CONTESTING THE UNIVERSITY: BLACK STUDENT MOVEMENTS IN
AMERICA AND SOUTH AFRICA BETWEEN 1968-1972 AND 2015

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ABSTRACT

Contesting the University: Black Student Movements in America and South
Africa between 1968-1972 and 2015

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This thesis analyzes the factors that lead to universities being contested by black radical students in the context of black intellectual/liberation movements in South Africa and the United States between 1968 – 1972 and the year 2015. Given the parallel historical similarities of the racialized capitalist system operative in South Africa and the United States respectively, the comparative framework of the thesis is split between two chapters. The first chapter historicizes the influence of the Black Consciousness Movement on the South African Students Organisation, as well as the Black Power and the Black Campus Movement in the US. The chapter suggests that, while locally manifested, the proliferation of black intellectual/liberation movements owes much to transnational/diasporic origins, since scholars recognized the shared struggle of fighting racial oppression globally. Emboldened by new notions of self-pride and positive affirmations of blackness, these ideas galvanized black radical student activists into action, beginning at historically black colleges and universities and later developing elsewhere, with the goal of transformation at a university as well as societal level.

Chapter Two bridges the two historical periods of focus, by discussing the origins of the myth of post-racialism in both contexts, which emerged alongside the attrition of the

movements discussed in the preceding chapter. Indeed, despite the different origins and rationale, the thesis demonstrates that *paradigm shifts* in both countries were complicit in the implementation of a colorblind national discourse, which shifted the political-social understanding of race and racism. In America, the myth of colorblindness has its origins in the Nixon era which formed part of a wider political strategy to stymie the hard-fought efforts of the Black Power/Civil Rights activists who elucidated the connections between race, racism and economic inequality. Relatedly, colorblindism in South Africa has been at the center of the post-apartheid political narrative since 1994, effectively supplanting race discourse with individualism and meritocracy. Yet for student activists in 2015, the continued systematic decimation of black bodies during a time when both countries' presidential offices were held by black men, presented a challenge to the notion of post-racialism. Thus, the university, once again, became central for black radical student activists. The thesis argues that this is to be understood in the overarching context of the Black Lives Matter in America and Fees Must Fall in South Africa. Attentive to the struggle of the previous generation of activism as well as the nuances of the 2015 context, the Open Stellenbosch and Concerned Student 1950 collective fought for more just universities as well as equitable societies.

Dedication

To my fiancé and best friend, Mohammad, for his love and intellectual motivation,

and to my parents, Mark and Julie, for their endless support.

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List of Abbreviations

<u>South Africa:</u>

ANC – African National Congress
BASA – Black Academic and Staff Association
BC – Black Consciousness
COSATU - Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA – Democratic Alliance
EFF – Economic Freedom Fighters
FMF – Fees Must Fall
OS – Open Stellenbosch
RMF – Rhodes Must Fall
SASO – South African Students' Organisation
SASCO – South African Students Congress
UNorth – University of the North
UWC – University of the Western Cape
Wits - University of Witwatersrand

<u>United States:</u>

CS – Concerned Student 1950
BCM – Black Campus Movement
BLM – Black Lives Matter
BP – Black Power
IDA – Institute for Defense Analyses
LBSM - Long Black Student Movement
Mizzou – University of Missouri
RAM – Revolutionary Action Movement
SAS – Student Afro-American Society
SDS- Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)
SNCC – Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee

Introduction:

When comparing black-led student activism in South Africa and the United States, the years between 1968 – 1972 mark an important point in the history of confrontational strategy that set forth in motion considerable institutional and social change - both on and off-campuses. Student activism occurred within the context of two black liberation ideologies of Black Consciousness (BC) in South Africa and Black Power (BP) in the United States, that which spurred efficacious movements in both countries. The movements occurred during anti-colonial and socialist movements which had contributed to the anti-capitalist narratives evident in the BC and BP movements.

In South Africa, BC and its movement are intrinsically connected to Steve Biko, who has been historicized as the father of BC. In addition, many South Africans consider the Soweto Uprisings in 1976 to be the apex of BC because, the state-sanctioned violence against schoolchildren, who espoused ideas of BC, shocked the international community.[1] Yet, little attention has focused on the protests that contributed to the events that preceded the buildup to the 1976 massacre. BC originated in the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)[2] of South Africa and transformed student activism in the Apartheid era through the South African Student Organisation [sic] (SASO), which was instrumental in the uprisings that occurred at the University of the North (UNorth) in 1972. Between the 1968 – 1972, BC had become more clearly defined, but the newly found confidence to challenge oppressive institutions was met with pushback especially from administrators.

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[1] Simon Hlungwani, "61 Years of the Freedom Charter. 40 Years of the 1976 Soweto Uprising. 20 Years of DENOSA existence," *Nursing Update*, July/August 2016, 41(4), 6.
[2] HBCU's is not South African terminology but adapted for purposes of chapter.

In 1972, student activist Okgopotese Abraham Tiro delivered a speech at UNorth which was the spark that ignited months of uprisings across South Africa, and consequently signaled BC and SASO's strategic shift from negotiation to confrontation.

In America, the intellectual history of the BP movement provides a crucial component in uncovering the origin stories of campus activism in the United States. The BP movement and the subsequent Black Campus Movement (BCM) developed in the mid-1960s when the majority of colleges and universities had desegregated. Nonetheless, most black students felt excluded from social, academic and cultural aspects of university life due to the normalization of racial whiteness in teaching pedagogies and conservative campus cultures that regulated daily student life.[3] In 1968, when Columbia University proposed the construction of a gym in the black Harlem community it marked the catalyst for a network of existing organizations to form a coalition that brought the university to a stand-still. The historical context for the BCM and Columbia at large, when positioned in the comparison with South Africa's SASO and UNorth uprisings in particular, underlines the important origins stories of radical black student activism between 1968 – 1972. In both contexts, black student activists focused on the university as the site of struggle, and found it deeply implicated in a myriad of social oppressions[4] because it not only readied students for employment, but its institutional culture was emblematic of the societies they served and affected the academic and social life of students on campus.

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[3] Ibram Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement – Black Students and the Racial Reconstitution of Higher Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 89-90.
[4] HBCU's in South Africa had a specific role in skills training that subordinated black people, discussed in Chapter One, Section III. In Columbia, the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) was involved in providing expertise to the U.S. government during the Vietnam War. For activists, it represented the university's involved in the capitalist functions of war-making. See Chapter One, Section VI.

In 2015, student-led movements such as Open Stellenbosch (OS) and Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) emerged across campuses in South Africa, culminating in the collective national shutdown of tertiary education in what became known as the #FeesMustFall protests, now known as the Fees Must Fall (FMF) movement. Significantly, the protests were the largest youth led demonstrations in the post-Apartheid South Africa. By 2015, "Black grad student on hunger strike" grabbed the headlines in America, prompting the student protests at the University of Missouri and across the United States in what would be known as the #StudentBlackOut protests. These protests occurred in the era of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement.[5] Although OS predated the emergence of FMF in South Africa, it was one of the co-founding organizations at the time of the first FMS protest. Whilst the Concerned Student 1950 (CS) is arguably the first instance of university activism in the BLM movement.

Both movements in 2015, exhibit symbolic and intellectual links to the BC and BP movements which preceded FMS and BLM. This is significant, in light of the paradigm shifts that occurred in both countries. The paradigm shift is the intersection of political and social ideologies that transformed both countries between 1972 – 2015. One aspect of the paradigm shift, was the neoliberal restructure of first, the American economy, and later the South African economy. Another aspect, was the implementation of an ahistorical 'colorblind' approach to the political and social understanding of race, racism and economic inequality – despite differences in chronological and political rationale that underpinned the shift. The outcome of the paradigm shift helped proliferate the myth of

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[5] Michael Miller, "Black grad student on hunger strike in Mo. after swastika drawn with human feces", *The Washington Post,* accessed April 12, 2017.

post-racial and colorblind societies, which seemingly occurred alongside the decline of BC and BP. Therefore, observing the context leading up to the 2015 protests, the leadership strategies as well as the perceptions of and reactions to the student movements will help to exemplify the limitations of post-racial societies in tackling institutional change and expose the myth of colorblind post-racialism. It may reveal that racism has similar systemic outcomes in countries where racialized oppression was sustained by the collusion of race and economics, from which black intellectual/liberation ideologies from the 1960s/70s emerged.

Thesis: In light of similar histories of racialized capitalist systems in South Africa and the United States that contributed to institutionalized racism and racial violence, why did black radical students contest the university in the context of black intellectual/liberation movements, first in the 1960/70s and then 2015? Other key questions include: did the overarching liberation ideologies in which black students mobilized in 1968 – 1972 and 2015, have both transnational and local origins? Can similarities in ideology/strategy of the protestors suggest certain modes of racial oppression and whiteness operate comparably in different global contexts? How did the paradigm shift in both countries shape the conditions from which the 2015 protests emerged? This project analyzes the significance of the university as a site of black radical activism, by first historicizing the intellectual black liberation movements that shaped said activism/mobilizations in both eras. The comparative analyses of activism in two countries and in the two eras will reveal aspects of ideology, symbolism and/or strategy that connects student activism in the 60s to student activism in 2015. It will uncover how the progression of the paradigm shift in both countries accounts for the differences and nuances that

distinguish the events of 2015 era from those during 1968 – 1972. With the historical similarities of the racialized capitalist system in South Africa and the United States respectively, the thesis analyzes the factors that lead to universities being contested by black radical students in the context of the Black Power and Black Consciousness movements, and again in the era of Black Lives Matter and Fees Must Fall.

Chapter One: Black Liberation and Universities, 1968 – 1972

I. Overview:

In between the years 1968 – 1972, campuses across the United States and South Africa witnessed the mass mobilization of black radical students, and set forth into motion to materialize the demands that would shape both the university and the societies they served. In America, these protests occurred in the advent of the Black Power (BP) movement, which was soon followed by the Black Consciousness (BC) movement in South Africa. Several key questions in this chapter provide context to understand the eruptions at Columbia University in 1968 and the University of the North (UNorth) in 1972, discussed in sections VI and VII respectively. The questions include but are not limited to: how/why did the then-nascent radical black liberation ideologies in both countries influence and evolve into student movements that contested the university? Did the historically racialized political economies in both countries produce the similarities in the ideological and strategic outcomes in black radical student activism alone? And/or, how did the exchange of ideology and strategy, both local and transnational in nature, influence all movements in South Africa and America in their shared goal of fighting racism? What responses/reactions did the protests at Columbia and UNorth elicit from administrators and other actors; and what conclusions can be drawn from this comparison?

Section II is concerned with the historical context behind the advent of the ideological/intellectual BC movement, and the subsequent emergence of the South African Student Organisation (SASO) that played an integral role in the 1972 UNorth uprisings. Section III will discuss the rise of the Black Campus Movement (BCM) and overlapping

Black Studies movement, within the wider conceptualization of the BP movement. Section IV explores the transnational and local origins of BC and BP through the exchange of ideas between black ideologies and how it pertains to notions of blackness, identity, and self-pride in societies with fierce white racism. Lastly, section V will analyze the history and significance of HBCU's in both countries where radical activism affiliated to BP and BC were first established. In doing so, it will not only underscore the similarities/differences in the development of strategy and ideology within SASO and the BCM, but the importance of the university both in this chapter, and throughout the thesis.

II. Black Consciousness and SASO:

In late 1968, the origins of SASO were discussed by medical students from the black section of the University of Natal who attended a conference in the town of Marrianhill. Yet, the inaugural conference of SASO was held at the University of North (UNorth) in July of the following year, with Steve Biko elected the first president.[1] BC and its movement are intrinsically connected to Biko, who has been historicized as the father of BC. Part of SASO's origins can also be traced back to the radical University Christian Movement (UCM), an organization that attracted many black radicals and white allies in 1967.[2] Similarly, Africanists such as Robert Sobukwe and others from the Ethiopian Christian movements had preached notions of self-reliance which was a central component

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[1] Patrick Laurence, "Black Politics in Transition," in *Race Relations in South Africa: 1929-1979*, ed. Ellen Hellmann and Henry Lever (Johannesburg: MacMillan, 1980), 59; Anne Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader: Abraham Tiro, the University of the North, and the Seeds of South Africa's Student Movement in the 1970s," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 41, no. 1 (2015): 177.

[2] Patrick Laurence, "Black Politics in Transition," 59.

of BC intellectualism.[3]   Evidently, SASO had multiple points of origin, all which converged from the factors listed above.

SASO emerged after the 'quiet period' of the 1960s in response to the *Verwoedian*[4] crackdowns on political establishments deemed hostile to Afrikaner Nationalism. This crackdown included the banning of the African National Congress (ANC) from which a vacuum for black political representation occurred. As far as students were concerned, the white-led liberal National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) continued to organize protests against the injustices of the apartheid regime but, mostly in the locale of white English-speaking institutions. NUSAS was not only thwarted by spatial constraints between white and black institutions but also by ideological constraints that adversely affected organization between white and black activists alike. NUSAS' intellectual and structural limitations contributed to the rise and significance of SASO, an organization that eventually usurped NUSAS as the leading student protest organization in the anti-Apartheid struggle. As a result, SASO emerged in the early 1970s not only as an alternative to the national student movement associated with NUSAS but as the *defacto* national student union.

NUSAS was predominantly active in South Africa's white institutions, which was a barrier for black activists who wished to attend lectures usually by foreign anti-apartheid activists who were banned from speaking at HBCUs. Moreover, NUSAS's spatial limitations restricted the conscious raising among white activists because they had limited

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[3] Leslie Hadfield, *Liberation and Development: Black Consciousness Community Programs in South Africa* (East Lansing: Michigan States University Press, 2016), 5.
[4] Hendrik Verwoed, the 7th Prime Minister of South Africa (1958-1966).

contact with black students.[5] The need for black-only student leadership emerged from long-standing frustrations with allies in the white-liberal led NUSAS. By 1970, SASO split from NUSAS on the grounds that the former organization was incapable of fostering the conditions for black emancipation.[6]

In the wake of the split, SASO faced the challenge of empowering its members to position black priorities and liberation at the center of the goals. At the same time, white liberals had to redefine their political roles as allies, as well as tackle the paternalism within leadership structures which caused the frustrations that facilitated the split to begin with. Such frustrations were articulated by Barney Pityana, close friend of Steve Biko and SASO activist, who claimed in 1970 that white student co-operation within student movements often led to "checks and balances" that emanated from their subconscious desire to protect their own interests.[7] Pityana's sentiments were reaffirmed by Sobukwe who believed that the whites, capable of total commitment to the cause, should not expect leadership roles, in order to avoid the "checks and balances" that Pityana warned led to a stifling of necessary radical demands.[8] Therefore, Pityana and Sobukwe both critiqued the myopic political and social interests of white-liberals at the time, and argued white-liberals reproduced unequal power relations in spaces of protest.

Before BC was conceptualized as a movement in South Africa, the notions of "blackness" and "consciousness" were constantly debated among notable thinkers such as

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[5] Nkosinathi Gwala, "State control, Student Politics and the crisis in Black Universities," in *Popular Struggles in South Africa,* ed. William Cobbett and Robin Cohen, (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1988), 172.

[6] Patrick Laurence, "Black Politics in Transition," 59-60.

