TOWARDS AN AFRICAN CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF RACE: UBUNTU AS A PHILO-PRAXIS OF LIBERATION[1]

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Abstract

Although 1994 is popularly represented as a year of major transition from an oppressive society to a democratic one in South African history, it did not mark the end of White Supremacy but instead its evolution from one constitutional form into another. This is because the so-called "right of conquest" remains affirmed in South Africa by the much celebrated constitution Act 108 of 1996. Since the early 90s, *Ubuntu* has been employed by the elite parties involved in the "negotiations" for the transition to the "new" South Africa, to justify the new society. This perverse employment of *Ubuntu* has been largely supported with the aid of sophistic academic posturing by the largely white academic establishment in South Africa and its network of international allies. Using African philosophical hermeneutics as a method, we will ground another interpretation of *Ubuntu* which stems from two interrelated roots. The first root is a firm understanding of and engagement with the Bantu languages and cultures which are its primordial philosophical basis (and thus crucial) on the one hand. The second is the study of the history of *Ubuntu* as lived and living philosophy responding to the challenge of the conquest of the indigenous people in the unjust wars of colonisation. Towards this end we will draw from the experience of *Ubuntu*-inspired movements in the history of the wars of resistance and the struggle for liberation ongoing since 1652.

Introduction

The last three hundred and sixty three years in South Africa have been characterised by a protracted succession of various struggles. In light of this feature of that experience one historian has recently referred to the

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period of South African history since the conquest of the indigenous peoples in the unjust wars of colonisation as "A History of Inequality" (TERREBLANCHE 2012). Central to the systemisation of inequality in South Africa has been the development and use of the experience and concept of race. This has in actual historical terms not only meant the installation and development of white supremacy as an ordering principle within the political sphere, it has also seen its realm of influence extend over all human experience in South Africa ever since the conquest of the indigenous people in the unjust wars of colonisation.

1994 is widely represented as the birth year of democracy in South Africa since that was the first year in which all adults of age were allowed to vote in national, provincial and municipal elections. More significantly, 1994 is thought of as having marked the end of the age of white supremacy. The coming into effect of the liberal constitution, Act 108 of 1996 of the Republic of South Africa (hereinafter "the constitution") with its founding value of non-racialism was envisioned to prevent the unjust use of power in South Africa. Ironically, the constitution not only upholds but also insures the continuity of white supremacy.

Although it is not our purpose here to extensively and in detail critique the constitution, it is necessary to discuss some general aspects of it which support the claim made above. Although South Africa has had several constitutions before the present one, none of them have ever enjoyed the status of supreme law until this one. Put more directly, it was not until the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation were finally able to have a say in the political and legal order of South Africa that parliament was subjected to a constitution in order to limit its exercise of popular power. This same supreme constitution accords the lowest status in terms of force, to the law and legal philosophy of the indigenous people. In South African jurisprudence, their law which is called "customary law" suffers a status lower than that of their colonial-conquerors, the so-called Roman-Dutch and English laws. In terms of the judicial hierarchy of South Africa, decisions made in terms of "customary law" may be overturned by appeal to even the lowest of the Roman-Dutch law courts. As a matter of fact "customary law" is accorded an even lesser status than the law of other nations.

In addition to the Eurocentricism of South African jurisprudence under the constitution, the spirit of its contents stands in violation of well established principles of justice even within western law and philosophy. The principle expressed in Latin as *jus ex injuria non oritur* [a legal right or entitlement cannot arise from an unlawful act or omission] or its relative *commodum ex injuria sua nemo habere debet*

[a wrongdoer should not be enabled by law to take any advantage from his actions] are just two examples. The constitution violates these principles precisely through its fundamentalisation of the right to property.

If one considers that under colonialism and apartheid after it, a combined period of more than 350 years, the European conqueror and his posterity acquired property through the seizing of the indigenous people's land and property (a racially differentiated crime), the question is "who exactly had property to protect in 1996?" In other words, "precisely whose property was being protected by the constitution?" The answer to this question makes the claim of the constitution to be founded on the value of non-racialism and its many proponents' insistence of its compatibility with *Ubuntu* philosophy rather dubious. Rather it is our argument that the constitution is precisely racist for the reasons set out above. The right to property in South Africa is a logical and practical extension of the so-called "right of conquest".

The Critical Philosophy of Race
As a result of the consistent effort of scores of African American philosophers as well as other philosophers of African descent working in the American Academy. Over the past three decades the problem of "race" has increasingly been admitted into formal English-speaking academic philosophical discourse. Race has increasingly been acknowledged (as a result of a great and continual struggle by black philosophers) as a phenomenon with serious, even fundamental philosophical implications in not only the domains of Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy but also in Metaphysics and Epistemology. This increasing realisation and struggle to bring it about, eventuated in the formalisation of a discourse which is increasingly described as "Critical Philosophy of Race". Robert Bernasconi, Kathryn Gines and Paul Taylor (2013) argue that Critical Philosophy of Race is a "critical" enterprise in at least three respects in that it "it opposes racism in all its forms; it rejects the pseudosciences of old-fashioned biological racialism; and it denies that anti-racism and anti-racialism summarily eliminate race as a meaningful category of analysis". It is a philosophical enterprise because of its engagement "with traditional philosophical questions and in its readiness to engage critically some of the traditional answers." (BERNASCONI et al 2013)

As early as 1999 Nkiru Nzegwu complained about the dominance of the American experience over philosophical treatment of race. She argued that in West Africa at least the general absence of a

permanent and sizeable population of white settlers meant that the mode of racism which was developed was not body-oriented and called for a different or variant theorisation of colonial racism (NZEGWU 1999, 131). We are not entirely persuaded by her argument for the simple reason that the effective globalisation of the world has consisted in part of the forced penetration of physical, psychological and cultural boundaries by ideas of the dominant class or group.

White supremacy finds expression even in societies with no history of large white settlement, through the media, international political and economic relations and cultural practice. Were this not the case, there would be no problems of skin-lightening in Ghana (BIAKOLO 2016) or the lawlessness and ruthlessness exercised by Western companies like Shell and Total in the exploitation of the natural resources of Nigeria. This article itself would not be written in European language of English, the common colonial heritage of the country of birth of the author and the country where this journal is published. Indeed, the dominance of the African sub-continent by the colonial culture is everywhere to the point that the African intellectual history is shaped and determined by Eurocentrism. This paper is in part a challenge to the neo-colonial order.

