Unpacking Decoloniality and Decolonial Education: South Africa and the World

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Abstract

In this article I unpack the terms 'decoloniality' and 'decolonial' as a means to address their respective histories in the South African context whilst also drawing on key examples within the global South. Many countries in the global South share histories of usurpation, coloniality and brutality at the hands of the same European colonisers. So, I offer, with overlaps, examples of the early stages of Portuguese, Dutch, British, Spanish, Italian and German colonialism, and their attempts at enslavement and colonisation. Whilst colonisation was for Europeans an escape from poverty, warfare, famine and disease, the promise of immediate and continued wealth through usurpation, settler-coloniality and the acquisition of raw materials through forced slave labour in Africa and the Americas, it secured their prosperity into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the afterlife of which they remain beneficiaries to, and which historical texts fraudulently offer them praiseworthy mention as empire builders.

Keywords: colony, decolonial, decoloniality, Arab Slave trade, colonialism in South Africa, #MustFall, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Black Consciousness, Pan Africanism

Any unpacking of the terms employed in the title, such as 'decoloniality' and 'decolonial education' requires an understanding of how these terms have been employed, what we understand as their meaning, how we carry out the work in their name, and to which purpose. Decolonial education is always in the present, and as such, our concern is then with the moment of insurgence, interrogation, and resistance to colonisation – the act that is in the moment of, that moment of execution, an in-progress process that is constantly unravelling, a process that involves the undoing of colonisation in the flesh, through thoughts and ideas enacted through the body of the subject(s) who under-

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stands and identifies the features of colonialism that hamper the continuity of a dignified lived experience – the subject acts, entrenches its decolonial position, enforces it, breaks with coloniality despite the shunning, the punishment the colonial threatens to inflict, despite the cunning coercion of complicity disguised as collegial congeniality. This in-the-moment process, is also an in-the-present one, a warding off of persistent, vigilant coloniality that has many tentacles, even if it hides under the rubric of democracy, such as in contemporary South Africa where the agents of coloniality draw from a bottomless pit of historical White privilege to refuel their attacks.

Each time I am with a community of scholars in a room where decolonisation and decoloniality are discussed, I generally ask, from the onset of the discussion: what is decolonisation and who are we decolonising from? *What* are we decolonising from? The questions noted here were also the ones I asked at the start of the sessions I presented at the University of South Africa Decolonial Summer School of 2018, 2019 and 2020. Attempting to address them, I drew on key tenets of Black Consciousness both in the analytical tools laid down by proponents such as Frantz Fanon, the Black Panthers under the analytical leadership of Stokely Carmichael, Angela Davis and Huey Newton, and Bantu Stephen Biko, revolutionary and trainee medical doctor from the Eastern Cape of South Africa, one of the founding members of the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania. These thinkers, whose analysis of the colonisation and enslavement of Africans come with rigorous analytical tools, collectively inform my interrogation of coloniality and decoloniality. Here in this collection, as noted earlier, our attention is focused on South Africa and various countries around the world, through the contributions of authors who were born and/or whose racialised identities and lived experience stem from Bhutan, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Germany, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Oman, the Philippines, Senegal, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. These are not only countries where coloniser-colonised relations inform our lived experiences, they are also geographical locations where our agency remains active (for some of us there is one location whilst for others, there are multiple locations), where we engage through various forms of pedagogies, teaching, learning, the sharing of community-based interests as is evidenced by the way that we take a stand, enact our protest politics, write, speak, think, imagine, produce knowledge(s) that come from our histories of struggle and/or our histories of engagement with the world.

As a means to address the interrelated question: 'what is decolonisa-

tion and what are we decolonising from?' I now offer a short segment on South Africa's history of colonisation, which is embedded in its history of enslavement, much like the rest of the African continent, as well as across the Americas, Asia, particularly the Indian subcontinent. It is not only as a consequence of the kind of work undertaken by the authors who come from the above-named regions of the world and their relationship to South Africa, which extend beyond the UNISA Decolonial Summer School but be-cause any commitment that seeks to actively dismantle *how and what* colonisation took from the colonised as a means to dispossess us, disown us, dehumanise us, subjugate and enslave us, has to lay bare the methodical processes through which they were undertaken ... on a world scale. There are, undoubtedly limitations in a text of this kind – it is a short introduction that seeks to lay a foundation but also to actively engage with the context. Despite limitations, one must steer beyond them to offer, if only briefly, some of the historical events that allow us to understand who and what we are indeed decolonising from.

For Europeans, colonisation was an escape from poverty, warfare, famine and disease and the 'voyage' to Africa, the Americas, the East, especially India and China, offered them the promise of wealth through the acquisition of raw minerals, spices, land rich in agriculture to grow food for export, the acquisition of silver and gold – all of the above were deemed crucial as a means to acquire wealth which Europeans did not have, and planned to increase upon acquisition. Richard Jobson, in *The Golden Trade,* writes of his 1620 trip to West Africa. 'Gold was the principal for which we came ... no part of the world abounds with gold and silver in a greater degree than Africa', he revealed. The wealth of natural resources were the key indicators of how European countries usurped, colonised, exploited and under-developed the African continent, which as Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* systematically reveals, until it was evident that African flesh, once enslaved, could ensure the Europeans their wealth.

Before the Dutch, the Portuguese circumvented the Cape and landed in its waters on the 3 February 1488, guided by Bartholomeu Dias, and named the region, Cabo da Boa Esperança which, as per its English translation, is still today referred to as the Cape of Good Hope. The Portuguese had previously sailed down the west African coastline, and by 1482, under the leadership of Sao Jorge da Mina entered the shores of Ghana, uninvited, and erected Elmina castle, which served as one of their main trafficking centres in the sixteenth century for enslaved Africans they took as cargo to North, South and Central

America. On 12 October, 1492, after a 2-month journey, Christopher Columbus (referred to by his Italian birth name, Cristoforo Colombo and often by his Spanish name, Cristóbal Colón), sponsored by Ferdinand the II, the King of Aragón (known by his Spanish name as Fernando) and Isabella I, Queen of Castile (the husband and wife team known as the Catholic Monarchs), landed on one of the many islands in the Bahamas, although his intended destination was India. Rodrigo de Triana upon seeing a glimmer of land exclaimed, 'Tierra! Tierra!' (Land! Land!). Columbus immediately proclaimed the land and the people as 'San Salvador', which with his Catholic sensibilities, was in honour of Jesus Christ and the salvation that the 'discovery' of the land implied, with a restless crew on the brink of mutiny. Not only was the accidental arrival in the Americas treated as an act of God but one which brought the Europeans into the Americas as saviours, filled with Catholic piety, commissioned by Spanish royalty. Columbus took four transatlantic voyages to the Americas between 1492 and 1502, primarily to the Caribbean, including the Bahamas, Cuba, Santo Domingo and Jamaica – the third largest island in the Caribbean.

