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Museum, memorial and mall: postcolonialism, pedagogies, racism and reconciliation

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Abstract

Through museum and shopping mall and the possibilities, subtleties, banalities and disparities of reconciliation in South Africa and Australia, this paper immerses itself in the question of pedagogies and in particular the pedagogies of reconciliation, public spaces and postcolonialism. In both Australia and South Africa postcolonialism as theory and pedagogy is ambiguously positioned especially in relation to issues of reconciliation which in turn is arguably also ambiguously located. Reconciliation is or has variously been state sanctioned policy, project and agenda which, in part, is a process and practice of recognising and addressing histories of racism and its effects. Projects in both nations have included public, educational and schooling spheres and range, for instance, from the building of large scale museums to self-initiated school and community projects. All of these involve ways of knowing and knowledge of the colonial past and a postcolonial present. Not insignificantly, they all involve the ways in which race, racism and postcolonialism are understood and represented. Central to this, we will contend, is a necessity to bring into question the discursive practices of both racism and antiracism particularly as they influence and shape new emerging modalities of anti-racism within postcolonial contexts and practices. We will argue that an ability to analyse and deconstruct everyday spaces such as shopping malls is as integral to pedagogy as is a class excursion to a museum such as the Hector Pieterse or the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg. Still further, we will argue that postcolonial pedagogy is itself an artefact of fraught histories deeply informed by colonial origins, local specificities and contemporary strategies of remembrance.

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Museum, memorial and mall: postcolonialism, pedagogies, racism and reconciliation

Vicki Crowley and Julie Matthews

*This ought not to have happened... Something happened there to
which we cannot reconcile ourselves.
None of us ever can
Hannah Arendt, 1993*

Whatever your age, wherever you are in life's journey – parent or
child, single or coupled, gay or straight, young or old, regular
worshipper or visitor... You are included in our worship and
invited to join in our fellowship and witness.
*Order of Service Sheet
Cathedral Church of St George, Cape Town,
Die Sint George-Katedraal, Kaapstad
Icahtedral ka George Ongcwele, Yasekapa,
November, 2005*

Reconciliation is a matter that takes place on different levels, if it
takes place at all.
Patrick Dodson, 2000

Introduction: The traveller's tale of significant sites

Standing inside the Hector Pieterse Museum, immersed in an intense soundscape that emerges from the theatre screening a poetry event, the museum visitor is drawn from exhibit, image, text, newsreel and video witnessing, to pausing, and perhaps in search of release from the unremitting horror of the retelling of the uprisings, one looks out onto Soweto through panes of glass. Yet the panes of glass are not clear. They are inscribed with red text that points to the material world in which the museum is located. The words animate the land and dwellings beyond the walls of the museum. They act as a refusal of the respite one may be seeking and add still another layer to the assault and again drawing another form of attention to a landscape peopled with the events, blood, lives and lies - all of which were a part of the children taking to the streets in their struggle against apartheid.

The museum, as we indicate in this paper, is a pedagogical project, and like that of the shopping mall involves ways of knowing and of eliding knowledge of the past, both are locations which influence and shape new emerging modalities of anti-racism.

The text on the plastic bag from the Hector Pieterse Museum Bookshop reads, “Soweto Race Riots, Students protest, To hell with bantu education, Away with Afrikaans, Over 16,000 rounds fired by police, 1339 injured, 172 dead! Nkosi Sikelela, 13 year old Hector Pieterse shot dead!” Children in this museum are not children as typically cast in western thought. Here they were actors and activists – participants and initiators of political intervention – comprador and comrade. Yet they are not simply heroic. They are school children of all ages. They are situated in the inexorable legacies of apartheid and its connectedness to colonialism and imperialism. And they are more. On this day classes of school children, the general public and tourists visit the museum, some with guides, others self-guided.