[7] Motsoko Pheko, *Apartheid, the story of a dispossessed people* (London: Marram Books, 1984), 118

[8] Pheko, *Apartheid, the story of a dispossessed people*, 161

Biko and his close friend Pityana.[9] At the 1971 Bloemfontein conference, the SASO policy manifesto defined "black" as a constituency "who are by law or tradition, politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in South African Society."[10] This definition created the conditions for alliances between blacks and other second-class Apartheid designated race categories, namely Indian and Coloured[11] people. Thus, political blackness was a description of oppression for all persons of color, rather than those who were raced as black exclusively.[12] For Pityana, the allegiance to the black community was important due to the nature of shared injustice and the necessity to restore pride and dignity – before material goals and demands to transform the political structure could be met.[13]

At the 1971 SASO Leadership Training Course, Biko addressed the problem of black people who reinforced the privileges of whiteness and inequality: "If one's aspiration is whiteness but his pigmentation makes attainment of this impossible, then that person is a non-white."[14] Biko elaborated on the ends to which the existential development of blackness was independent from white domination and categorization: "what Black Consciousness seeks to do is to produce at the output end of the process real black people who do not regard themselves as appendages to white society."[15] Although BC, according

[9] Daniel Magaziner, "'Black Man, You Are On Your Own!": Making Race Consciousness in South African Thought, 1968-1972," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 42, no. 2 (2009): 239.
[10] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 225, 227.
[11] Coloured is a racial category first designated in Apartheid to classify people of mixed-racial heritage and numerous South Africans still identify with the term in the post-Apartheid era.
[12] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 178.
[13] Pheko, *Apartheid, the story of a dispossessed people*, 119.
[14] "The Definition Of Black Consciousness by Bantu Stephen Biko, December 1971, South Africa" *South African History Online*, 2001.
[15] Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like* (London: Bowerdean Press, 1987), 51; Biko's sentiments are important to bear in mind in Chapter Two when colorblind racism, the

to this argument, advocated for wider representation of black people in power, it was as committed to the intellectual consciousness raising of black South Africans, and the youth in particular. In essence, Biko's ideas represented more of a consensus among black activists in South Arica and his articulations emphasized the intellectual and consciousness- raising process at the center of BC, and its direct impact on the initial strategies of SASO. By the 1970s, BC aided SASO activists in the intellectual philosophizing of blackness which invoked a strong sense self-pride in a black identity. BC also helped SASO activists reach a consensus on how Apartheid systematically oppressed black people and thus enabled the conditions for SASO to mobilize black students at universities across South Africa.

III. Black Power and the Black Campus Movement:

BP liberation ideology and its philosophical underpinning of the wider BP movement is complex to establish with precision. Among several influential ideologies on BP is Marcus Garvey's scholarship on Black Nationalism, in the 1920s and 1930s.[16] Garvey's ideas and Black Nationalism as a concept, were instrumental in shaping the ideas of intellectuals associated with BP, such as Stokely Carmichael. According to Peniel Joseph, the BP movement was a black radical social and political movement to initiate the transformation of both American and global society, and resembled other social

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myth of post-racialism and nefarious nature whiteness in both people of color and white people are discussed. See Chapter Two: Section(s) I, II, VI for colorblindness, post-racialism, colorblind racism and its effects.

[16] Black Nationalism is widely theorized as the social, economic and psychological empowerment of black people.

movements such as the feminist and decolonization movement.[17] After Carmichael referred to "black power" during a speech at a Mississippi rally in 1966 it became a rallying call for radical black student activists, both as a racial and political slogan.[18] Although the Black Panther Party represented one among a plethora of BP-affiliated groups, the Party's distinctive aesthetic and dress code (Afro-hair styles, black berets, leather jackets) and confrontational posture were adopted by student activists, whilst the Party's structure/model shaped numerous successive Black Student Unions.[19]

Historian Ibram Kendi argues that the Black Campus Movement (BCM) is conceptual term that describes the movement of BP-affiliated organizations that emerged in 1965 and declined in 1972. The BCM incorporates the 1968 Columbia University protests; Kendi claims: "[the] 1960s Black power campus struggle represented a profound ideological, tactical and spatial shift from early 1960s off-campus civil rights student confrontations."[20] Therefore, the influence of BP is what distinguishes the BCM from the Long Black Student Movement (LBSM)[21] and links the Black Studies movement to BP. The Black Studies movement was forged from the gathering tide of black student activism across America by protesters who were incensed both by the national events of 1963's televised violence directed against black people in Birmingham as well as the conservative administrations within the universities of their local contexts. If change had to come, radical black students associated with Black Nationalism, demanded the implementation

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[17] Peniel Joseph, "Black Liberation Without Apology: Reconceptualizing the Black Power Movement," *The Black Scholar* 31, no. 3-4 (2001): 3

[18] Karen Grigsby Bates, "Stokely Carmichael, A Philosopher Behind The Black Power Movement." *NPR*. March 10, 2014, accessed April 5, 2017.

[19] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 80.

[20] Ibid., 3.

[21] The Long Black Student Movement is historicized between 1919-1972.

of new a black-centered curriculum and departments for universities (first at HBCU's and later elsewhere) in what became known as the Black Studies movement.[22]

In May 1964, the earliest semblance of the Black Studies movement materialized at a conference on Black Nationalism for radical black students at Nashville's Fisk University, hosted by the Afro-American Student Movement - a radical affiliate of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).[23] According to student activist Max Stanford, co-founder of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), the outcome of the conference was that students formulated the "ideological catalyst that shifted the civil rights movement into the Black Power movement."[24] Stanford's statement is not to invoke an apparent dichotomy between "civil rights" and "black power" (because both concepts overlap and intersect); rather, Stanford alludes to the reconstitution of the black youth strategy that emphasized African American solidarity and black suasion which departed from a strategy of white suasion and unity with white liberals. White suasion was a common strategy and approach during the Civil Righs Era.[25] The outcome of this shift, as evident in SNCC[26] was an 'inverted social hierarchy' which historian and activist Barbara Ransby explained in these terms: "black leadership had to be emphasized and poor people's voices amplified because in absolutely every other facet of social life the opposite pressures

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[22] Peniel Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy: Black Studies, Student Activism, and the Black Power Movement," *The Journal of African American History* 88, no. 2 (2003): 190
[23] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 71
[24] Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy, 189: Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,*70-71
[25] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 69.
[26] SNCC played an influential role in terms of strategy during the 1968 Columbia protests.

and privileges were in force."[27] Although sometimes far from reality, organizations in the BCM strived for the inverted social hierarchy.

The Black Studies movement recorded its first triumph at San Francisco State University in 1967, when the first Black Studies program began in the spring semester amidst increased off-campus BP-affiliated activity in the San Francisco Bay Area.[28] The Black Studies movement was integral in the wider BCM movement and began to raise consciousness about domestic and international struggles against racial oppression. For the black studies movement, curriculum reform and the implementation of black studies departments had several positive outcomes, one of which reminded activists that the struggled against racial oppression was not isolated to their local context but also in other parts of the world, such as South Africa. The international focus is not surprising given the influence of Pan-Africanist ideology on Black Nationalism and Black Power movements across the nation, which were coming to terms with renewed calls for separation, from activists such as Carmichael.

The Black Studies movement represented one of the key components of the BCM and was the vehicle from which BP spread among black student circles who were involved in activism. This activism had a direct impact on the formation and goals of the Student Afro-American Society (SAS) at Columbia University during the protests of 1968.

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[27] Barbara Ranbsy, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision* (Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 369.
[28] Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy", 191; Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 95

IV. Transnational/local origins of Black Consciousness and Black Power:

The exchange of ideas between black ideologies is worth elaboration. This section is concerned with the development of notions of identity associated with blackness and self-pride, and how these ideologies circulated transnationally. Historians and critics of black activism alike, have often attributed the exchange of liberation ideologies through a nationalist lens, one that credits the exchange of the ideas strictly to the nation of origin ie: between United States and South Africa. Yet, the commonalities of race and subjecthood in societies of racialized capitalism and oppression, such as South Africa and America in both eras, produced similarities in the 'black experience' from which a global network of black intellectuals and publications produced knowledge which illuminated such global connections. For example, years before BC and BP, the Negro's Writers Conference of 1956 and 1959 brought together prominent scholars across the black diaspora, which in itself, highlights the international diasporic connections that provided the network for the interchange of systems of knowledge. Such meetings predated the apex of both BP and BC, and contained radical ideas that would be reproduced and adapted by activists for decades long after. Among several prominent scholars in attendance was Frantz Fanon whose scholarly work extensively influenced both BP and BC. Intellectuals associated with BP who influenced the BC movement, such as Stokely Carmichael, was himself influenced by Pan-Africanism and the vision of leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and Kenneth Kaunda.[29] So too did Kaunda's humanist "man-centered society" influence Biko's ideas of blackness as a fundamentally humanist doctrine, interested in human relationships

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[29] Blake Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition: African Americans, New Leftists, and Counterculture at the Columbia University Protest of 1968," *Journal of Social History* 41, no. 4 (2008): 968.

that also prioritized black liberation.[30] Similarly to BP in America, SASO activists were inspired by the anti-colonial and other successful African independence movements.

Yet, the Apartheid government's propaganda against black enfranchisement in South Africa cited the political violence and oppression under then Ugandan president Idi Amin as a justification for white-minority rule.[31] But, SASO also condemned Amin's administration to counteract the Apartheid regime's propaganda that created a narrative of incapable black leadership synonymous with failed states.[32] BP also advocated for the betterment of a universal humanism, apparent in the goals of the Black Studies movement that believed America's educational institutions must radically change for the benefit of humanity's sake.[33] For BC and SASO activists, demands made for universities to be "Africanized" echoed the aims of BP via the Black Studies movement.[34] Historically, "Africanization" was coined by Frantz Fanon within the project of nation-building whilst activists adapted the terminology on the more personalized level of the self.[35]

Whilst it may seem SASO's utilization of American struggles is only plagiarism or ideological mimesis of other liberation struggles, BC in South Africa had nationally specific dimensions too. Much of the development of BC emerged from long processes of philosophizing and identity formation through exteriorizing the experiences of subjecthood

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[30] Daniel Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 45 – 46.
[31] Idi Amin Dada, 3rd Ugandan President (1971 – 1979).
[32] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 231, 240.
[33] Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy", 182.
[34] Mokubung O. Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities: the roots of resistance* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 75 – 76.
[35] Achille Mbembe, "Decolonizing the University: New Directions", Arts & Humanities in Higher Education, 58, no. 1, (2016): 33 – 35.

under the Apartheid state.[36] The same can be said in America, where Malcolm X, for example who was highly revered among BCM activists, had espoused such ideas as early as 1961 when he engaged Bayard Rustin in a debate titled "Integration or Separation" during a time when BP ideological influence on student movements was still nascent.[37]

Another key example of the transnational exchanges of black intellectualism, were the internationally circulated American based publications from *Black Scholar* and *Muhammad Speaks*, as well as the contributions of the members of the RAM.[38] A particular anecdote that is important to note is taken from RAM member, Harold Cruse's influential *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual.* In his critique of white liberalism and paternalistic encroachment on black social movements, he argued that black intellectuals and white liberals engaged in unequal terms.[39] SASO activists such as Pityana, mentioned previously, echoed similar sentiments that fostered SASO's decision to split with NUSAS, in the belief that white and black activists were meeting on imbalanced terms of power and would have to be separated until such imbalances were addressed. Furthermore Joseph argues Cruse's work was important in framing the BP movement for local and international readers because it analyzed the contributions of activists such as as Stokely Carmichaels' first mention of "black power" in 1966.[40] The critique of white liberalism by Cruse and Pityana

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[36] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 226; Magaziner, *Law and Prophets*, 47.

[37] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 73.

[38] Joseph, "Dashiki's and Democracy", 193.

[39] Harold Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro intellectual: A Historical Analysis of the Failure of Black Leadership* (New York: Morrow, 1967),199-203.

[40] Joseph, "Black Liberation Without Apology," 6; Hortense J. Spillers, "The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual: A Post-Date, *boundary 2* 21, no. 3 (1994): 65 – 67.

is significant because they both articulated similar kinds of ideas about race, power dynamics and strategies in their respective countries.

*Muhammad Spea*ks was founded by the Nation of Islam during the leadership of Elijah Muhmmad in 1962 and quickly garnered a large subscription base among African American people. The journal provided coverage and analysis of major international events, with particular interest in the independence movements of colonized countries that Nation members felt was absent from the mainstream media. It addressed this void when it published on global anticolonial struggles, many of which concerned struggles of black people against oppressive regimes of white domination.[41] Naturally, the BP movement was not monolithic and the publication's connection to the Nation of Islam did not please everyone affiliated with BP; need this is not of concern in this thesis. Rather, the publication reflected the international perspective embedded in the BP movement and was a continued impetus for activists in both countries to secure a legacy of networks and alliances.

South African radical politics and the development of BC in the early 1970s was influenced by the language and symbols of global liberation movements. By early 1972, SASO had adopted the symbol of a black hand in a clenched fist, but this provided the backlash for opponents to attack the movement; in 1977 government officials banned any paraphernalia with the aforementioned symbol and peddled the view that BC's notion of blackness had been borrowed from America.[42] It is important to note that before SASO was banned, cohesion or similarities between the two ideologies had been noted by both

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[41] Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy," 187.
[42] Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets*, 47.

the Apartheid State and South African activists alike. According to Historian of South African history Daniel Magaziner, former SASO president and disgruntled member Themba Sono argued that the SASO 1971 manifesto was mimetic of Stokely Carmichael's 1967 *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*.[43] Sono's remarks are significant – true or not – because it provides an example of a SASO leader's engagement with scholarship from the BP movement in America. In singling out Carmichael's book, it can be assumed that other SASO and BC-affiliated activists also had a working knowledge of popular BP texts and were reading such texts alongside the formation of SASO leader's own intellectual/ideological development.   Ironically, BP's endorsement of separate development aligned with the Apartheid ideology of separate racial development. Therefore, any influence BP had on BC/SASO was at first not perceived to be a threat by the Apartheid government. However, with SASO responsible for the 1972 UNorth uprising, the Apartheid government's perception changed and ultimately banned SASO in 1977.[44] Nevertheless, SASO's ability to avert an immediate ban enabled the organization to build influence and their membership rank in the interim.

In spite of clear similarities in strategies and ideologies of BP and BC-affiliated activists, students and other protesters were fighting battles in societies with inevitably different outcomes. These fundamental differences were raised by Steve Biko, who argued in the early 1970s that "Black power is the preparation of a group for participation in an already established society, and Black Power therefore in the States operates like a minority philosophy"; by contrast, Biko explained, black people in South Africa represented a

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[43] Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets*, 47.
[44] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism*, 122.

majority, who once awakened, "are out to completely transform the system and to make it what they wish."[45] Biko's statement reflected a wider sentiment in the BC movement in the 1970s that a revolution was both necessary and highly probable because black people constituted the majority of citizens in South Africa, whilst wholesale revolution was an unlikely outcome in America because, black people were the minority. At the same time, Biko's sentiments potentially reflected an attempt to regain agency over the intellectual process of BC, given criticism from Apartheid officials and dissidents such as Themba Sono that framed BC as a knee-jerk imitation of black politics in America.[46] In essence, Biko's and Sono's existential awareness of blackness within society demonstrated the philosophizing nature of BC. Understanding the historical interconnections of black liberation ideologies as a global process illuminates the approach in which black student activists in South Africa in 1972, were able to both observe and engage with black liberation ideologies of a global context, whilst philosophizing what overseas ideologies mean in a local context.

V. Universities and strategies within Mobilization:

In America and South Africa, radical student activists guided by both liberation ideologies of BC and BP focused on the university as the site of struggle, and found it deeply implicated in a myriad of social oppressions. Activists on both sides of the Atlantic identified the university as a crucial institution because, it not only readied students for

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[45] Steve Biko quoted in Robert Fatton, *Black Consciousness in South Africa: The Dialectics of Ideological Resistance to White Supremacy* (State University of New York Press, Albany: 1986). 76.
[46] Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets*, 46-47.

employment, but its institutional culture was emblematic of the societies they served, and also affected the regulation of student life on campus through academic and social means. Although American universities by the early 1960s had become sites for "ideological and physical confrontations," it would not be long before South Africa followed suit.[47] For many activists, universities were a "repository of labor, educational and ideological production and orientation.[48]" Despite the noted similarities between both countries, there were also significant variances in the context of South African and American universities between 1968-1972. Such variations stemmed from the different governing systems of South Africa and America.

With the historical context of BC and BP discussed in the previous two sections, this section examines the university when it emerged as a site of protest for SASO and BCM activists. Although protests occurred at HWCUs, SASO and the BCM protests first erupted at HBCUs, an overlap which is significant to elucidate. This section will provide a historical overview of HBCUs in both countries that will not only underscore the similarities/differences, but explain why HBCUs were the first to witness protests. In doing so, it will provide a clearer understanding to the development of strategy and ideology within SASO and the BCM. Given the nuance of BP and BC university protests in both contexts, it is important assess the reactions of administration to protestors and how SASO and BCM activists adapted strategy in response to such reactions.