Much to the dismay of Columbus, it was Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese usurper known as the first European 'explorer' to reach India by sea, who entered South African waters on the 4 November 1497 in the southwestern coastal waters, which he named Saint Helena Bay, making it the second Portuguese entrance on South African land and sea. Da Gama named this place where he took his first steps on the shores of South Africa, Saint Helena – after the mother of the Roman Emperor, Constantine the Great. The religiosity of colonialism and enslavement, as we see throughout history, was central to the moral consciousness of the coloniser as a usurper and enslaver. Somehow, when met with resistance, the Indigenous peoples were considered the savages and murderers, in fighting back. One such case is when the Khoi attacked the audacious 'explorers' in November of 1497 and wounded Vasco Da Gama in the thigh. Thirteen years later, Francisco de Almeida, the Portuguese Viceroy to the state of India (1505 - 1509) entered South Africa. A series of recurring events set in motion a relationship between South Africa and India, as is evidenced for three centuries among the Dutch, English and Portuguese colonisers of the two countries. In February of 1510 Almeida was met with fierce opposition by the Goringhaicona, an Indigenous Khoi people, who resisted his intrusion, after an exchange of iron for cattle was negotiated and an agreement reached. Instead of returning to their ship Almeida and 12

men thought their thievery would go unnoticed as they took cattle from a village belonging to the Goringhaicona. The Goringhaicona apprehended then attacked them, and they fled to their ship and returned with 150 of their men. Thievery and arrogance cost 64 of these intruders their lives, including that of Almeida and 11 of his captains. And whilst Almeida's defeat is scantily mentioned in history books former president Mbeki, noted the role played by the Goringhaicona in fighting usurpers when addressing the National Assembly on the 26 March 1999, as he bid former president Nelson Mandela well into his retirement.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to engage in the Atlantic slave trade; they completed their first transatlantic slave voyage to Brazil with enslaved Africans as their cargo in 1526. North-west of its unmarked border sits the country we now know as Colombia, where slavery was practised from the beginning of the sixteenth century when the Spanish usurped Santa Marta in 1525, Cartagena in 1533, and Santiago de Cali in 1536. Indigenous people were the first to be trafficked and enslaved in Colombia, which was soon followed by enslaved Africans. Whilst it is important to note that the cities noted above was not towns or settlements at the time of usurpation, one cannot credit the Spanish (or other European colonisers) as 'founders' when civilisations already existed before they established settlements. Spain usurped and colonised the Philippines for more than 300 years, from 1565 - 1898 firstly under the Mexico-based Viceroyalty of New Spain then directly governed by Spain. When Spain was defeated in the Spanish-American war of 1898 the Philippines became a territory of the United States. Spain was considered the largest empire in history, from the 15th to the 19th century, and was often called, 'the empire on which the sun never sets'[1]. The expression 'Spanish West Africa' is not only a contradiction but an indication of the Spanish conquest of North Morocco, Ifni, the Tarfaya region, Western Sahara, and the territories of early 21st century Equatorial Guinea. Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, were among the 35 colonies it once had control of.

Colonialism in South Africa is often dated as beginning in the year

[1] '... [T]he empire on which the sun never sets' (Spanish trans: *el imperio donde nunca se pone el sol*) indicated how vast its empire was and that at any given time of the day or night a territory in their possession was in daylight. See also, 'The British Empire', *Caledonian Mercury* (15619; 15 October 1821. p. 4; and, 'Empire Sunset? Not Just Yet'. *The New York Times* 1 July 1997.

1652 under the command of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) also known as the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie, which initially registered itself as a silk company. The year 1652 also marks the history of enslavement and forced labour at the Cape, the first and main port of usurpation and colonisation by the Dutch. Of note, and as an indication of the history of colonialism and enslavement in South Africa, it is important to note that the Dutch usurped and colonised Indonesia in 1595, Mauritius in 1598, Bengal in 1605 and Malaysia in 1641; it is from these regions, proclaimed as Dutch colonies, that the DEIC returned and gathered their strength to continue enslavement and derive greater wealth as they forged the process of enslaved cargo, transporting the enslaved to and from different colonies – Bengal to Java, then from Java to the Cape – in the middle and latter part of the 1650s to set up their planned half-way station from Europe to India, at the Cape. These acts of enslavement, deemed as necessary acts of enforced labour by the Dutch, were envisioned before the usurpation of South Africa, thus premeditated, and as such seen as crucial to the success of DEIC colonialism. Without slave labour, the DEIC could not have established the proposed halfway station to India at the Cape, which included enslaving people from Bengal, Indonesia (mainly Java), Malaysia, and later trading enslaved as cargo with the Portuguese in Mozambique and Angola. Walter Rodney, in his 'European Activity and African Reaction in Angola' notes that 'it was in Angola that the slave trade was conducted with the greatest violence' (Ranger 1968: 51).

The palate of the coloniser, who slowly became accustomed to food from places they usurped and colonised such as Bengal, Malaysia, Java, among others, were of concern for the DEIC who ensured that whilst the process of usurpation and colonisation was in process, the enslaved peoples from the colonies lived under strict conditions of servitude whilst cooking their meals and flavouring their palate as they plundered, usurped and continued to destroy the livelihood of Indigenous peoples of South Africa. Walter Rodney, in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, makes the point about what a culture is, and what colonisation did to African culture by robbing it of all aspects of its way of life. 'A culture is a total way of life. It embraces what people ate and what they wore; the way they walked and the way they talked; the manner in which they treated death and greeted the newborn' (Rodney 1968: 53). And whilst Italians are eager to boast of their cuisine, especially their many varieties of pasta, it was none other than Marco Polo, not the first Italian to travel to China, who arrived in China in 1275 and stayed for 17 years. He took noodles from

China to Italy – a cuisine that the Chinese had cultivated as far back as 3000 B.C. It is no secret that with the spread of Italian conquest in East Africa, the seizing of territories by a massacre in Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia, that pasta made its home wherever the Italians usurped and sought to seize land.

The population that the Dutch found at the Cape (before it was divided into the four regions) were the Khoi, San, Griqua (a Khoi Khoi group), Nama (a Khoi Khoi group), the Goringhaicona, many of whom were also part of the *Strandlopers* group (a derogatory term used by the Dutch, which is taken up later in this collection), the Xhosa people a Nguni group primarily from the Eastern Cape. The Zulu peoples, also a Nguni group has lived mainly in the eastern coastal province, which we now call, KwaZulu-Natal, whose livelihoods were affected by colonialism throughout but where we see the effects mainly during the period of British occupation, post-1843.

What we learn from the early history of colonialism in South Africa, is how language played a role in the negotiations between the Dutch coloniser, the enslaved who spoke a Dutch infused language whilst retaining many Javanese, Malay and Bengali words, and the Indigenous Goringhaicona inhabitants, who for a very short period were able to speak all three languages. It is omportant to note that apartheid education did not introduce learners to Autshumato but referred to this leader of the Goringhaicona as 'Harry the *strandloper*' (the term beachcomber, is the closest English translation), which situates the Goringhaicona as a people with no purpose in their life other than combing the beaches of the Cape and enacting various forms of pleasure along the coastal beaches, which is still held against Indigenous people today. Krotoa, his niece, worked in the Van Riebeeck household as a child and could speak the Khoi language, Dutch and the language of the enslaved (later known as *Kaaps*), which is what the enslaved population spoke who were forcibly brought from the Dutch colonies to the Cape (Kaap, as per the Dutch translation and later Afrikaans translation). Krotoa married Danish 'explorer' Pieter Meerhof, under her Christianised name Eva, which was given to her once it became clear that she was able to read the bible in Dutch. This was the measure of being human, and the measure that allowed her colonisers to assert their stamp of approval upon her. Krotoa and Pieter lived on Robben Island, as he was in charge of cargo ships of enslaved people between the DEIC and the Portuguese, negotiating the exchange, and on one expedition he was killed leaving Krotoa a widower with several children. Krotoa made her way back to the mainland, where she continued to work, but was later banished to