This museum stands on the site adjacent to a source of one of the most recognisable images from the 1976 Soweto uprising, one of the pivotal moments in which a world much bigger than Apartheid South Africa was rattled into taking greater notice than it had in the past of an abhorrent and deathly regime. The museum is built alongside a memorial to one child, shot by police, and carried along his streets by a distressed young man. Hector’s sister, Antoinette Sithole is there. She is running alongside, wailing. She will never again catch up with her brother. The camera of Sam Mzima has captured the material and visceral horror, the immediacy of an anguish that likely touches fears and hope buried in our deepest psyche, yet activated in full-bodied sensory overload as we, spectator to the past, perhaps try to step outside of our fear of encountering such a moment twinned by its obverse, the hope that this will never, ever be a part of our lives, or anyone’s else’s life again. An image is memorialised and a death honoured, but honoured as a profoundly symbolic gesture that aims to pay homage to and account for all those that died and all those that have been injured physically, psychologically and materially by apartheid and the struggle to bring about its end. Museum visitors, the observers of this memorial and museum stand amid the material symbolic – and reading through Australian eyes – an emblem, perhaps, of truth and reconciliation. The museum is witness and archive. It represents a truth formation. In and through this truth formation an aspect of reconciliation may be performed.

On another day in Johannesburg another new post-apartheid zone is Rosebank Shopping Mall, where on a Sunday afternoon it is possible to sit outside and have

coffee and watch a smorgasbord of locals, but mostly visitors, pass by in a relaxed and free zone of the new South Africa. There is the group of buskers drumming, moving, eating fire and invoking the rhythms of Africa's past and its contemporary manifestations of public entertainment and of trying to make a rand. There are people 'of all descriptions' that arrive on their motor-bikes or camped-up vespers, BMWs, Mercedes or hire cars, and perhaps they get their car polished and their tyres blacked while they lunch and shop. The new Constitution says it is okay to be gay and lesbian and on this afternoon it is possible to witness that okay-ness. Likewise mirroring the Constitution's inclusiveness, access for the disabled is apparent, a person in a wheel chair navigates the shoppers and passers by with as much ease as is possible in an environment not really designed for this kind of embodiment and machine managed movement. Downstairs is a tourist haven – the African Market which on Sundays competes with the car-park market upstairs. Here the artefacts of Africa, trinket and fine craft and art alike, can be perused and bought. Inside is *The Zone*, a locally famed cinema and store complex (Nuttall, 2004) where the hip middle and aspiring middle class youth can hang out in a practice of a reassembling of multi-racial, multi-ethnic society supported and sponsored by global capitalism and its cultural flows.

Neither of these are scenes that are replicated in Australia where colonial history traversed a quite different trajectory, however, both South Africa and Australia have launched reconciliation platforms to address 'unreconcilable' events that should not have happened (Arendt, 1993) and both are reviewing its meanings, possibilities and potentialities – albeit in very different ways. In Australia reconciliation has not been accompanied by the building of major memorials and museums, and the occupation of public space by such things as the Indigenous Tent Embassy on the grounds of the Australian Parliament have not gripped the public imagination. Still further, if Indigenous youth gather anywhere in Australia, let alone in the sanitised environment of a recently refurbished and extended shopping mall, they are far from being viewed, or welcomed, as sign of a 'new' Australia coming to terms with its racist and divided past, or present.

We want to argue that an understanding and representation of race and racism – its discursive practices – are pivotal in accounts and engagements with the work of reconciliation and its pedagogies, since racial divisions have and continue to shape

what we make of the present and the past. What this means for pedagogy is that the ability to analyse and deconstruct everyday spaces such as shopping malls is as relevant as a class excursion to a museum. Further, and quite obviously, historical accounts of the racial formation of the present, such as briefly provided below, are not only necessary and important inclusions, but from a postcolonial perspective their representational practices require careful interrogation.

Both Australia and South Africa are part of the Commonwealth of Nations. Both are steeped in British imperialism and their colonial histories mirror each other in ways that exemplify colonial intention and practice as being neither benign nor accidental; either singular or ubiquitous. Australia does not have a history of colonial insurgence between competing western forces, but it did participate in the Imperial Forces that defended the British colony against the Boers in the (Anglo-) Boer War.¹ The British Colonial endeavour has ensured close approximations between South Africa and Australia. In 1901, for instance, Australia's newly formed Federation and Constitution introduced its notorious Immigration Restriction Act which colloquially continues to be referred to as the White Australia Policy. In 1902, the South African parliament, then firmly acting in British tradition, introduced its Immigration Restriction Act and it too, set about classifying and reclassifying its peoples and potential citizens on the basis of race – categories that could be and were massaged and amended to suit exigencies of trade and labour, but which maintained as its core the superiority of whiteness. Both nations separated their people on the basis of race, restricting the movement of people, access to work, access even to basic needs such as water, sanitation and food. People were dispersed and homelands were grafted into the domain of the white colonisers. In Australia Indigenous people could be exempted from their Indigenous identity by separating from their family and by holding a “dog tag” – a pass that gave them Full Exemption or Part-Exemption from being ‘native’ and Aboriginal – an exemption which could be revoked at any stage by the Protector