Instead we must express intellectual affinity with African American philosopher Tommy Curry (2011) who has complained of a "methodological crisis of African-American philosophy's study of African-descended peoples under an integrationist milieu" (CURRY 2011, 1). Curry's insight can be summarised in a phenomenon he describes as "epistemological convergence" (CURRY 2011, 320), which is typified by "Black cultural perspectives only being given the status of knowledge "to the extent that they extend or reify currently maintained traditions of thought in European philosophy" (CURRY 2011, 320). He elaborates this insight later when he writes:

> This argument does not necessitate that Black thought derives from European thinkers but maintains that in order for Black thought to gain philosophical status, it must be describable by an established European stream of thought. In other words, Black knowledge is only knowledge insofar as it converges with a 'higher' anthropological order established in the history of European philosophy. (CURRY 2011, 320)

Curry admits that previous Black thinkers have adequately shown the systematic problems which arise from white hegemony in philosophy

and lists Lewis Gordon, Charles Mills and Lucius Outlaw especially. He nevertheless maintains, and we agree with him that the ways in which they have proposed to deal with this problem have been wanting. (CURRY 2011, 315)

I propose to begin to address the problem of the reliance upon European philosophical anthropology by grounding a critical philosophy of race upon the philosophy of *Ubuntu* . Before setting out our own conception of Ubuntu as a philosophy of liberation, we will first provide some context about the status of *Ubuntu* in South Africa since 1994.

Ubuntu since 1994

Over the past two decades there has been an enormous rise in interest in both academic (some philosophical) and public discourse on the subject of *Ubuntu*. This prolific rise has brought to birth research chairs, professorships, and volumes of books, articles and prestigious status for many white South African, European and American scholars[2].

It is, however our contention that most of these "Ubuntus" which have taken hold are curiously "*Ubuntus"* without *abantu* (the Bantu speaking people whose philosophy it is). Also, they are quite often "*Ubuntus"* without *isintu*; the culture which is the basis for the philosophy of *Ubuntu*. It is perhaps for this reason that these anthropologically and culturally hollow versions *Ubuntu* continue to be employed in sustaining the epistemicide initiated at the conquest of the indigenous people of South Africa in the unjust wars of colonisation. In

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[2] This is philosophically relevant because as Ramose (2002: 326-327) has shown in the case of Augustine Shutte. Most "[white South African authors)] approach the question of Ubuntu […] from the point of view of the stranger to Ubuntu". "As stranger[s], [they] stand at least one remove from *Ubuntu*. The distance between [themselves] and *Ubuntu* means [they] are standing on a platform of experience, an epistemological paradigm which must reflect some minimum difference between itself and Ubuntu epistemology. To some extent this epistemological platform determines [their] way of looking at Ubuntu and interpreting it. [They] are looking at Ubuntu and interpreting it from the point of view of a European". This observation extends to most white South African and American and European authors on the subject for example Praeg, Cornell, Metz and Keevy who have in the past decade written voluminously on the subject providing no known and satisfactory evidence that they have a working knowledge of at least one of the Bantu languages. This is a minimum conventional scholarly requirement for anyone who claims expertise in a discipline, for example, the claim to expertise in Greek philosophy requires a working knowledge of Greek.

our time, these versions are living examples of the exercise of the dubious "right of conquest" by the successors in title to this questionable "right of conquest".

In relation to the work of one of the pioneers of the *"Ubuntus"* so described, Augustine Shutte, Ramose (2002, 328) has pointed out, that his depiction of the South Africa to which his "ethic" is prescribed is based on a taking for granted of the so-called "right of conquest". Ramose argues that Shutte's "failure to problematise the unjustified violence of colonisation" as well as his "faithful and uncritical restatement of the dogma of the history of South Africa according to the conqueror, reveals an ethical insensitivity towards the legitimate moral and political claims of 'the San, 'The Khoikhoi and the various Bantu peoples'" (RAMOSE 2002, 328).

Although it is not the purpose of this article to review individual instances of the literature described above, it is worthwhile to note that the majority of the work published on the subject is subject to the criticisms above. For example Praeg (2008; 2014a; 2014b), Keevy (2014), Metz (2007a; 2017b; 2011), who are united in their blissful ignorance of work produced by African philosophers on the subject. All the above authors have also at various times sought to use *Ubuntu* in the justification of the constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) by advancing the indefensible argument that the philosophy of *Ubuntu* is compatible with the constitution[3]. This is tantamount to using the philosophy of the indigenous conquered people of South Africa in the legitimation and justification of "the right of conquest".

In view of the enduring exercise of "the right of conquest" as described above, we seek to retrieve *Ubuntu* as understood by the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation. The retrieval is an integral part of the continuing resistance against the unethical doubt concerning their quality as human beings.

We will undertake the exercise with the aid of Tsenay Serequeberhan's systemisation of liberatory philosophical hermeneutics (SEREQUEBERHAN, 2009). Founded in both the indigenous resources of the the languages, cultures and traditions of the Bantu-speaking people (*isintu*), as well as their engagement in the struggle for liberation. *Ubuntu* philosophy as we understand it was the basis of *inkosi* uShaka Zulu's wars of resistance, Bambatha's rebellion against imperial imposition and the formation of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania,

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[3] See DLADLA 2017 a for a thorough discussion of the constitution of South Africa as a perfection of the paradigm of conquest

the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania and the Azanian People's Liberation Army.

African Philosophical Hermeneutics

Western Europe's conquest of the indigenous peoples of other continents; the original inhabitants of their respective countries from time immemorial, beginning with the Americas in 1492 culminated in the colonization of these peoples, including the peoples of Africa. The latter were subsequently treated as objects of the ethically unjustified slave trade, especially across the Atlantic. Colonisation itself was the violent process of the re-organisation of all life in the colonies according to the patterns in the European regions from which the colonisers originated. In instances where the struggle to impose this ordering did not translate into full-scale genocides, it still very often meant the attempted annulation of modes of life in the conquered territories. This attempted epistemicide was a necessary complement to the social injustice the conquered peoples suffered at the hands of the colonial conqueror. Whoever and whatever survived the genocides and epistemicides was then subjected - under the ethically and juridically questionable "right of conquest" - to an order of things hierarchised in such a way that placed Europe both at the centre and zenith of humanity. On this reasoning, being a human being depended upon arbitrarily recognised proximity to "Europeanness". Depending on how a specific colonialism was fashioned, "Europeanness" could be attained either wholly or partially by "conversion", "civilisation" or "education". This allowed for the ostensibly voluntary participation of the indigenous conquered peoples in their own epistemicides and swearing to the new gods of Europe.

