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Legislation, segregation, and violence in apartheid-era South Africa

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Abstract

The 20th century was a pivotal era in South Africa, deeply affected by capitalist growth and economic interests. The history is characterized by colonization and ongoing segregation, leading to sustained exclusion and denial of rights for indigenous and non-white populations. Existing literature underscores government policies promoting segregation, particularly after the official establishment of apartheid in 1948. The transition to democracy entailed challenges such as rebuilding the economy, reconciling divided ethnic groups, and overhauling institutions. Despite post-apartheid advancements, issues like poverty, inequality, and unemployment remain.

Keywords: South Africa, segregation, apartheid, laws, violence.

Legislación, segregación y violencia en la era del *apartheid* en Sudáfrica

Resumen

El siglo XX marcó un período crucial en Sudáfrica, impactado profundamente por el avance capitalista y los intereses económicos. La historia está marcada por la colonización y la segregación persistente, resultando en una exclusión duradera y la negación de derechos de poblaciones indígenas y no blancas. La literatura existente resalta las políticas gubernamentales que propagaron la segregación, especialmente tras la implementación oficial del *apartheid* en 1948. La transición a la democracia implicó desafíos como reconstruir la economía, reconciliar grupos étnicos divididos y reformar instituciones. A pesar del progreso tras el *apartheid*, persisten desafíos como la pobreza, desigualdad y desempleo.

Palabras clave: Sudáfrica, segregación, apartheid, leyes, violencia.

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1. Introduction

The 20th century bears witness to the profound impact that capitalist progress and economic interests had on South Africa. Shaped by colonization and enduring segregation, the country's history is a long-standing narrative of exclusion and the denial of social and political rights to indigenous peoples or diverse non-white populations. This text specifically discusses the proposals of segregation embedded within the governmental policies implemented in the country throughout the 20th century, particularly following the official establishment of the apartheid regime in 1948. Additionally, we highlight the challenges encountered during the South African transition process towards becoming a democratic nation. These analyses draw upon relevant literature on the subject.

2. The Assumptions of Segregation

The government of the National Party (NP) officially declared racial segregation in South Africa after being elected in 1948. Under the term apartheid ("segregation", "separation", "separate identities and lives" in Afrikaans), one of the most violent and repressive regimes in contemporary world history was instituted, the most restrictive of all legalized racial discrimination systems in recent history (Stone, 2008, p. 17), one that defined constitutional rights based on racial differences and where color formally determined the position of citizens in the social hierarchy (Jonge, 1991, p. 9)[1].

The implementation of apartheid officially solidified long-standing assumptions of inequality, as the core laws and regulations of the regime had been shaped as early as the 1910s and 1920s (Cell, 1982). Therefore, apartheid formalized the racial divisions that were already deeply ingrained in laws rooted in the colonial legacy of both the Boer and British influences. It was in 1910 that these two groups came together to establish the Union of South Africa[2], laying the groundwork for the emergence of proto-apartheid policies.

According to Stone (2008, p. 17), it can be asserted that the concept of apartheid prevailed since white settlers assumed power in South Africa in the mid-17th century, subjugating the native inhabitants.[3] According to Jonge (1991, p. 15), the formalization of the regime was the result of a long succession of events involving conquest, colonization, and the importation of essentialist ideologies that accompanied the formation of European nation-states and the expansion of imperialism. In South

Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church played an ideological role that was consonant with the Apartheid regime. The church utilized Biblical passages that differentiated people by their origin, tribes, and nations to justify the establishment of racially segregated congregations. Following the victory of the National Party, the Dutch Reformed Church ratified, in its Transvaal Synod of 1948, a document titled "Racial and National Apartheid in the Bible". In this document, it was posited that racial mixing was contrary to God's will. The notion that various races are ordained by creation persisted for an extended period within the doctrine of this church. Although there were dissenting members, churches were founded in alignment with the demarcated boundaries of the regime's policy of "separate development".

There are various interpretations of imperialism, ranging from those that emphasize economic factors to those that consider political and ideological perceptions. The term seems to have been first used in Victorian England around 1870 (Hernandez, 2008, p. 71). In the case of South Africa, as described by Arendt (1976), imperialism seems to have been sustained by two central aspects: race and bureaucracy. Like white gods ruling over black slaves, the early settlers in the region became accustomed to the forced labor of the native population to meet their basic needs.

> Racism, as a ruling device, was used in this society of whites and blacks before imperialism and exploited as a major political idea. Its basis, and its excuse, were still experience itself, a horrifying experience of something alien beyond imagination or comprehension; it was tempting indeed simply to declare that these were not human beings. Since, however, despite all ideological explanations the black men stubbornly insisted on retaining their human features, the "white men" could not but reconsider their own humanity and decide that they themselves were more than human and obviously chosen by God to be the gods of black men. (Arendt, 1976, p. 195)

In the footsteps of colonialism, apartheid escalated discrimination against "coloured populations" and deepened inequalities in access to land and basic survival resources. With the regime in place, racial discrimination encompassed and regulated every facet of human life, from spatial to legal, economic to social, and cultural. A white minority assumed control over the civil rights of the population, dictating freedom of movement, housing, and employment conditions, opportunities for marriage and marital relationships, and determining who was eligible for education, healthcare, and other quality public services. Throughout this process, women were

intersectionally marked by exclusion shaped by their racial, class, and gender circumstances.

