Race and Development

Introduction

Development discourse owes a great deal to sociological models of modernity. Modern societies are understood to be composed of individuals all of which, regardless of their personal attributes, enjoy equal rights under the law. The distribution of needs through economic and political circuits is supposed to operate in an increasingly universal and objective fashion favouring no-one by reference to particular personal attributes, but by the impersonal demand and supply of the market or by some form of rational means-tested welfare that cover all citizens. The dominant interpretation of modern world development (whether “neo-liberal” and favouring the autonomy of market forces, or a “capabilities approach” and recognising the necessity of political intervention) can be understood as the universalization of these methods and mechanisms of distributing need across all societies and cultures.

The related problems of modernization that development studies seeks to address - such as poverty, inequality, unsustainable population growth, environmental decay and urban/rural linkages - are not usually investigated explicitly in terms of their racial dimensions (exceptions include White 2002; Kothari 2006; Duffield 1996; Goudge 2003). This is because mainstream notions of development assume that race is a personalised attribute that is anachronistic to the progressive integration – rather than segregation - of impersonalised individuals within modern (and putatively global) public-political and private-economic spheres. Racism is presumed to be inimical to the progressive universalization of individual rights and freedoms, a process assured by the entrenchment and expansion of free markets and civil society. That is to say, racial identity is something that modern ideas of development presume to be atavistic (against this assumption see Chua 2003). In this chapter I argue that modern world development, as a set of practices and discourses, has always been and continues to be defined by the hierarchical ordering and re-ordering of humanity into racially-delineated groups. Race is no atavistic force; rather, it has been a foundational ordering principle of modern world development, one that has been re-articulated and fought over both as an idea and in practice.

To pursue this argument I proceed by sketching out four broad periods of modern world development and focus upon the racial dimension of thought and practice evident in each. I focus on key notions associated with the liberal understanding of world development as “modernization” e.g. economic growth, increased inter-dependence through trade, the associated entrenchment of individual freedoms, and the homogenisation of cultural values and standards of living. Rather than simply disavowing liberal thought per se as racist, my intent is to plead for a sensitivity to the continued – if changing – racial dimension practices of modern world development most of which are embedded in liberal narratives of universal technical, economic and moral progress. There are also many
different understandings of race and many frameworks exist through which to plot a narrative of the development of race and racism in modern world history. In this chapter I deploy one broad framing of the problem of race in modernity, namely, the tension between naturalistic understandings of race as a genetic marker of different “stocks” of humankind (often associated with the polygenesis thesis of multiple origins to human races), and historical understandings of race as socially and environmentally constituted (often associated with the monogenesis thesis of a common origin of humanity) (see Goldberg 1993, 4; see also Hannaford 1996). While liberal notions of progress that in the main inform the notion of modern world development are more at home with the universal scope of the historical-monogenetic approach, the naturalistic-polygenetic understanding – usually associated with non-liberal ideologies such as Nazism - has nevertheless remained influential. Indeed, as I shall suggest, it is over the invocation of the “bad”, “recalcitrant”, or “un-reformable” native where both approaches have tended to synergise. It is within this contradictory framework of race that discourses and practices of modern world development have understood continuity, change and difference within the human condition.

I begin by looking at the period of Atlantic slavery. I show how in this period world development was structured as a hierarchical and racialized ordering of social beings, and I show how Enlightenment thought considered some races to be not human enough so that the possibility of progress in the human condition was quarantined to the white European race. Then moving to the nineteenth century I show how in the era of European imperialism liberal thought deemed the possibility of progress to apply universally to all human groups. However I show how this universality was mobilized for a “civilizing mission” that ascribed the right and responsibility of the civilized white European race to imperially school non-white savage and barbarian races in the ways of progress. Turning to the Cold War period I show how Western leadership of the Development Project was significantly undermined by a coalition of previously colonized societies that moved the ideological battleground over progress directly onto the terrain of a critique of European (and United States) racism. And finally I look at the tendency in post Cold War development thought and practice to deploy both a naturalized understanding of racial difference and a socio-historical narrative of the civilizing mission. Moreover, this tendency is posited upon an assumption that by not speaking explicitly in the language of race, the development project can be safely shorn of its historical reliance upon the construction of racial hierarchies and segregations.