The "common sense" of contemporary cultural discourse is the well established result of this history of violence of conquest and colonialism. It is for instance a prevailing practice in accordance with this "sense" in the world of fashion, that the styles of dress or hair of peoples other than West Europeans are called "Ethnic". In the field of musicology, adherence to this differentiation is maintained with the appellation, Ethno-musicology. The suggestion of this insistence to differentiate is that only West European culture is culture proper and thus universalisable. The demand on thought, science and theory that before it attains the status of propriety, authenticity or scientificity it ought to be universal turns out to be a demand for such thought to deny its own specificity and experience.

Compliance with this demand is, in reality, is submission to Western Europe's questionable claim to the right to describe and define

experience, knowledge and truth for all other human beings in the name of the universality of science.

It is precisely this arbitrary claim that this article proposes to submit to a sustained critical questioning from the standpoint of African philosophy. African philosophy as hermeneutics may be understood then as a refusal to give up the specificity of the African experience as the grounding basis for doing philosophy. Theophilus Okere, describing the ambition of his doctoral thesis (A pioneering systemisation of African philosophical hermeneutics) and work that followed it, suggests that it was much more than simply initiating a tendency or way of doing African Philosophy. His work sought to show that all philosophy is hermeneutics, "Not only African philosophy but all philosophy is hermeneutical in nature, meaning simply that all philosophy is an effort of interpretative understanding, understanding one's world, one's environment, one's culture or one's reality" (OKERE 2005, 4).

Tsenay Serequeberhan also suggests that African philosophical hermeneutics as a perspective counters itself to both the "particularistic antiquarianism of ethno-philosophy and to the abstract universalism of professional philosophy" (1994, 5). For him its primary task is to think through the "historicity of our post-colonial 'independent' Africa" (SEREQUEBERHAN 1994, 5). It is at once a philosophy of liberation since "it is fully cognisant of the fact that its own hermeneutic efforts are part of a struggle to expand and properly consummate our presently unfulfilled and paradoxical independence" (SEREQUEBERHAN 1994, 5).

Our basic claim with the aid of the above is that philosophy is for us about understanding and action suited to the understanding. Seen from this perspective, philosophy proper is not about being locked in the contemplation and clarification of texts for its own sake. On the contrary, philosophy proper arises from and is about experience as living and lived reality (DUSSEL 2002, 3). It goes without saying that experience is multiple and varied as well as time and space bound. Serequeberhan argues that philosophy, African or otherwise is a "situated critical and systematic interpretative exploration of our lived historico-cultural actuality […] in our case it is a critical and systematic reflection on the lived antecedents of contemporary African existence and thought" (1994, 3).

African Philosophical Hermeneutics here describes a position of interpretation from the perspective of the indigenous peoples conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation. It describes also a philosophy of liberation, not simply content to interpret the world from the perspective of the oppressed but with the understanding that

interpretation is the first step to changing this situation so that the indigenous African people may once again be free according to their own understanding of freedom.

The Critique of Eurocentrism (Critical Negativity)

We share the view with Ramose and others that at the very least the African philosopher is one engaged in a struggle towards "the liberation of African philosophy from the yoke of dominance and enslavement under the European (Western) epistemological paradigm" (RAMOSE 1999, 37). It is precisely the on-going non-freedom of the African people despite decolonisation and the end of apartheid in South Africa that lead to his identification of a two-fold exigency which he describes as follows:

> One [being] that the colonised people's conception of reality, knowledge and truth should be released from slavery and dominance under the European epistemological paradigm […] the second exigency is that the common pluriverse of discourse must take into account the rational demands of justice to the colonised arising from the unjust wars of conquest that resulted in the colonial disseizing of territory as well as the enslavement of the colonised. These rational demands are specifically the restoration of territory to its rightful indigenous owners and reparations to them. This two-fold exigency is the indispensable necessity for the authentic liberation of [South] Africa […] Our reflections on the need for the authentic liberation are underlined by the thesis that whoever holds the key to the construction of theory also does hold the key to power. (RAMOSE 1999, 36-37)

In light of this two-fold exigency we agree with Serequeberhan that as a practice of resistance African philosophical hermeneutics has at least a double task: *de-structive* and constructive. Elsewhere Serequeberhan (2002, 75) describes the first leg as "critical negative", its task is an engaged "clearing-away" or "making way". Drawing from Martin Heidegger's *de-struction* he describes as *de-structive* readings in which "one which undermines the text from within in terms of the cardinal notions on which it is grounded and in so doing exposes the hidden source out of which the text is articulated" (SEREQUEBERHAN 2002,

77). He goes on to explain that "the hyphen in variations of the term which he utilises is meant to differentiate it from the English word "destruction". It is meant to emphasise that what is intended is not the "elimination, annihilation or demolition of what is in question, but rather its critical unpacking or opening up to a radical enquiry or interpretation" (SEREQUEBERHAN 2002, 77).

The *de-structive* task more often than not involves what he describes as "our [African philosophers] responsibility to hermeneutically elucidate what remains hidden: that is 'a relevant reading that hasn't been addressed thus far by the dominant Euro-American scholarship on the philosophic tradition" (SEREQUEBERHAN 2002, 65). More practically it requires our critique of Eurocentrism which presents an obstacle to the authentic liberation of the African people and their philosophy. It is necessary to de-structure and expose the basic speculative core of lexicography, texts, discourses, laws, practises, philosophies and even languages which enslave and dominate the colonised people's conception of reality, knowledge and truth (Ramose's (1999, 36) first exigency).

Resistance and the critique of Eurocentrism however are only one phase of the path towards true liberation. They deal with that part of freedom which we may describe as *free from* Once we have successfully *de-structed* the codes of the oppression and uncovered their hidden sources and *telos*, it will be necessary to pursue the exercise of the second part of our freedom, which can be described as *free to*. It is important to understand that the *freedom from* and the *freedom to* reflects more of a conceptual rather than necessarily a historical sequence. In thinking about *freedom from, freedom to* is already thought out even if this might be just inchoately. One criticises something as wrong or bad precisely because one has an already existing (even if not explicit) idea of right or good. Thus there is mutual reinforcement rather than strict and rigid division between *freedom from* and *freedom to*.