When black universities in America and South Africa erupted in 1968 and 1972 respectively, both countries were yet to witness the scale of campus protests that defined

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[47] Joseph, "Dashikis and Democracy," 191.
[48] Ibid., 190.

these two periods. In America, this even included campuses unaffected by protests, preceding 1968, such as the University of Iowa, a HWCU. In a speech delivered at the Symposium on Higher Education in the Future in March 1968, University of Iowa president Howard Bowen, appeared unnerved by the "political agitations" that had occurred across America.[49] Although Bowen recognized the importance of faculty and students expressing their ideas "even when these ideas are unconventional or critical of the established order," he argued that the university is "a place of study…and publication, not a center of political action."[50] Bowen's remarks, certainly not conservative in comparison to other administrators, indicates the uncertainty among administrators who struggled to interpret and react accordingly to the new wave of radical activism in America. By his own admission, activism had not had a "significant place in American Higher Education" but this is arguably not true when the protests of the LBSM are taken into consideration.[51] Bowen's remarks preceded the 1968 Columbia uprising by a month, but occurred after the BCM had already staged protests at HBCUs such as Hampton University. Bowen's sentiments possibly reflect a general perception from white administrators and HWCUs in general, that black radical activism mostly occurred in the confines of HBCUs. Therefore, the convergence of ideologies and activists at Columbia in 1968 demonstrated both the significance of this university in the history of black radical student activism and the progression of the BCM.

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[49] Howard Bowen,"The University in America," *Vital Speeches of the Day* 34, no. 13 (1968): *412*.
[50] Bowen, "The University in America," *412-13*.
[51] Ibid., *412*.

In South Africa, HBCUs were created by the Apartheid regime under the vision of Afrikaner Nationalism, that developed segregated and inferior systems of black education policies which were shaped by legislation such as the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The first black universities were established formally in 1960 and 1961 respectively.[52] This followed a three-tiered classification system: the urban, the autonomous and the homeland university.[53] The structure of the black university existed as a tool of the Apartheid state to fragment the black populace and entrench a system of socialization that subordinated black workers to the racialized economic system. The school socialization process was specifically designed to prepare future workers so that they would have the skills needed to meet the demands of the job market.[54] In fact, it was the lobbying efforts of Anglo and Afrikaner business interests to remove statutory discrimination against blacks obtaining technical skills that instigated a rapid expansion in school enrollments and coincided with the rise of BC in the early to mid 1970s.[55]

Administratively, the black university was rigidly controlled by Afrikaner bureaucracy that disseminated a paternal institutional culture and exercised fierce control over the intellectual production of the university.[56] This included administrative approval

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[52] Gwala, "State control, Student Politics and the crisis in Black Universities," 164

[53] Gwala, 168: black universities can be classified in three types: Urban Universities are universities established in major urban areas such as the University of the Western Cape (UWC); homeland universities are those established in the 'independent' bantustans/homeland regions of Apartheid South Africa; autonomous universities are universities that are not controlled by bantustans' leaders and can be either urban or homeland situated.

[54] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities,* 108.

[55] Jonathan Hyslop, "School Student Movements and State Education Policy," in *Popular Struggles in South Africa*, ed. by William Cobbett and Robin Cohen (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1988), 184.

[56] Gwala, "State control, Student Politics and the crisis in Black Universities," 169.

of guest speakers/lecturers who were routinely disallowed, as well as the appointment of professors and lecturers.[57] Professors who did not abide by the imposed guidelines in their teaching and research as well as those who sympathized with radical students were relieved of their contracts.[58] The top-down nature of Afrikaner bureaucracy facilitated the appointment of black administrators in universities whom black students admonished and ultimately resented, with the exception of UNorth where the Black Academic and Staff Association (BASA) were in solidarity with students.[59] Preceding the implementation of the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 that specifically prohibited integrated education, English speaking institutions had been consigned the role of educating black students albeit on a heavily restricted basis.[60] Moreover, those fortunate to be admitted into the limited places were still subject to hostility from staff and students and were banned from the use of recreational facilities such as pools and sports facilities – empowered by Apartheid's segregationist Separate Amenities Act. The experiences of admitted black students echoed what is referred to as institutional racism today.

In the United States, white and black donors founded HBCUs in the Reconstruction era, to meet the challenge of providing education to recently freed black slaves.[61] Despite

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[57] Gwala, "State control, Student Politics and the crisis in Black Universities," 172.
[58] Ibid., 172-3.
[59] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities,* 133; Due to UNorth's unique demographic composition for a black Apartheid university, and the history of activism already evident at UNorth, black staff and faculty would have experienced protests more frequently which forced council to discuss methods of quashing black protests more frequently than other HBCU's at the time. In addition to a long record of black faculty being sidelined in voting-based decision making, BASA emerged to promote the interests of black staff and faculty at UNorth.
[60] Lysle E. Meyer, "A Report on South Africa's Black Universities," *A Journal of Opinion* 4, no.3 (1974): 12.
[61] Alexander Nazaryan, "Black Colleges Matter," *Newsweek*, August 18, 2015, accessed February 10, 2017.

the limitations of financial and social capital, the mission of HBCUs was to better the black community, a historical difference that distinguishes it from the mission of HBCUs in Apartheid South Africa. Yet despite the different origins of American HBCUs to South African ones, the reality was that in both countries HBCUs often could not address the needs of the black community – according to activists. For activists in the BCM, the perceived failure of HBCUs such as Hampton University to address the needs of the black community motivated students to tackle these institutions first. HBCU's were not a monolith but many students objected to the conservative campus culture, upheld by administrations populated mostly by black conservatives. Conservative campus culture was characterized by rigidity in the regulation of daily campus life, such as compulsory class attendance, strict dress codes for women as well as the prohibition of vices such as drinking and smoking.[62] Evidently, paternalism defined the relationship between administrators and students and provoked subsequent protests.

Similar to South Africa, resistance from American HBCU's administrators against the earliest demonstrations of the BCM, were defined by harsh responses that can be attributed to the conservative campus culture. For example, in March 1965 following "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, students occupied the administration building at Hampton University which prompted conservative university president Jerome Holland to expel student protestors. In addition to the lack of diverse pedagogies in curriculum, American HBCU's professoriates were also predominantly white; therefore, the Black Studies movement demanded greater diversity. Ironically, once the Black Studies movement via

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[62] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement*, 90.

BCM spread to HWCUs, the demand to diversify faculty exacerbated the poaching of staff from HBCUs. [63]

Between 1968 – 1972, the BCM movement successfully ushered in new Black Studies departments, Black Cultural Centers and Diversity Offices across America. Paradoxically, the significant gains made by the BCM contributed to the movement's decline as students clashed ideologically in terms of making their next move. The BCM occurred in the context of the feminist and black capitalism movements; the former mentioned movement demanded fairer treatment and representation of female activist leadership and the latter rubbed against the ideologies of socialists who were more prevalent in the wider BP movement. Moreover, the movement was also hampered by the imprisonment and loss of members through violence, whilst NAACP member Roy Wilkins questioned the long-term feasibility of BCM successes mentioned above.[64]

In South Africa, the emphasis on negotiation and bargaining as preferred methods of engagement with administration dominated SASO strategy until the campus uprisings in 1972. But conditions created a context for confrontation, that with historical hindsight, were ultimately inevitable for two reasons.[65] First, the university administrations of black universities could not be persuaded into initiating reforms due to the top-down oppressive Afrikaner bureaucracy designed to stifle social and intellectual production.[66] Second, the

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[63] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement*, 99.

[64] Ibid., 98 -99.

[65] Julian Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest, 1968–1972," *South African Historical Journal* 62, no. 4 (2010): 724.

[66] V.P. Franklin, "Patterns of student activism at historically black universities in the United States and South Africa, 1960-1977," *The Journal of African American History* 88, no. 2 (2003): 213; Gwala, "State control, Student Politics and the crisis in Black Universities," 169.

institutional structures of black universities were weak and the administrators were resented by students for the perceived ineffectiveness of their power and even by certain administrators such as Student Advisory Director at Zululand University, Professor S.M. Bhengu.[67] The fragility of the institutions alongside state-sanctioned power to suppress black dissent resulted in the sustained presence of police on campuses.[68] At the same time, the spread of BC throughout universities created the conditions for SASO to successfully demand the appointment of black Vice-chancellors at several campuses that would later include UNorth.[69] Collectively, issues such as paternal administrators and restricted student liberties were identified as problems that contributed to the protests and boycotts, which engulfed institutions in 1972.[70] Because of the deliberate oppressive structure of the black Apartheid university, radical progressive politics of BC flourished and helped galvanize student opposition against an inferior education.

Despite the chronological and geographical/spatial differences that separate BC and BP, both liberation ideologies articulated scathing critiques of capitalist political economies, and how universities in general contributed to outcomes of racialized economic inequality in each context respectively. At UNorth's 1972 graduation, former 1971 Student Representative Council (SRC) president and SASO member Okgopotese Abraham Tiro allocated a segment to criticizing the economic arrangement of the Apartheid state:

> A White member of the Administration has been given the meat contract to supply the University - a Black University. Those who amorphously support the policy may say that there are no Black people to supply it. My answer to them is:

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[67] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities,* 134, 133.
[68] Franklin, "Patterns of student activism at historically black universities," 729.
[69] Laurence, "Black Politics in Transition," 60.
[70] Franklin, "Patterns of student activism at historically black universities," 213.

> why are they not able to supply the University? What is the cause? Is it not
> conveniently done that they are not in a position to supply these commodities?[71]

The above quotation makes it evident that black consciousness was about raising attention

to the tepid material conditions and systemic social and economic decimation of black

South Africans. Analogous sentiments were echoed in America by Lerone Bennett in a

1970 *Ebony* article, two years after Columbia protests who argued that integrationists had

missed the real roots of racism which "is a matter of labor, productive relations, money and

power." Bennett also argued that the Civil Rights Movement dismantled legal/material

segregation but failed to improve the economic circumstances of racialized inequality.[72] In

an article published in 1970, Bennett discussed university activism which seemed to

reference key aspects of the 1968 Columbia University protests. These aspects included

the activists who alleged Columbia not only abused its financial power in relation to the

Harlem community but was also complicit in supplying labor to the Institute for Defense

Analyses (IDA). Leader of white radical Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Mark

Rudd, had hoped for the student movement to morph into a broad coalition for a wider

revolutionary movement.[73] Rudd was also notable for forming the Weatherman faction in

alliance with the New York Black Panther Party, which according to Slonecker, had

advocated for the "overthrow of the United States Government."[74] Rudd's connection to

the New York Black Panther Party also demonstrated the links between on and off-campus

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[71] "Graduation Speech by Onkgopotse Tiro at the University of the North , 29 April
1972," *South African History Online*. April 29, 1979, accessed February 26, 2017.
[72] Lerone Bennett, "Separation: Integration is not the sole possible route," *Ebony*, August
1970, 42-43; Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 235-236.
[73] Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 972.
[74] Ibid., 986.

BP-affiliated alliances that were crucial to both the intellectual and strategic influence of the wider BP struggle on the BCM. Bennett's statement also brings attention to the stark economic inequalities that remained in place after the defeat of what Magaziner refers to as "superficial segregation" of black civil liberties in the Civil Rights Act.[75] Evidently, black student university activism and affiliated allies/organizations linked economic and racial arguments in both countries. Events at Columbia and UNorth are case studies which reveal how student organizations adapted the intellectual movements of BP and BC respectively, into the strategies of SASO and BCM-affiliated protests.

VI. Uprising at Columbia University, 1968:

The Columbia University protests of 1968, were a spectacular display of effective coalition-building between a multitude of complex political ideologies, and reflected the greater radical student movements which emerged globally. So far, this chapter has provided a historical summary on the origins of BP and affiliated radical student organizations/movements that aimed to transform society by first transforming the university. The Columbia protests demonstrated the effective alliances between external BP-orientated organizations with the student groups on campus, namely the radical white-led Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and the black-led Student Afro-American Society (SAS). For example, SNCC and the alliance with the SAS and SDS was characterized by exchanges of intellectual and strategic content.

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[75] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 235; Lerone Bennett, "The Ebony Revolution," *Ebony*, November 2005, 74-75.

On April 23, the SDS called for a mass meeting at the Sundial situated in the center of campus; the gathering attracted a crowd of more than 500 people, mostly students, with the intention of occupying the Lowe Library. The list of demands included a call to support the SAS and their demand to halt the construction of a gymnasium on a public park, and to denounce both the pervasive racism on campus, and Columbia's involvement in the IDA.[76] For activists at Columbia, the IDA symbolized the institution's complicity in the Vietnam war machine. At the mass gathering, SAS and SDS protestors were met by counter-protestors labelled by an unknown student activist as the 'jocks' who attempted to block protestors from entering the Low Library. Upon discovering the library was locked, protestors broke-in from the side entrance and were met by the use of belligerent police force. If the university had hoped to dissuade further action, then the plan completely backfired. Instead, SAS and SDS leaders regrouped the invigorated students, which put in motion a rapid development of events that would shake the relatively unsuspecting community at Columbia University.

Within days, five campus buildings – Hamilton, Low, Avery, Fayerweather and Manning – had been occupied by the protestors.[77] These occupied buildings were referred to as communes because of the communal life that activists shared whether it was bed space, food and/or intellectual discussions. Each commune had its own unique ideological/hierarchical structure Avery and Fayerweather were home to the moderate wings of the protests, whose members practiced a system of participatory democracy at meetings as a means of minimizing the differences among activists.[78] Hamilton Hall, was

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[76] *Columbia Revolt*. Produced by Kit Parker. Newsreel Films, 1968. 5:20 – 5:50.
[77] *Columbia Revolt*, 9:07.
[78] Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 976.

the bastion of BP and the seat of the SAS. Although the protestors had legitimate demands, the social nature of the communes permitted a memorable and welcoming atmosphere for students, with commune-borne relationships that strengthened and continued into the summer. One occupier claimed "I've never been so comfortable on this campus" whilst two activists got married inside the commune.[79] When music and dancing was not helping time pass by, communes would be engaged in debates and meetings that lasted up to eight hours a day, claimed one activist.[80] However, serious questions concerning leadership models and styles emerged, especially concerning gender. In the communes, signs were erected to demand the non-gendered designation of house-keeping and chores pertaining to food preparation, as a method of encouraging women to demand rights entitled to them.[81] The latter point is important to consider because it reflected the feminist influences within a protest, and highlights the intersections of ideology within the Columbia protests. Although anti-racism and issues on black marginality on and off campus were the primary reasons and interests behind the emergence of the Columbia protests, black university mobilizations contained various intersectional elements. Such elements, which included gender and sexuality, would later be more explicit in the concerns articulated by Open Stellenbosch and the Concerned Student 1950 collectives in 2015.

Earlier in the decade, SNCC had split from Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and advocated for BP with the intention of achieving black self-determination and expelling white leadership from its ranks.[82] This move influenced SAS

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[79] *Columbia Revolt*, 20:26 – 22:30.
[80] *Columbia Revolt*, 14:50; Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 982.
[81] Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 977.
[82] Stefan Bradley, "'Gym Crow Must Go!' Black Student Activism at Columbia University, 1967-1968," *Journal of African American History* 88, no. 2 (2003): 167.

to invoke an identical strategy when it asked white students at a mass meeting in Hamilton Hall to organize and occupy elsewhere.[83] According to one SDS activist, the split between white and black activists had emerged not only from a difference in ideology but also from the perception held by black activists that white organizations and SDS in particular were "ill-disciplined" and "spread amongst [themselves]."[84] Still, the separation strategy ultimately paid off since more communes grounded by different ideologies emerged. As noted by Slonecker, Hayden met with the Harlem chapter of SNCC during the time of the protests, and his previous connection with the organization suggested the pre-existence of coalitions.[85] This is significant given Hayden's involvement in the SDS because similarly to the protests at UNorth in South Africa, students and activists involved in protests were not always from the same institution and often referred to as 'outside agitators.'

SAS was not concerned with public relations, perceptions, and winning the hearts and minds of white people, but were resolute in wanting to forge an alliance with the black community of Harlem. This tactic was crucial in what was largely seen to be a wealthy white university institution abusing its power to expand through the acquisition of property at the alleged expense of the poorer and primarily black residents of Harlem.[86] Yet the decade had been tumultuous even without the 1964 Harlem riots taken into consideration. Tension and resentment between Columbia administrators and residents of Harlem had centered on property use and spatial conflict arisen from Columbia's expansion into Morningside Heights; evictions had increased and one activist went as far as to describe

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[83] Kendi, *The Black Campus Movement,* 96.
[84] *Columbia Revolt*, 8:45 – 9:00.
[85] Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 976.
[86] Bradley, "Gym Crow Must Go," 173.

university President Grayson Kirk as the "biggest slumlord in Harlem."[87] Another protestor

addressed a crowd and voiced anger in what he perceived to be lies and contradictions of

the university: "Grayson Kirk said we have stopped the gym…the next damned day the

Board of Trustees said we have stopped the gym, *temporarily* [emphasis his]"[88] In essence,

it demonstrates a fickle history between the Harlem community and Columbia University.