The Atlantic world and slavery

Although there are many arguments as to the meaning of the term “modern world development” we might say that, notwithstanding its contested nature, the phrase usually connotes two processes: a) the increased inter-connectedness of societies and cultures world-wide through the trade of staple and not just luxury goods such that the needs of one society depends on provision by others; and b) the rise of the bourgeoisie through the increasing importance of trade to become a new ruling class of Western European states (although not necessarily as capitalists (see Brenner 1977)), with these states taking on a leading – and imperial – position vis-à-vis non-European societies. If these definitions are
used, then modern world development began with and grew out of the Atlantic slave trade. For unlike their adventuring in the seas surrounding South East Asia, European traders in the Atlantic did not parasitically latch onto existing networks of trade managed by existing non-European merchants and rulers: instead they *created* the “golden triangle” that ultimately linked European manufactures to African bodies to American primary produce (especially sugar, and later, cotton) helping to make the (very different kinds of) bourgeoisie in Britain, Holland and France leading political forces. Indeed, the politics and trade of the Atlantic world, once established, became the pulse that determined the direction of European involvement in the non-Atlantic world (Bailyn 2005, pp.92-93; Trouillot 2003, pp.1-6).

European settlements in the New World were governed by means of unusual violence to insiders and outsiders that sacrificed many of the relative political liberties enjoyed by subjects and protocols of diplomatic engagement enjoyed with foreign communities that were now becoming common-place in Europe (Canny 1978; Eltis 2000, 1, 10). The violent - practically genocidal - use of Amerindian labour in much of the Spanish and Portuguese Americas was replaced by the turn of the eighteenth century with the sugar plantation system and the concomitant mass importation of approximately 11 million Africans as a slave labour force. The trade in slaves intensified from the 1760s and, despite abolition movements and emancipations proclamations (the last being Brazil in 1885), the trade did not decline systemically until the 1850s (for figures consult Eltis et al. 1999). Due to the extremely harsh living conditions on plantations only the slave populations in the southern colonies of North America showed a marked tendency to reproduce themselves (see Blackburn 1997, pp.459-483), and these populations counted for just 4% of the total of New World slaves. In fine, the Atlantic system was constituted by both unfree and free forms of labour that were geo-politically separated but systemically inter-related and reproduced in the accumulation of profits on a world scale (Santiago-Valles 2005).

An important prop of this structural differentiation was the segregation of labourers based on a racialization of personal attributes that dictated the degree of their humanness and, concomitantly, the degree of rights to be enjoyed by them ranging from full, to less, to hardly any. This racial differentiation and segregation arose in part from adapting pre-existing prejudices within European thought regarding the transmission through bloodlines of “degenerate” religions and cultural practices (such as Judaism), poverty (especially the dirtiness of the peasantry), and the “naturalness” of slaves (inherited from Natural Law traditions). 1 Nevertheless, slaves in the New World were identified almost solely by reference to their skin colours as Africans, and despite Christian proclamations to save their souls, were typically treated as barely human. In spite of segregation, sexual relations between slaves and non-slaves were endemic mainly as a form of social control and as a psychological effect of the economy of desire constructed by plantation life (Wolfe 2001; Garraway 2005). Various typographies of racial intermixture were developed and re-developed, based upon observations of pigmentation, hair texture and knowledge of parents and grandparents, in order to reproduce, as effectively as possible, the racialized structural differentiation of the Atlantic system (see Glissant 1989 appendix

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1 On these various influences see the special issue of *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54 (1), 1997.
2 for some examples). Such a naturalization of differences counted as “scientific” evidence for a polygenetic theory of human origins.

The rise of New World slavery occurred at the same time as the Enlightenment in Europe increasingly highlighted notions of progress and the coming to being of individual freedom in the human condition. This confluence provided for lasting frictions and contradictions within much of Enlightenment thought to which liberal thought is indebted. Notions of progress articulated especially by English, Scottish and French intellectuals often possessed syntax that differentiated the conditions of individual freedom and slavery by reference to a naturalist and/or historical racial matrix. For example, for Montesquieu and for Arthur Young the tropics appeared to be the climatic zone most naturally conducive to slavery. And James Steuart, in distinguishing between “labour” as unfree manual work and “industry” as voluntary and mentally engaging work singled out the Caribbean as the location par excellence of the former (Drescher 1999, p.402; Dubois 2006, pp.4-5). John Locke, David Hume and Immanuel Kant (influenced by Hume) considered Africans to be, effectively, a sub-human species in relation to the European race such that the mental faculties required for possessing rationality and thus exercising individual autonomy were absent (Eze 2000; Bernasconi 2001; Glausser 1990).