The NP remained in power continuously until 1994, composing a parliament consisting only of white members, as all other groups had been disenfranchised in 1948. During this period, there were numerous resistances to the government, but until the 1980s, parliamentary opposition to the regime appeared to be small and ineffective (Waylen, 2004, p. 4). Initially, women's participation in the resistance movements seemed to be limited due to the prevailing ideologies that defined politics as a male domain (Casaburri, 1986, p. 54).

According to Posel (1991), far from constituting a "grand plan", apartheid developed in a fragmented manner, with its policies justified by a system of ideas from the white right, asserting white supremacy and emphasizing the need for "separate development for different races". Thus, the regime was not architectured in a cumulative or systematic manner according to a preexisting singular plan but rather constituted an ideology. On the eve of the 1948 elections, even Afrikaner nationalism itself, known as Afrikanerdom[4], remained divided regarding the substance of apartheid. There were disputes, for example, about the extent to which white economic prosperity should and needed to rely on African labor. Some debates also led to disagreements regarding state control and African urbanization (Posel, 1991, p. 4).

From this perspective, Posel (1991, p. 5) challenges a certain historiography that views apartheid as a singular, grand plan, thereby downplaying its long-term control and planning effects. Furthermore, she argues that apartheid was constructed and established through a series of efforts within and beyond the state, which compelled the architects of state policies to revise many of their original strategies. In this case, uncertainties, conflicts, weaknesses, and deviations were as integral to the regime's development as continuities and triumphs.

Throughout this process, particularly considering that earlier segregationist laws laid the foundation for the 1948 apartheid regime, there appears to have been intellectual alliances[5] or political and ideological alignments between white and black sectors. This can be seen, for instance, with members of the Zulu middle class, who frequently formed connections with conservative and racialist elements of white society. John Langalibale Dube, the founder of the African National Congress (ANC)[6], is a notable example. Especially in the 1930s, Dube[7] seemed to agree with the concept of "separate development" and formed alliances with the more conservative sectors of white society (Marks, 1975, 1977).

Thus, the survival of apartheid was made possible through political alliances and the alignment of state interests with the objectives of certain groups. Afrikaner nationalism, at various points, aligned itself with English ideals, and the state played a much larger role than liberal economies in ensuring white domination by creating repressive structures to suppress opponents and enforce its laws. As demonstrated by Waylen (2004, p. 4), through the regulation of foreign capital and control over domestic migrant labor systems, the state operated with deep racial prejudice and discrimination in terms of public expenditure, such as in the fields of healthcare, education, and support for agriculture. In the economic sector, it particularly prioritized the interests of a segment of the white population, the Afrikaners.

Indeed, the implementation of the apartheid ideal, which gradually solidified in the mid-20th century, represented an exceptionally extreme degree of social exclusion for non-white groups in South Africa compared to the country's own history prior to 1948. As a result, the South African nation was considered exclusively for whites, and non-white groups, particularly those classified as Africans (including local, Indian, and Malay origins), were not regarded as part of it (Rosa Ribeiro, 2002, p. 490). With the regime in place, these populations gradually lost the limited degree of autonomy and negotiation they still possessed in the early 20th century.

3. Legislation and their reverberations during apartheid

There were numerous laws created or expanded upon from 1948 onwards, and, in general, they imposed restrictions on the lives of both white and non-white individuals within South Africa. Among the most well-known are the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, the Pass Laws, the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, the Immorality Amendment Act, and the Bantu Education Act. These and many other legislative acts established norms that, in practice, affected multiple spheres of social life, leading to ongoing resistance from various population groups. Some laws directly involved the territorial reordering of South Africa, considering the progressive confinement of populations divided into racial groups as proposed in the segregation scheme.

The Population Registration Act, enacted in 1950, was used to classify the population into three racial groups: Europeans, Coloureds (mixed-race), and Natives or Africans. From 1960, certain terms or their meanings were replaced, and the classification would then be between Whites (including descendants of Dutch, French, German, and English origins), Coloureds (including a

complex group with seven subcategories, one of them being Asian, also referred to as Indian, which later became a fourth category), and Bantus[8]. Under the law, classification measures took into account a person's appearance and the social acceptance of their skin color. In this division, people of different black origins occupied the lowest rung of the social pyramid. However, individuals could be reclassified multiple times by government departments, as there was a clause allowing for the correction of classification errors made during the initial assessment. The 1951 Census facilitated these corrections, which could be carried out by the Census Director, an official appointed by the Minister of the Interior (Stone, 2008, p. 81)[9].

The Immorality Amendment Act (1950) updated the immorality law (Immorality Act, 1927) and restricted affective-sexual relationships between individuals of different racial groups in an effort to control society's "improper desires". Under the pretext of preventing adultery, the law reinforced the prohibition of interracial sexual relationships, now encompassing not only white and black individuals but also Coloureds and Asians. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) prohibited conjugal unions between individuals of different racial groups. An amendment to this law (Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Amendment - Act 21, 1968) declared marriages between South African citizens and women of different races performed abroad invalid throughout the country.