One protestor from the Hamilton commune remarked that even "the brothers who had it

made, were protesting so that others could get in," which was in reference to the admission

of black students at Columbia willing to risk their academic futures; but more importantly

it also reflected the cross-class solidarity between student activists across lines of race with

the Harlem community.[89]

The events that unfolded on Columbia's campus were part the wider counterculture

movements of the New Left and the proliferation of BP. Subsequently, African American

studies professor, Stefan Bradley, argued that from the perspective of the activists,

Columbia had come to represent a symbolic and tangible oppressor of marginalized black

interests in an era of explosive demonstrations and racialized neglect of Harlem.[90] Harlem

student activists sought to unearth the powerful private interests whose capital and interests

were exploitative and damaging to the Harlem community. One activist identified Percy

Uris as a member of the board, who was also the chairman of one of New York's largest

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[87] Stefan Bradley, *Harlem vs. Columbia University: Black Student Power in the 1960s.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 89.
[88] *Columbia Revolt*, 05:05.
[89] Ibid., 10:13.
[90] Bradley, "Gym Crow Must Go," 166.

construction firms, the Uris Building Corporation, drawing the connection between wealthy white private interests and access to public land in the primarily black Harlem.[91]

As mentioned before, the university's significance in the transformation of society had been acknowledged by the BP movement, and consequently SAS. According to Lerone Bennett, as quoted in Bradley, SAS students and allies had fought for the "power to control the cultural apparatus which defines reality and shapes and maims minds." This was akin to SDS ideology and its stance on the role and significance of the university. At the time of its establishment in 1962, the SDS was concerned with "the development of a political means toward the creation of a radical society" and argued that it had to begin with the university because of its primary role within society. For many activists, the university was the "integral part of the system's corruption."[92] The role of the university in society fostered hours of debate inside the communes, and became a central component of the coalition's ideology. Most importantly, SAS and SDS, in spite of ideological differences, the coalition had identified the university as central to changing society in the long term.

Despite the radical leadership of both the SAS and SDS, most students identified as moderates before and during the earlier stages of the protest; but having witnessed and experienced first hand the brutality of the police force following the clearing of the communes, many neutral sympathizers were pushed into full-fledged radical supporters. Amidst a scene of billy-club wielding police officers, flanked by the 'jocks,' one protestor explained how the whole experienced radicalized him; "I was passive, non-violent but this changed me…I am not neutral…I will occupy [again] tomorrow."[93] Furthermore, the post-

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[91] *Columbia Revolt*, 3:37 – 3:55.
[92] Bradley, "Gym Crow Must Go," 166-8.
[93] *Columbia Revolt*, 29:07

raid atmosphere of the campus was soured by the pervasive presence of police officers on campus who guarded entrances with a check-point system because, the administration wanted to keep out activists without formal ties to Columbia. A man who could have been a student or staff member furiously remarked: "I mean, take a look, what is this? A god damned police state! They have got cops all over campus, the entrances, you got to show two cards to get in, what is this!"[94] Eventually, the police presence ebbed in the onset of summer as campus activity abated but Columbia had been changed by the wave of BCM that swept the country and the campus. Columbia had also been exposed as vulnerable to the organized demands of black radical students and capitulated to the demand to halt the gym construction in Harlem. In the same way black radical activism at Mizzou and Stellenbosch universities in 2015 would challenge said institutions to acknowledge its role in the past and present injustices both on and off-campus, Columbia was forced to reconsider its role its relationship with its black students and surrounding Harlem community. Overall, student consciousness and campus based activism in America had been invigorated by multiple facets of the BP movement, which facilitated the conditions for alliances between SNCC, SAS, SDS and Harlem activists. These organizations converged to forge an alliance that propelled the Columbia protests of 1968.

VI. University of the North and SASO protests 1972:

By now, this chapter has discussed the historical development of Black Consciousness and its influence on SASO, that served as the movement's home base in South Africa. In the dearth of organized black mobilization of the 1960s, SASO emerged to usurp the white

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[94] *Columbia Revolt*, 30:06 – 30:22.

liberal NUSAS as the leading organization for black student interests and focused its attention on dismantling the racist education policies of the Apartheid state. This section assesses the impact of the 1972 uprisings at the University of the North (UNorth) and the transformation of SASO strategy between 1968 – 1972 from negotiation to confrontation.

In a 1971 speech at UNorth as SRC president, Onkgopotse Abraham Tiro stated that the "university is not a place for revolutions" and that "no student can enroll with a university for the sole purpose of staging demonstrations and protest marches."[95] Tiro's statements were aligned with SASO thinking in the early 1970s. According to academic Julian Brown, Steve Biko urged activists in general to refrain from demonstrations that led to confrontational violence with police and instead advocated a "third idiom" protest that aimed to work within the parameters of the law.[96] Yet from its origins in 1968 to the protests of 1972, BC had become more clearly defined, and as a result, simultaneously influenced SASO to part from a strategy of negotiation to confrontation. The change of strategy in the four-year period reflected the speed at which dissent and activism grew alongside the proliferation of BC ideas. The difference between Tiro's speeches of 1971 and 1972 not only indicated how rapid the changes were but articulated the changes in strategy by BC-inspired/SASO-affiliated leaders.

In April 1972, Tiro was now a graduate student at UNorth, and as the former SRC president, had been requested by students to speak at the graduation ceremony at the same institution.[97] As mentioned earlier the Apartheid government had not yet deemed SASO a threat in 1972 and thus overlooked the migration of black students from NUSAS to SASO

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[95] Magaziner, *The Law and the Prophets*, 148-150.
[96] Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest," 723.
[97] Ibid., 724.

at the time. Conservative white administrators were also opposed to white-liberals which was made clear when white university rector, J.L. Boshoff denounced NUSAS. But Boshoff and other white administrators who held similar beliefs reflected *Verwoedian* thinking, which was characterized by great disdain for white liberalism and their movement.[98] Moreover, Tiro had delivered the welcoming speech in 1971 in his then-capacity as the SRC leader which was markedly different in tone and ideology to the speech in 1972. Although administrators were reluctant to allow Tiro to speak again, they were unaware of the change in his political views and partly explains why the administration permitted his speech in 1972.

The unique character of UNorth's composition compared to other black institutions created a symbolically appropriate catalyst for nation-wide protests, since its multi-ethnic coalition epitomized BC philosophy that rejected the core Apartheid ideology of "ethnic fragmentation."[99] Established in 1959, UNorth was designed to educate a black elite class that would serve in the designated Bantustans regions. Despite the stipulations of separate ethnic education policy, the university enrolled students from several Bantustans, and had a heterogeneous student body comprised of Sotho, Venda, Tsonga and Tswana students, unlike other black colleges which were homogenous.[100] Nonetheless, Tiro's deliberately critical speech angered administrators who perceived the speech to be a gross over-step of the respectable boundaries of a black student. The administration's response underscored the paternalistic nature of institutional culture and white apartheid society at large.

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[98] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 176.
[99] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities,* 113.
[100] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 174.

Still, Tiro's speech did not mark the commencement of struggle since protests and boycotts at Fort Hare had already occurred in 1970 – in disregard for SASO's policy at that point.[101] Rather, the events that unfolded in the wake of his speech reflected the students' migration to radical politics. In the same way BP aligned activists in the US turned their attention to the university in the 1960s – a shift that included Howard and Columbia among several others – SASO's confrontation with administrators appeared inevitable due to the philosophical contradiction that existed between black Apartheid education and ideologies of liberation.

Unsurprisingly, the response was swift and draconian. Tiro was expelled on the decision of a university senate vote. His expulsion created conditions for students to mobilize in support of Tiro's speech. The SRC organized a mass gathering where it was decided that action should be taken and a boycott of all academic classes ensued. However, the university was under pressure to maintain order and leaders were willing to risk the functioning of the university to do so. In an almost farcical reaction, the administration summarily expelled every student, and triggered a re-admission process on a conditional basis.[102] This extreme tactic allowed the university to bar re-admission to students suspected and renowned for campus politicking but underestimated the steady inward gains of BC on student consciousness nationally, and ultimately contributed to the escalation of unrest across the country.

In the ensuing days following the speech and Tiro's expulsion, student activism against repressive university responses escalated.[103] Such responses often included the

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[101] Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest," 726.
[102] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 180.
[103] Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest," 725.

excessive use of police force as well as the banning and arrest of prominent student leaders and activists.[104] In May 1972, the mass expulsions at UNorth facilitated the meeting of student delegates from UNorth and other schools in the small town of Alice, home to Fort Hare University, where the Alice Declaration (named after the host town, Alice) was passed by SASO. The declaration called for the closure of black universities through effective boycott strategies as a means of bringing attention to the pervasive discontent of black university-going students in Apartheid South Africa's oppressive atmosphere of higher education. But the white administrators of black universities hardened their stance and continued to repress the nation-wide discontent, as was evident at UNorth's mass expulsions. Julian Brown argued that the deployment of police across campuses nationwide demonstrated the insidious partnership of administrators and state forces.[105]

Later that year, recently elected SASO president and Fort Hare student Jerry Modisane was arrested upon visiting the HBCU University of the Western Cape (UWC) for trespassing.[106] Modisane's arrest reflected a coordinated tactic by police, university administrators and the Apartheid government to limit the growing reach of SASO by targeting the organization's highest leadership. But, these efforts had a limited effect on stemming the spread of campus demonstrations. Even prior to Modisane's banning, UWC students had boycotted classes and university-provided catering in solidarity with the repression of students at UNorth, which fueled the coordinated momentum of SASO to call for a nation-wide boycott, just a month later in June 1972.[107] In addition to the boycotts

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[104] Brown, 729-31; Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 180-81.
[105] Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest," 731.
[106] Ibid., 731.
[107] Ibid., 726-27.

dictated by the Alice Declaration, UWC students called for the university to be 'Africanized,' which echoed demands outlined by UNorth in 1971, albeit the latter proposed such measures in an attempt to improve relations between an angered and indignant student populace and conservative administration. In addition to Fanon's earlier definition of 'Africanization,' students in the Black Studies movement and later Open Stellenbosch/Fees Must Fall movement, understood 'Africanization' to be concerned with the increase of black staff and administrators to a majority share as well as an overhaul of the curriculum that would instead center the newly defined notion of blackness.[108]

As mentioned earlier, the top-down bureaucratic management of black Apartheid universities over the social and intellectual production of academics and students, was skewed towards flagrant anti-blackness. This fostered an immense barrier to the independence of black staff members and administrators in their careers, as well as making it difficult to enact effective change without harsh repercussions. At UNorth, following the senate vote to expel Tiro, black staff members affiliated with BASA dissented from strategic neutral passivity to protest the use of police and the restriction of their power in university voting decisions.[109] Part of the 'Africanizing' process entailed increasing black staff personal to a numerical majority, in order to counteract parochial white-voting interests. Staff who were held in high regard by students were oftentimes involved in the student politics and aligned with the ideology of BC. This often included radical white staff members who were usually Marxist aligned. As a consequence, such staff members had their work contracts terminated or were pressured into resignation.[110]

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[108] Brown, "SASO's Reluctant Embrace of Public Forms of Protest," 724.
[109] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 179.
[110] Nkomo, *Student culture and activism in black South African universities,* 9, 22, 68-70.

The effectiveness of the coordinated boycotts and solidarity protests was remarkable given SASO's short history, and is indicative of the powerful resonance BC had on students and their newly found sense of blackness and subjecthood under the obtuse racial categorizations of the Apartheid government. The impact reverberated beyond the black campuses and gained momentum in the school movements. In fact, Tiro accepted a position at Moris Isaacson High School following his expulsion from UNorth in 1972, and mentored promising students with the teachings of BC. Tiro was pressured to resign in 1973 and was later assassinated during his exile in Botswana in 1974 – but his legacy continued. One of Tiro's impressionable students, Tsietsi Mashinini, later became chair of the Soweto Students Representative Council (SSRC) which was instrumental in the mobilization of students during the 1976 Soweto Uprisings.[111] The events between the speech at UNorth in 1972 to the uprisings four years later, demonstrate Tiro's role as an interlocutor in the exchange, development and dissemination of BC.

Moreover, SASO's shift in strategy from negotiation to confrontation was hastened by an atmosphere of heightened awareness among black South African youth alongside increasingly hostile black universities. Ironically, SASO's intellectual teachings on BC pushed students towards confrontation, during a time when BC intellectuals such as Biko were advocating non-confrontation, but Biko and Tiro took note of such changes. SASO did not develop its relationship to BC in a top-down manner but in a reciprocal manner which itself reflects the overlap in the development of both BC and SASO. By 1972, the culmination of these factors rendered non-confrontation unfeasible. As a result, SASO's new confrontation strategy avoided an erosion of leadership legitimacy because it helped

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[111] Heffernan, "Black Consciousness's Lost Leader," 181-82.

direct the energy of the galvanized students against the university and the Apartheid state at large.

VIII. Summary:

The origins of two liberation and intellectual movements, Black Consciousness and Black Power, were discussed in this chapter. Both movements drew from earlier black intellectual movements of transnational origin such as the Pan-Africanist and Black Nationalist movements; the symbolic and ideological significance of African independence movements and its leaders such as Kenneth Kaunda and Kwame Nkrumah, greatly influenced BP and BC intellectuals such as Carmichael and Biko. But the two intellectual movements were mostly shaped by conditions specific to the local contexts of protests such as, among others, the origin stories of HBCUs as well as the legalized forms of racism that were far more prevalent in South Africa. The ideologies of BP and BC profoundly influenced radical black student activism as demonstrated by the origins and strategic choices of SASO in South Africa and organizations within the BCM in America. In section VI the uprisings at Columbia served as a case study that closely followed the SDS and SAS organizations within the coalition. The conditions/context that promoted the protests were explicated in the examples of campus racism and the construction of a gym in the Harlem community, as well as the strategies adopted by the coalition with the establishment of communes. Section VII used UNorth as a case study that detailed SASO's strategy transition from negotiation to confrontation.

Both liberation ideologies articulated scathing critiques of capitalist political economies, and identified the university as central to the transformation of society because

it is deeply implicated in reproduction of racialized inequality through social, intellectual and economic dimensions. Such connections were articulated in Tiro's 1972 speech at UNorth, whilst similarly in America, it was revealed that board members on Columbia were connected to New York's business elite, who wielded political and social influence both over the university and the Harlem community. Although SASO and the BC movement sought aesthetic/symbolic inspiration from the BP movement – such as the clenched fist or hair-styling— the strategies which emphasized black-led leadership and a split from white suasion/appeasement can be attributed to the experiences black activists faced in their respective local contexts. In both incidences, the emphasis on black-only organization was not punishment for white-liberals and radicals alike; on the contrary, it allowed black students to demand more radical changes that had favorable outcomes in both countries.

Notwithstanding the differences in the origin stories of HBCUs in both countries comparatively, issues such as conservative campus cultures, a lack of black staff diversity and a white/euro-centric curriculum were comparable issues that galvanized students into action in both America and South Africa. Such preconditions also alluded to the similarities in societies with histories of white racism, black oppression and racialized capitalism. Overall, both BP and BC fostered intellectual cognizance that elucidates the connections between racism on campus and the racialized economic oppression which the institution of universities were complicit in. Thus, it is likely the paradigm shifts that took place in both political economies between 1972 – 2015, would have an impact on the liberation movements and its influence on black radical student activism in the long term.

Chapter Two: Post-Racial Societies and the Return of Protests, 2015

I. Overview:

In 2015, universities in the United States and South Africa once again were the site black radical student activism. Blacks students at Mizzou stood with a clenched fist at a rally organized in protest against campus racism, whilst students in Stellenbosch joined thousands of other students and staff in a national university shutdown. At a glance, the remnants of the movements that shook campuses in both countries during 1968 – 1972 are evident. But in the roughly four decades between the protests that rocked Columbia and UNorth, and the overarching liberation struggles that inspired the intellectual and strategic formations of Black Campus Movement (BCM) and SASO – much has changed politically. In the United States, the myth of a post-racial colorblind society began in the 1970s through the efforts of political rhetoric and legislative changes that started during the Nixon administration. In South Africa, the colorblind approach to race has been at the center of the post-apartheid political narrative since 1994, whilst an increasingly neoliberal economic framework has been implemented under the leadership of the ANC. Yet the emergence of Open Stellenbosch (OS) and Concerned Student 1950 (CS) contradicted the narrative of the post-racial American and South African myth and brought the university to the center of radical black student activism once again.