The historical dimension comes into the picture on the recognition that the actual realisation of *freedom from* is the precondition for the exercise of *freedom to*. The following questions should be understood against the background of this reasoning with regard to *freedom from* and *freedom to*. What kind of philosophy? What kind of society? What kind of humanness shall we found and support once we are engaged in the active exercise our freedom?

It is essential to note that the separation of these dimensions of freedom and their content is a philosophical technique for conceptual clarity. In reality, freedom is one indivisible wholeness because the very

critique of the *unethicality* of the prevailing order which we are to become *free from* unfolds according to the basis of an already existing philosophy which will provide the basis for the exercise of our freedom which we call *free to*.

This brings us to the final part of our task, that which we described elsewhere as *constructive* or positive—that which deals precisely with the content of our philosophical basis for the critique of Eurocentrism as well as the matter of the construction of our liberation.

The Constructive Dimension: Ubuntu as a Philo-praxis for liberation

African philosophy as a philosophy of liberation has a second task which is closely linked to Ramose's second exigency[4]. This task is the indigenous re-orientation of philosophical work or what Serequeberhan elsewhere describes as the *constructive* aspect. Serequeberhan describing this dimension writes "In its constructive aspect the practice of African Philosophy has to engage in the systematic and critical study of indigenous forms of knowledge and 'know-how' both practical and theoretic" (SEREQUEBERHAN 2009, 47) and adds "among other things, we- those of us engaged in African Philosophy, have to be willing to learn from and critically study the concrete practices of various African liberation movements and struggles" (SEREQUEBERHAN 2009, 47).

We accordingly understand the constructive aspect of our task to be grounded in two inseparable resources in our case. These are the indigenous African philosophy of *Ubuntu* as it continues to exist in the languages and cultures of the Bantu-speaking people. In addition to this are the history and artefacts of the liberation movements and struggles some of which have their basis in the philosophy of *Ubuntu*. We will accordingly below provide a concise exposition of African philosophy through *Ubuntu* drawing a great deal on the work of the South African philosopher Mogobe Ramose.

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[4] The second exigency is that the evolving common [pluri]verse of discourse must take into account the rational demands of justice to the colonised arising from the unjust wars of conquest that resulted in colonial disseizing of territory as well as the enslavement of the colonised. These rational demands are specifically the restoration of territory to its rightful indigenous owners and reparations to them. This twofold exigency is the indispensable necessity for the authentic liberation of [South] Africa […] Our reflections on the need for the authentic liberation of [South] Africa are underlined by the thesis that whoever holds the key to the construction of theory does also hold the key to power" (RAMOSE 1999, 36-37).

The reason for drawing on his work is that his study (RAMOSE 1999) is the only example of a book-length technical study of the philosophical categories which has its basis on thorough knowledge and analysis of the Bantu language-cultures. It does of course draw upon the work of previous African philosophers and linguists. We will then make a case for the study of the liberation struggle and movements as philosophical resources which have provided us with an example of *Ubuntu* engaged in the practice of resistance. We will restrict ourselves as a result of the scope of this essay to the exposition of a philosophy of race.

African Philosophy Through Ubuntu
Ubuntu Philosophy
Ubuntu is the Zulu or Nguni translation of a term which can be found amongst Bantu speaking peoples throughout the continent of Africa. For example, it is known and understood as *Botho* in the Sesotho languages or *Hunhu* amongst the Shona speaking people of the Great Zimbabwe. It roughly translates to "be-ing Human" or "humanness" rather than human-*ism* – a matter of philosophical importance which we will explore in the following section. Our purpose in this section is to exposit very briefly the philosophical basis of Ubuntu with the purpose of discussing what can be understood as the philosophy of race or absence thereof amongst the Bantu speaking peoples who were conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation.

Philosophy in Ubuntu
Ubuntu is the philosophical foundation of African philosophy among the Bantu speaking peoples. We will rely on the work of South African philosopher Mogobe Ramose (1999, 40-53) in our discussion of Ubuntu philosophy. In his philosophical analysis of Ubuntu, Ramose argues that the term should be approached as a hyphenated word: *ubu-ntu* with the prefix being *ubu-* and stem *ntu-*. *Ubu-* evokes the idea of be-ing in general. It is enfolded be-ing before it manifests itself in the concrete form or mode of existence of any particular entity.

The Ontology of ubu-
At the ontological level, there really is no strict literal separation between *ubu-* and *–ntu*. They are instead as Ramose suggests, mutually founding, i.e. two aspects of being in one-ness and an indivisible whole-ness. *Ubu-* according to Ramose evokes the idea of be-ing in general, always oriented towards unfoldment that is an incessant, continual

concrete manifestation through particular forms and modes of being. While *Ubu-* may be said to be distinctly ontological, *-ntu* is the point at which be-ing assumes concrete form or a mode of be-ing in the continual unfoldment and may be said to be distinctly epistemological. Accordingly, Ubuntu is the fundamental ontological-epistemological category in the philosophy of the Bantu speaking peoples.

Umu- and the epistemology of –ntu: be-ing human vs human being
Umu- shares an identical logic with *ubu-*. The two prefixes share the logic that each one of them denotes the highest level of generality in the sense that they specify nothing in particular. They are, as it were, dangling and will remain in that position until they are grounded by a particular suffix. The "dangling" aspect of these two prefixes also suggests the recognition that motion is the principle of be-ing. The activity implied in the concept of motion is the basis for the construal of 'doing', that is, the verbal element in the prefix *ubu-* but not *umu-*. The point then is that depending on their classification in the categorisation of being (RAMOSE 2006, 58-60), some prefixes – once grounded by the relevant suffix – are gerundives or verbal nouns.

Once they are grounded they become nouns. The difference is, however, that *umu-* belongs to a different class in the categorisation of nouns. In this particular case, the *ubu-* connotes the class of abstract nouns whereas *umu-* connotes the class of concrete nouns. Because of the verbal character inherent in *ubu-* when it is grounded by the suffix –*ntu* then *Ubuntu* is properly an abstract verbal noun.