Based on two main premises, the naturalization of racial and cultural differences and the danger of contact for the maintenance of these differences, the nation of apartheid rejected interracial contact represented in the figure of the coloured person. Thus, a person of mixed "racial" ancestry never constituted the basis of nationality in apartheid thinking, and the concept of segregation was built against miscegenation, seen as entirely harmful to the preservation of distinct racial or ethnic identities (Rosa Ribeiro, 2002, p. 489). Despite control policies, miscegenation in South Africa reached significant proportions, being more significant in terms of percentage than in, for example, the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique (Jonge, 1991, p. 19).

According to Moutinho (2004, p. 83), Geoffrey Cronjé's proposal (an Afrikaner sociologist considered the main architect of apartheid) was to consolidate the system of legal segregation, initiated with the Mixed Marriage Act and Immorality Act, by segregating other spheres of South African social life in order to encompass the entire continent. In this proposal, it would be possible to envision an internationalized European community that was white, Christian, and morally superior. Moutinho (2004, pp. 60-61) highlights that the first apartheid law was precisely the Mixed Marriage Act (1949) and notes the eroticization and threat that the couple consisting of a "black" man and

a "white" woman represented to the segregationist state, whose policy sought to regulate and prevent such unions. This process began to take shape more substantially ten years earlier, during the 1938 elections, when the electorate was mobilized by the image of the "white" woman.

Indeed, during the regime, most interracial sexual relationships involved white men and black or mixed-race women who served them and were legally subordinate to them. There were few white women who publicly declared having ongoing relationships with black men, but there were certainly many who had occasional encounters of that nature. In many situations of coercion, sexual encounters could occur due to the unequal distribution of power that white men held over women from other racial groups. Even the laws prohibiting such relationships condemned and punished men and women unequally (Stone, 2008, p.73), highlighting yet another aspect of the gender inequalities inherent in the system.

Before the formalization of apartheid, racial distinctions in South Africa were primarily limited to whites and non-whites. However, with the introduction of the term "coloured" as a racial classification, a new reality emerged. Previously, anyone who did not have official white status was categorized as black, regardless of their genetic background or skin color. After 1948, South Africa became a complex mixture of ancestry and physical appearance. Consequently, if someone's phenotype indicated a previously unknown heritage, suspicions about their past would arise.[10] As a response, a new amendment to the population registration law in the mid-1960s shifted the focus from appearance to ancestral lineage, emphasizing the importance of ancestry over physical features (Stone, 2008, p. 32).

During the apartheid regime, there was a conservative view of gender relations that naturalized white women as mothers, while promoting the separation of black mothers from their children. As a result, women were affected differently, subject to specific legal arrangements based on their "race". Black women were subject to customary laws that technically denied them adult status and prevented them, for example, from owning or inheriting property, obtaining credit for agriculture, and retaining rights over children in black communities, which remained with men. Black women and men were also subjected to different regimes within the migrant labor system, and restrictions on mobility were imposed on the non-white majority. White women were subject only to the South African legal system, which discriminated against them compared to white men, for example, in terms of property and tax legislation, but gave them significant legal benefits over other women, such as the right to vote. Although white women were assigned a passive role in social relations, the majority of them supported the regime (Waylen, 2004, pp. 4-5).

The concept of "migrant labor" as understood by employers was ambiguous and typically divided into two categories of workers: the so-called "raw labor", newly arrived or directly recruited from rural areas, and migrants who permanently settled in rural areas, regardless of the number of years they had worked in cities (Posel, 1991). In practice, there was a policy prioritizing whites for urban jobs and an entire bureaucratic apparatus capable of excluding non-white populations and controlling the distribution of black workers in various urban industries (Pereira, 2011, p. 126).

The Natives Amendment Act of 1952 reinforced the well-known Pass Laws, which required black individuals to carry an identification booklet. Until 1985, only this group was required to carry the document, called a pass, which contained all the individual's basic information, such as their life history, travel records, and work permits. Being caught without the pass was considered an offense punishable by fines or imprisonment. The enforcement of this law sparked a series of reactions from workers who argued that they were not slaves to have their movement controlled (Dubow, 2014, p. 79)[11]. Many women took to the streets and participated in mobilizations against the pass laws (Barbosa, 2022).

The need for labor led employers to recruit black workers, and thousands of them migrated to the gold mines in the Witwatersrand. Other individuals, who were poor, landless, and without means to practice subsistence farming, were compelled to seek paid employment on white-owned farms. To attract workers, employers often concealed the true living and working conditions, as well as the wages. The mining sector prioritized the recruitment of workers from neighboring British colonies and Mozambique, which was then a colony of Portugal. Once at the mine, the worker was kept there for extended periods, housed in accommodation complexes, and separated from their family, sometimes even without permission for family visits[12].

The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, enacted in 1953, enforced obligatory segregation in all public services, such as buildings and transportation, to prevent contact between whites and other racial groups. Signs indicating service and space usage became common, with phrases like "Net blankes" (Whites Only) or "Europeans Only" on one side, and "Slegs vir nie Blankes" (Non-Europeans Only) on the other. This law also regulated the separation of racial groups in recreational spaces and environments, such as sports facilities, beaches, transportation, swimming pools, libraries, bathrooms, cinemas, and public gardens. Although the law was only repealed in the early 1990s, segregation persisted in small towns in

the Orange Free State and Transvaal, which were conservatively controlled by Afrikaners (Dubow, 2014).

