THE DIALECTIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

JAKE SCOBHEY-THAL
CHAPTER ONE: DOMINATION

AT ONE POINT IN THE LIFE OF THE GENUS MAN, LIFE WAS ORGANIZED BY DOMINATION (MARCUSE 60)
In 1949, the National Party, a conservative Afrikaaner political organization, won the majority of seats in South African Parliament. Led by Prime Minister D.F. Malan, the new government formalized and expanded upon existing policies and practices that institutionalized segregation and white domination in South Africa. This regime was known as Apartheid. (Wilder, lecture)
"I have been here for five months and my most vibrant memory is still that first flight."

"Descending below cloud cover, the first thing you see is Table Mountain."

"The peak is named for the way clouds roll over the level plateau like a table cloth."
Immediately after taking office, the Malan government passed sweeping legislation which sought to classify and segregate racial groups. (Wilder, lecture)

The Population Registration Act formalized racial classification. The legislation defined three dominant racial groups: white, black, and coloured (mixed). The scope of one's civil and political rights was determined by which group an individual claimed membership. (Wilder, lecture)

In 1953, the apartheid government passed the Separate Amenities Act. This piece of legislation legally enforced the segregation of public facilities. (Wilder, lecture)
Black Africans could not swim at the same beaches as whites. (Wilder, lecture)

Nor share bathroom facilities. (Wilder, lecture)

The Apartheid regime passed a series of laws geographically segregating the races. The Group Areas Act of 1950 assigned racial groups different residential and business sectors in urban areas. The Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 established the 10 different homeland reserves for black Africans. Pillars of the Apartheid regime, these pieces of legislation were critical in establishing a separate and grossly unequal black and white South Africa. (Wilder, lecture)
I lived in a suburb called Mobray. Very few people actually live in Cape Town—the city itself is comprised primarily of the financial and commercial districts. The metropolitan area though, is huge, with residential neighborhoods extending throughout the Cape.

The Group Areas Act and the Bantu Authorities Act legally justified the relocation of millions of black africans and coloureds in the 60's, 70's and 80's. The groups were isolated into the most decrpit and inhospitable slums. (Wilder, lecture)

"While segregation is no longer legally enforced, most of these neighborhoods retain the racial and socioeconomic homogeneity produced by apartheid era legislation."
The Apartheid government established an institutionalized racial hierarchy. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, the ruling minority enjoyed the pleasures of the "white Africa," while systematically denying individuals of color, social, political, and economic freedoms. (Wilder, lecture)
CHAPTER TWO: REVOLUTION

EVERY REVOLUTION HAS ALSO BEEN A BETRAYED REVOLUTION
(MARCUSE 91)
"THE ROUTE, WHICH WINDS THROUGH DOWNTOWN CAPE TOWN AND CAMPS BAY, AS WELL AS AROUND KHAYELITSHA, SPANS THE TWO EXTREMES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL LANDSCAPE."

Developed through centuries of Dutch and British colonial rule, the seeds of the resistance movement were sewn long before the Malan government took office. (Wilder, lecture)

"CAPE TOWN IS A WEALTHY CITY. LINING THE COVE JUST SOUTH OF THE CITY, CAMPS BAY IS ITS MOST AFFLUENT SUBURB."

"THE AIRPORT IS 20 MILES OUTSIDE OF THE CITY."
The ANC, which would become the dominant force in the resistance movement was first established in 1912. (Wilder, lecture)

"The only black faces you see in Camps Bay are the service staff and the homeless who panhandle on the beach."

After the election of 1948, and under the new leadership of Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo, and Nelson Mandela the ANC adopted a more radical approach. (Wilder, lecture)

"Khayelitsha is the largest township in Cape Town."
"Huts made of plywood and corrugated metal span for miles on the dust-laden plateau that runs alongside the highway."

"Women wander the gully next to the road, searching for discarded recyclables."

The organization coordinated boycotts, strikes, and other displays of civil disobedience, protesting the suppression of the apartheid regime. (Wilder, lecture)

"The only white faces you see in Khayelitsha are the NGO volunteers and the tourists on "township walks"."

The Sharpeville massacre occurred on March 21, 1960. (Wilder, lecture)
The Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) was another major party in the resistance movement and an early rival of the ANC as they fought for membership. (Wilder, lecture)

PAC organized an anti-passbook demonstration in Sharpeville, a small township in the Transvaal. (Wilder, lecture)

On March 21, 1960, 6,000 people marched to the Sharpville police station and offered themselves up for arrest. (Wilder, lecture)

The police opened fire on the reportedly peaceful crowd, killing 69 and injuring over 1,000. (Wilder, lecture)
"The segregated student housing culture at UCT optimized this stratified social landscape."

"The white students live in lofts, while the black students live in the dorms."

"I lived in dorms. Besides the 21 American students there was not a single white resident."
I lived with 2 black Africans, Tshepo was from Durban and Sebu was from Soweto.

"Soweto, the largest township in Africa, is the product of the largest relocation effort of the apartheid era--the forced removal of Sophiatown."

In 1974, the apartheid government passed the Afrikaans Medium Decree. (Wilder, lecture)

"Sebu was my favorite roommate."
The decree forced township schools to teach, half in English and the other half in Afrikaans. (Wilder, lecture)

"Sebu often told me stories about Soweto—about the food, about the girls."

"He spoke 10 languages, including English and Afrikaans."