When joined with *-ntu* into *umuntu* it refers to the concrete noun; human being, *homo-loquens* who is simultaneously *homo-sapiens*, the specific: human-being- maker and subject of politics, law and religion. To make an English translation then, while *Ubuntu* can be thought of as describing the more general and abstract human-ness or be-ing human, *umuntu* on the other hand is the specific concrete manifestation. *Umuntu* is the specific entity which continues to conduct an enquiry into be-ing, knowledge and truth, something we would best consider an activity rather than an act, a process which cannot be stopped unless motion is itself stopped in line with this reasoning then *ubu-* should be regarded as be-ing becoming, verbal rather than verb.

-ness versus -ism
It is the case, according to Ramose, that *Ubuntu* is always a –ness and never an –ism. The reason for this is the logic of *ubu-* being the recognition that motion is the principle of be-ing as explained in the

immediately preceding section. This is corroborated by The Oxford Dictionary of Word Beginnings and Endings clarifying the meaning of "-ness" that although "the suffix is active in the language, […] words coined with it are often of transitory existence". On the other hand, entry 1. Of '-ness' in The Oxford Concise Dictionary of Current English reads: "forms nouns from adjectives and sometimes other words expressing 1: a state or condition or an instance of this and 2: "something in a certain state." '-ness' amongst other things in the language of motion openly admits its temporality, as merely a state and stage in a much greater process, which is still to manifest itself in other ways.

It is precisely the understanding of be-ing Human as verbal and continual motion, always in a constant state of revision, reconfiguration that makes the translation of *Ubuntu* into Human-ism untenable. Humanness is the accurate rendition *Ubuntu*; of Human being becoming. Thus *Ubuntu* may never be translated as Humanism as many writers have done (see METZ 2007a; CORNELL 2014; PRAEG 2014).The suffix "-ism" which is described by the Oxford Dictionary of word beginnings and endings (QUINION 2002, 118) as "forming nouns" is also described in the same entry as a creation of the 17th century for the description of "distinctive practices, systems, political ideologies". The "-ism" suffix creates the false impression that we are dealing with nouns as separate and distinct, independently existing entities. "Ism" inevitably fixates and arrests from motion some or other moment or aspect of reality. The result is the creation of the dogmatic and unchangeable, the foregone and finalised. Philosophically, it also has the effect of positing a "fundamental and irreconcilable opposition between being and becoming which arises from the subject-object-verb understanding of the structure of language.

This "false dogmatism and immutability constitute a false necessity based on fragmentative thinking" (Ramose 2002:42).The cumulative conclusion arising from the above is that *Ubuntu* as an abstract verbal noun is linked ontologically to *umuntu*. This is a mutually reinforcing link in the sense that *umuntu* (the concrete), is the potential doer of *Ubuntu* in practice. In philosophical terms, *umuntu* precedes *Ubuntu* ontologically and by virtue of such precedence, umuntu is the progenitor of the epistemology of *Ubuntu*. The following section is an elaboration on this cumulative conclusion.

Ubuntu Philosophical Anthropology and The Concept Race
Under this section we propose to discuss briefly the *Ubuntu* understanding of the nature of the human being. For two related reasons,

of which the first is that race and racism are at base concepts related to a contest concerning the quality and universality of humanness (which racists doubt and anti-racists assert). The second reason is related to our discussion of Curry above where he argues that the limits of African American philosophy of race are its often reliance upon the philosophical anthropology of the very European philosophy which has excluded Africans from its auspices. We will proceed through a hermeneutic elucidation of a central aphorism of *Ubuntu* and some of the implications that arise out of it.

Umuntu ngumuntu nga bantu:
It is essential before providing an English approximation to disclaim the fact that the meaning of this maxim is inexhaustible by English translation. It is also important to note that although the example provided here for treatment is the isiZulu version, there exist equivalents for it in all the Bantu languages.

Ramose translates the aphorism thus "to be a human be-ing is to affirm one's humanity by recognising the humanity of others and on that basis establish humane relations with them"(1999, 37). The core meaning of this aphorism may be expressed best philosophically by Benezet Bujo who writes: "For Black Africa, it is not the Cartesian *cogito ergo* sum but an existential *cognatus sum, ergo sumus* [I am related, therefore we are] that is decisive (BUJO 2001, 22).

The relatedness underlined by this aphorism means that *Ubuntu* as humanness obliges one to be humane, respectful and polite towards others. The obligation to be humane towards others is an ethical imperative based on the principle that one ought always to promote life and avoid killing. *Ubuntu* as ethics is inseparably connected to the recognition that motion is the principle of be-ing. Thus the ethics of *Ubuntu* revolves around contingency and mutability. Accordingly, "there is no ethics as such, but only different ethical systems, with identical ideals". (BUJO 1997, 47)

We concur with Bujo but with the qualification that the ethical ideals are not always "identical". Understood in this way, *Ubuntu* is both the source as well as the embodiment of the ethics of the Bantu-speaking people. The implication is that be-ing a human being is simply not given or passive. *Ubuntu* is simultaneously gerund and gerundive. As such it is an orientation to the *practice* of the philosophy of Ubuntu. It is in this sense a *philopraxis*. Simply being born of the species Homo sapiens may be a necessary condition to be a human being but it is not sufficient. One ought to become – in the ethical sense – a human being.

This, in the philosophy of *Ubuntu*, is an indispensable complement to the ontological condition of being a human being. The be-ing of oneself is always dependant on one's doing in relation to others. That is precisely the recognition of their humanity and the establishment of humane relationships with them.

It is also the case that the human order is distinctly social, beginning with the language which is one of the central instruments of our enquiry into the nature of being as well as the world we construct with that language as its basis. Everything about ourselves (as human beings) requires others to have any significance and so too our human constructions assume this. Everything from language, law and politics has no meaning if there are not 'others' (*abanye abantu*) in its description, definition and practice. What is critical then is "to prove oneself to be the embodiment of *ubu-ntu* because the fundamental ethical, social and legal judgment of human worth and conduct is based upon *Ubuntu*" (RAMOSE, 2002: 43). This brings us to the next part of our examination of the pragmatics of this judgment.

Ngu muntu or akusi umuntu?