Religious influence also had an impact on the educational policies of the regime. Christian National Education, for example, influenced by Calvinism and orthodox nationalism, was designed for white children and aimed to instill the "Christian values of Apartheid", including the idea of white supremacy. Similarly, various measures were employed to restrict the education of other racial groups as part of the same process. The Bantu Education Act (1953), considering blacks as intellectually inferior, aimed to prevent their access to important positions in society. In the same vein, the Coloured Persons' Education Act (1963) and the Indian Education Act (1965) consolidated inadequate education for coloureds and Indians, respectively. Moreover, the government spent ten times more on the education of whites than on blacks (Stone, 2008, p. 58)[13].

In general, apartheid policies towards the coloured population, primarily concentrated in the Cape Province, were highly ambivalent. They primarily served as a mechanism to silence the "coloureds", granting them small privileges in order to prevent this group from politically aligning with the black majority. Therefore, although they were subject to forced removals and received inferior education, they were not required to carry passes and faced fewer job restrictions compared to blacks. Additionally, they had the right to vote in the Cape Province, albeit only for white representatives (Stone, 2008, p. 101)[14].

In addition to the Population Registration Act, the Group Areas Act (1950)[15] was one of the most significant laws for the establishment of inequalities in South Africa, particularly concerning access to land and spatial restrictions on certain population groups. Directly linked to what became known as "grand apartheid", this legislation played a central role in the dynamics of the regime by enforcing spatial separation of racial groups, displacing populations from previously occupied territories, and compelling them to reside in areas designated by the government (Bleazard, 2004, p. 4). Blacks and coloured individuals were required to live in designated ethnic neighborhoods (Bantustans or homelands), which were characterized by their status of "independence" from other territories. This arrangement implied that each black person would become a citizen of their respective Bantustan due to their ethnic ties to it (Hull, 2017, p. 47; Mann, 2000, p. 1). Although lacking true autonomy, these areas were considered independent countries inhabited by groups that, according to the logic of segregation, were far from being recognized as part of the South African nation (Rosa Ribeiro, 2002, p. 490)[16].

The argument put forth by the leaders of apartheid was based on the reinforcement of each person's specific identity. Government propaganda claimed that "separate development" was founded on the recognition of cultural diversity, not only among whites (whom they considered one of the "tribes" in South Africa) but also among blacks. This is why different Bantustans were created for blacks based on their origins. The regime's policy maintained that mixing and coexistence of different cultures would be detrimental to all, thus advocating for ethnically distinct education for different human groups.

Prior to this, the Natives Urban Areas Act (1923) had already laid the groundwork for residential segregation in cities by restricting the settlement of blacks in urban spaces considered white enclaves. The most they could access were townships, peripheral black areas surrounding urban centers, intended to accommodate urban labor. Under apartheid, in 1952, the Natives Laws Amendment Act further defined the category of blacks who could permanently reside in cities, limiting this right to those born in the city and who had lived or worked there for at least fifteen years, or to those who had worked continuously for the same employer for a minimum of ten years (Jonge, 1991, p. 40).

The segregation of residential areas and public places and services became known as "petty apartheid", in contrast to total segregation or "grand apartheid", which aimed to create an exclusively white South Africa by expelling blacks from government-designated areas of interest. Within the regime, the quantity of land became progressively insufficient for the population, and in many cases, women had to assume the role of administrators of the few resources available to their families in the Bantustans (Bleazard, 2004, p. 2), coping with land and housing shortages and the disintegration of their families.

Thus, one can also consider the existence of a "sexual apartheid" that compounded racial apartheid in South Africa. In general, "women typically remained in rural areas where they practiced subsistence farming", while "their husbands traveled thousands of kilometers to find wage labor". This situation gave rise to the formation of a migrant male proletariat and a sedentary female peasant category (Mazrui, 2010, p. 1112). According to Mazrui (2010, pp. 1103-1104), in the 1950s, a division between men and women in terms of production became increasingly common. Men comprised a male proletarian workforce in factories, while women made up the peasant population. This situation of urban labor was regulated by influx control legislation, which made it nearly impossible for rural women

to join their partners in cities or find employment in urban areas. As a result, rural women often became dependent on money sent from the city by their husbands and relatives, with farm labor on white-owned farms being the least well-paid and least secure option in this context.

The National Party assumed power at a time when numerous urban areas had a surplus of African labor, while white farmers voiced concerns over labor shortages in rural areas and faced competition from industry and commerce in the open labor market, leading to increased agricultural costs due to the necessity of offering competitive wages. Consequently, the state viewed influx control as a means to regulate the uneven distribution of labor between urban and rural regions, addressing the aforementioned disparities (Posel, 1991, pp. 7-8)[17].

When discussing the effects of this mobility on urban areas, it is crucial to revisit the changes that were already taking place in rural areas of South Africa even prior to 1948. As a result of earlier processes, the Natives Land Act (1913) solidified the exclusive separation and divide between settlers and natives by reserving 87 % of South African territory for the exclusive use of whites, prohibiting blacks from owning property there and allocating only 13 % of the land for over 85 % of the population, comprising blacks and mixed-race individuals (Bell & Ntsebeza, 2001, p. 26).

The primary aim of the Natives Land Act, within the segregationalist control of the Union of South Africa, was to reinforce white control over land and compel the "natives" into wage labor. According to the terms of the law, anyone, man or woman, who was a member of an "aboriginal race" or "tribe of Africa" was considered a native (South Africa, 1913, p.10).