¹ Interestingly the Castle of Good Hope's Military Museum in Cape Town makes no distinction about the troops that constituted the Imperial Army in the Boer War and which included troops from Canada, New Zealand, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and India (Australian War Memorial, <http://www.awm.gov.au/>). The Australian Forces receive no particular mention yet in Australia's war history and major war memorial, the Australian War Memorial, in the capital city Canberra the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) is given some prominence and involves very significant military events in Australia's military and war history. (See Denton (1981) and Bleszynski (2002) on the controversial Court Martial and execution of “Breaker Morant”). This further underscores the issues of memory and memoria.

of Aborigines. In South Africa there was the Pass system and the compulsory carrying of cards of which there are legion examples as an ultimate strategy of containment, abuse and violence.

In Australia, Indigenous people today number a little less than 2 per cent of the total population and the vast majority live in circumstances that the majority of the population have increasingly less knowledge of as Australia's neo-conservative government shifts the public gaze and preoccupation to global events such as The War on Terror, the potential avian flu epidemic and, at the micro level, encourages its population to be wary of strangers, to be conscious of the vulnerability of Australia and Australian shores to 'illegal immigrants'. Under the current regime, Australia's political agenda entails the disestablishment of many of the liberal modes of cultural and collective endeavour that had been struggled for since the late 19th century and throughout large sections of the 20th century. Australia's political climate stands in stark contrast to the Constitution of the New South Africa. As Australia redraws the boundaries of race and racism, distances itself from multiculturalism and has opted for, at best, 'practical reconciliation', South Africa signals its representative and participatory desire for a new nation built on the most liberal and democratic Constitution in the world – a desire that is mindful of its recent history and liberation yet compounded by the fraught and compromising politics of global capitalism, global cultural flows and the deep local problems and problems of renewal. In both nations reconciliation is a complex set of practices, desires, ambiguities and ambivalence. In Australia Reconciliation was a 10 year project of recognition and cohesion building in the national imaginary culminating in the Centenary of Federation in 2001. In South Africa reconciliation was established within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission making it of a very different order to Australia. As moral suasion and ongoing possibility in nation building and racial politics in both countries, however, reconciliations entail not uncommon precepts, yet each is clearly marked by its specific relationship to events, time and state sanctioned policy and practice. In Australia there is no major government project to build memorials to witness the path to democracy or the histories of race struggle.

We are of course aware that this descriptive account of experience, exposure and comparative 'facticity' of reconciliation, entails issues of representation, interpretation

and analysis as they occur within notions of history, place, travel, and dialogue. The issues, commitments and interior musings that it brings into question, and as questions of pedagogy, provide the opportunity for considering reconciliation as an embodied dialogical and dialectical encounter situated in the between space of modernity's congealed historical past and its sense of the dynamic present. The between space provides the possibility to inquire into the conditions of, rather than search for, a definite truth or complete resolution of conflict, injustice and injury. This is not to deny or erase the deep personal and emotional attachments to events and pasts, or their unravelling or unravelling presents and possible futures. Rather it is to posit the notion of reconciliation in the context of schooling and education as richly conflicted and where existing and emergent representations and manifestations of conflict are embraced as really useful and significant sites for grappling with racism and racial formations as they are represented and reshaped through reconciliation. It is to say that the narratives of colonial oppression and apartheid considered through the rubric of reconciliation ought to consider the facticity of its facts, the desire for results and the epistemological and affective processes entailed in each move and encounter. Such reflections and refractions remind us that such postcolonial 'pedagogy' is itself an artefact of fraught histories deeply informed by colonial origins, local specificities and contemporary strategies of remembrance.