Robben Island for immoral behaviour and died there. Of note here also is that records show that she is the ancestral mother of Paul Kruger, Jan Smuts and the last apartheid president, F.W. de Klerk (Brand South Africa Reporter 2017). Marike de Klerk, F.W. de Klerk's first wife, once noted that there is no such thing as Coloured identity, and referred to Coloured people as 'oor-skepsels', a term that references the remains of the food that one gives to dogs or four-legged animals, which journalists translated to English as 'leftovers' (McGreal 2021). This is how deep the former first lady and many Afrikaners in South Africa hate Coloured people, most of whom have KhoiSan ancestry, like her husband, children and grandchildren, and a large percentage of the Afrikaners in South Africa. I return to this point later. Christianisation was a key element of colonisation; in this case, the Dutch colonisers fancied themselves as the middle-man between God and the people they colonised and named Krotoa 'Eve' as a means to indicate that she was a 'first', that she reproduced in the image of God (with a European man), thus giving their colonialism a biblical significance. Not only did this act of renaming erase her Indigenous name and attempt to erase her history, but she was also awarded a responsibility to uphold a code of conduct regarding her sexual practice – tied to marriage and relations with Europeans and therefore European culture – that was imposed upon her and for which she was severely punished.

Allow me here to shift the focus to a phenomenon less spoken of among decolonial scholars in South Africa and furnish it with a personal anecdote. In December 2017, I was invited to participate in a roundtable at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal as part of a two-day programme to commemorate the work of Souleymane Bachir Diagne. After the closing panel, where I was a presenter, a participant from the audience raised himself from his chair and delivered a speech on how he had listened to presenters talk about colonialism but had not heard them talk about Senegal's Arab colonisers. The participant had not asked to speak via the chair, and as we listened, it was clear to me that in addressing questions of decoloniality, many today cut corners, not out of ignorance but because it is easier to address European colonialism than talk about the Arab slave trade. The speaker addressed us with fervour and rigour, and whilst he did not use the kind of discourse in English or French that we are familiar with, and under which lay the hidden and forbidden of that which we claim to be against, most of us saw the error of our selective amnesia. The speaker called us out, so to speak, for participating in a process of selection, and avoiding discussions of

the Anti-Black racism exerted by Arabic nations. The Arab slave trade refers to periods in which a slave trade was carried out under the auspices of Arab peoples or Arab countries. The Arab slave trade lasted more than 13 centuries and was a huge component of African history; it began in the early seventh century and lasted in various forms until the middle of the 1960s. Slavery was only officially outlawed in Mauritania in August of 2007. The lands of Islam were considered an important destination, especially the coast of East Africa towards the Middle East; it was characterised by violence, castration and rape and African women and girls were targeted as sex slaves. Abdulazizi Lodhi, a Zanzibari by birth, and Emeritus Professor of Swahili and African Linguistics at the University of Uppsala in Sweden is the author of *The Institution of Slavery in Zanzibar and* Pemba and gives a full account of East African slavery. Lodhi asserts, 'In many African societies, there were no prisons, so people who were captured were sold' (Fröhlich 2019). Palestinian writer, Susan Abulhawa (2013) writing in the twenty-first century, notes that 'the Arab slave trade is a fact of history, and anti-black racism in the region is something that must be addressed'. She continues by stating: '… In a world order that peddles notions of entire continents or regions as irreducible monoliths, the conversation among Arabs becomes a dichotomous "Arab" versus "African", ignoring millennia of shared histories ranging from extensive trade and commerce to the horrors of the Arab slave trade, to the solidarity of African – Arab anti-colonial unity, to the current state of ignorance that does not know the history and cannot connect the dots when it comes to national liberation struggles'. Abulhawa continues: 'And yet when Palestine went to the UN for recognition of statehood, the vast majority of nations who voted yes were southern nations. The same is true when Palestine asked for admission to UNESCO. In fact, when the US cut off funding to UNESCO in response to its members' democratic vote to admit Palestine, it was the African nation of Gabon that immediately stepped up with a $2m donation to UNESCO to help offset the loss of income. It was not Saudi Arabia, or Kuwait, or Qatar, or Lebanon, or Sweden, or France. It was Gabon. How many Palestinians know that, much less expressed gratitude for it' (see Abulhawa 2013).

The late Muammar Gaddafi, apologised at length for the Arab slave trade at the second Africa - Arab summit held in Sirte, Libya on October 10th, 2010, noting:

> On behalf of the Arabs, I'll like to condemn, apologize, and express

> deep sorrow for the conduct of some Arabs – especially the wealthy among them – towards their African brothers. The wealthy Arabs treated their African brothers in a disgraceful way in the past. They brought children and took them to North Africa, to the Arabian Peninsula, and to other Arab regions. They subjugated and traded in them. They engaged in slavery and human trafficking in a most abominable fashion, to tell you the truth. We are ashamed, along with our African brothers, when we recall this. We are ashamed of those who behaved in this manner, and especially the wealthy Arabs, who viewed their African brothers as inferior slaves. This is no different from the way the West – America, and Europe – behaved towards the Africans. They would hunt them like animals, treat them like slaves, and act like colonialists. They engaged in colonialism and exploited them, and this continues to this day. We extend our apology and express our sorrow (Chiwanza 2020).

In the past five years, I have encountered several South African academics who have made disparaging remarks about the inconvenience of decolonial teaching and learning practices. Mostly, when confronted, one would hear them make disgruntled remarks such as:

- What is decolonisation anyway?
- Why are we concerned with decolonisation?
- Are we not fine as we are?

In unpacking the terms employed in the title of this collection, our task is as clear as daylight:

> *de·col·o·nise*
> *verb* (used with object), de·col·o·nised, de·col·o·nis·ing.
> 1. to release from the status of a colony.
> 2. to allow (a colony) to become self-governing or independent.
> *verb* (used without object), de·col·o·nised, de col·o·nis·ing.
> 3. to free a colony to become self-governing or independent.

It is not difficult to comprehend that the word ‘colonial’ sits within the word ‘decolonial’. The *de* in decolonial is a prefix, and its dictionary meaning suggests: ‘removal, to do away with’ (Collins English Dictionary). Thus, to employ the word decolonial is to understand that it means to remove the colo-

nial. The bigger question is, what are we removing the colonial from? Ourselves? Our thinking? Our Being? And what does such a process include: a series of acts that involve an untying from colonial practices? If so, what do these entail as 400 years of colonialism in South Africa covers a broad spectrum of day-to-day activities that starkly reminds us of our history of colonisation every single day. Within the S.A. context of post-apartheid existence, our existential beings are constructed alongside our colonisers. As such, we cannot do away with the colonial – get the settler-colonial to leave or repatriate the settler-colonial to their place of origin – their place in South Africa as a place of their belonging is secured by the South African constitution, the wording of this unreasonable reason is borrowed from the 1955 *Freedom Charter*, which ensures the coloniser a place in the afterlife of apartheid. We, who understand that decolonisation, when employed by the colonised, is first and foremost an inward-looking process, an act of recognition: you have to see yourself, to have self-consciousness before you develop consciousness of your history as part of the colonised. Upon recognition, the colonised moves to the realisation: a process that develops into a practice, an ongoing state of continued interrogation of the many facets of colonisation. The process from recognition to realisation is an accumulation of thoughts and actions that are directed at all of how the criteria for being in the world – thought, speech, writing, the imagination – are examined for the relationship(s) they hold to the coloniser, in the language of the coloniser, and of which the colonised's acceptance of these relations of being, through no fault of our own, have been rewarded.