Consequently, while the law increased the political power of whites by giving weight to the votes of rural areas, where Afrikaners still constituted the majority (Le Roux, 2005, pp. 236-237), it systematically reinforced the domination of black populations who relied on land for their agriculture. Without land, the majority of local blacks were forced to accept wage labor on white-owned farms, migrate to urban centers in search of employment, particularly in factories, or work in mines. Meanwhile, those living in the few reserved lands soon faced problems such as soil depletion due to high population density and limited space for agricultural production. As a result, the rural black population tended to become even poorer and further marginalized.

The Native Trust and Land Act (1936) also had profound impacts on rural areas, serving as a regulatory element in the country's agrarian structures. Renamed the Bantu Trust and Land Act during apartheid, it

formalized and expanded the reservation policy established by the Natives Land Act of 1913, prohibiting natives from owning or purchasing land outside of government-planned reserves. The law also imposed new forms of control over Africans living on white-owned land (Surplus People Project, 1983, p. 31).

Based on this law, the "Bantus" were only allowed to remain on lands designated for white farmers as farm workers and tenants. Thus, the law rendered blacks illegal occupants of appropriated lands and prohibited them from continuing to acquire land. As a result, lands purchased before 1936 could be retained by blacks as long as they were located in planned homeland territories. If their lands were situated within white-owned properties, they were considered black spots, and Africans were forced to leave. These black spots were seen as "black blemishes" to be eliminated.

The reservation program, embodied in the policy of homelands, was essentially based on the principle of "divide and rule". Its aim was to balkanize African nationalism and to gradually consolidate white supremacy, thus reviving and exacerbating ethnic rivalries already potent in South Africa. Thus, the alleged illegal occupation of land, conflicts over tenancy, rural tensions, housing shortages, and other problems were regulated by the state through the forced repatriation of individuals to their homelands (Chanaiwa, 2010, p. 307).

Within the official documentation of the apartheid regime, the terminology commonly employed by the government to denote policies of forced removal and expulsion of local black communities from specific lands varied, encompassing terms such as "removal", "elimination", or "replacement" of perceived "black blemishes" within agricultural and industrial areas of the country. These policies were underpinned by legally codified practices that engendered social exclusion across multiple dimensions. The establishment of the South African Development Trust (SADT)[18] under the 1936 Land Act served the purpose of documenting reserve territories throughout the country and acquiring land for the resettlement of displaced black populations. As the custodian of African reserve areas, the SADT implemented a trust tenure system[19] on land previously owned by whites, which had been acquired by the state for the purpose of establishing designated areas for "native" habitation. Simultaneously, governmental pressures to sell certain lands compelled many black individuals to leave their families and communities in pursuit of employment opportunities.

Over time, South Africa became characterized by the stark contrast

between the homelands and townships, where controlled migratory patterns were enforced, and the industrial cities, mines, and white agricultural regions. By the 1960s, the aspirations of the state's social engineering program were materialized, resulting in the denial of citizenship for the majority of South Africans and the forced removal of over three and a half million individuals from the so-called "white areas" of the country, subsequently relegating them to ethnically defined homelands (Posel, 1991).

Notwithstanding resistance efforts, opposing forced removals proved arduous for affected communities, as their actions were circumscribed by the Natives (Prohibition of Interdicts) Act (1956), which effectively curtailed the right of black individuals to seek legal recourse against potential evictions. According to this legislation, individuals classified as "natives", within the context of being members of "aboriginal races" or "African tribes", were subject to common law and devoid of the ability to challenge decisions pertaining to "vacating, leaving or withdrawing, being expelled or removed, not returning, not being or not entering any specific location or area". Noncompliance with such decisions also exposed individuals to the risk of detention (South Africa, 1956).

In the 1960s, the nationalist regime appeared to be ideologically stronger and more cohesive than its predecessors, and its political decisions were implemented with profound determination and a certain fanatical zeal. Undoubtedly, certain characteristics of the regime were systematically pursued from 1948 until the late 1970s, such as the prohibition of interracial sex and marriage. While it may be inappropriate to attribute a grand plan to define it, it must be acknowledged that there was some method to the madness of apartheid (Posel, 1991, pp. 4-5)[20].

During the 1960s, despite the persistence of apartheid policies, the regime experienced a significant transformation that marked a discreet second phase. This phase was characterized by realignments within Afrikaner nationalism, particularly within the Department of Bantu Administration and Development (BAD), which served as the forefront of the regime's political decision-making. Under new leadership, the BAD departed from certain premises and objectives that had guided its policies in the 1950s, aiming to rectify past mistakes. Among the recurring debates was the contentious issue of white dependency on African labor, and once again, questions surrounding African economic integration and urbanization took center stage, fueling disagreements among policymakers (Posel, 1991, p. 6).

During the 1970s and 1980s, an increasing number of black women turned to agricultural wage labor as an alternative means of employment.

However, their engagement in this sector predominantly took the form of irregular or occasional farm work. Nevertheless, the agricultural labor sector experienced contraction as mechanization advanced, reducing the demand for manual labor (Casaburri, 1986, p. 48).

As a capitalist state driven by the pursuit of accumulation, the apartheid regime was fundamentally concerned with safeguarding and preserving its established norms. It recognized that nurturing a stable and prosperous economy was essential for maintaining its power. Consequently, the regime relied on force as a means of self-legitimization, even at the expense of the well-being of the majority population (Posel, 1991, pp. 21-22).