Placing reconciliation in locations such as shopping malls provides the opportunity to consider the boundaries and boundedness of terms and their meanings – if to do this seems incongruous, misplaced or absurd, then we have need to review reconciliation's specificities and its preclusions. To yet again qualify such a move – this is not to give reconciliation a relativist, universal and ubiquitous application, but to consider its limits and its logics of adherence to specificity. What exactly is it that we invest in reconciliation as a pedagogical move and pedagogical encounter? We elaborate the positions and issues just named through the following problematics: postcolonial eyes and the travel of theory; disparate reconciliations; and reconciliation, anti-racism and postcolonialism.

Postcolonial eyes and the travel of theory

In many ways the teacher and the school children visiting museums, memorials and shopping malls are travellers, akin to the tourist or local visitor – taking with them ideas gleaned in the context of their everyday lives and shaped though global flows of information, images and imaginings. The problem of travellers’ tales, travelling, and travelling theory are hardly novel or new to postcolonial writing and thinking and they ought to, we suggest, be brought to the ways in which we conduct school excursions and the teaching of reconciliation. Travellers’ tales, travelling, and travelling theory are issues that have been shown to be critical to the imagining of east and west in particular and, to a lesser extent to the north and south. Said (1978), Bhabha (1994), Clifford (1997), Robertson, *et al.*, (1994) Rushdie (1992) and a long list of others have asked ‘how does theory travel, and how do theorists travel?’ (Clifford, 1989, 179), along with the need for other ways of telling to emerge. These other ways of telling require as Chambers has recently written that, ‘the very premises of the history we have been told and inherited need radically to be re-evaluated’ and that – to use a musical metaphor – ‘we need to lend our ears to a different way of scoring the past and orchestrating the future’ (2004, p. 424). Writers such as Arundhati Roy (1998) and Salman Rushdie (1981, 1994) explore issues of diaspora and the diasporic looking back and weaving among local incongruities and actualities of life lived in messy and untidy ways and in the context of the historical present. Contemporary novelists such Alexander McCall Smith and his series of *The No. 1 Ladies’ Detectives Agency* ply the local, imagining it through historical and contemporary notions that never quite depart from imperial desire and longing. All of these are grist to shaping and informing ways of thinking and ways of knowing, and they all require careful attention when we consider a project such as reconciliation in local or comparative circumstances. Here, the context of British imperialism and its interrelationships with Dutch imperialism cannot be ignored.

Like any theory, postcolonialism travels and postcolonial thought and theory are taken up in diaspora – by this we mean it is taken up in the embodied and hybrid contexts of those whose recent or long histories of forced and chosen migration lead them to think and to position their politics in the postcolonial. Like any other perspective or theoretical position, postcolonialism is neither uniform in its ambit and its embodied location, nor is it a non-neutral modality of thought and preference. Postcolonial

thought and theory can be taken up in and through whiteness as an act of contesting whiteness *per se*, in some few instances as contesting historical colonial and imperialist whiteness, and as the ongoing oppressive practices of whiteness in its contemporary enactments of its centrality. Postcolonial thought and theory may also be taken up by bodies that have none of these particular affiliations or indeed may be an admixture of all.

Within and across embodied mindfulness the embodied sense of colonialism and the knowledge of colonialism are disparate. Imperial Britain hails its subjects through disparate discourses including the discourse of the Commonwealth of Nations mobilised in such events as the Commonwealth Games (formerly Empire Games). There are moments, therefore, in contemporary nation states, where the legacies of the past are mobilised as affective affiliations in the present.

It is in and through such trajectories of colonial and imperial practice that it becomes possible to assimilate reconciliation as quasi universal in its meanings, applications and practices. The point here is that to speak the word reconciliation or to think of government projects of reconciliation as in some way being common may entail a practice of thinking through the historical practices that occlude specificity and deny diverse embodiments and enactments of politics. It is possible for postcolonial tensions to be seen to exist in the comparison of nation and nation and to also recognise tensions within the local – but *how* they are seen and the extent to which the tensions can be seen to be composite and multifarious may represent another order of analysis.