Ramose warns that a literal interpretation is without use as it would simply ask "is he human, or isn't he?" (RAMOSE 2002, 43). Instead this is an expression that should be seen as an enquiry into the human-ness; the ethical quality of being a particular individual. Thus, the judgment concerning a particular individual does not refer to any aspect of their biology. The determination whether one is *umuntu* or not has its basis on the known history of the actions of a particular person and whether such a person has in fact conducted herself humanely, that is, with *Ubuntu*. It is also technically possible for the judgment to be extended towards a group of people provided that a history of interactions is recorded between a given Bantu-speaking community and such a group of people. It is for instance the case that Europeans (*abelungu*) are generally considered to not have *Ubuntu*. The effect of this is that by aggregation it might be said "*umlungu akusi umuntu*", he is white, he is not a human being.

More precisely a question can be asked meaningfully "*ungumuntu na*?" [Is he a person ?] to which the answer could be issued sensibly: "*cha ungumlungu*" [no he is white]. This is not a mode of reasoning *based on race*. It does not have its basis in biology. Rather, it is an ethical judgment based on the historical interaction between the indigenous conquered people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation(*abantu*) on the one hand and their colonial conquerors (*abelungu*) on the other.

The kernel of this ethical judgment is the experience of the injustice in the forms of: (i) the so-called right of conquest, being the ethically unjustified usurpation of sovereign title to territory from *abantu to abelungu;* (ii) political subjugation in the service of sustained systemic and systematic economic exploitation and, (iii) racism to consolidate political subjugation and reinforce systemic and systematic economic exploitation. Despite the constitutional change brought about since 1994, this experience remains unaltered. This is because the new constitutional dispensation is, politically and legally, the constitutionalisation of the triple experience of the injustice we have just identified. Accordingly, it ought to be censured on ethical grounds regardless of the consent of the conquered delivered through the medium of "negotiations".

To demonstrate the ethical assessment that "*umlungu akusi umuntu*" is the fact that when an *umulungu* or indeed any non-Bantu person exhibits *Ubuntu* and contradicts the precisely negative history of interaction between her people and *abantu,* then it is said that "*lomlungu unobuntu*" [this white person has *Ubuntu]* or even "*lomlungu ungumutu*" [this white person is a human being], this is not a biological valuation but an ethical one. This shows that even when a historically negative relationship has been formed, that is, one in which the conduct of the other has negated the humanity of the Bantu or any other human beings, their reasoning has been flexible enough to recognise humanness wherever, whenever and by whomsoever it presents itself. This kind of ethical judgment is distinctly and completely free of racism. Ngubane (1979) and Pheko (1990) both write of various Europeans who were accepted as *abantu* and were integrated into the Bantu-speaking communities and established humane relations with them. It follows then that the orientation towards as well as the burden of racist reasoning is alien to the philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Only a superficial understanding of the ethics of Ubuntu constitutes the basis for the hollow and unsustainable charge that Ubuntu is racist.

Ubuntu as A Philo-praxis for Liberation

We have made the point following Dussel, that the object of philosophy is properly speaking, reality rather than simply philosophical texts. Our exposition of *Ubuntu* has its basis on the living reality of the languages, culture and life of the indigenous African peoples. We are reliant also on the theoretical work of those professional philosophers who have gone before us within the discursive and academic spaces to deepen our

understanding of the philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Our final source is the living text provided by the many generations of groups and individuals who have been engaged since the commencement of unjust wars of colonisation in the struggle to assert the undeniable truth that the humanity of the African is second to none.

These have included *sovereign* kings such as *amakhosi* Shaka ka Senzangakhona (Zulu), Cetshwayo ka Dingiswayo, Sekhukhune, Dinizulu ka Cetshwayo and Bambatha. These heroic defenders of their sovereign title to territory were defeated by the colonial conqueror in the unjust wars of colonisation.

Political formations and organisations such as the South African Native National Congress, the All Africa Convention, the Unity Movement, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the Black Consciousness movement are all part of the history of resistance against the colonial conqueror. It is from the history, theory and practice of these individuals and organisations and from the culture (*isintu)* of the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation that the content which supports our understanding of *Ubuntu* philosophy comes.

We understand much of the struggle for liberation in South Africa from its beginnings to have always had its basis in *Ubuntu*, in the understanding that human life is inter-connected, in the understanding that a ruler derives the authority to rule from and through the people. Furthermore, human beings were deemed to be equal in their status as human beings despite differences in the colour of their skins (among others). It is precisely because of their conquest in the unjust wars of colonisation that the indigenous African people, title bearers to their territories since time immemorial, resisted and continue to resist their colonial conquerors including the successors in title to the conquest. Our understanding of *Ubuntu* is based on the history and philosophy of their resistance and struggle: our struggle for complete and total liberation with due recognition of the fact that the dynamism of liberation means that it cannot be achieved once and for all time.

Africanism / "Azanianism" [5] *as the political philosophical expression of Ubuntu*

We now turn our attention to a brief examination of the political philosophical approach which arises out of *Ubuntu* which was described by its earliest theoreticians as Africanism (and then as it was taken up by subsequent generations collectively Azanian school). Historically, Africanism understood itself explicitly as a philosophy of liberation and reflected a moment in the development of the liberation struggle where certain younger members of the African National Congress tired of white paternalism and the reliance by the organisation on European ideas. They as a result sought to redirect the struggle and its approach towards an African cultural basis which meant the reconnection of their contemporary struggle with the antecedent history of anti-colonial wars. This line of resistance understood its ultimate goal as the restoration to the indigenous people, the title to its territory and sovereignty over it. Rather than simply demanding a place at the white man's table as was the common path, it meant the reclamation of ownership at that table and the right to determine the rules that would govern those seated there. Many of the tenets of Africanism such as the unification of fragmented and separate groups of African people into a single nation precede

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[5] In South African liberation political history the Azania school is a particular African/ Black Nationalist tendency which is sometimes referred to as BCPA (Black Consciousness Pan Africanism). Although it is not the intention of this note to give an exhaustive discussion, some common factors which unite the organisations which are characterised as belonging to this school are the emphasis on African culture (isintu) as the basis of liberation politics. Also included is the incredulity held by the adherents to the "liberatory" nature of the '94 "negotiated settlement". Organisations and individuals belonging to this school are also critical of the use of "South Africa" to describe the territories belonging to the indigenous conquered people variously referred to as "Africans" or "Blacks" in whom title to territory is vested. The adherents prefer instead the use of the word Azania in the description of the said territories. Such organisations have also at various times attempted or at least expressed interest in uniting together under one banner. The school has also been claimed as inspiration for various recent political developments in South Africa such as the rise of the Economic Freedom Fighters party, the #RhodesMustFall movement and the resurgence of the Pan Africanist Student Movement of Azania (PASMA), all in the past 3 years.

colonial contact. Our interest here is however with the nature of Africanism as a philosophy of liberation, that is, as it finds expression after the conquest of the indigenous people in the unjust wars of colonisation. In this regard, the credit for the original development of Africanism as a systematic philosophy can be given to Anton Muziwakhe Lembede.