Decoloniality is the product, embedded in the production of thinking and acts that drives the colonised who have done the recognition, the realisation, and expressed the willingness to detach, to cut, sever, remove all ties that link the colonised to the coloniser. Through the English language, one may know that your body has a colon: a long intestine, an organ that regulates and controls your body. It is therefore not difficult to understand the relationship that the word 'colon', holds to 'coloniser' – the person(s) who regulates and controls its conquest, that is, the colonised. The derivation of the concept colony can be traced to the ancient Roman concept of *colonia*, from the Greek *apoikia*, which means 'home away from home, with reference to territories that settled by ancient Greek city-states[2].

[2] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colony. Colony also referees to species of insects, etc. See https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/colony

Yet, what is also apt here, is *colon* from the words 'colon-isation' and 'de-colon-isation' as referencing a body part – how a fleshed body with body parts that have particular functions, is acted upon; how the psychosocial trauma of colonialism, some of which are not always diagnosed or understood as such, impacts the colonised and the coloniser. Likewise, psychosomatic symptoms of colonisation are not easily detected as directly related to the process of subjugation and control. All bodies experience the social construction of race, gender, class, sexuality and coloniality, among others. Cardinal's book, *The Words to Say It*, is an autobiographical account of her history of bleeding and seeking out psychoanalysis as a means of addressing the underlying conditions of her symptoms that extended beyond the bleeding. I met Marie Cardinal in July of 1992 at a public event in Ottawa and there was a thorough engagement of colonisation and the body between her and I. Not only was her position as part of the French colonisers in Algeria evident in her history of psychosomatic 'illnesses' her relationship with the colonised, 'the Arabs' as per her expression, was very clear, as many of her 'attacks' were triggered by anti-French protests. Whilst I will not go into detail on the full exchange between us, a close reading of the above-named book situates her realisation of her bodily experience as a coloniser integral to both her symptoms and her recovery.

Decolonisation is a series of acts aimed at undoing colonisation; decoloniality speaks to the process, the in-progress aspect of decolonisation. As such, to decolonise is to take your independence from the coloniser – and to take charge of the process. The coloniser is not afraid of uninformed Black people desperate for their attention. As such, any act of self-governance that the colonised takes as a person guided by the knowledge, conviction and identity as someone who works from a Black consciousness position, usually comes with consequences. There will be shunning, ostracization, shock, dismay, impudence, belittling, your position scoffed at, your actions treated as violence because you've called out your coloniser, you've named her – you've called her a beneficiary and she dislikes it. When you take up Biko's teaching by connecting the act and the actor, in other words, connecting the act (usurpation) to the actor (the usurper), the act of colonisation to the actor (coloniser) and examine the features that mark these acts of cruelty, such as the actor who benefits from colonialism (the beneficiary), who benefits from racism and colonialism, you as the colonised who leaves little room for the coloniser to undermine the level of understanding you have attained of their acts of colonisation ... you will be the person who 'has a chip on her shoulder'.

To decolonise is to unpeel and examine each layer of colonialism, each segment that is layered with historical events wherein the history of your people lies buried and forgotten, lodged in, hooked, entrenched, in words, sounds, blood, dreams, gestures, memory, some resurfacing within your body as part of your intergenerational trauma;

To decolonise is to exhale what you have inhaled through repression and coercion within the colony; to release your body from silence is to release your body and take it from silence to speech, to action. It is to remove the layers of inaction, complicity, obedience to the law of racism and coloniality under which your body lived during colonialism and in its afterlife;

To decolonise – the is to open the wounds of the word; the word that has gone flesh from its moment of announcement. To colonise ... the word exists because it has happened, and its cruelty is everywhere: derived from the English word of the colony.

Often what the coloniser fears is the death of coloniality within the colonised, the extinction of the performance of civility for which the applause will always be better than the resistance the colonised who adopts Black consciousness forges. Everywhere around us as the colonised, complicity comes with the reward of likeability, a performance of a fraudulent understanding of uniqueness, that falsely places you into the exclusive position of false comfort, the shower of praise that you are different and not like the other colonised – you are sophisticated, and they are not ... you are more like the coloniser and they can never be. Desperate to believe your coloniser, you smile, adopt a certain degree of security among them, gleeful in the manner in which you have been singled out, then slowly drawn in. There, in an instant, after 400 years of colonialism, you believe you alone can enter the special place created for exclusive Black people who know how to behave (your behaviour, in this case, the many ways in which you've taught yourself to acquiesce) is always a test and this is how you befriend the coloniser, because you have 'moved on', and the rest of the colonised have not. You hint at how different you are, how you have always had White friends, and you wait for their glances of approval, as you arrive to their dinner parties wearing your African dress – the kind that keeps your puppeteering position securely lodged in their anthropological gaze, and your problematic anti-Black sentiment in the master - slave relationship, sustained. This process of exceptionalism is the desperate quest for denial on the part of the coloniser – a denial that pleads, begs, that not all of the colonised have turned against their coloniser for there must be some Black

people, who like Helen Zille, see the benefits of colonialism.

To remove the colonial means to remove the agents, complicit in the colonial exercise who are engaged, engrossed in the empire; it means to remove both the beneficiaries who regret the events that catapulted them to prosperity through the benefits of enslavement, apartheid, racism and those who reap the benefits yet claim to be opposed to coloniality. The liberal colonial has a ready-made and handy list of verbal protestations, but it is never accompanied by a plan of political action, as Albert Memmi warns, in *The Coloniser and the Colonised*. The colonial enjoys every privilege and verbalising it as a guilt trip does not mean she will give it up. There is no nice colonial – there is only the colonial who benefits.

Decolonisation has been on the table for discussion of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of South Africa [HELTASA] since 2016. Between November 27th until November 30th HELTASA held its 2019 annual conference at the University formerly known as Rhodes, in Makhanda, named after the Xhosa warrior and prophet, Mkhanda ka Nxele, a name to which it reverted in 2018, after being called Grahamstown, after Colelen John Graham, a British colonial. The HELTASA organising committee invited me as a keynote speaker and I was listed as the last speaker on the programme. The first speaker, Ahmad Bawa, in line with the title, 'Pedagogies in Context', delivered his keynote with a PowerPoint, which was titled, 'Pedagogies for tomorrow'. His keynote slides were in point form and he elaborated on them as generously as time permitted. Suddenly, as he was talking about the curriculum, he made a remark reflecting on what the country was engaged in and began to talk about the concern with decolonisation. 'I do not even know what decolonisation means', he said. Given South Africa's drive to transformation and decolonisation that came from our government, and certainly the Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], this struck me as rather peculiar for someone who occupies the position of Chief Executive Officer of Universities of South Africa.

It is not the semantics of the word that is not understood nor the action that the word demands, it is rather what the word insists on. The word – decolonisation – evokes immediate implications for addressing the coloniser, the settler-colonial, the White liberal whose smile fades seconds after you open your mouth to address the meeting because she realises her comments on how nice you look had little bearing on the content of your speech. It is the agency of the colonised, that becomes 'the problem' and because your agency is a

problem because you have problematised the actions of the settler-colonial, you are a problem!