We would contend therefore, that any project of reconciliation requires rigorously reflexive attention to the complexity that is in play in the shaping of one's gaze, including the contemporary postcolonial gaze. The question of one's subjectivity, as educator and that of student, thus become issues of pedagogy in reconciliation. The point to be made here then, is that pedagogical practices seeking engagement with reconciliation require close interrogation, not simply to the ideas that seem immediate to the project, but to the histories of those ideas as composite and constituted in time and place *and* through the alignment of bodies. It is to open one's subjectivity to its vulnerability and responsibility in ways that are mindful of the ways in which bodies

may be forced and/or thrust and/or choose mobile trajectories and theory and ideas travel in uneven and contestable ways. It may also be to ask, to what extent is reconciliation a project of Enlightenment and what capacities does it have to exist as a non-normative form of practice and analysis?

Disparate reconciliations

Reconciliation can never assume or presume itself as a universal for it is always replete with its historical specificities. While having important points of resonance, the purposes, aims and position of reconciliation are distinctive, and as already noted, distinctively marked by local histories. Nevertheless, reconciliation variously circulates in popular discourse as signalling an act of religious atonement, as state initiated policy, as political imprimatur, and as moral suasion and rallying point.

In South Africa reconciliation was a term formally located within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) 1995 and headed by Bishop Tutu. The TRC was comprised of 17 Commissioners and its brief was to address initially the period from the date of the Sharpeville massacre (March 1, 1960) to the date of the adoption of the Interim Constitution (December 6, 1993), but was extended until the date of Nelson Mandela's inauguration as President, to May 10, 1994. The TRC was mandated to address the atrocities and gross human rights violations of the past. The TRC Act granted amnesty to 'persons who make full disclosure of all the relevant facts' (www.doj.gov.za/trc/legal) and through ubuntu² it was designed for understanding not for vengeance, to provide a bridge between the past and a future and would restore the dignity of the victims by allowing them to tell their stories publicly. It included the notion of reparation, but the TRC was never given the power to award such reparation³.

The TRC was controversial because of the way it presented the truth. As Leebaw (2004 & http://irisfilm.igc.org/longnight/In_history.htm) notes, the TRC was controversial on several counts including that the TRC dealt with the extremes of apartheid, rather than apartheid itself, leaving the TRC open to the criticism that the

² Ubuntu comes from the Nguni-based languages of Southern Africa and refers to "humaneness" and community interdependence. It is most commonly translated into English as 'humanity to others' and as, 'I am what I am because of who we all are'.

³ Some time later it did offer reparation to over 16,000 people. As with all aspects of the TRC this drew heavy criticism in terms of inadequacy and questions of justice.

truth of the TRC was misleading. The TRC presents, she writes, ‘the truth about apartheid as the extreme violence of torture and murders’ as if it were the sum total of apartheid. Such a position left aside the routines of such things as the forced removals, enforced poverty and ill-health, the legacies of which are abundantly apparent today. Leebaw also notes that the notion of "gross human rights violation" that underscored the TRC meant that the violence that was committed by the state in the name of Apartheid South Africa was considered as being on the same level as those acts of resistance committed by the ANC and other political parties. Such a position places the victims of apartheid on the same level as a regime recognised internationally as a violation of human rights. Likewise it placed the ANC in a contradictory position as it had been instrumental in constructing the TRC. Reconciliation would seem an unlikely outcome of such a levelling and erasure.

Horsthemke argues that reconciliation is inadequate to the task of restoring ‘human and civil dignity of victims’ (Tutu in Horsthemke, 2004, p. 3). It is too slippery a concept, since it calls forth notions of forgiveness acceptance and balance, settling a quarrel, harmonising, making compatible and even acquiescence and resignation to something disagreeable. Calling for reconciliation as the heart of a process of transformation in education, Horsthemke argues that the backbone of the process is recognition of fundamental human rights and redress.