In Section II, the chapter takes a theoretical approach. The concepts of neoliberalism and colorblindness are introduced and defined generally and discussed in terms of the particular historical conditions from which the new political framework emerged in South Africa and America respectively – collectively known as the paradigm shifts. In doing so, it provides the context in which Black Consciousness (BC) and Black

Power (BP) movements declined as well as the new challenges the paradigm shift presented for black student activism in 2015. Given the transnational origins and influences discussed in chapter one in relation to the formation of the BC and BP intellectual movements, section III traces the threads that connect the two aforementioned liberation ideologies to the Fees Must Fall (FMF) and Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements in South Africa and America. Together, the analysis in sections I, II, and III exemplify the context necessary to understand how the university was challenged in the protests of 2015. Using Stellenbosch University and the University of Missouri as case studies, the mobilizations of OS and CS are analysed in sections IV and V. Lastly, section VI discusses the perceptions, backlash and reactions to OS and CS.

In alignment with the thesis overall, this chapter raises several key questions throughout its sections which are signposted as follows. Did the neoliberal/racial colorblind political framework which produced the post racial myth,[1] also contribute to the absence of sustained black social movements between the events of 1960/70s until the emergence of new movements/organizations in the 2010s? How were BLM and the FMF movements of the 2010s influenced by and/or differed to the BP and BC movements of the 1960/70s respectively? How similar or different were the experiences and strategies implemented by OS and CS compared to SASO and BCM? In light of the comparative nature of this thesis, the collective analysis of the above conditions will allude to the universities importance within the narrative of student activism in 2015 and 1968 – 1972.[2]

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[1] In Section II, see "capitalist realism." Also, the 'neoliberal colorblind political framework' are part of the collective changes that constituted the 'paradigm shift'.
[2] Also taking into consideration institutional culture, student/administration reactions, and alliances between black radical student organizations, strategies used in protests.

II. Paradigm Shifts - Neoliberalism, Colorblindness and the post-racial myth:

Neoliberalism has been defined in numerous contexts but generally refers to a political and economic paradigm in which freedom is synonymous with market terms unimpeded by political and market regulation. Furthermore, neoliberal globalization seeks to naturalize structures of inequality under the gospel of unfettered markets, and became the dominant political paradigm in both countries.[3] Colorblindness is a logic that refutes race as a contributing factor in a myriad of social interactions which allows colorblind racism to proceed unchecked. Kendra Barber argues that colorblind racism, an outcome of political colorblind frameworks, is centered on the premise of blaming the victim instead of the racist factors that underpin economic and social harm in one's individual context. Moreover, this perpetuates an ahistorical approach to understanding identity that negates the workings of racism as a system of power within social institutions.[4] For example, colorblind logic suggests that all students are entitled to an equal education, but the legacy of residential segregation in both countries, and the consequent stratification of resources in capitalist societies, facilitates the reproduction of racial inequality.

In 1994, South Africa's ruling party the African National Congress (ANC) under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, helped the country's 'elite transition' into the global economy and increasingly adopted a neoliberal agenda whilst colorblindness increasingly

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[3] Alison Schonkwiler and Leigh Claire La Berge, "Introduction: A Theory of Capitalist Realism," in *Reading Capitalist Realism,* ed. by Alison Schonkwiler and Leigh Claire La Berge (Iowa City, IO: University of Iowa Press, 2014), 4.

[4] Kendra Hadiya Barber, ""What Happened to All the Protests?" Black Megachurches' Responses to Racism in a Colorblind Era," *Journal of African American Studies* 15 (2011): 220.

became the primary understanding of race relations. These events coincided with substantial economic globalization in the wake of capitalism's symbolic and material triumph in the Cold War, following the collapse of the Soviet Union.[5] The occurrence of the latter marked the enclosure of global capitalism, rendering socialist alternatives which had been at center of both BP and BC's critique - discredited and antiquated. Writer and cultural theorist Mark Fisher argues that the logic of neoliberalism creates the emergence of a 'capitalist realism' that characterizes the belief in capitalism as the only viable political-economic system. This approach ultimately fostered a deepened sense of resignation primarily among leftist activists, both in South Africa with regards to the ANC and in America in the wake of 2011's Occupy Wall Street.[6] Fisher continues: "Ideology is of course at its strongest when it appears non-political, just the way things are. When capitalist realism is at its most powerful, it always generates this depoliticizing effect."[7]

When the ruling ANC and the alliance with powerful white Apartheid elite business class emphasized peace and stability, it occurred at the expense of tackling chronic social injustice.[8] This policy seemed to have adequately appeased the international community as

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[5] Patrick Bond, *Elite transition: from apartheid to neoliberalism in South Africa* (London; Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 2000), 15.

[6] Jodi Dean and Mark Fisher, "We can't Afford to be Realists," in *Reading Capitalist Realism,* ed. by Alison Schonkwiler and Leigh Claire La Berge (Iowa City, IO: University of Iowa Press, 2014), 26-27.

[7] Dean and Fisher, "We can't Afford to be Realists," 27.

[8] The chronic social injustices described in this context, refers to the racialized economic inequality produced by the Apartheid state. Millions of black South Africans were impoverished by Apartheid's separate development policies that grossly underfunded or neglected black communities entirely. Therefore, during the series of negotiations during 1990 – 1993 that ended Apartheid, there was pressure from mainly socialist factions to address the social injustices through state-intervention policies. The goal of such proposed political measures were to achieve economic redistribution. However, little changed within the economic hierarchy of South Africa.

well as the local and international financial and business interests which earned South Africa a reputation as an example of outstanding conflict resolution.[9] So too was the non-racial[10] society that the ANC envisioned for a post-apartheid South Africa, enshrined in then President Mandela's 1996 constitution and has largely become synonymous with a colorblind understanding of race relations in South African society. Such thinking has been enthusiastically taken up by the opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, as supporters stressed an "individualist" and "colorblind" approach to employment and general economic advancement – as indicated by a 1998 party document.[11] In the years that followed 1994, the rebranding/renaming of key infrastructure at the command of the ANC such as O.R. Tambo International Airport and a plethora of street names in Durban to name a few, contributed to the narrative of the transformed and representative state.[12] South Africans born after the first free and fair democratic elections in 1994, were touted as the generation raised without the lived experience of the apartheid regime and increasingly referred to as the "born-free" generation in the media across lines of race. Moreover, the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 2002, created the language of restorative justice from which forgiveness and reconciliation were supposed to take place.[13] The legacy of the TRC hearings resembles the enactment of civil rights legislature in the United States because it produced the politic rhetoric and national

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[9] Bond, *Elite transition*, 3-11, 90-95; Sisonke Msimang, "The strongest victims in the world," *The Daily Maverick,* February 25, 2016, accessed May 4, 2016.

[10] Non-racialism is a principle within the Freedom Charter of the ANC and was a guiding document in the drafting of the new progressive constitution of South African society.

[11] Christi van der Westhuizen, "Race: The DA's elephant in the Room," *The Mail & Guardian*, May 9, 2014, accessed April 10, 2017.

[12] Kyle G. Brown, "South Africa's street signs, place names lead to more struggle," *The Star*, May 28 2010, accessed April 20, 2017.

[13] Msimang, "The strongest victims in the world."

discourse of a 'clean slate' whilst failing to confront how racism continues to be a key organizing principle in South African society.

In the United States, the advent of the colorblind political framework emerged for different reasons to South Africa. The BP movement and the Civil Rights activism that preceded it, raised important connections between race and economics that contradicted the narrative of America as 'an equal land of opportunity.' The American ruling elites were threatened by the occurrence of radical protests because the black liberation movements appeared to inspire other marginalized groups (such as the feminist and gay liberation movements) to also demand radical change.[14] In 1968, President Lyndon-Johnson appointed the Kerner Commission to investigate the causes behind riots and it found African-Americans eligible to claim federal aid on racial claims because of the racial discrimination experienced at the hands of a myriad of public and private institutions, which included universities.[15] Furthermore, BP-affiliated Huey Newton, who spoke from a different political spectrum to President Johnson, had similar related points about capitalism and the links to racial oppression: "We realize that this country became very rich upon slavery and that slavery is capitalism in the extreme. We have two evils to fight, capitalism and racism. We must destroy both racism and capitalism."[16] Newton's critique of capitalism and the desire to overthrow and replace it with socialism, was emblematic of the ideology in the wider BP movement, such as the Weatherman faction during the 1968 Columbia protests mentioned in Chapter One.[17]

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[14] Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* (Chicago, Haymarket Books: 2016), 55.
[15] Taylor, *#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 52.
[16] Philip Sheldon Foner, *The Black Panther's Speak* (Haymarket Books, 1970), 51.
[17] Slonecker, "The Columbia Coalition," 986.

By 1970, President Richard Nixon was under pressure to restore business confidence that felt threatened by the rise of the welfare state and workers' rights, and to reverse the heightened consciousness of race-related problems in America. As a result, Nixon developed the "Southern Strategy" which exploited the resentments and fears of white Democratic Party voters in the South in order to secure a voting bloc for the Republican Party. The defecting whites were threatened by the rhetoric of Civil Rights and BP whilst others were incensed by the idea of government intervention in aiding the black community.[18] The Southern Strategy's ability to appeal to racial resentments without explicit racist remarks is indicative of the logic behind colorblindness. Such racial politicking or "dog whistle" politics is evident in Lee Atwater's now infamous remarks: "…By 1968 you can't say "nigger" [sic] – that hurts you, it backfires. So you say stuff like, uh, forced busing, state's rights, and all stuff, and you're getting so abstract. Now you're talking about cutting taxes…and a byproduct of them is, blacks get hurt worse than whites…". Atwater's statement is indicative of the racism often behind the colorblind rhetoric and exhibits the pathologizing of black culture by means of attributing a myriad of social problems to a "lack of personal responsibility." In pathologizing black culture, the overarching political, economic and social obstacles to the black communities standard of living are negated.[19] In addition, it created coded racial distinctions between the deserving (white) poor and the undeserving poor (black), a divide and conquer strategy. Since whites had mostly benefited from the welfare expansion of 1960s, ruling-class ideology began to implement the language of freedom and choice, as a means of creating the perception of a

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[18] Ian Haney-Lopez,"The Racism at the Heart of the Reagan Presidency," *Salon*, January 11, 2014, accessed March 20, 2017.

[19] Taylor, *#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 49.

free and fair and society and attributed failure to vague notions of culture or individual choice.[20] Nixon's Urban and Housing cabinet member, George Romney, used racially coded colorblind rhetoric that framed poverty as an outcome of "crisis problem people" rather than public expenditure cuts. This rhetoric allows for political leaders to blame black people and simultaneously obscures/underreports white poverty ultimately to ensure the inequities of American capitalism, the cause behind all poverty, remains invisible.[21] Colorblindness, then, subverts racial justice by hindering cross-racial unity, and instead permits racists stereotypes about blacks as an explanation for the emergence of the protests.

By the late 1970s, the potency of the colorblind racism embedded within the "Southern Strategy" was strong enough to reverse the trend of a growing number of whites who became conscious of the demands at the forefront of black social movements and agreed to the expansion of the welfare state to address both white people's own interests as well as the historical inequities of racialized capitalism. In 1970, certain polls found the public leaning on the left political spectrum, with majority opinions against the death penalty, in favor of affirmative action and almost 70% of people polled claiming they would vote for a black president – up from 38% in 1958.[22] Factoring in a margin of error, it is evident the wider black activism had played a substantial role in pushing the public leftward, and rendered outright political racism unacceptable. Yet, by end of the 1970s and in spite of the crisis of political confidence brought on by Watergate, and the Iranian hostage crisis under President Carter, the potential for solidarity or broad coalition between white and black communities, had been eroded by the shift towards the right. Collectively,

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[20] Taylor, *#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 62
[21] Ibid., 48-9
[22] Ibid., 60.

the paradigm shift of colorblindness and the emphasis on individual agency associated with neoliberalism, not only placed a wedge between the potential solidarity with the growing numbers of poor whites and other groups to form coalitions, but the dominant narrative becomes accepted even within the black community. Taylor explains: "[African American] acceptance of the dominant narrative that blames blacks for their own oppression is one explanation for the delay in the development of a new a black movement, even while police brutality persists."[23]

Although the United States had a head start in the implementation of the paradigm shifts, South Africa's 1994 election would bear witness to a revolutionary nationalist ANC capitulating to a neoliberal agenda – much to the bitter disappoint of the left.[24] Keith Breckinridge explains in the context of the post-apartheid capitalist realism:

> Confronted with vigorous forms of consumer capitalism, a rights-based political order, entrenched racialized inequality, high levels of personal violence, and conspicuous patrimonialism in the state, South Africans have opted for the most unconstrained forms of individualism, much to the bitter disappointment of the leading humanist writers, black and white.[25]

Breckingridge's sentiments align with those of anti-Apartheid activist Ronnie Kasrils, who has been critical of the post-Apartheid regime. Kasrils claimed that in spite of Mandela's support of the "socialist inclined" Freedom Charter (that favored state control over key economic means of production capable of addressing inequality) he embraced economic policies that favored the international business elite.[26] In the long term, redistributive

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[23] Taylor, *#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 49.
[24] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 224.
[25] Keith Breckingridge, "Hopeless Entanglement: The Short History of the Academic Humanities in South Africa," *American Historical Review* 120, no. 4 (2015): 1266.
[26] Ronnie Kasrils, interview by Amy Goodman, *Democracy Now.* December 12, 2013. *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mA5N5hca_WY&spfreload=10*

policies such as nationalization become unattractive political and activist pursuits because the neoliberal political framework has deemed anti-capitalist pursuits as non-rational, unaffordable and unrealistic, whilst on the other hand, colorblind rhetoric undermines the race-based reasons behind redistributive policies.[27] The public sphere is increasingly swayed to accommodate business thinking, free markets and individualism which collectively accompany the wholesale privatization of social life, excessive police/private security force in response to dissent and the institutionalization/corporatization of activism. Peter Dauvergne and Genevieve LeBaron argue that the corporatization of activism, in general, is not just concerned with the organizational aspects of activism work such as financing and staff, but the immersion of corporate culture which in itself is instrumental in the shift of responsibility away from state actors to private corporate and individual domains.