In HE in South Africa, the colonial is present, always, everywhere, in every meeting to discuss decoloniality and in every event purporting to further the aims of decolonisation. Many scholars in the academy are not bold enough to ask their White settler-colonial colleagues, 'What are you decolonising from? Yourself? Your European thinking on African soil, and if so how? Let's discuss this'. At HELTASA, not only did I see White women's faces drop as I delivered my keynote throughout which I was cheerful, I saw them holding their tissue paper (a handkerchief substitute for modern-day White women who overidentify with the main character in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*) over their mouths. In the corridors of the main building, Black women looked over their shoulder before pulling me aside to thank me for my keynote; as soon as the White woman line manager made her appearance, the affinity to my words, and me as the speaker of those words, was severed ... with a smile. The emotionally, socially and psychologically attached colonised had to return to her master, which I understood; I had to recognise that being seen with me publicly, especially in a manner that showed delight or appreciation of my analysis of coloniality and the candour with which I spoke with a room full of entitled settler colonials wearing African garments or African hand and neck jewellery meant that their future in the academy, tied to the White madam who made their 'position' possible through her thoughtful benevolence on the hiring committee, would be at risk.

The coloniser - colonised relationship is complicated by the attachments of a master - slave relationship that has spanned over four centuries and three decades, produced conditions for complicity, where freedom and democracy are talked about as a proud moment linked to the release of Nelson Mandela but where the conversation quickly turns towards 'but our students have to be trained the same way students are trained overseas', which means that the comparison to Europe and the United States of America is sought as a means to declare the universal when in fact that so-called universal is knowledge from two or three European countries, which the settler - colonial educator refuses to acknowledge. The settler - colonial would be the uneducated if they acknowledged this, and this prospect is too daunting.

Decolonisation in South Africa is not a new phenomenon; it is a progression of political resistance over 400 years grounded in the political thought and activism of the ANC, the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, and

the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania. Irrespective of one's political affiliation, one has no choice but to credit the activism that has come before one even when the ANC-led charterist position maintained its hegemonic power, as the party who went into negotiations with the apartheid regime's National Party and therefore the party who claimed victory over apartheid for the masses of South Africa. The post-1994 narrative of post-charterist, negotiationist politics, with its celebration of non-racialism has been at the deliberate exclusion of the Black Consciousness and Pan Africanist position and continues to this day. The South Africa of post-1994, is a South Africa with a vibrant student body, much like in the 1960s and 1970s, and as much as the ANC led Ministry of Education has attempted to ignore issues within the Freedom Charter that make direct mention of free education, the student bodies across the country have articulated their needs and their interest in a South Africa way beyond that of the ANC led government's vision.

Today, especially post 2014, as universities in South Africa have seen a generation of students emerge with demands about their education, fees, radical curriculum change as well as the need to remove remnants of colonialism such as statues like the one in the image of Cecil John Rhodes that marked the cruelty of colonisation, for which an upward glance, with tilted heads, against the backdrop of table mountain expected a historical recognition of past bondage and subordination by students climbing the hill of former Whites-only University of Cape Town to a statue of a man who robbed them of their land and dignity, was simply not tolerated. The fact that the statue stood there since 1934 is an indication of what Rhodes meant to the colonials studying at UCT; Afrikaner students requested the removal of the statue in the early 1950s noting that it offended them to study amid a statue of a British imperialist who thought Afrikaners were inferior. Black students have for many years refused to study amid the statue of this glutenous colonial perched on a stone demanding a glorious glance against a postcard-perfect silhouette of blue skies, a mountain, the abundance of crisp air, faeces-free, a good 26 kilometres from children being potty trained on a bucket in Khayelitsha, but which the thoughtful Chumani Maxwele, sought to rectify on March 9th, 2015. Rhodes was not the only figure that young learners found offensive; King George V at UKZN, the statue of Gandhi in Johannesburg and various places in India were met with vehement opposition. In April 2015, several months before Ashwin Desai and GoolamVahed released their book *The South African Gandhi*, Gandhi's statue was vandalised in Johannesburg

by chanting protestors with placards reading 'Racist Gandhi must fall' and the hashtag #GandhiMustFall followed soon thereafter to the next step, which is social media. Ela Gandhi, the Durban born former ANC member has refuted the allegations of those who call her grandfather out for his anti-Black racism and his casteism (cf. for instance Desai 2019).

Much as decolonisation seems to have gained a reputation as a university-based intellectual movement, as soon as student protest politics hit the tarmac of South African universities, students were depicted as either hooligans or ungrateful freedom children who do not appreciate what their predecessors had rewarded them with – a Freedom Charter but no freedom. The politics of decolonisation is not only about the transformation of former apartheid education and curriculum changes that reflect on South Africa's history and culture but about our nation's poverty, our Black population who continue to live below the poverty line, forced removal, shanty towns as a result of forced migration, the accumulation of historical wealth that continues to buy first-class tickets to the sons and daughters of settler-colonials into previously Whites-only universities. It is, first and foremost about the usurpation of the land and the return of the land to the inhabitants from which the land was taken. Fanon makes his position very clear in *The Wretched of the Earth*. He notes, '... For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity' (*Wretched of the Earth* [1963] 2004: 42)[3]. 'Africa for the Africans' was a term coined by Martin Delaney[4]. This issue of the return of the land has been echoed by Lembede, Sobukwe and Biko and can also be found in the writing of Marcus Garvey, George Padmore, Martin Delaney, Patrice Lumumba, some of which are evidenced in writings from the early 19th century. Indigenous Unangax scholar Eve Tuck and Chinese American scholar K. Wayne Yang, assert in their paper with an unmistakable title, 'Decolonization is not a Metaphor' that decolonisation is about the repatriation of the land, '... it is about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools'. They are asserting the fundamental objective of

[3] In this edition of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Homi Bhabha shows his criticism of Jean-Paul Sartre.

[4] https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/asia-and-africa/african-history/pan-africanism

decolonisation: to demand the return of the land[5].

Biko was enormously influenced by Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, who in turn was influenced by KwaZulu born, Anton Lembede. Muziwakhe Anton Lembede, known as Lembs to his friends, among whom were Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, spearheaded African nationalism. Lembede was the founding president of the ANC Youth League, and he had a strong influence on Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and others. Lembede's ideas, especially those considered more radical by the ANC were taken up by Sobukwe and later by Biko. Lembede's writing on the land, agriculture, economics, language, trees and their value to human beings, not only precedes the analysis and writing of decolonial scholars of the twenty-first century but demonstrates the richness of his thought, the diverse and systematic way in which he thought of decolonisation – which he termed 'Africanisation', a process of thinking and being in the world, on the continent, in South Africa, on African terms. Isn't this what decolonisation in South Africa is all about? Are we not striving in our decoloniality to exist in our country on South African terms, fully cognizant of our history of struggle, without the regulation and control of the coloniser? For Lembede it was about Africanisation, in the form of what he expressed as African nationalism – although it has to be said that his African nationalism came at a time that is considered very early on in his life. Lembede drew on the life and work of Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), who is considered the last of the African American leaders born into slavery in the United States, and whose legacy stirs mixed feelings among Black scholars in the United States today. Lembede was attracted to Washington's self-help approach and his ability to conscientise the descendants of the enslaved to stand up and build their own communities.