Horsthemke’s critique and arguments are based on a realisation of reconciliation that does not easily approximate understandings of reconciliation in the Australian context. In Australia, reconciliation was adopted as a state policy between 1991-2001. The installation of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR)⁴ in 1991 was preceded by many decades of Indigenous lobbying, struggle and debates about the absence and need for some form of Treaty. The call for such a council was a recommendation of the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody report in which the appallingly disproportionate rates of death in custody for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander

⁴ Initially it was projected that the new body to oversee reconciliation in Australia would be named the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and Justice. Very quickly the ‘justice’ element was removed, thereby signalling to many that reconciliation in Australia was to be symbolic rather than legal and that reparation was not going to be a part of the decade for Reconciliation. In this shift, the commitment to reconciliation was seen by many as side-stepping the very real and hard issues of sovereignty, land rights and self-determination.

peoples was situated in the indefensible inequities and injustices that are unequivocally linked to colonialism's racist, racialised and racialising core. CARs key task was to disseminate knowledge and understanding of the history of colonial settlement and contemporary conditions, to change attitudes and to forge closer interpersonal relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people (Leigh, 2000). It aimed to address Indigenous disadvantage through community education and the provision of advice to government and other agencies (Aberdeen & Matthews, 1999, Hollinsworth, 1998). The main role of reconciliation was,

To bring about through education, a greater level of awareness of Aboriginal History, cultures, dispossession, continuing disadvantage and the need to redress disadvantage. In short we must come to terms honestly with our history as a nation (Hollinsworth, 1998, 207)

Redress in the Australian context was not tied to arguments about the loss or lack of human rights in the colonial context, but more simply on the assumption that knowledge of what went before, would set things right for the future. According to Frank Brennan, political commentator, academic and former-Jesuit priest, reconciliation was about addressing an 'historical burden', which needed and needs attention in the present for the future and where reconciliation 'can be brought about by taking collective responsibility for our present reality' (1994, p. 104). A major strategy for reconciliation was the development of a nationwide network of Study Circles. A reconciliation study kit was developed and distributed among schools and community groups willing to take up reconciliation. The kits contained suggested discussion points and ways of bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous people together in literal as well as symbolic ways. Its voluntary nature meant that only small sections of the non-school community actively participated in Australia's reconciliation program.

In both Australia and South Africa reconciliation's official location within the rubric of state intervention is over – yet its work is clearly incomplete. In both contexts too reconciliation served as a rhetorical 'rallying point', an agreement that something has happened which requires the demolition of previous colonial 'truths' (Jacobs, 1996), and yet it is not clear how previous colonial histories can be destroyed or supplanted. In South Africa and Australia 'affective histories' (Bhabha in Attwood, 2005, p.251), comprising individual testimony and the witnessing of trauma, loss and suffering have

been generated to construct revisionist historical accounts. These accounts may shock us into listening (Attwood, 2005) but their pedagogical work is poorly understood and may not necessarily provide a ready route to reconciliation.

In Australia, 'reconciliation histories' or 'newer [academic] histories' referred to by (CAR) (Attwood 2005, p. 247) regarded the 'grim truth' of colonisation, dispossession and discrimination to be past wrongs and injustices. Such accounts were represented as if past colonial conditions are no longer present, in process or continuing (Attwood 2005). Representations, as Said observes are not simply lies or myths which are able to be 'blown away' ... 'were the truth to be told' (Said, 1978, p. 7). Rather they enable the formulation of categories of thought and assumptions through which human social difference is conceptualised and ordered. To gloss over the pedagogical is to fail to pay attention to the ways representational practices order and disorder 'truths', subjectivity, the circuits and flow of ideas, knowledge and analytic tools. It is to risk the epistemic violence of pressing difference, multiple and contradictory archives, memories and testimonies into singular historical accounts (Attwood, 2005). To disregard the pedagogical is to contribute to rather than disrupt the orientalisising practice of representation elaborated by Said.

Reconciliation, anti-racism and postcolonialism

In South Africa, it might be argued that reconciliation seeks less to unsettle previous colonial truths than it does the 'truths' of apartheid, despite it being the case that it is the colonial 'truths' that entrenched the conditions on which apartheid could grow and seize the nation.

There is nothing in the policies of reconciliation in South Africa or Australia that encourages an engagement with the very notion of race or practices of racism. Reconciliation in both places is located within historical events which are configured through the subordination of indigenous peoples through the epistemic and physical violence of settler-colonisers. In reconciliation, historical deeds and events are popularly considered in hindsight as wrongful and often the explanation of the emergence of events lies in a sense of historical wrong-headedness and ignorance, rather than in questions of power. While it can be said that in both Australia and South Africa race has been institutionally mobilised along similar lines, it remains

critical, we would argue, to continue to ask what it is that constitutes race and how is race mobilised into determining racial categories. Still further, even though official policies may have ended the absolute expression of race segregation, race nevertheless continues to be a dividing practice that involves the shoring up of economic wealth, health, access to education and other social resources.