Collectively, these factors produced challenges for contemporary activism that were different for activists from conditions those that organized in the 1960/70s faced. It is important to highlight that the decline of BP and radical activism in America is not solely attributed to the rise of the colorblind discourse and the atomization of communities through neoliberal restructuring. The BP movement's ability to capture long-lasting change was also hampered by government crackdowns such as COINTELPRO, assassinations and negative media portrayal.[28] Still, American sociologist Andrew Barlow argues, Jim Crow and other strict segregation laws had shaped a multi-class black community of the 1960s, but subsequent changes in society have contributed to black communities that are

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[27] Schonkweiler and La Berge, "Introduction: A Theory of Capitalist Realism," 2.
[28] Andrew Barlow, "The contemporary crisis of neo-liberalism and Black Power Today," *The Black Scholar* 40, no. 2 (2010): 27.

separated by both race and class today, conditions that create difficult conditions for unity and organization. Barlow continues: "The challenge today for black politics is to understand the ways that globalization is both intensifying the problems of the US black community, as well as creating new opportunities for black liberation."[29] Political scientist and critic of neoliberalism Lester Spence, argues the challenges lay in the task of getting people to understand and contest neoliberalism, and building the local infrastructure of organizations aimed at issues that include fighting student debt and foreclosure. These are difficult challenges that require new solutions, and "we do this not by making overtures based on bygone eras, movements, definitions, or assumptions."[30]

By the 2010s in post-Apartheid South Africa, the unrelenting systematic marginalization, poverty, and police violence against black bodies under a black-government, were the new conditions that defined the challenges activists faced when compared to the 1968 – 1972 period. In Marikana Massacre in 2012, 36 unarmed miners were gunned down by primarily black police officers which presented a devastating example of the decimation of black bodies during the post-Apartheid era – all in the interest of foreign capital.[31] Black police officers deployed to enact violence in the name of powerful white interests, has historical origins in the Apartheid regime. It is for this reason that Achille Mbembe, the Cameroonian-South African academic, has discussed the problem in terms of necro-politics and has posited that institutional racism and other echoes

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[29] Barlow, "The contemporary crisis of neo-liberalism," 31.
[30] Lester Spence, "Race, Class and Neoliberal scourge," *Tikkun,* Fall 2013, 31.
[31] The Marikana mine is owned by Lonmin, a public company registered in London with its operational headquarters situated in Johannesburg.

of apartheid will not die "natural deaths"[32] It is impossible to see a natural death of apartheid infrastructure since wealth and power remain trapped in white spaces. These connections reveal an oppressive intersection between capital hegemony, race and institutional culture that continue to flourish in the post-Apartheid landscape while being permitted under the watch of a primarily black government. Similar to the United States, Taylor argues that racism has never been simply about the abuse of black and brown bodies but rather about the richest and most powerful white men who have adopted the ideology to divide and conquer, and in the process justify the accumulation of wealth whilst defectors are nullified.[33]

Given the pervasive nature of colorblindness in the context of deeply racist societies, it is not surprising that all bodies are susceptible to absorbing its nefarious ideologies. Keeange-Yamahtta Taylor argues that in the age of post-racial societies, whiteness as a harmful brand of white supremacy, is not restricted to white people but can also be by embodied by black and brown bodies.[34] This lends itself to the philosophical nature of whiteness that extends beyond the flesh and blood, but also persists to exist as an ideology that when combined with economic capital has repercussions that play themselves out across spatial landscapes, modern segregation and institutional culture. In the Obama Era, massive gains in black leadership and representation occurred alongside calamities that greatly affected black communities. Evidently, we are here presented with a contradiction, since it is difficult to reconcile the gulf between a society in which black

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[32] "Achille Mbembe, "The State of South African Political Life," *Africa is a Country,* September 19, 2015. Accessed February 15, 2017.
[33] Taylor, *#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, 216.
[34] Ibid., 210.

people are represented at the level of the head of state, police chiefs, renowned athletes and celebrity superstars on the one hand, and the rate of incarceration and or the killing of Michael Brown as metonym for dealing with black people, on the other hand. From this analysis, one can see how racial abuse which routinely transpires on and off campuses, can be absorbed by institutional cultures such as in the case of the University of Mizzou.

III. Ancestral liberation movements – Fees Must Fall and Black Lives Matter:

> "Nostalgia in the West for the 1960s leads some writers to portray this period as the heyday of popular protest as a political tool. Yet protest recurs across generations, the intensity rising and falling over time."[35] - Peter Dauvergne and Genevieve LeBaron

So far, this chapter has historicized and located the advent of neoliberalism and colorblindness in the context of political crisis that began in the United States in the 1970s, with South Africa experiencing a similar paradigm shift at the end of Apartheid that coincided with the acceleration of the global economy at the end of the Cold War. The narrowing of the political and social spectrum produced a depoliticizing effect in what Mark Fisher theorized to be capitalist realism. As a result, the critique of capitalism and efforts to unearth its entanglement with racial oppression that were once central to both ideologies of BP and BC, had been undermined by the new paradigm shifts that contributed to their structural decline. Yet, in spite of the factors that transformed the conditions for organization and protest, new black liberation movements recently emerged to fight racial

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[35] Peter Dauvergne and Genevieve LeBaron, *Protest Inc.: The Corporatization of Activism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 6.

injustices with black student activists in both countries once again leading protests on university campuses.

In 2013, Black Lives Matter (BLM) was established in the United States by three community-based activists Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometti, in the wake of the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the killing of Treyvon Martin.[36] For Garza, her younger brother's age was close to Martin's at the time of Zimmerman's acquittal which affected her deeply. Garza discussed the aims and mission of the movement in her *Feminist Wire* essay: "Black Lives Matter goes beyond the narrow nationalism that can be prevalent within some Black communities, which merely call on Black people to love Black, live Black and buy Black. Black Lives Matter affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks…" and the movement represented "…an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise."[37] Patrisse Cullors discussed the empowerment of the clenched fist from the BP movement that she learned from her father. Cullors also cited the visibility and leadership of black women and transgender people in the BLM as a distinguishing factor in comparison to the BP movement.[38] BLM is increasingly unearthing the connections between race, the justice system and mass incarceration. The development of the neoliberal state required new measures of displaying effective governance, such as politicians being tough on crime and jailing thousands of primarily black men.[39] Race-conscious black

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[36] Darryl Lorenzo Wellington, "The Power of Black Lives Matter," *Crisis,* Winter 2015, 20-21.

[37] Alicia Garza, "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement by Alicia Garza," *The Feminist Wire,* October 7, 2014, accessed March 16, 2017.

[38] Carl C. Chancellor, "#BlackLivesMatter deeply connects to Black Power Movement." *USA Today*, February 1, 2016, accessed April 25, 2017.

[39] Barlow, "The contemporary crisis of neo-liberalism," 28.

activists raised similar questions during the Occupy movement in 2011 – an important

precursor to the emergence of the BLM. Journalist and writer Darryl Lorenzo Wellington

discussed the problem at length:

> "The conundrum was how could a country that elected a Black president still passively let segregated ghettoes and large oases of socio-economic hopelessness remain intact? And turn a blind eye on the rates of Black child poverty and Black incarceration? How could Black people and Native Americans remain the most afflicted of the 99 percent? When we consider specific issues of discrimination, race still trumps class. How could America deny that Black lives mattered?"[40]

This quote is significant for two reasons. First, the disjuncture between black political

representation and the occurrence of the killings of unarmed black people highlighted the

limitations of symbolic milestones such as the election of President Barack Obama as an

accurate barometer for measuring societal change. Second, it articulates the complexity of

identifying and tackling issues without a solid foundation of intersectional goal and

leadership strategies. Drawing from the critique of the limitations of Black Nationalism

and cultural production in the legacy of BP, and the limitations of the Occupy movement's

largely ahistorical positioning of class, BLM emerged as a means of addressing this

vacuum.

As the BP movement had done before, the Black Lives Matter empowered students

nation-wide to stand in solidarity with the Mizzou protests. The context related to the

Mizzou protests is comparable to the Columbia protests of 1968 which in addition to

campus and Harlem community grievances, were aided by the momentum of the wider BP

movement. On November 18 2015, students nationwide participated in the

#StudentBlackOut, where universities across the nation witnessed mass sit-ins and

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[40] Wellington, "The Power of Black Lives Matter," 21.

boycotts. This included HWCUs such as Princeton University where several hundred students staged a walk-out whilst others occupied the President's office because they wanted administration to "take racism seriously."[41] The solidarity protests at Wesleyan University stipulated equitable hiring practices in staff and faculty as well as the implementation of a multicultural center. These demands are reminiscent of the previous era of protests that defined the Black Studies movement and BCM in general. The Concerned Student 1950 collective were also inspired by the symbols of the clenched fist and Pan-Africanist colors made famous by the BP movement. This was evident by the T-shirts worn by activists during a courageous face-off with a hostile crowd of white parents and students at the Mizzou homecoming.[42]

In South Africa, SASO's legitimacy as the leading organization of radical student activism has waned amidst its institutionalization under the ANC government in the post Apartheid regime. Since early 2000s, SASCO (formerly SASO) has demonstrated a minimized role in the leadership of facilitating national protests. As a result of SASCO's alignment with the ANC in the post-Apartheid society, new mobilizations were prompted to organize even before the emergence of FMS and affiliated organizations such as OS in 2015. For example in 2004, protests at the University of KwaZulu-Natal resulted in a split between the SASCO and its socialist alliance faction, with the latter accusing the former of selling out to the national party's agenda and further criticized SASCO's emphasis on

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[41] Maya Chung, "#StudentBlackOut: College Students Rally, Demand Change Across Campus," *NBC*, November 18, 2015, accessed January 20, 2017.

[42] Tyler Kingkade, "The Incident You Have To See To Understand Why Students Wanted Mizzou's President To Go"**,** *The Huffington Post*, November 10, 2015, accessed December 20, 2016; See Section VI. for further information on the Mizzou homecoming protest incident.

working with the ANC.[43] In essence, the students politics at UKZN revealed a conscientious shift in the early 2000s away from the now politicized strategy of SASCO. This shift signified the declining impact of the BC liberation movements of the 1960/70s. Yet despite the decline of SASCO, professor of Public Affairs at Tshwane University of Technology, Mashupye Maerumule argues: "black Consciousness is a transcendence that connects generations" because the positive ideological formations of black identity, black value systems and black culture embraced by the struggle generation[44] has constituted a great source of inspiration for the born-free generation and the subsequent development of their own organizations/mobilizations. [45]

With regards to FMF in South Africa, students at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) began to mobilize in October 2015, at first in small numbers, after the Student Representative Council denounced the 10.5% tuition hike and staged a demonstration under the hashtag #WitsFeesMustFall. Yet, the demonstrations snowballed as a result of the perception that university management and the executive meeting were systematically stalling attempts at reformation and transformation. Eventually, private security forces were called in and tasked with crowed dispersal, a decision made by the university executive which backfired when protestors got pepper sprayed. The violent response prompted a coordinated coalition between OS and Rhodes Must Fall (RMF), the Wits SRC

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[43] Marcelle Dawson, "Students, Activism and Identity," in *Globalisation and New Identities: A View From the Middle*, ed. by Peter Alexander, Marcelle Dawson and Meera Ichharam (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2006), 284.

[44] The generation of activists primarily involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle.

[45] Mashupye Herbert Maserumule,"Why Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy resonates with youth today," *The Conversation*, September 4, 2015, accessed March 25, 2017.

and other organizations through the social media hashtag #FeesMustFall which signaled

the beginning of FMF movement. Saleem Badat, former Rhodes University president and

current program director at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, emphasizes that the FMF

movement contains various currents and ideological positions within it.[46] Despite the

differences, FMF successfully called for a national shutdown of all universities.[47]

The FMF movement has been credited to the leadership of "born-free" students,

who in despite of the absence of a lived Apartheid experience, are not detached from the

affects of Apartheid's legacy of institutionalized racism. Because of the prevalence of

racism as well as the privileging of Eurocentric norms still pervasive in institutions like

Stellenbosch University, South African black students have thus enthusiastically returned

to the ideology of BC. The unfulfilled promises of the rainbow nation[48] alongside the

tragedy of Marikana attributed to the political and social climate of the early 2010s. This

political climate contributed to the emergence of primarily black-led mobilizations such as

OS and RMF, whose members have turned to, among others, Steve Biko and his Movement

for "both a political and a philosophical critique" of the societies they desire to transform.[49]

Marzia Millazzo argues that as "white domination persists the South African

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[46] Elizabeth Redden, "#FeesMustFall", *Inside Higher Education*, November 18, 2015, accessed April 30, 2016.

[47] Zalmaire Goosen, "From fees must fall, to fees will fall, to #WitsFeesHaveFallen", *Connect Citizen Online*, October 17, 2015, accessed January 7, 2017.

[48] The 'Rainbow nation' term was made famous by former South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and is a reference to the broad racial diversity of South Africa and its notions/promises of racial equality and fairness. It is often used in reference to colorblind racial rhetoric both in the media and in social settings. Thus it is intrinsically connected to the post-racial myth.

[49] Magaziner, "Black Man, You Are On Your Own," 224; Deshnee Subramany, "South Africa: Fees Must Fall protests prove post-Apartheid 'born free generation' is a myth", *International Business Time*s, October 28, 2015, accessed January 15, 2017.

case...Millions of students of all backgrounds are being indoctrinated into naturalizing and reproducing racial inequality."[50] Millazzo describes this problem in what can also be understood as institutional racism, which formulated a primary concern for activists in both contexts in 2015. Maserumule echoes such sentiments: "this is what students at the universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch are fighting against. Their struggle seeks to restore and assert black pride – the essence of Biko's philosophy of Black Consciousness."[51]

In addition to the new calls to adapt BC ideology in FMF, there had also been a resurgence in Fanonian ideology that had first influenced the liberation movements of the 1960/70s. Students have called on the "decolonization" and "Africanization" of universities often as solutions to address the institutional problems, whether it be racism at Stellenbosch University or curriculum reform supported by RMF at University of Cape Town.[52] Historically, the origins of decolonization can be traced back to the 1970s where it was used almost interchangeably with "Africanization". The latter concept was developed by Frantz Fanon within the project of nation-building. Decolonization, also refers to the access of the institution not merely in the recruitment area but the material environment too; universities must provide infrastructure that is conducive to learning and stimulating academic inquiry beyond the metric of pure commodity.

However, the emergence of 'new' social movements, defined as those that have

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[50] Marzia Milazzo,"The Rhetorics of Racial Power: Enforcing Colorblindness in Post-Apartheid Scholarship on Race." *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication* 8, no. 1(2015): 22.

[51] Maserumule,"Why Biko's Black Consciousness philosophy resonates with youth today."

[52] Douglas Foster, "After Rhodes Fell," *The Atlantic*, April 25, 2015, accessed April 21, 2016.

emerged in response to the new issues of a post-Apartheid South Africa, have been surfacing since the 2000s and oftentimes without the involvement of the 1960/70s liberation movements yet populated by its members.[53] In essence, BC represents one strand among others woven into the formation of FMF activism. As argued by sociology professor Sakhela Buhlungu, South Africa has a tradition of independent mobilization that: "emerges to contest with the dominant liberation movements for hegemony. This is often achieved by mobilizing around those issues that the liberation movement seems incapable of addressing."[54] At Johannesburg's Wits University, SASCO and several key trade unions convened to form the Anti-Privitization Forum (APF) with a focus on the basic needs such as water, electricity, education and housing.[55] Buhlungu continues to argue that the ranks of the APF are filled with disaffected working-class communities who have defected from Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) as a result of a perceived failure to provide leadership resistance to neoliberalism.[56]

At the same time, previous liberation movements of the BC era and members of the government's Tripartite Alliance[57] have accused the APF and other land-associated movements as being "anti-ANC/anti-government" and fixated on subverting the national democratic revolution.[58] The APF's criticism of the Tripartite Alliance perceived failure to

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[53] Sakhela Buhlungu, "Upstarts or Bearers of Tradition? The Anti-Privatization Forum of Gauteng," In *Voices of protest: Social Movements in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, ed. by Richard Ballad, Adam Habib, and Imraan Valodia (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2006), 69.

[54] Buhlungu, "Upstarts or Bearers of Tradition?" 69.

[55] Ibid., 72-74.

[56] Ibid., 75.

[57] COASTU, ANC and the South African Communist Party (SACP) collectively form the Tripartite Alliance.

[58] Buhlungu, "Upstarts or Bearers of Tradition?" 77.

initiate redistributive economic measures would later echo the 2015 FMF movement's grievance with the government. Buhlungu argues that the ANC and its partners are mostly intolerant to new centers of social mobilization because of the potential to undermine its support, he continues: "One of its approaches to movements that operate outside [the ANC's] compass is to demonize and marginalize them by labelling them as 'ultra Left.'"[59] To a great extent, this argument holds credibility with hindsight amidst the 2015 FMF protests. Education Minister Blade Nzimande echoed the ANC's conviction that the protests were political and comprised of "ultra-left formations" and used the statement to level criticism against South Africa's third largest political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF): "this is an anti-ANC government agenda by those who cannot win power through the ballot...there is no reason to be protesting."[60] Analyzing Nzimande's response through Buhlungu's argument highlights the narrowing of the liberation spectrum and emblematic of the wider institutionalization of activism that has occurred in post-1990s in South Africa and the United States. The collusion of these events has once again elevated the importance of the university at the center of black social movements and student activism in both countries respectively.