Bantu Stephen Biko, in *I Write What I Like*, ([1978] 2005) was clear when citing his reliance on Fanon; he formulated his response to *Black Skin White Masks* – 'Black Souls in White Skins', a paper in the collection where he addresses the South African White community of liberals whose main aim, he noted, was to relish in their privilege. In 'White Racism and Black Consciousness', in a subheading, 'The Totality of White Power in South Africa' Biko (2005:69) shows his reliance on Fanon when he notes: 'As Fanon puts it: 'Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the Native's brain of all form and content; by a kind of perverted

[5] Quote on page 1 of 'Decolonization is not a Metaphor'.

(sic) logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it'. Biko also referred to Césaire as one of the founder members of the Négritude movement, along with co-founders Léon Demas and Leopold Senghor, as instrumental to his formulation of Black Consciousness not only as a philosophy but a politics, and so to were Hegel, Marx, and certainly, German psychiatrist and philosopher Karl Jaspers, who wrote so eloquently on 'Metaphysical Guilt' when addressing the German population and pointing to their being-in-the-world amid, and participating in, the atrocities of the holocaust. It is important to bear in mind, as we travel this journey of decoloniality, that we address African history, come to the realisation of the Namibian holocaust, which some insist should be called a genocide, which took place between 1904 and 1907 under Germany's Second Reich, and killed thousands of Nama and Herero peoples as a means to acquire African land during their colonial conquest but also to test their massacre and extermination methods on Africans, before inflicting them on Jewish peoples in Europe.

The language that students utilise in the #FeesMustFall movement and the many acts of insurgence we have witnessed toward decolonisation, come directly from Fanon, Biko, Sobukwe, Lembede and the interrelationships of their thought throughout the African diaspora. It was not only Biko's assertion that 'The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed' (*I Write What I Like*: 68), that the youth of 1976 rallied around but also the call to Black Consciousness – a call, unlike that of Sobukwe who made a point of drawing our attention to the fallacy of race, which does not, he argued, exist as a biological construct, but which, much to the chagrin of those who embraced Sobukwe in his lifetime and following his death, would have liked to see the intellectual giant grapple with when addressing the materiality of race, which Biko was very clear about and adamant in critiquing the role played by race in the struggle for freedom in South Africa. Mangoliso Robert Sobukwe walked out of the *Freedom Charter* meeting when it was decided that a document of core principles would within its preamble state: ' We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white ...' (cf. History of the Freedom Charter). Sobukwe was clear in his understanding of the role of usurpation and colonialism and could not fathom how a document purporting to stand as testimony to the need for a liberation struggle would include its colonisers and speak of colonisers at the dawn of liberation as equals. Sobukwe always insisted that the land be returned to the Indigenous people, which is

precisely why he could no longer be part of the ANC. The ANC formed their military wing, uMkhonto we Sizwe, in 1961, and the PAC formed a military organisation Poqo, based on the Xhosa word, meaning Pure, in the early 1960s and set up an underground base in Tanzania.

Our forefathers and foremothers did not sit on their hands, nor did they wait for decolonisation to happen within the university institution – they fought the apartheid regime with every fibre of their bodies and wanted to be liberated from their coloniser before decolonisation was the kind of movement it is known as today: waiting with baited breath for the university leadership to approve a programme of apologetic manoeuvres that does not offend the settler - colonials of South Africa. But I return to Pan Africanism once again: Pan Africanism in South Africa was influenced by Pan Africanism globally, especially from the United States, as shaped by African Americans in the 19th century like Martin Delany and Alexander Crummel, and Caribbean-born Edward Wilmot Blyden, who is often considered the father of Pan Africanism. The previously enslaved in the Caribbean produced many revolutionaries and a great many scholars, some of whom include Black Panther Stokely Carmichael, CLR James, Eduoard Glissant, and Queen Nanny of the Maroons in Jamaica, whose likeness is featured on the Jamaican $500 banknote. South Africa's young generation of scholars and revolutionaries are likewise inspired by the work of Anta Diop, Lumumba, Nasser, Ngugi, Nkrumah, Nyerere, Senghor, Van Sertima, and others; the work of African scholars that have been denied a presence in our African history studies under apartheid, and even thereafter, when White men at UCT decide that African history, of the calibre taught by esteemed and internationally renowned scholar, Mahmood Mamdani, would not be suitable for South African students. When settler -colonials enjoy the legalised subjugation the apartheid laws secured, they fear an uprising of the truth, and the best way to ensure that the truth does not surface is to forbid the teaching of African history – the kind of history where the Black person is not merely, 'slave', oppressed, downtrodden, massacred, murdered, dispossessed. Biko quotes Fanon to make a larger point about the perverted logic of the study of history: 'Hence the history of the black man in this country is most disappointing to read. It is presented merely as a long succession of defeats' (*I Write What I Like*: 95).

The emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters [EFF] in 2013, and Black First, Land First [BLF] founded in 2015, has fostered open discussion of their Black Consciousness and Pan-Africanist affiliation along with an

assertion that the return of land should not come with compensation. Both the EFF and the BLF assert the basics, without apology: that the land has to be returned to its owners and the economy should serve the masses. Millions of university students in South Africa have joined the EFF and BLF, and if they are not members, they walk about chanting the ideologies of both.

Guyanese born Walter Rodney played an enormous role in the way that African scholar-cum-activists began to see 'underdevelopment'. After completing his doctoral degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies, with the working title, 'A History of the Upper Guinea Coast', he took his first teaching appointment in Tanzania. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Rodney's seminal text is considered compulsory reading in many Southern African universities. Rodney was a Pan Africanist, and his critique of how Europe drained Africa of its wealth, is an understanding well entrenched in the work of many Pan Africanists. Fully aware of his transatlantic slave history, Rodney was part of the Tanzanian contingent at the 1974 Pan Africanist Congress held in Tanzania, of which he remained particularly proud.

A matter warranting concern, and which needs mentioning is that of the decolonial tourist to South Africa. Decolonial tourist-cum-scholars have been flooding South Africa, especially after #FeesMustFall, citing their country of birth as part of their biography when introduced to South African scholars, as a means to draw an allegiance to the Fanonian 'Third World' whilst drawing on their 'American' imperial cultural capital to open doors for meeting with South African student leaders, posing on photos with their freshly acquired poor people – images that I call, without hesitation, pornography of the poor. This photographic evidence of conquest is to indicate that they have rubbed shoulders with the 'real' oppressed of the country, much like the colonials did, where they fool themselves into believing that they are needed like a priest needs a sinner ... or as Shanghai native, Irina Patsi Dunn, who grew up in Australia would say when mocking relationships where men believe they are irreplaceble, 'like a fish needs a bicycle'. For some of the tourist-cum-scholars, a meeting with a handful of South African academics at the Decolonial Summer School in Barcelona in 2012 opened the door to greater narcissistic promises to which a pinch of religiosity sealed the deal of bringing the gospel of decoloniality, as stipulated by an unwritten script of 'Thou shall Not', which soon surfaced as a code of conduct as it was later taken up by their South African disciples – the one, resembling the Nicene creed in Christian churches.