These kinds of distinctions and erasures made by the state point to issues of power, of economic and other expediencies and clearly draw attention to race as a sufficiently mobile category as to be able to harness populations within state borders as deemed necessary to support and maintain power. However, the official dismantling of apartheid in South Africa and the end of the White Australia Policy in Australia may have minimal impact on the power that race holds.

In this section, however, we want to consider reconciliation as a rallying point within the rubric of anti-racism, and to distinguish between reconciliation as a site of pedagogical intervention, a resource for anti-racism and reconciliation as an anti-racism strategy.

As a pedagogical intervention, a focus on reconciliation identifies processes and practices often disregarded in education and reconciliation discourse such as witnessing and archival construction, memorialising, and the material and visceral immediacy of horror, violence and trauma. Thus, as a resource for anti-racism reconciliation requires an understanding of the ‘racism,’ that anti-racism seeks to eradicate.

What postcolonialism brings to this is attentiveness to the way we speak about, theorise and analyse the conditions of others and ourselves. Problematically, as we have noted previously, the questions and concepts we rely on to formulate our theories and analysis are drawn through geo-temporal histories and politics; divisions were reinforced by colonization and decolonization and under globalization they have seeded ‘violent tensions’ (Balibar, 2005, p. 9). In Balibar’s work attention to postcoloniality highlights the ‘interiorisation’ of notions of culture, people, nation and citizen; where cultural inventions that have protected national rights *and* overcome

internal national divisions, they have also established new divisions and binaries – divisions between those regarded as ‘native’ and rightful citizens of particular territories and those who are considered foreign, and/or racially or culturally stigmatized.

Postcolonial and race theorists mark the deep internal contradictions of ‘race’ where bonds of ‘racial solidarity’ (Gilroy, 2000) retain and extend their power to both establish privileges and inclusions of certain groups *and* to challenge them. ‘Race’ is used as a vehicle of nation state building *and* decolonisation. ‘Racialisation’ has inherited the capacity to recirculate bodies into desirable *or* undesirable, ethnic/raced/cultured objects. Quite often this is done in a manner that circumvents the necessity to engage with the specificities of postcolonial histories of racialised and sexualized injustice and injury. As Gilroy (2000) argues, our ability to name, categorise or generalise people into religious category, an ethnic minority, a culturally diverse background, or a black or Asian identity, should not allow us to sidestep or ignore the historical particularities which enable certain differences and exclusionary practices to take on different forms.

Balibar (2005) observes that we commonly reduce racism to notions of difference, otherness and exclusion, and in doing so disengage with their different epistemologies, and thus the different epistemologies of racism(s) where:

- Difference relates to debates about the non-biological grounding of discrimination;
- Otherness to debates about the relationship between race and nation, racism and nationalism, and more generally to the discrimination of us/them, self/others at national and supranational and civilizational levels such that notions of race are unnamed;
- Exclusion is associated with political debates on the status and rights to citizenship, residence, equality and liberties.

The point we would like to make here is that anti-racism as a strategy is not about the reduction of racism to a core typical structure, but quite the reverse. It is about tracking historically situated circumstances which have deeply felt, heart wrenching histories and consequences where our theories and explanations quite frequently elide easy theories and solutions. Without an adequate theorization of racism, reconciliation serves as a poor resource for antiracism.

When understood in relation to difference, otherness and exclusion racism requires analogies or 'intrinsic' correlations with 'other phenomenon such as 'nationalism, imperialism, social or 'biopolitical' exclusions' (Balibar, 2005, p. 21). This means that racism can under different conditions, and in combination with different factors be understood as: a) one among other oppressive social/ideological formations b) an extreme process that is overdetermined by other factors and formations or c) an underlying structural formation:

Or, to put it in other terms by moving from a simple reaction of defense against racism and a critique of its murderous prejudices against specific groups, its denial of certain basic human values, etc., to a more specific understanding of its constitution, the reasons for its astonishing resistance to critique, not to say its permanent existence, we are also joining a zone of indistinctiveness, where we are no longer sure that we are indeed theorizing about racism, and not about other, very general phenomena with a number of historical and sociological illustrations, and finally about certain fundamental characteristics of culture, society, political communities, economic structures, the collective imaginary, etc., of which 'racism' would be a symptom, or whose conflicts and violent outcomes it would reveal (Balibar, 2005, p. 21)

In failing to theorise racism, and its relationship to other factors such as sexism, nationalism and fundamentalism, reconciliation is unable to identify the the points at which racism becomes something else, and thus the range of circumstances which may require reconciling.