IV. Contextualizing the 2015 protests:

It is March 2015 in South Africa and a mass gathering of students assembled upon the Rooiplein central plaza at Stellenbosch University, a picturesque campus nestled on the foot of the Helderberg Mountains. The mass gathering of primarily black students at a

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[59] Buhlungu, "Upstarts or Bearers of Tradition?" 78.
[60] Sipho Mabena, "Nzimande puts a price tag on Fees Must Fall protests, blames anti-ANC agenda," September 27, 2016, accessed March 20, 2017.

predominately white institution may have appeared peculiar at first but the crowd had responded to an advertisement that called for a mass meeting in light of recent racially charged events on campus and the greater community. In the weeks preceding the gathering, university management did not succumb to internal pressure to press charges or take disciplinary action against white students that wore blackface at a dormitory party. Moreover, a racially motivated assault on two black students by a group of intoxicated white men outside a McDonalds restaurant affirmed the hostile nature of the environment that marginalized students had only previously voiced in singularity.[61] It was at this meeting that Open Stellenbosch (OS) was born, describing itself as a collective of concerned staff and students that wanted to challenge the lingering legacies of 'Apartheid culture' at Stellenbosch University. Duma, would later join the OS collective.

The University of Missouri is situated in the small college town of Colombia, in the southern state of Missouri. On October 24, an unknown assailant smeared human feces in the shape of a swastika onto a wall of a new residence.[62] In response, University of Missouri student Johnathan Butler felt obliged to take a serious stand against what he believed was a symptom of a wider systemic problem with the institutional culture on campus, asserting that, "I already feel like campus is an unlivable space." Butler, in what he felt to be the administration's complicity in the racial climate at Mizzou, prompted him to undergo a hunger strike, during which he demanded the resignation of university president Tim Wolfe, and was prepared to compromise his health in the process. The

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[61]Shanaaz Eggington, "Race Row Hits Maties." *The Times Live.* February 25, 2015, accessed December 28, 2016.

[62] Michael E. Miller, "Black grad student on hunger strike in Mo," *The Washington Post,* November 6, 2015, accessed April 12, 2017; Tessa Weinberg and Taylor Blatchford. "A historic Fall at MU." *The Maneater.* November 5, 2015, accessed March 24, 2017.

swastika incident did not occur in isolation. In early 2010, cotton balls were strewn in front of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center in what as intended as crude historical reference to the cotton plantations on which enslaved black people labored. Perhaps one statement that was unequivocal, articulated by Danielle Walker, captures the hostile environment that is the university in affirming that "the University of Missouri does not care about black students".[63] Collectively, these incidents formulated an intersectional basis of concerns that would guide further mobilizations. Prior to the hunger strike, Butler had led a group of students at a gathering under the rally name "Racism Lives Here" in response to an incident in which Missouri Students Association president, Payton Head, was racially assaulted on his way home from campus. Head took to social media to share his frustration, stating, "Last night as I walking through campus, some guys riding on the back of a pickup truck decided that it would be okay to continuously scream nigger at me [sic]".[64] It was from these gatherings that a collective of students, mobilized under the banner of 'Concerned student 1950' – a nod to the historical year when the university admitted its first black student.[65]

V. A legacy of oppression:

In South Africa, the OS collective began fostering a narrative that placed the plethora of racist events in 2015 as an outcome of an unchallenged and enduring legacy of white supremacy. Stellenbosch University had been a vital arm of the Apartheid State, incubating

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[63] Kaley Johnson, "About 100 students protest racial discrimination at MU," *The Missourian,* September 24, 2015, accessed January 5, 2017.
[64] Miller, "Black grad student on hunger strike in Mo"
[65] Richard Webner, "Descendant of MU founder atones for family's slave-owning past", *The Missourian*, January 20, 2014, accessed March 24, 2017.

all seven of the regime's prime ministers, and remains an important institution for the Afrikaans community. In addition to supremacist clergymen, the university produced most of the politicians, legislators, intellectual architects of the apartheid, as well as physicians who produced pseudo-scientific knowledge that underpinned the Apartheid regime.[66]

In light of this, the primary goal of the OS movement was to target the university's language policy, which the movement argued unreasonably privileged Afrikaans as the primary language of instruction. Consequently, classes conducted in academic Afrikaans placed students from a non-Afrikaans background at a disadvantage, which meant the policy disproportionately affected black students from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds. Thus, OS argued that the language policy created a culture of exclusion because non-Afrikaans students and staff were systematically excluded from contributing to residence, faculty and other operational meetings which are conducted in the working language of Afrikaans.[67] Sikhulekile Duma, one of victims of the before mentioned McDonalds incident', reported that the assailants shouted "You don't belong here, you don't speak Afrikaans" during the altercation.[68] OS activist, Mohammad Shabangu, argued that the language policy acts as a key tool in the "perpetuation of neo-Apartheid ideologies" that allows for black staff and students to be disproportionately excluded from the main facets of university life.[69]

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[66] Kylie Thomas, "Open Stellenbosch aims to move its fight beyond campus boundaries," *Africa is a Country,* September 29, 2015, accessed December 20, 2016.
[67] Open Stellenbosch, "Open Stellenbosch – tackling language and exclusion at Stellenbosch University", *The Daily Maverick,* April 28, 2015, accessed December 20, 2016.
[68] Open Stellenbosch, "The arrogance of apartheid-denialism at Stellenbosch University."
[69] Mohammad Shabangu, interview by Leanne Manas, *SABC Morning Live News*, November 16, 2015.

At the same time, student activists at the University of Missouri adopted similar strategies in the formulation of their narrative, by positioning their protest against the Payton Head incident as a microcosmic reflection of a greater system of injustice. Student activist, Danielle Walker shouted on the microphone "Racism lives here. Not in Ferguson. Not in Baltimore. Not in South Carolina. Here. Right here." Of course, Ferguson, the site where a black teenager Michael Brown was shot and killed by a white police officer in August 2014, is located two hours away from the campus. The reference to Ferguson, a city that witnessed continual BLM protests, was for activists at Mizzou, emblematic of the racial violence that was often left unchecked at college campuses. Butler arrived at similar conclusions and criticized the university's silence on racial matters, stating "for the school to not cover that or really address [Ferguson], and we are only two hours away, I think was a huge mistake on their part and contributed to the current cultural environment that we have."[70] Barbara Ransby elaborates further, arguing that black-led student mobilizations have never been refined to the perimeters of campus and argues that there is an intimate connection between the black student experience and surrounding community grievances.[71] It is easy to see how institutional cultures on university campuses, the site of knowledge production, can absorb and normalize the pervasive racial abuse which habitually transpires on and off campuses, such as the case in Mizzou and Stellenbosch. [72]

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[70] Miller, "Black grad student on hunger strike in Mo."
[71] Barbara Ranbsy, "From Mizzou to Yale: The Resurgence of Black Student Protest," *Truthout*, November 25, 2015, accessed March 15, 2017.
[72] This of course can be explained by the deception perpetuated in the media which curates a perception of economic and social equity whilst masking worsening conditions of economic inequality and racial strife.

Moreover, both universities, situated in Stellenbosch and Missouri respectively, have historical links to the institution of slavery. When the university was built in the 1800s, Missouri was a slave state. Colombia was chosen as the site for the university. James Sidney Rollins, is recognized as the largest slave owner of the country and is dubbed the "father of the University of Missouri" for his establishment of the university through legislative efforts.[73] The university used slave labor in its very establishment, and has neither issued an apology nor acknowledged historical ties to the oppression of black bodies. Similarly, Stellenbosch University chancellor[74], Johann Rupert, who is also in the top 5 richest people on the continent of Africa, possesses wealth that was acquired largely from a legacy of exploitative labor practices that can be traced back to slavery.[75] It is for this reason that at the forefront of both movements' strategies there was an an attempt to force institutions to acknowledge their historical implications. The protestors at the Mizzou Homecoming Parade brought attention to this legacy, wearing T-shirts that read "1839 Was Built On My B(l)ack" whilst speaking about incidents of racism from the founding year of 1839 to 2015.[76] At the same time, in Stellenbosch, a demonstration occurred on the steps of the Humanities faculty building. The area was previously home to a black[77] Muslim community known as *Die Vlakte* before it was forcibly demolished in the late 1960s under the Group Areas Act to allow for the construction of the current Humanities building.[78]

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[73] Webner, "Descendant of MU founder atones."

[74] In South Africa, the chancellor is a ceremonious leadership position, not to be confused with university presidents in the United States. In South Africa, the office of the Vice-Chancellor is the equivalent of Presidents or Chancellors in America.

[75] Thomas, "Open Stellenbosch aims to move its fight beyond campus boundaries."

[76] Kingkade, "The Incident You Have To See."

[77] Apartheid racial classifications designated the Die Vlakte community as 'Coloured', a category some still identify with today.

[78] Open Stellenbosch, "The arrogance of apartheid-denialism at Stellenbosch University."

The community, like all under apartheid, was given no compensation. In a way, the demonstration proved 'successful' in highlighting this aspect of historical injustice as the University has since established a trust fund to ensure that select descendants of *Die Vlakte* could attend Stellenbosch University tuition free.[79]

Evidently, activists in Mizzou and Stellenbosch excavated the troubling oppressive narratives both of their universities were complicit in, and incorporated these incidences into their protest demonstrations. By illuminating the historical connections between past and present issues, the movements in both cases moved towards a means of strengthening the urgency of the contemporary injustice. This explains why, for instance, FMF protestors included the demand to end the outsourcing of low skilled laborers, which occurred as a result of privatization measures in higher education – a core tenement of neoliberal policy. Indeed, the practice of outsourcing represents the historical trajectory of the exploitation of black laborers at South African institutions, which can also be traced back to slavery.[80] The importance of comparing the two contexts demonstrates how mobilizations occurred in response to challenging institutions that are not forthcoming in acknowledging how injustices committed in the past are connected to injustices in the present.[81] Thus, historical enquiry is used as a site of protest.

As a result, student activists see material manifestations of historical legacies such as busts and statues with troubling historical legacies, as evidence for the inability of university and society at large to grapple with turbulent historical legacies. These historical artifacts are appropriated by student activists in order to challenge and interrogate

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[79] Open Stellenbosch, "The arrogance of apartheid-denialism at Stellenbosch University.
[80] Thomas, "Open Stellenbosch aims to move its fight beyond campus boundaries."
[81] Open Stellenbosch, "The arrogance of apartheid-denialism at Stellenbosch University."

historically entrenched institutional racism – often leading to the removal of artifacts in symbolic displays of cathartic historical release. In South Africa, student activists at the University of Cape Town through effective protest, removed the statue of the infamous colonialist, Cecil John Rhodes.[82] Writing about visual redress, OS activist Greer Valley argues that statues like that of Rhodes "symbolises the slow rate of transformation in the institutional, physical and socio-economic spaces of the Western Cape[83] and in South Africa in general".[84]

Similar motivations were behind the Student Coalition for Critical Action's decision to petition for the removal of the Thomas Jefferson statue at Mizzou. The students wanted to bring attention to the founding fathers' slave owning past and saw an opportunity for students to engage in difficult issues that cannot be discussed during class, but issues that the protestors believed should nevertheless be discussed.[85] However, the statues were also appropriated by a conservative counter-narrative. In response to the October 7 petition, MU College Republicans organized the #StandWithJefferson campaign.[86] Students draped the statue with an American flag and posted sticky notes that said "freedom fighter" and "thank you." Skyler Roundtree, President of MU College Republicans, stated that the campaign was important because "Thomas Jefferson in history stands as a memoir of what

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[82] Foster, "After Rhodes Fell."

[83] Western Cape is one of nine provinces in South Africa, situated on the South Western coast of the country. The largest city and capital is Cape Town, and contains the Parliament of South Africa. The community of Stellenbosch is situated roughly 40 minutes away by car and is the home of Stellenbosch University.

[84] Greer Valley, "It's Not Just About Cecil John Rhodes", *Africa is a Country*, March 25, 2015, accessed December 22, 2016.

[85] Thomas Oide, "SCCA creates community change", *The Maneater*, October 25, 2015, accessed December 22, 2016.

[86] Weinberg and Blatchford, "A historic Fall at MU."

we came from and what we fought through".[87] In Stellenbosch, student volunteers from

Afriforum - an Afrikaner nationalist group – arrived on campus to clean the statue of J.S.

Marais which had been 'vandalized' by mud and disposable waste.[88] Nevertheless, both

incidents illustrated the pervasive nature of institutions that permit the nurturing and

protection of historical figures who perpetuated oppression under the guise of cultural

preservation whilst diversity of the curriculum and the composition of staff and students

are collectively neglected.

Between the establishment of OS in March and the advent of FMS in October, black

student activists at Stellenbosch after eight months of protest were strengthened by

experience and in hindsight, better prepared to join the coalition alongside other black

student organizations to rally behind the #FeesMustFall. On October 21, the FMF

movement that included members of OS, RMF and other political actors in the Western

Cape, demonstrated outside the Parliament buildings in Cape Town. The demonstration

was a retaliation to the suppression of Wits protestors several days before – discussed in

section III. The protest escalated when police fired stun grenades and tear gassed the crowd,

and made multiple arrests. No doubt, the excessive use of force against student protestors

by police and security personal has a pained history in the South African psyche such as

massacre of schoolchildren in the 1976 Soweto Uprising.[89] Despite reforms enacted by the

South African Police's 1991 Strategic Plan that pledged the comprehensive

"depoliticization of the police force", excessive force has evidently remained innate to

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[87] Maneater Staff, "Discussion surrounding Jefferson statue a plus for people petitioning", *The Maneater,* October 28, 2015, accessed December 24, 2016.
[88] "WATCH: Stellenbosch University students face of", *ENCA News*, November 18, 2015.
[89] Pheko, *Apartheid, the story of a dispossessed people*, 165.

political responses post-1994.[90] Eventually on October 23, FMF protestors outside the Union Buildings in Pretoria successfully demanded President Zuma address the crowd personally. Zuma announced via television screen: "we [Student leaders and government] agreed that there will be a zero increase of university fees in 2016".[91] Although fees did not fall, the outcome is significant for two reasons. First, the FMF movement which mobilized a coalition of campus organizations initially concerned with issues of institutional racism demonstrates an intersection of the issues of race and economics. Secondly, in forcing the government to acknowledge a crisis related to tuition and access, FMF pushed free tertiary education into the political imagination, a once unthinkable prospect in the capitalist realism of the post-Apartheid society.

VI. Perceptions, reactions and backlash:

My tandem analyses of the cross-Atlantic protests reveals salient tactics, ideologies and strategies that point toward the common similarities between black-led protests in post-racial neoliberal states. It is not surprising that protests in both countries would illicit backlash of a similar nature, from both conservative and liberal predispositions. Perhaps one of the most crucial aspects of the protests is that they also drew attention to the ways in which racism within institutional cultures is often unchallenged by white counterparts and colleagues. For instance, Mizzou protestor Shakoul Bailey argues that many white students reacted indifferently and sometimes in hostile ways to the claims of discrimination

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[90] Janine Rauch, "Police reforms and South Africa's Transition", *Center for the Study of violence and reconciliation* (Conference paper, South African Institute for International Affairs conference, Johannesburg, 2000).

[91] Simon Allison, "#FeesHaveFallen: A big day in Pretoria, with a Zero outcome", *Daily Maverick*, October 23, 2015, accessed March 29, 2017.

because they do not experience it themselves. Bailey thus describes them as "People [that] don't want to act on something unless it's happening to them".[92]

During the demonstration at the Homecoming Parade, the Concerned Student 1950 (CS) protestors were taunted and jeered at by a crowd of onlookers that consisted mostly of white parents and members of the Mizzou community. A video uploaded to the Huffington Post online, reveals members of the crowd chanting "M-I-Z-Z-O-U" in an effort to drown the protest chants emitting from the megaphone used by Johnathan Butler. Furthermore, several white men pushed the activists in an attempt to allow Tim Wolfe's vehicle to pass through which garnered support from the crowd. Wolfe later apologized for the incident and ultimately heeded the petition to resign.[93]

The connection here can be linked to the OS collective, which similarly claimed that many white students on campus "behave as though Apartheid did not happen". The collective further believes that the blatant ignorance that underpins racial incidents on campuses are permitted by management's complicity with enduring structures of oppression. Attempts to push back whiteness and white racism in a colorblind society continued in Stellenbosch. For example, the online hashtag photo campaign titled #IamStellenbosch was created in response to the controversy generated from an OS produced documentary titled *Luister*[94]. The subsequent photo campaign consisted of a

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[92] Johnson, "About 100 students protest racial discrimination at MU."

[93] Kingkade, "The Incident You Have To See."