The decolonial apostles, created in the image of their narcissism, and

decolonial disciples, have asserted a particular route for decoloniality, steeped in semiotics, European philosophy and mundane poststructuralist arguments, and an unending need to reproduce the very European thinking they claim to be against; for others, it has been about 'preaching' the work of Fanon, as though we don't read Fanon and incapable of interpreting his translated words (French to English) ourselves. Cast in the image of Moses who receives the Ten Commandments, with the promise of leading the previously enslaved to the Promised Land, we have been witness to this performance of discipledom that smacks of anti-Black racism of the worst kind. But scholars of decolonial scholarship, many of whom are not South African, are partly to blame for this phenomenon: many among South African university management use the term 'African' as a means to guarantee a university job to Africans and yet do not demand that the claim is accompanied by the knowledge of South African history. Many foreign African nationals, as the legal term notes, working within South African universities as part of the 'Academic managerial class' take the route of benefitting from the 'I'm-African-and-I-am-eligible-for-the-South African-job-market' without familiarising themselves with South African history. It is no surprise that many still think that District Six, the old slave quarter at the Cape, is called District Nine, as was gleefully asserted to me to indicate knowledge of my history of forced removal from District Six, which I immediately rectified by drawing out its Hollywoodised vulgarity.

An internet search for information on decolonial thinking brings readers to a Wikipedia page that notes the following, '... the work as a school of thought used principally by an emerging Latin American movement which focuses on untangling the production of knowledge from what they claim is a primary Eurocentric episteme'[6]. Shortly after, readers are taken to segments that offer them a list of decolonial scholars. Among these, at the top of the list appear those of Walter Mignolo, born in Argentina in 1941, just after the start of the second world war, of Italian parents. Anyone who reads Mignolo's work soon discovers that he has done little to no engagement with the work of Black scholars, let alone African scholars. A face-to-face meeting with Mignolo in 2011 at the 'Decolonising Gender' symposium, at the University of Bremen, in Germany, made the latter very clear. He seemed aghast at the possibility that one could cite Africans other than simply when referencing murder, killing, massacres or protest marches. The following year, at a meeting organised by

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decoloniality

the INPUTS group for scholars working towards setting up a soon-to-be-established Decolonial Summer School, a small group gathered together in the June - July period to offer our respective contributions as a means to ascertain what such a programme would look like. Sabine Broeck as the Director of INPUTS opened the session, and upon her fifteen-minute delivery of the history of the programme and the need to think about a Decolonial Summer School, Mignolo declared himself as the chair of the session. This was a surprise to many. There was an exchange of awkward glances, and of course, silence: the tense, White, middle-class moment I speak so fondly of stages itself with clockwork regularity. There was a raised hand: a woman considered older than any of us in the room, sitting by herself, who looked visibly as though she could fall into a group of retirees asked a question. Her question was met with silence. In my experience, many scholars speak of 'the community' and yet when a member of 'the community' is in an environment with learners, there is a certain measure of discomfort when the person asks a question no one is expecting. The silence bore evidence of not wanting to answer a woman who appeared too old to be asking a question about why we were studying the lives of Black people. I, none the less, not recognising the self-appointed chair, offered a reply to the question that was posed. There was a short silence. The same woman asked another question. There was silence again. Considering that there was no speaker's list among a group of twenty people in a room with ample space, I did not think it out of place to respond the second time again. Mignolo, the self-appointed chair, remarked quite hastily that I could not speak twice. I looked around the room and noted that if I left the room it would not be a decolonial room since I was surrounded by Europeans, who in my view had no place telling me when I could speak or answer questions they were too awkward to answer as neither the person nor her question mattered to them. In both 2011 and 2012, it was clear that Mignolo had not read the work of African scholars or revolutionaries; if and when they were mentioned, for example, such as Bantu Stephen Biko, it was concerning his death. It does not take a meticulous reading of Mignolo's work to grasp the overwhelming restaging of European thought, which he claims to be untangling from, to realise how the work of Fanon, has of late become useful to him and only because if he must play the game of how important he is among the male posse sitting at his feet, he has to ward off climbers on the ladder and thus position himself as knowledgeable of at least one Black scholar.

In 2013 and 2014 I worked with a group of select philosophers who

were recruited by UNESCO to work on a SOUTH – SOUTH PHILOSOPHY textbook. Enrique Dussel, another Wikipedia listed decolonial scholar, was among them. Any search on Dussel shows scant information on his birth in Argentina's La Paz in 1934, of German parents, with a greater focus on his studies in places such as France, Germany and Spain, and later in Israel/ Palestine where he learnt Arabic and Hebrew. Greater emphasis is placed on the content of his work, the vast range of scholarly contributions he is known for, most of which are in theology of liberation, ethics and decolonial scholarship. The UNESCO project noted above also had a scientific committee that formed part of the larger group whose expertise was relied upon to ensure that the collection would be a solid reflection of historical and contemporary philosophy from the four regions. There were two representatives for each region: Africa, the Arab Region, Asia Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Enrique Dussel and Magali Mendes de Menezes were the represent tatives for Latin America and the Caribbean. I can offer further details as to our gathering but I would like to share one particular experience that marks the ethics of a decolonial scholar like Dussel. Magali Mendes de Menezes, came to the meeting exasperated and noted that she was tired of arguing with Dussel as he had refused to include any philosopher she suggested, including those from Brazil, except of course for the work of Paolo Freire. As a member of the group, I raised my hand and asked how he made decisions for his compilation? Discussion among the representatives was encouraged so that there was shared knowledge among all of us. There was silence, the kind I grew accustomed to each time Dussel made a demand with the full knowledge that he would not be challenged – that as scholars schooled in a particular etiquette that showed regard for our elders we would simply not address him in a manner that he might consider challenging. His immediate response to my question was, '[citing my name], *?estás enojada conmigo porque no hay negros en esta sección?* Translation: [Citing my name], are you angry with me because there are no Blacks in my section? I formulated my response very carefully as the outpour of despair by my Brazilian colleague had given me enough time to consider how I wanted to address Dussel and the matter at hand. I asked him whether he was content with a collection that erased Black people like the conquistadores erased Indigenous knowledge in the Americas, making sure that there was no trace of Black knowledge for South and Central America. 'How can you live with yourself knowing that you have not even considered the Caribbean, to be more precise, the Black Caribbean?' He then addressed

me more personally: '... [citing my name], are you upset with me because I did not include the work of ... [citing world-renowned scholar of Africana philosophy, born in Jamaica]. I stared at him in disbelief and shook my head. Dussel did not reply. Not only did he allow the newly appointed UNESCO head of the philosophy division (who has now left), to make racist comments, he played right into their hands, and the members of that team allowed him to exclude Black philosophers from the Caribbean. It is interesting to observe how revolutionary thinkers practice silence when racism rears its ugly head. I raise these matters here for not only do they inform how we need to question the anti-Black racism of these 'esteemed' decolonial scholars, but we also need to be mindful and vigilant of the pedestals we create for scholars who continue to show disregard towards Black people.