Dividing the trajectory of the regime into three distinct stages, Waylen (2004, p. 7) argues that its collapse began in the 1980s. Faced with ongoing structural crises and mounting opposition, the government implemented a program of "conservative modernization". This program encompassed labor market reforms and revisions to pass laws, aimed at creating a stable urban workforce. Additionally, limited political reforms were introduced, granting coloured and Indian communities partial decision-making powers through a tricameral parliament, while local African representation in urban areas was also established. However, these initiatives failed to achieve the desired outcomes, as African urbanization continued to surge, accompanied by intensified opposition to the regime, both domestically and internationally.

Due to mounting pressure, the government abolished the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the Pass Laws in the 1980s. However, it simultaneously enacted the National Security Act (1982) as a means to contain insurgent movements against the regime, allowing for the indefinite detention without trial of individuals suspected of "threatening public order". The catalyst for the enactment of this latter law was the riots that erupted in various districts of South Africa following the police killing of a thirteen-year-old black boy during a peaceful protest by youth in Soweto in 1976 (Stone, 2008). The Soweto Uprising became one of the most renowned protests against apartheid. Led by young people who opposed, among other grievances, the discriminatory educational policies that imposed fees on black students while providing free education to whites, and mandated the teaching of Afrikaans in the curriculum, the protest was met with brutal police repression and resulted in a high number of casualties. The incident gained international attention, and as a result, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) designated the date as the Day of the African Child in 1991.

Casaburri (1986, p. 56) argued that the Soweto uprising cut across

social classes and groupings, transforming the participant's perceptions regarding the unity of the political struggle and how alliances should be formed. Among the oppressed groups, students built bridges that transcended racial categorizations. Women, on the other hand, became heavily involved in protecting their children and advocating for the fulfillment of their familial reproductive responsibilities. According to the author, what may have been perceived as "weakness" was translated into "relative strength" as women sought alliances and support, both material and emotional, that extended beyond their social classes, ethnicities, and "races".

Repression persisted throughout the 1960s to the 1980s. Following the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and the country's withdrawal from the Commonwealth, the National Party dedicated itself to reinforcing segregation and transforming South Africa into a veritable police state, enacting new repressive and racist laws. In May 1963, the General Law Amendment Act authorized the police to detain "agitators" for 90 days, with the possibility of renewal. In 1968, the Prohibition of Political Interference Act prohibited the activities of multiracial political parties (Chanaiwa, 2010, p. 326).

The period of political transition was marked by violence and conflicts, not only against apartheid but also within the black political parties, which often served the interests of the regime. In the 1980s, the ANC, dominated by the Xhosa, clashed with the Inkatha Party, led by the Zulus. These disputes were instigated by the government, which, through the police, provided funding to Inkatha members to incite discord. A covert war was waged against the regime's opponents, facilitated by the security services, particularly the secretive "Special Branch", which recruited spies in districts to foment violence among black organizations and was directly responsible for thousands of deaths, a fact the government denied (Stone, 2008, p. 231). Reports emerged of vigilante groups affiliated with Inkatha invading schoolyards and classrooms, seeking out "comrades" and subjecting them to public abduction or execution (Bonnin, 2000, p. 307).

Based on Meintjes (2005, p. 86), during the 1980s and 1990s, Inkhata's political opponents were categorized by the party in terms of ethnicity and essence. Embracing an ethos of ethnic essentialism, Inkhata drew a connection between the Xhosas and the ANC. However, the party's leader, Gatsha Buthelezi, and King Goodwill Zwelethini targeted Zulus who rejected Inkhata, deeming them traitors and witches. As tensions escalated from the interior of KwaZulu-Natal to Witwatersrand, particularly between migrant single men's hostels (IFP strongholds) and informal settlements

(ANC strongholds), the heart of Johannesburg became a volatile breeding ground for violence between 1991 and 1993. During this time, the IFP formally emerged as a significant voice at the negotiation table.

Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a psychology professor at the University of Cape Town) concluded that...

> Killing opponents of apartheid became South Africa's dirty little family secret, something that everyone saw but no one could openly talk about for fear of the house of cards called apartheid collapsing. There were two South Africas: the white and the black. There was also the public and the private world, the declared and the secret, and they were rigidly separated. What happened under the cover of clandestine actions was deemed acceptable as long as no one found out. The two spheres were not supposed to collide. White observers in South Africa were able to coexist with the brutality against blacks because it was being carried out within a relative secret, in that "other" world. Everyone was involved in a "mental apartheid", a psychological division. (Stone, 2008, p. 232)

As Cabanillas (2016, p. 21) points out, the period known as the transition from apartheid to democracy (1990-1994) was a particularly delicate time in South African history. Despite the beginning of negotiations for democracy, conflicts and violence continued to persist. African individuals were the majority of the victims, and in regions such as the land of the Zulus, the situation escalated to the point of resembling a civil war. In order to promote national reconciliation, two key processes were undertaken: the organization of the Interim Constitution, which began in 1993 and eventually led to the final drafting of the Constitution in 1996, and the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1996-2001).

However, Grossman (2000) provides a critical perspective on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's approach in South Africa. He argues that the Commission focused primarily on recounting the experiences of individuals during apartheid from the perspective of victimization, neglecting the opportunity to construct a memory of resistance. This approach, according to Grossman, left younger generations feeling frustrated, as they were interested in commemorating a past marked by struggles and achievements.