On June 16th, 1976, thousands of black students marched in Soweto, protesting the decree. (Wilder, lecture)
The peaceful protest intensified when students were stopped by a police barricade. (Wilder, lecture)

Violence broke out when a few students started throwing rocks at the police, and the police fired back into the crowd. (Wilder, lecture)

Riots erupted across Soweto, and continued into the night. (Wilder, lecture)

23 people were killed on that first day, over a 1000 were injured. (Wilder, lecture)
The Soweto uprising was a turning point in the resistance movement. The tragedy catalyzed a more sustained, militant, and aggressive resistance. (Wilder, lecture)

"Throughout the semester I volunteered at a children's center in Khayelitsha, called Baphumelele."
"Bhapumele was founded by Rosie Mashale. Disturbed by the number of young children wading through rubbish piles, Rosie brought them into her home."

The MK, the military wing of ANC, recruited more and more members. (Wilder, lecture)

"Functioning as an orphanage for abandoned children in Khayelitsha, the center also provides a preschool, a community kitchen, and HIV care center."

The MK coordinated numerous bombings of military, industrial, and civil infrastructure sites. (Wilder, lecture)
Political violence continued to increase throughout the late 1970's and early 1980's. In 1985, Prime Minister P.W. Botha declared a state of emergency. (Wilder, lecture)

"There are anywhere between 70 and 120 kids in the orphanage."

"Most of them victims of the AIDS crisis."
The decree expanded the powers of the state, in particular those of the police and military. (Wilder, lecture)

Yet, this new decree did little to mitigate the tension, catalyzing more militant resistance. (Wilder, lecture)

"Without Baph, these children have nothing."

By 1988, 30,000 individuals had been detained within the current state of emergency. (Wilder, lecture)
In 1990, De Klerk was elected prime minister. (Wilder, lecture)

Despite being electd as a conservative candidate, De Klerk recognized the demise of the apartheid state. (Wilder, lecture)

De Klerk moved quickly to repeal the discriminatory policies of the apartheid regime. (Wilder, lecture)

Between 1990 and 1994, The government held a series of meeting with ANC leadership, negotiating the transition from apartheid regime to democratic rule. (Wilder, lecture)
On the bus to Baphumele, too many children are still wading through rubbish.

In 1994, Nelson Mandela became the first black president of South Africa. (Wilder, lecture)

Apartheid was over...
CHAPTER 3: DOMINATION REAFFIRMED

In the development of civilization, freedom becomes possible only as liberation. Liberty follows domination--and leads to the reaffirmation of domination. (Marcuse 65)
"Sebu once told me that Nelson Mandela was the only thing keeping South Africa together."

"It's been 15 years since apartheid ended."

"South Africa is a wealthy and stable democracy."

"All races and ethnicities carry equal civil rights and freedoms under the law."

"I can still see Khaletcha out my right window."

"All races and ethnicities carry equal civil rights and freedoms under the law."

"I can still see Khaletcha out my right window."
"I traveled to Bhapumele twice a week to teach math."

"I co-taught a class of 22 kids."

"Though we technically taught 5th grade, we had kids as old as 15 in the class."
In 1994, the ANC became the caretakers of this new republic.

The voice of the people. The promise of change.

The ANC has faced limited political opposition. In the last election the opposition party took only 13% of the vote. (Wilder, lecture)
"I had never seen poverty like this."

With no legitimate opposition, the ANC leadership controls the fate of the nation.

Thabo Mbeki, who served as president for the past 10 years was recently forced to resign due to his role in pressing the corruption charges against Zuma, his opponent for the ANC chairmanship.

Jacob Zuma the incoming Chairmen of the ANC has been charged with corruption, fraud, and rape.
Bhapumlele was an important part of my trip.

“I learned so much from those visits.”

The still prevailing impoverishment of vast areas of the world is no longer chiefly due to the poverty of human and natural resources, but to the manner in which they are distributed and utilized. (Marcuse 92)
In 1994, the new democratic regime facilitated their inclusion into the global economic system.

This neoliberal model, built on deregulation, privatization, and capital accumulation, would facilitate national growth and assuage the debilitating poverty of the apartheid era.

Built on a prosperous diamond industry and expanding financial and communication sectors, South Africa is, by far, the largest economy in the region.
While this regime has successfully expanded South Africa's GDP... it has done little to reverse the racialized stratification of wealth cultivated by the apartheid era.
The poorest 20% account for 3.5%. (World Bank Report, 2007)

The richest 20% of the population hold 62.2% of the total national income. (World Bank Report, 2007)

The country has an unemployment rate of 23%. (World Bank Report, 2007)
According to the World Bank, only 13% of the population lives in first world conditions. (World Bank Report, 2007)

50% of the population lives in 'developing world' conditions. (World Bank Report, 2007)

Of this latter group, only one-quarter have access to electricity and running water. (World Bank Report, 2007)

Only half have access to primary education. (World Bank Report, 2007)
"Domination is constantly reinvented."

"I was a white American teaching math in my language."

"I taught them for just 4 months--I wonder if they can calculate that?"
"My car has finally emerged from the shattered skeleton of Khayelitsha. My flight back to the US is in 3 hours."

I will show photos of children starving and I say it was the best experience of my life.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


WORLD BANK COUNTRY REPORT, 2007
HTTP://WEB.WORLDBANK.ORG/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/SOUTHAFRICAEXTN/0,,MENU:368086~PAGE:141132~PI:141107~THESITE:368057,00.HTML