I turn now to another form of Anti-Black racism, and that is, anti-Coloured attitudes in South Africa. In the past two years (2019 - 2020) as the collection took shape, Coloured people(s) in South Africa became the object of ridicule by White university professors once again, who sought to make Coloured people the subject of their lethal arrogance, disguised as research. The term Coloured, is used in very particular ways in South Africa and speaks to apartheid classification and as such a legal definition of a racialised identity and status under the law.[7] The continued material conditions under which the Coloured population lives, in the afterlife of apartheid, around the country, speaks to the horrific consequences of the dispossession of land, forced removal, overcrowding and continued racial segregation. The term 'Coloured' in the South African context cannot be compared to the term 'Colored', in United States as they each have distinct histories of origin and continue to hold social and political currency, some of which are considered derogatory both in South Africa and in the United States. On the 26 of April in 2019, a few select telephone calls from colleagues got me on the internet in search of an article, which the Cape Times ran with the heading: 'Academics want Study on Coloured Women's Intelligence Removed' (Adriaanse 2019). The article began by informing its readers that 'a number of academics have called on the study by Stellenbosch University researchers on cognitive function of "coloured" women to be removed from UK-based academic journal publishing site'. In reading the article then coming to terms with the full scope of the study, I was shocked but not surprised to see what the study was concerned

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_South_Africa

with. Sixty women between the age of 18 - 64, who the researchers identified as Coloured, were sought, separated into four age groups and two education groups, as subjects of a study. What the researchers deduced was that Coloured women presented with low cognitive development due to the lack of education. On April 30th, the Stellenbosch university leadership issued an apology noting that the study would be investigated for allegations of breaches of research norms. A campaign to have the article retracted was started by South African professors Boswell and Ratele, which received more than 2000 signatures by May 1st, 2019. One has to ask how a research study of this kind received ethical clearance? Did the research ethics office at the University of Stellenbosch not read the ethical clearance application, or did they consider the application a necessary gesture to engage with the Coloured community and not expect the publication of the findings to be accessible to South Africans since the intended place of publication was a UK-based journal? On the 22nd of May 2019, it was reported that Stellenbosch University's Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Wim de Villiers, was 'appalled' after learning of the findings of the study and its publication. What is troubling is the outrage expressed by the Stellenbosch Vice-Chancellor and the university's leadership, each account filled with moral indignation but not one comment on the ethics of treating Coloured and Black peoples (I use the general politicised term Black but make a distinction here for the purpose of the research that focused on Coloured people) as subjects of studies that determine the cognition and education level when: (a) there is widespread knowledge among the Black masses that the material conditions under which we live were created through usurpation and colonialism then furthered by apartheid and continues today in the afterlife of apartheid for the sole benefit of the settler-colonial; and (b) when we speak of the materiality of race, we understand this to mean how racialisation was established by first setting down the grounds for materiality, such as, through usurpation creating dispossession, landlessness, migration, forced migration, forced removal, etc., thus setting the groundwork for the lived experience, which includes all of the ways in which the regime ensured that housing, schooling, medical health, psychological health and every aspect of our being would be contained, and life for Black people would be that of servitude.

How could any White scholar in South Africa research Black people(s) without the slightest understanding that their lived experience was created, crafted, sculpted from the continued and perpetual dehumanisation, mas-

sacre, murder, killing and abuse of Black people, which they participated in so that they could live the 'Whites-only', 'Slegs Blankes' life they grew so accustomed to? Would ethical clearance be given to a group of researchers, let's say, White men, who identify as rapists seeking to study White women in the afterlife of their 342 years of patriarchal power which included repeated rape, verbal and psychological abuse, sexual assault, serial killing, massacres, murders, forced removal, dispossession, displacement and expect an outcome other than the one they were instrumental in creating? The blasé manner with which racism is treated, bandaged by a written word to express outrage – a word that is in the moral objective of showing, not in the ethical principle of the living. The written apology does not point to the criminal act of racism nor how serial offenders of racism commit their crimes. 'We deeply regret the hurt [this article] has caused', was front and central in the Vice-Chancellor of Stellenbosch's words (Somdyala 2019). How deep is your regret? Deeper than the wells on farms that were taken unlawfully from Indigenous peoples of South Africa? How deep exactly is the hurt? I was not hurt by the article. There is very little hurt that racism can inflict upon me that has not been done already. There is nothing left of the racism of the agents of White domination who inflict, engrave, stamp, and enact that I have not encountered already. I have over the past four decades allowed myself a continued process of learning of the operation and functioning of White domination so that I can see when it is coming; I have even tried to understand the vulnerability of its agents in clamouring for apartheid-style living because the ushering in of the post-1994 style democracy came at a huge loss to White South Africans because they have not been able to bury apartheid. There was no funeral, there was simply a transition of power by negotiators.

There is, at times, nothing more telling than observing the desperation with which White men and White women will come at Coloured women who dare, by our very presence in this world where we stand firmly, unphased, as living emblems of apartheid's failure because we are still here, they cannot erase us, and we are still forces to be reckoned with. When one knows why racism is the go-to place for the beneficiaries of colonialism and apartheid who have to descend, climb down, lower themselves into the dire-straights of democracy that the seas of protest cannot send back into the ocean one knows that for the unwilling White man and unwilling White woman, democracy is a lowering, a coming down from. It is a bigger shame, when Black women who have little to no Black Consciousness, act in accordance with what a

liberation struggle paved, claim kinship, which means claim Blackness, and ask for it to be bestowed upon them, selectively. This is how their Blackness comes alive in the convenient aftermath of a realisation that there are rewards to be claimed by entering the door as Black then siding with the coloniser against Black people. The White colonial knows this: all she has to do, is compliment the Black woman and tell her she is wearing a nice dress, invite her home for tea, introduce her to her paid subordinate who she allows to call her by her name, make sure she understands that she's different from Blacks, the plural identity used with intent to suggest that she has been measured against her entire group, and in a small heartbeat, the White woman has won over the convenient Black woman – her lack of Black Consciousness accompanied by a lack of a politicised Black identity, has secured it.

By late May of 2020, an article published in the *South African Journal of Science*, by Nicoli Nattrass with the title, 'Why are Black South African Students Less Likely to Consider Studying Biological Sciences?', made the news. The keywords for the paper were: 'socio-economics, conservation, materialist, values, colonial evolution'. The research, noted in the article, suggests (according to Nattrass) that Black South African students are less likely to consider studying biological sciences than other students (note: we are not told who the 'other students' are), and that 'this stance was linked primarily with career aspirations (supporting conservation but not wanting a career in it) – and these were associated with materialist values and attitudes to local wildlife'. The summary of the research findings by Nattrass notes that Black students, while not opposed to conservation, are not keen on a career in conservation and that 'materialist values' play a role. Nat-trass continues by saying: 'black South Africans may be interested in careers other than in conservation in part because of their relatively disadvantaged backgrounds which could prime them towards considering primarily the higher paying occupations (accountancy, law)'. What we are facing in the country is a lack of an ethical approach when it comes to addressing the matter of researching people that researchers have usurped, colonised and dehumanised. Therefore, in situating the history of your subject, which you have no qualms identifying as Coloured, situate your history with this person and your racialised group – name it, claim it, own it like you own everything else in the world. Every researcher has a history; we walk into every research environment with our racialised identity, sexuality, sexual practice, class background, cultural and linguistic history.

The Council of the Academy of Science of South Africa posted three note worthy points as part of their 'respect the author' position when respect has little to do with it. If, as it were, the researcher seeks to ascertain the reasons why Black people are not enrolled in a course on conservation, how can an ethical clearance certificate be issued for any researcher to conduct any work that speaks directly to the history of conservation as the history of usurpation? Conservation speaks to the care and protection of physical resources, including land, animals, what is generally referred to as nature – in other words where Black people have been forcibly removed from, and where a garden of Eden has been created to preserve Whites-only spaces. Whether one considers Natrass' position a combination of ignorance or arrogance, is of little significance if one does not see the bigger picture, and that is, the ethical and moral implications of knowledge production that does not recognise that the history of colonialism in South Africa, covers all of the land, flora, fauna, animals, trees, rivers, sea, sand, oceans, mountains, air that envelopes the land that was taken away, and which should be returned to their rightful owners.

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