4. A mode of conclusion

It is evident that multiple processes marked South Africa throughout

the apartheid era. The forms of exclusion triggered by the regime gave rise to numerous resistances and opposing initiatives, ranging from civil society's engagement in public acts and protests to more planned actions by workers, students, artistic and cultural movements, and political parties. Men and women from various categories played significant roles in this process, mobilizing in diverse ways, leading to the organization of social and political movements with broader implications.

The regime left a legacy of pain, fear, revolt, and an almost impossible coexistence among the racially defined groups in the country, as well as tensions in gender relations due to inequalities. The anger and extremism generated by apartheid further exacerbated the conflict between generations, between the younger and older generations. The scarcity of land, resources, and essential services for the majority of the population, along with the lack of dignified means of survival, also deepened the inequalities in the country. These circumstances continue to leave their marks on the current reality of many South African groups, notably the Black population, who remain excluded from access to public policies and fundamental rights.

Notas

1 In the general elections of South Africa that year, the United Party, led by Smuts, and the National Party, led by Daniel Malan, faced off. The political atmosphere was preoccupied with economic issues, the "black peril", and pro-political dominance sentiments. Malan and his party ultimately won the elections, subsequently establishing apartheid and republicanism (Chanaiwa, 2010, p. 304).

2 Apartheid originated after the bloody Anglo-Boer War (1889-1902), which was fueled by disputes over mineral resources in the Transvaal region and was eventually won by the British after difficult struggles. It represented the union of the British colonies of Cape and Natal with the Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange, forming one of the dominions within the British Empire (Commonwealth) until 1960 when the Republic of South Africa was proclaimed (Jonge, 1991, p. 37). The Union of South Africa was formally administered by the British Crown, represented by a Governor-General, with a predominantly white Parliament. Louis Botha is recognized as its first Prime Minister. According to Stone (2008, p. 99), the Afrikaners allegedly agreed to the formation of this Union only if the English accepted racial segregation as national policy. Ultimately, they both agreed to leave the question of African rights to be decided by a future, white-led government (Le Roux, 2005, p. 236).

3 In the 17th century, the European colonization of southern Africa began with the Dutch and was further deepened by the British in the 18th century. It

quickly solidified in the early 19th century, expanding inland and triggering intense conflicts over land, natural resources, cattle, and labor (Le Roux, 2005, p. 236). In 1652, the first Dutch settlers arrived at the Cape of Good Hope through the Dutch East India Company, which encouraged them to engage in trade and agriculture. As the trekboers (nomadic farmers) moved eastward into the territory of present-day South Africa, they encountered and confronted African pastoralist populations, such as the Zulus, from the early 18th century onwards (M'Bokolo, 2011, p. 297). As a result of colonization, the territory received Dutch, French, and German settlers, as well as enslaved populations of Asian and African descent from other regions, brought in by the colonizers.

4 M'Bokolo (2011, p. 300) suggests that the consolidation of an Afrikaner identity took place in the 1830s, with the gradual replacement of the term "boer", which had social connotations but lacked ethnic and racial references, by "africander" (afrikander, later spelled afrikaner). This identity formation among the Boers was reinforced in the face of British influence in the region. As Ribeiro and Visentini (2010, pp. 29-32) state the Boers, moving inland with their wagons and livestock, cease to be Europeans and come to consider themselves "Africans", that is, they consider Africa their land. Thus, Afrikaner nationalism emerged, seeking to free itself from British authority in the Cape Colony and discontented with the English-imposed racial equality law of 1828 and the abolition of slavery in 1833.

5 Devés-Valdés (2008, p. 105) highlights that, despite the repression of apartheid, there was a significant circulation of ideas and thoughts among different ethnic groups - black, coloured, Asian, and white - in South Africa, likely because intellectual production was more intense there than in other parts of Africa.

6 Established in 1912 as the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), it was renamed the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923. The ANC was banned by the South African government in 1960 following the Sharpeville Massacre, in which 69 unarmed protesters were shot and killed by the police. It operated underground until it was unbanned in 1990. The ANC had a military wing called Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), which was created in 1961 and led by Nelson Mandela. After the 1994 elections, the ANC became the ruling party in South Africa (Mandela, 2010, p. 396).

7 As the founding president of the SANNC (now ANC), he was an educator, editor, and writer. According to Devés-Valdés (2008, p. 73), he had a close acquaintance with the principles of Gandhi and published his ideas through the African People Organization (APO) newspaper. He founded the Ohlange Zulu Christian Industrial School and established the Ilanga lase Natal, the first Zulu/English newspaper (Mandela, 2010, p. 397).

8 While definitions of black South Africans or Africans are often encountered, the use of "Bantu" became widespread among apartheid bureaucrats to include a larger number of individuals than the term "black", as the latter specifically

referred to skin color. In South Africa, many of those classified as "Bantus" had skin color that could be mistaken for "coloured" individuals.