As has been long since established in the educational literature on issues of race and racism, the notion of race and whom it is applied to cannot be taken as given nor indeed as stable (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993). In looking at South Africa and Australia we can see that the question of race has been central to nation and that in both countries the contestation has taken distinctive pathways. In terms of reconciliation, race is not unproblematically situated and indeed the conflations and distribution of meanings, along the lines that Balibar elucidates, lead for instance to the necessity to acknowledge, for instance, that in South Africa colonial racisms prior to apartheid remain unproblematised and uninterrogated in its narrow and broad sense of reconciliation. In Australia ignoring how race as either Indigenous or white operates leads its reconciliation process into a complete failure to understand the more

complex colonial project of discrimination, family separation and repatriation and spiritual severance that occurred under white Australia.

Through these erasures and confluences we want to bring postcolonialism to the consideration of reconciliation as anti-racism – all three concepts are tenuous in Australia and in South Africa. In Australia postcolonialism continues to be a concept that is rejected in very strong terms by many Indigenous peoples who may equally argue for the process of reconciliation and perhaps see it as a precondition for any possible discussion or place for postcolonialism in debates about Australia's racial formation. For many, postcolonialism remains, in Australia, a white discourse – a criticism that pays little heed to Australia as a nation of diasporas, including but not exclusively so, the white diasporas of imperial Britain. In South Africa it might be argued that the defeat of the British by the Afrikaans also means that the history of colonisation is less clear cut and that through this the historical migration patterns that occurred through British *and* Dutch Imperialism are obscured (Soudien, 2001). This kind of contestation is critical to understanding the importance of continuing to grapple with the core issues that have figured in the long-standing educational debates about racism and anti-racism (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993). Much of postcolonial education is constructed outside of these debates.

On-going questions must be asked of the past *and* of the present as they bring into play the stability and instability of the relationship between race and racism, racial formations and trajectories. The question must also become one of how these categories and the events and lived actualities shape what is understood by reconciliation and by whom.

Conclusion

Working in and with reconciliation is to work between something that is as robust as it is fragile. Its robustness lies in its rallying points and steadfast commitments to witnessing, remembering injustice amid quests for more just worlds, or at least worlds in which freedoms from vilification and terror remain sacrosanct while they are, in turn, persistently watched over and acted for (Bauman, 2000). The time continues to

be ripe, we would suggest, for critical reflection on state interventions around reconciliation, the effects and aftermaths and the ongoing projects that occur in schools and in public arenas. The public arenas include museums, monuments and the new public spaces of shopping malls and markets designed for the co-mingling of the people, experienced as everyday passing by or special visit and deliberate attention. They also include projects that are ‘grassroots’, study groups that emerge in churches or through popular political movements, as well as the everyday engagements that occur for instance when a travel guide takes the cultural tourist to a place entrusted to the public by local custodians, be they semi-government or private endeavours. There is also the requirement to be vigilant about the ways in which reconciliation projects within schools may collapse an un-interrogated anti-racism and reconciliation into one another, achieving perhaps little more than a gesture towards social justice. And still further there is the need to persistently subject postcolonialism to the kind of scrutiny that it demands of us in our work on racism to resist any progression of thought and analysis that eclipses nuance and the overlapping and competing tensions that comprise histories and subjectivities. Perhaps after Paul Gilroy (1993), we can ask: ‘What will count as reconciliation?’ and likely we must ask, ‘What will count as pedagogy?’ These questions signal the fruitfulness of interrogating the vocabularies that we mobilise and that are mobilised for us and on our behalf through nation building, policy, place, politics, popular political movements and pedagogical givens in anti-racism. This is especially critical as reconciliation is, as Veerle Dieltens (2005) notes, ‘seldom a simple or inconsequential matter’.

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