Gail Gerhart (1978, 62) makes this point thus: "[the] intensive study of history and philosophy had freed […] the mind [of Lembede] from any blind tendency to conform to the thinking of those around him and had stirred a fervent desire to create something in the philosophical realm which was new and uniquely African […] The total thrust of his ideas in the South African context was quite unprecedented".

Africanism as a philosophy of liberation arose for Lembede out of his dealing with the philosophical implications of the conquest, disseizin and the oppression of the African people in their own country. It is important to note that the unapologetic assertion that South Africa is a "black man's" country, that it belongs to the indigenous peoples conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation, is precisely one of the features that distinguishes Africanist thought in South Africa from other indigenous political liberation organisations except the Black Consciousness Movement which is its ideological descendant (DLADLA 2017, 110). In addition to the legitimate claim that South Africa is "a black man's" country, Lembede also identified racism's attendant psychological and cultural oppression of Africans as a pathology of mind, in writing: "[it is] assuming alarming dimensions… [and] manifests itself in such abnormal and pathological phenomena as the loss of self-confidence, inferiority complex, a feeling of frustration, the worship and idolisation of white men, foreign leaders and ideologies." (LEMBEDE 2015, 140) Because of this, Africanism identified the liberation of the African intellectually, psychologically, culturally, politically and economically as its primary aims. It is interesting to note – albeit parenthetically – that right from its inception the Black Consciousness Movement declared the pursuit of exactly these aims by appeal to the same reasoning espoused by Lembede even though he was not explicitly quoted. On this point, the historical continuity between Africanist and Black Consciousness philosophies is strikingly conspicuous and unmistakable.

The restoration of the African's knowledge of and confidence in her own culture was a self-affirmative activity with the aim of reminding the African that her humanity was second to none against the negativity of colonialism and apartheid. The philosophical basis which informs the resistance to oppression can, for Africanist philosophy, then be found within African culture and history. Lembede, for example,

writes repeatedly about the necessity of remembering the wars of resistance fought by the great sovereign kings of the past (GEHART 1978, 200). The point as Gerhart (1978, 201) points out, was not to return to the past but to reinterpret the present as an extension of a heroic ongoing African struggle against conquest.   Africanism's conception of freedom and the character of the society and polity that would come into being as a result of the expression of that self-determination is also one which has its basis in African culture see Lembede (2015), Sobukwe (1959) and Biko (2004).

In the general discourse of African Philosophy then Africanism can be categorised into the group which Henry Odera Oruka called nationalistic-ideological philosophy. This approach to philosophy is one which originates in the experience of the struggle against oppression in Africa. Many of its central theoreticians were gifted intellectuals, educated in various fields, sometimes in Western academic philosophy itself, for example, Kwame Nkrumah and Anton Lembede. Few of them were however simply academics. They were soldiers, activists, freedom fighters, who distilled ideas they had been taught through the cultural education of their communities and families in the experience and process of political struggle.

With a few exceptions such as Kwame Nkrumah, many of their works are not written as extended treatises in the fashion of academic philosophy. Instead, they survive as pamphlets, speeches, letters and notes which are nevertheless rich sources of social, legal, economic and political philosophies as well as epistemology, metaphysics and ethics. Robert Sobukwe's Africanism, Leopold Senghor's Negritude, Julius Nyerere's Ujamaa and Kenneth Kaunda's African "humanism" come to mind as examples in this regard, not forgetting the poetry and writings of physician Presidents Agostinho Neto and Felix Houphouet-Boigny.

Oruka describing the character of nationalistic-ideological philosophy writes that:

> It is clear that this philosophy is claimed to be rooted in the traditional or communal Africa, but it is explicit that it is actually a philosophy of the individual author concerned. Thirdly, this philosophy is practical and has explicit problems to solve, namely those of national and individual freedom. (ORUKA 2002 [1978], 122)

In addition to Oruka's criteria, Africanism also meets those set by Ramose, Serequeberhan and Okere, amongst others, for the practise of African philosophy in general, namely that it has its basis upon "the culture and experience of African peoples" and the "African philosopher

would at the very minimum be arguing for the liberation of African philosophy [itself] from the yoke of dominance and enslavement under the European (Western) epistemological paradigm" (RAMOSE 1999, 37).

In view of our discussion above concerning the tension between –ness and –ism, it is clear that the proponents of African-ism must be criticised for delivering an African philosophy derived from African culture in terms of an –ism. The criticism is pertinent on the ground that all of them were born and nurtured into and through the philosophy of Ubuntu. The importance of the criticism lies in the fact that it is a reminder that (i) even English or any other non-Bantu language is not necessarily the best medium of rendering the meaning of indigenous vernacular concepts, in this case, *Ubuntu*: (ii) one must be constantly alert to the distinction between speaking or writing in English – (or any other language) – and philosophical reasoning. According to our criticism, the proponents of African-ism are guilty of the failure to distinguish between speaking or writing in English and philosophical reasoning.

The Africanist/Azanian Critical Philosophy of Race

The Africanists called their own doctrine in relation to the problem of race, "non-racialism". Because however this is a contested concept (SOSKE 2014 and DLADLA 2017) in South African political history it is necessary to distinguish the Africanist conception of non-racialism, which we can describe as liberatory Non-Racialism, from its liberal counterpart. Liberal non-racialism is the dominant and more well-known version in South Africa and is even contained as a founding value in the constitution as we discussed earlier.