9 Every year, hundreds of people would request the Government to reclassify their racial status, hoping for a lighter classification (Jonge, 1991, p. 10). While the Racial Classification Appeal Courts could be approached by white individuals seeking reclassification to marry someone from a different racial group, or by mixed-race individuals who wanted to be classified as black to continue their businesses in black communities, most cases involved coloured individuals "trying to become white" or black individuals hoping to be classified as coloured. In these courts, judges would assess a person's appearance using a range of pseudo-scientific tests before hearing the witnesses' testimony. They would measure and analyze nose width and flattening, examine facial bones, apply the pencil test to determine hair texture and curl pattern, and even consult a hairdresser to aid in their determination. Other tests were used to determine black or mixed-race status, such as examining nail color (blacks were believed to have pinker cuticles than mixed-race individuals), pinching ear lobes (blacks were said to have softer ear lobes), and evaluating eyelids (as blacks were believed to have more contrasting eyelids compared to whites and mixed-race individuals). Men even underwent the "scrotum test" to assess the whiteness of their testicles, and for babies, there was the "blue butt test". While decisions made by the appellate court could be challenged in the judicial system, only a few could afford the expenses of such legal proceedings (Stone, 2008).

10 That was exactly the case for Sandra Laing, who underwent racial reclassification three times during the apartheid era. Born in 1955, she was the daughter of white parents affiliated with the Dutch Reformed Church and had a brother named Leon. As a young girl, she began to be considered non-white by her peers and school staff, which gradually changed the course of her family's life and Sandra's own relationship with them. The dramatic story of Sandra's life was recounted in the book "When She Was White: The True Story of a Family Divided by Race" by Stone (2007) and inspired the film "Skin", directed by Anthony Fabian and released in 2019. In the film, Sandra's intriguing case, where she came to be seen as mixed-race, even raising suspicions about her mother's fidelity, is portrayed as a genetic case of atavism.

11 Passes were used to restrict the movement of non-European South Africans more intensely from the 19th century onwards, and it became a common practice for owners and local authorities to control the movement of enslaved individuals. There are records indicating that in the Cape, slaves were forced to carry passes as early as 1709, as they performed various tasks including stockpiling and loading ships for the Dutch East India Company. In the Transvaal or South African Republic, pass laws were aimed at forcing blacks to settle in specific areas to provide white farmers with a steady labor force. With the discovery of diamonds in this region and the subsequent mining boom from the 1870s,

the use of local labor became crucial, and all workers had to be registered, but it was only the black population that was required to carry passes.

12 It is known that white workers were allowed to relocate with their families to housing in the greater Johannesburg area. Thus, the workplace was one of the central spheres where discrimination was exercised. For instance, under the Mines and Works Act of 1911, certain skilled positions were reserved for white workers. In the same year, the Native Land Regulation Act legalized the provision that black workers injured in industrial accidents would receive less compensation than their white counterparts and could also face criminal liability for strikes or any violation of their employment contracts.

13 Macmillan's article (1967), published during the apartheid era, helps us understand that the emergence of this educational model, born in response to Anglicization in the first half of the 19th century in the Cape Province, aimed to provide an education inspired by the Reformed Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. There was a "Christian" and "national" principle in this approach, which was part of the Afrikaner effort to establish a pre-1948 political, economic, and social identity.

14 Africans and Coloureds had a shared language, Afrikaans, and while there were some Muslims among them, the majority belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, which was established as a separate branch to prevent white and mixed-race individuals from worshipping together.

15 As a result of this, the Group Areas Development Act was enacted in 1955, which provided for the control of the disposal and acquisition of immovable property in designated group areas and other areas defined by the Group Areas Act, as well as the proper development of each area, with the purpose of establishing a council and defining its functions.

16 These processes were interconnected with a series of other laws and legal codes, such as the Bantu Authorities Act (1951), which reinforced the establishment of black homelands and local authorities, aiming to expand self-government in these areas. The Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act (1959), while revoking the right of Africans to have representation in the South African Parliament, advocated for their political voice to be heard and practiced within the homelands. The Urban Bantu Councils Act (1961) created black councils linked to the authorities responsible for the homelands, and the Bantu Homelands Citizens Act (1970) stripped black individuals of their South African citizenship, compelling them to become citizens of the designated homelands, regardless of their ties or sense of belonging to those areas.

17 This type of project was not entirely new. Before 1948, successive governments had attempted, unsuccessfully, to use influx control measures to contain the migration of farm workers to the cities. However, the nationalist government succeeded in making influx control more systematic and extensive than any of its predecessors (Posel, 1991).

18 It was initially named the South African Native Trust (SANT), then became the South African Bantu Trust (SABT) before finally being called the SADT.

19 The land use system under trusteeship/administration entailed transferring a title of possession to an administrator (typically an African chief), while the State retained ownership rights, including the freedom to initiate development projects, lease, or sell the land. As a result, in the end, the land did not truly belong to the black populations.

20 Hendrik Verwoerd was a notable and powerful actor in this process. He strongly believed in the power of mass communication and that societal values could be shaped (Bell & Ntsebeza, 2001, p. 37). Born in Amsterdam in 1901 and assassinated in Cape Town in 1966, he played a significant role in rebuilding the National Party in the Transvaal in 1937. In 1948, he became the party's representative in the Senate and in 1958, the Prime Minister. He is considered one of the key architects of apartheid, and his name is notoriously associated with the regime's most rigorous and violent repressive policies. Verwoerd was killed by Dimitry Tsafendas, a man born in Lourenço Marques (now Maputo), the son of a Greek father and a mixed-race Mozambican mother, who was a member of the South African Communist Party (SACP).

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