[94] *Luister* is the Afrikaans word for Listen. The documentary consisted of staff and students who recounted oppressive experiences of attending class and teaching at a historically designated Afrikaans institution in post-Apartheid South Africa. In one scene, an unnamed man recounted a story of being abused at a campus bar for dancing with a white woman while another woman recalled difficulties with the translation devices in the primarily Afrikaans teaching modules. See "WATCH: The doccie that exposes racism at Stellenbosch University" from *ENCA News* for reference.

diverse range of students holding placards. A white woman held a placard saying "I am white, and I have a multi-racial friend group" whilst a black woman held a sign stating "I am human, don't classify me by race". Evidently, the campaign espoused a colorblind discourse, utilizing the language of unity and togetherness represented by white and black bodies, as a counter-narrative of Open Stellenbosch's unearthing of racism.

The #IamStellenbosch campaign's masquerade as a benign unifying effort that excluded race, demonstrated a failure on the part both of some students and management at Stellenbosch to grapple with issues brought forward by the OS collective. Indeed, the campaign was sanctioned by conservative staff and management itself that which highlighted the denial at the center of opposition strategy. For example, Vice-Rector Professor Arnold Schoonwinkel told OS protestors: "I just want to know, really did you think you would come to Stellenbosch and not hear Afrikaans?"[95] Schoonwinkel's statement reflects a part of a wider consensus among OS opponents that Afrikaans is normative and aggrieved students should transfer to another public institution; Stellenbosch student Lovelyn Nwadeyi claimed black students are frequently told: "Stellenbosch is an Afrikaans University, if you don't want to learn in Afrikaans, go somewhere else."[96]

Across borders, there is a similar logic in the responses Stellenbosch black activists received that can also be found in America. *The Washington Post* reported a response from

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[95] S'thembile Cele, "Stellenbosch: rector's comments triggers stand-off," *News 24*. May 13, 2015. Accessed April 20, 2017.

[96] Lovelyn Chidinma Nwadeyi, "My thoughts on Complexity and the Intersectionality of Change at Stellenbosch University (SU)," *Bonfire Stellenbosch* (blog), September 2, 2015, (12:00) http://www.bonfiire.com/stellenbosch/2015/09/my-thoughts-on-complexity-and-the-intersectionality-of-change-at-stellenbosch-university-su/

a commentator that echoed the example of the backlash in South Africa mentioned above: "if you are not comfortable at MU please leave."[97] At the same time, Fox News a conservative news organization, published an article to smear Butler, labelling him a "hypocrite" because of his "rich kid background".[98] In Stellenbosch, student activist Sikhulekile Duma faced a similar gesture of dismissal by his white counter parts. In fact, Professor Albert Grundlingh and Head of the History Department at Stellenbosch University, asserted that Duma's involvement in the protest was disingenuous and reflected an ulterior motive or agenda since he was educated in a private school, which suggested that Duma himself, similarly to Butler, had a "rich kid background" which precluded him from speaking authentically about social justice issues. Furthermore, Grundlingh speculated OS is not "authentically Stellenbosch" but rather a "copycat" of the American BLM movement because of the invocation of the BLM "I can't breathe" slogan used by OS protestors during the planned disruption of an Afrikaans lecture.[99] Grundlingh's assertion that OS is 'inauthentic' and a mere copy of the American black liberation movements is not only a simplification of the nuances of the South context but echoes the claims leveled against BC and SASO in the 1970s which were discussed in Chapter One. The racially charged intimidation of activists revealed the manner in which black-led student activism, and their allies, posed a significant existential threat to the bastion of *Afrikanerdom* at Stellenbosch University.

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[97] Miller, "Black Grad student on hunger strike."

[98] Jillian Kay Melchoir "Crack, misogyny and stealing from hotels: Meet Mizzou's rich-kid civil rights hero." *Fox News.* May 9, 2016, accessed April 20, 2017.

[99] *Opening Stellenbosch: From Assimilation to Occupation.* Directed by Aryan Kaganof. African Noise Foundation, 2016. Online release. Accessed March 15, 2017. 1:00:39 – 1:01:47, 1:02:53 – 1:03:05.

VII. Summary:

This chapter illuminated the significance of the historical changes characterized by the paradigm shifts in South Africa and America, from the end of the observed period in chapter one to the events of 2015. The paradigm shifts from the 1970s in America and 1990s in South Africa, contributed to the widespread myth that both societies were colorblind and post-racial. It has been argued that the colorblind approach supplanted race with individualism and meritocracy[100] in the rationale of the distribution of resources in a neoliberal political economy, despite race continuing to be an organizing principle in both countries. In the 1990s, the global victory of capitalism as the only viable economic system alongside the complex and overlapping layers mentioned above created a totalizing perceptive reality that Mark Fisher described as capitalist realism. It was argued capitalist realism can provide a general explanation for a multitude of factors from which the sustained absence of black radical university activism of the 1960/70s until the 2015 can be understood. Drawing aspects of intellectual and symbolic components of the Black Power and Black Consciousness liberation movements, black students mobilized behind the Open Stellenbosch and Concerned Student 1950 collectives, to contest the university and expose the myth of colorblindness.[101] Section III detailed the threads that bind the two eras of activism – BP and BC with Black Lives Matter and Fees Must Fall - which revealed

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[100] As discussed with the examples in section II, South Africa's Democratic Alliance Party stressed individual meritocracy in a party document. Historically, with a foundation in classical South African Liberalism, the party has been an opponent of race-based claims to economic equality. For example, the party opposes Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) programs, which garnered great media attention in the Mbeki Era (1999 – 2008). In America, the individualism/colorblind approach has its origins in the Nixon Era and is now synonymous with the Reagan Era rhetoric.
[101] Section VI discussed how colorblind rhetoric informed the critique behind the opposition to OS and CS.

the continuation of transnational/local origins of black student activism. But activists in 2015 were also reticent of the different challenges activists in the age of globalization face, especially in light of the paradigm shifts. For example in 2014, BLM co-founder Alicia Garza argued Black Nationalism ideologies were not enough to grapple with the nature of systemic racism in a supposedly post-racial America. Thus drawing from Garza's sentiments, Section V and VI explicated the nature in which whiteness and racism has similar affects in both America and South Africa, especially in the context of pushback/perceptions and reactions, and also the implication of universities in racialized inequality. Although both FMF and BLM are still nascent movements, the extensive efforts of OS and CS in the fight for racial equality on their campuses demonstrated the enormous potential for black radical students to traverse the complexities of post-racial societies and enact lasting change on their respective societies.

Conclusion:

After the 'quiet 1960s,' the South African intellectual movement of Black Consciousness created positive connotations with blackness among SASO activists that counteracted the racist discourse of the Apartheid state. It articulated the connection between Apartheid's racialized political economy and the subjugation of black people in order to counteract the black inferiority complex instilled by Apartheid education's design. Similarly, in the mid-1960s America, a growing number of radical student activists affiliated with Black Nationalism demanded a reconstitution of HBCUs through curriculum change and greater faculty diversity - these demands characterized the Black Studies movement, which were central to the Black Campus Movement. After Stokely Carmichael reintroduced 'black power' into the social and political discourse in 1966, a new era of a Black Power affiliated radical student activism distinguished the Black Campus Movement from the Long Black Student Movement.

Black radical student activists in both countries were able to identify the causes of their oppression, which among others, included the university. Both liberation ideologies have articulated scathing critiques of capitalist political economies, and how universities in general contributed to outcomes of racialized economic inequality in each context respectively. South African HBCUs were founded by the Apartheid government to fragment the black populace through tribalism and ingrain a system of socialization that insubordinates black workers to the racialized economic system. On the other hand, American HBCUs were established after Reconstruction to meet the challenge of providing education to recently freed black slaves and by the 1960s the pervasive conservative

campus culture and administrative paternalism were understood to be complicit in the reproduction of inequality, which also included the HWCUs. For example, Columbia's historical appropriation of land in the mostly black Harlem community and the exploitation of its tenants was voiced by an activist who referred to university president as "the biggest slumlord in Harlem," whilst a board member was also the chairman of one of New York's largest construction firms. This illuminated the connection between wealthy white private interests and access to public land in the primarily black Harlem.[1]

At the same time, HBCUs in South Africa witnessed the first wave of radical black student activism whilst American HBCUs – not novice to black demonstrations – were structurally challenged by the BCM on the grounds of curriculum reform and dismantling the paternal regulation of student life. Moreover, the conservative campus culture prevalent at American HBCUs were upheld by an administration that consisted mostly of black conservatives, whilst in South Africa, BC leaders referred to conservative black administrators as 'non-whites.' The paternal relationship between administration and students pervaded the crackdowns against activists, whom many faced expulsion or judicial punishment. Evidently, HBCUs first responded heavy handed in both contexts to halt what administrators believed to be situational protests. If anything, students were incited to further protest that included even the white moderates at Columbia University.

However, a predominant similarity between all of the intellectual movements in this thesis was the emphasis on self-pride and allegiance to the community. At Columbia, Student Afro-American Society (SAS) activists were not concerned with public relations,

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[1] Stellenbosch University's Chancellor, Johan Rupert, is in the top five richest people on the African continent, and represents one among many powerful and influential actors that preside over the university's decision making.

perceptions, and winning the hearts and minds of white people but were rather adamant about wanting to forge an alliance with the black community of Harlem. SAS's forging of ties with the black community against the reprehensible legacy of a university was consistent with Pityana's remarks in the 1970s on BC. Pityana stressed allegiance to the black community as a paramount principle to BC and SASO. Years later, OS would put this BC notion into practice in forcing Stellenbosch to acknowledge its role in the uncompensated removals of members in the *Die Vlakte* community. In general, the unapologetically black radical mobilizations which avoided white suasion and representation was shown not to be detrimental in the alliances forged (which even included white students and faculty) or some of the demands that were successfully met.

Chronologically, the BP movement preceded the BC and South African black radicals engaged with the scholarship and adopted certain aspects of the BP aesthetic such as Afro-hair styling and clenched fists. But it is both a historical exaggeration to suggest BC emerged *because* of BP. It is a false dichotomy (conjured by critics of BC such as the Apartheid state) that posits BP as original and BC as secondary. In fact, BP intellectuals like Carmichael and student activists had been inspired by African intellectual movements such as Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism, that embedded a global awareness of black independence and anti-colonial struggles in BP intellectualism. So too did Pan-Africanist intellectual/leader and former Zambian president Kenneth Kuanda influence Biko – and his philosophizing of blackness, identity and nation – which provided the intellectual foundation for a then nascent-BC in the late 1960s.

Yet, the political economies were simultaneously a source of both similarity and specificity to the respective movements. BC responded to Apartheid South Africa's ethnic

and racial fragmentation by defining blackness as both political and social reality. BP differed in this aspect, because activists associated it with members of the African American community – blackness did not include all persons of color oppressed by the American political economy. Then again the racial demography and crude judicial racial categorizations were more prevalent during Apartheid South Africa compared to the United States at the time. Likewise, as the Columbia protests demonstrated, this noted difference did not inhibit BP-affiliated groups in the BCM to forge alliances with groups such as the white-radicals SDS, but the emphasis on black leadership and community first were the modus operandi of the SAS.

Both SASO and the BCM shared a similar approach to cross-racial alliances and ultimately forged movements that empowered black leadership. For SASO, the split from NUSAS had positive outcomes because it allowed its members to focus on a radical strategy without the interruptions of white-liberals whom custodians of BC such as Pityana and Biko believed hindered the movement. For BCM during the Columbia protests, the split allowed black-led SAS to assume lead position in decision-making which included directing white-radical SDS to occupy additional buildings whilst other BP-affiliated organizations provided strategic and ideological support to SAS. In both incidences, the emphasis on black-only organization was not punishment for white-liberals and radicals alike, on the contrary, it allowed black students to demand more radical changes that had favorable outcomes in both countries.

Chapter Two explored the significant historical paradigm shifts in both the political economies of South Africa and America from the end of the observed period in chapter one to the events of 2015. The paradigm shifts proliferated the myth of the post-racial

society in both countries. In the United States, the post-racial colorblind myth began in the 1970s through the efforts of political rhetoric and legislative change that started during the Nixon administration. In South Africa, the colorblind approach to race has been at the center of the post-apartheid political narrative since 1994, whilst an increasingly neoliberal framework has followed suit at the behest of the ANC party. Such changes occurred alongside the institutionalization of SASO (now SASCO) and a decline in black radical activism in general.

It has been argued that the colorblind approach supplanted race with individualism and meritocracy[2] in the pursuit and distribution of resources in a neoliberal political economy, despite race continuing to be an organizing principle in both countries. In America, Nixon's political strategy fought to undermine the links made between economic and racial oppression that which were elucidated in the BP movement, and prolific among activists in the BCM. In South Africa, the colorblind narrative was crucial to mask racialized economic inequality that continued in the post-Apartheid era, in part, exacerbated by the nation's structural adherence to the neoliberal global economy – from which America is a dominant actor in related decision making.

In the 1990s, the global victory of capitalism as the only viable economic system alongside the complex and overlapping layers mentioned above created a totalizing perceptive reality that Mark Fisher described as 'capitalist realism.' I argued that capitalist

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[2] As discussed with the examples in section II, South Africa's Democratic Alliance Party stressed individual meritocracy in a party document and has been an opponent of race-based claims to economic equality (See footnote 100, Chapter Two). In America, the individualism/colorblind rhetoric has its origins in the Nixon Era and is now synonymous with the Reagan Era rhetoric.

realism can provide a general explanation for a multitude of factors through which the sustained absence of black radical university activism of the 1960/70s until the 2015, can be understood. Capitalist realism then, in the context of activism, produced a reduction in the imaginative capacity of activists. This is due to the disappearance and/or discrediting of global anti-colonial and socialist movements which, for example, were central to the intellectual framework of BP and to a lesser extent for BC. Of course, as totalizing as the above mentioned factors were, the BP movement in America also waned as a result of the judicial repression and negative media portrayal, whilst in 1977 South Africa, SASO was banned and BC intellectual Steve Biko was assassinated.

However, despite the political efforts to entrench a myth of post-racial colorblind societies, such efforts were repeatedly contradicted by the occurrence of racist incidents represented at both a social and institutional level in both countries. As argued, the frequent killing of unarmed black people in America in spite of black representation in the Oval Office and certain police departments, highlighted the pervasiveness of whiteness embedded at a institutional level and the contradiction of post-racialism. So too did the Marikana Massacre of black miners in South Africa, at the hands of mostly black police officers, mirror the symbolic tragic contradiction of the American context. It is no surprise that universities returned to the forefront of the black liberation movements in 2015, given the intimate connection between the black student experience and surrounding community grievances.[3]

The context at both universities from which Open Stellenbosch and Concerned Student 1950 were established, reveals several important points. Firstly, the duplicitous

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[3] Ransby, "The Resurgence of Black Student Protest."

nature of campus culture that espoused diversity but accommodated racist incidents and other forms of exclusion of campus, spurred on the rallies from which OS and CS organized. Secondly, drawing from previous symbols and language from predecessor BP and BC movements, black-led students demanded changes at their mostly white and conservative universities. Moreover, the propagation of racial colorblindness potentially explains the general absence of white-radical alliance organizations in the 2015 era of protests as well as the impetus behind the reactions of opponents detailed in section VI of chapter two.[4]

However, a significant difference between OS and CS in relation to the overarching movement of FMS and BLM respectively concerns a structural and chronological aspect. Structurally, OS and the other movements had a direct stake in the creation and mobilization of the FMF movement. CS and the solidarity protestors were inspired but loosely connected to the BLM movement. Thus chronologically, OS preceded the emergence South Africa's new radical student movement FMF, which suggests FMF was strengthened and propelled by the existence of already established radical black student organizations. In the context of CS, the overarching BLM movement chronologically preceded the events at Mizzou and consequent #StudentBlackOut campaign that contributed to the atmosphere of black student consciousness across America.

Overall, on the premise of the similarities between the United States and South Africa across both eras of interest, this thesis has illuminated the central role of the university in black radical student activism. The four principal liberation movements

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[4] This is indicative of the responses from the #IamStellenbosch campaign at Stellenbosch University in 2015, (See Chapter Two, Section VI.)

discussed in this thesis - Black Power, Black Consciousness, Fees Must Fall and Black Lives Matter – contained both local and transnational origins, from which the multitude of student protests at universities emerged. Notwithstanding the complex and intricate political and social developments of each country between 1972 – 2015, the emergence of Open Stellenbosch and Concerned Student 1950 reveal the resilience of black student activists – mindful of previous generational struggles and the unique challenges of the 2015 context – in the fight for just universities and equitable societies.

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