In terms of the liberal conception of non-racialism, the prefix "non-" is a technical referent describing a social or political procedure in which race is not to be considered. So, for instance, "non-racial franchise" comes to mean that people can vote without consideration to their race. American philosopher Theo David Goldberg (2006) has preferred for this phenomenon the term "anti-racialism" (which is to be distinguished from anti-racism). Anti-racialism in effect gives rise to a phenomenon which has been called "racism without races" (BALIBAR, 2015). What it means is that the categories of race which were used to systematically oppress the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation and negatively differentiate them from their conquerors are required to fall away in the supposed name of justice. As multiple critiques have shown however this de-categorisation is no more than a name change; it is purely nominal since it is not at once the existential de-categorisation of the racialised subjects (RAMOSE, 2001;

GOLDBERG, 2006, 2015). The somewhat idealised falling away of the categories of race does not subtract the unjustly gained privilege and power of the beneficiaries of racism who acquired that power and privilege on the basis of the discourse and historical actualisation of race.

This is, however, considerably different from the Africanist conception which is directed towards a negation of the reality of race itself. The repudiation of the reality of race by the Africanists was not a naïve denial of racism, racism for them precisely involved the elevation of a biological fiction into a sociological and political reality. On the contrary, non-racialism in the Africanists' approach shows up the ethical untenability of racism and the ethical necessity of anti-racist struggle. It is worth considering as we did in the section on *Ubuntu* philosophical anthropology above that the Bantu languages which are the basis of the philosophy of *Ubuntu* do not contain any equivalent word or concept for race – conceived either as a social or biological category.

Using *Ubuntu* as the basis for understanding the problematic of race, the Africanists' treatment of the problem of race begins with the conviction of the equal humanity of all human beings. Racism is for Sobukwe[6] is a false dogma developed and asserted with the purpose of justifying the conquest and dispossession of Africans by Europeans. (SOBUKWE 1978, 18). Sobukwe argues that race as such, applied in the plural form with regards to human beings serves this purpose of the differential recognition of humanness on the basis of a scientifically untenable "bio-logic".

It relies, according to him, on the fallacious elevation of superficial physical differences to the status of being – or kinds of being. He therefore understands White Supremacy as having its basis in a politically entrenched social ontology which pretends to biology.

Rather than being bound by the imagination of the apartheid government which through the Population Registration Act No 30 of 1950 converted race from an ontological fiction to a juridical fact by providing that there were four races in South Africa, namely Native, Coloured, Indian and White. The Africanist theory spoke instead of "socio-historical groups in South Africa the differences between which

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[6] Mangaliso Sobukwe was the founding president of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the body which broke with the ANC in 1958 for amongst other reasons their sense that it had no basis in African philosophy but had become the plaything of a small minority of Russian instructed communists of the South African Communist party. He was an academic linguist and expert of the Bantu languages as well as a leading theoretician of Africanist social and political theory.

are the result of a number of factors, chief among which has been geographical isolation as well as shared historical experience" (SOBUKWE 1978, 18)"

The philosophically meaningful way of describing these groups for Sobukwe was through a critical examination of their competing title to the territory of South Africa. For him, the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation were one group: Africans who have occupied Africa since time immemorial (SOBUKWE 1978, 18). Africanism for him was precisely their philosophy and ideology for continued resistance and ultimately decolonisation and the restoration of sovereignty. Europeans on the other hand were defined as "the dominant group […] the exploiting group, responsible for the pernicious doctrine of white supremacy which has resulted in the humiliation and degradation of the indigenous African people. It is this group which has dispossessed the African people of their land and with arrogant conceit has set itself up as the "guardians", the "trustees" of the Africans" (SOBUKWE 1978, 18)

For Sobukwe and the Africanists, the struggle for liberation is not merely a struggle against apartheid which was understood properly as a contingent but aggravating expression of white domination but the struggle is against the complete phenomenon of White Supremacy itself in all its manifestations. It is after all the case that Africans were conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation nearly three centuries before apartheid was established in 1948 and white supremacy established upon their land through the process of colonisation.

It is only after the defeat of White Supremacy that non-racialism can exist as an experiencable social order. For the Africanists, non-racialism has three logically and ethically related implications, firstly it begins on the firm theoretical basis of the repudiation of race as scientifically and ontologically meaningful way to describe human beings. Secondly a critical phase which requires that Africans as a conquered people destroy white supremacy. This means a struggle by the indigenous conquered people for the restoration of title to the territory of South Africa and sovereignty over it. Finally once the second phase is completed then the critical-theoretical first phase may be implemented (that is transformed from theory) into a social and political reality.

There is no doubt that for Sobukwe, the end of White-Supremacy would inaugurate the permeability of Africanity. In a discussion about the Africanists' definition of an African as one who "owes his loyalty only to Africa and accepts the democratic rule of an African majority" (SOBUKWE 1978, 24). Elsewhere Sobukwe insists "I have said before and [still say so now], that I see no reason why, in a

free democratic Africa, a predominantly black electorate should not return a white man to Parliament, for colour will count for nothing in a free Africa." (SOBUKWE 1978, 25). Soske writes "In the PAC's[Africanists'] analysis, this definition of the African only had purchase after the dismantling of the white population's economic and political control. […] In other words, Sobukwe distinguished between the racialized subject of anti-colonial nationalism and the individual subject of post-colonial politics" (SOSKE 2014: 31).

Only when the indigenous peoples conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation have full entitlement to and enjoyment of the land that belongs to them and its wealth as well as the reparations which are due to them for their endurance of the dehumanisation which enriched their conquerors can we begin to speak of non-racialism. Only if the successors in title to their conquest in the unjust wars of colonisation recognise their humanness according to their (*abantu*) own understanding of humanness and act in accordance with the duty which arises from that recognition can there be a genuine experience of Ubuntu between them.

Conclusion
In the course of this essay we have shown that *Ubuntu* as a philosophy of liberation can form a solid philosophical-anthropological foundation for an African Critical Philosophy of Race. We have also shown that there are fundamental differences between *Ubuntu* as understood by the indigenous people conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation on the one hand and the posterity of their conquerors on the other. Whereas the former has served as a basis of their struggle for liberation against the historical injustice of conquest, dispossession and domination and continues the cry for the return of title to territory to *abantu* and the restoration of an unencumbered sovereignty over it. The latter version attempts to obfuscate historical injustice and defend their conquest and continued domination in the very name of their philosophy. This obfuscation is unconvincing both for technical reasons related to the hollowness of content of its proponents and the political and existential contradiction presented today by the continued suffering and vulnerability to poverty, landlessness and death suffered by the majority of the indigenous conquered people. This avoidable state of affairs by its very nature is a negation their humanity and by no stretch of logic or the imagination compatible with *Ubuntu*.

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