Abolitionists in many ways signified the most radical position towards the monogenetic pole of European thought on race in that they argued firmly for the humanity of slaves. Yet even abolitionists presumed that slaves were so debased by their condition that it would take generations to train them to be civilized humans. That slaves in the French colony of Saint Domingue could rise up in 1791, fight a 14 year war against their masters, take their freedom by force and declare the first post-colonial post-slave-holding state in the Americas (Haiti) was for most Enlightenment thought unthinkable in the available categories and thus effectively written out of history (Trouillot 1995). Moreover, for many years English abolitionists kept a keen eye on the development of the Northern kingdom of Haiti to see if slaves, once freed, really could conduct themselves as humans (Geggus 1985). Even amongst abolitionists, then, the actual humanity of the Negro race was not quite a “fact on the ground”, but an attribute to be cultivated through civilized progress.

**Imperialism, the civilizing mission and social darwinism**

Slavery ideologies continued to resonate within 19th century European thought, especially with regards to the purported animalistic nature of Africans (Jean Comaroff & John L. Comaroff 1991, chap.3). Nevertheless, the abolition movement had at least, in Europe, temporarily tipped the balance away from the naturalist pole towards the historical pole of understanding race. Concomitantly, monogenesis became preferred to the polygenesis thesis, although, as we shall see, the later – and its naturalistic ontology of race – were never eradicated by the light of such reasoning. Overall, though, it was much more common for European intellectuals to believe that all racial groups were naturally amenable to progress so long as they were introduced to a “civilized” social and political environment. This conceptualization of civilization spoke to a grand narrative of the
selective movement of certain human groups through the state of savagery, to barbarism and to enlightened civility. It so happened that the civilized were categorised as white Europeans with various non-white non-Europeans groups being mapped onto the sliding scale between barbarism and savagery. Through this civilizational narrative a temporal division was drawn between “modern” Western Europe and the “pre-modern” Rest of the world, a narrative that became a central organizing framework for liberal thought on continuity and change in a world of different cultures.

Effectively, this framework posited a universal standard of civilisation modelled upon an idealised version of Western European culture, but at the same time denied the colonial relation that enabled this standard to be used as a comparative benchmark on the progress of other cultures (Krishna 1988). Anthropology was the discipline that rose to prominence in the 19th century in order to make sense of this colonial cultural “encounter” in terms of discovering pre-modern cultures, encapsulated in the term “primitive”. Furthermore, primitive culture was defined by anthropology in essentially racial terms as non-white. This conjoining of primitive culture with non-white races is what accounts for the sense of a terrible loss of the civilized self that accompanied nineteenth century travelogues of Europeans marooned on South Pacific islands and, for the sake of survival, having to “go primitive” (Milcairns 2006).

Therefore, in significant contrast to the ideologies that were to underpin the development of the Atlantic colonial world, the new imperialism of the nineteenth century was legitimised as an instrument for universal progress: all races would progress through savagery and barbarism to civilization, and the European white race, because it showed primitives the image of their own future, had the right and responsibility to be imperial vanguards of humanity’s telos. In 1883, French Minister Jules Ferry coined the term, the “civilizing mission” (mission civilisatrice) as a moral argument for colonial expansion under the Third Republic: “the superior races have a right because they have a duty: it is their duty to civilize the inferior races” (Cooper & Stoler 1997, p.351).

The stadial view of universal human progress that the racialized ideology of the civilizing mission relied upon was multi-dimensional. Economically, progress was deemed to move from a simple-rural division of labour that exhibited little or no institutionalization of property rights to a complex-urbanised division of labour institutionalised through private property regimes. In terms of political organization, because the savage/primitive was said to have no clear conception of property (being so close to the natural world), they could therefore have no system of law and thus make claim to no really sovereign political authority. The barbarian, alternatively, did live an orderly life under political authority except that this centralized order placed the sovereign in tyrannical and despotic hierarchy over the individual hence producing to a violent and coercive form of governance. The political authority of civilized societies, alternatively, existed for the sole purpose of upholding the rights of the individual underpinned by respect for private property, and here order was gained through the consensual balancing of individual interests via contractual agreements instead of violent conflicts. With all this came a clear

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2 (Boas 1938). For a comprehensive review of the term “primitive” see (Brickman 2003, chap.1)
3 On these dimensions see (Meek 1976; Kiernan 1972; Anghie 2005, 2)
moral hierarchy: the savage/primitive, if perhaps innocent, was nevertheless lacking in any moral order and had to be schooled; barbarian societies were despotic, stagnant, morally corrupted and thus in need of saving; while the civilized European societies spearheaded the “good life” of liberal society: democracy, freedom and progress.

In the settlements regarding the fate of the Ottoman Empire and German colonies that followed the end of the First World War, the ideology of the civilizing mission was deployed in the construction of the mandates system. The societies that formerly composed the Ottoman Empire, (“A” mandates) were effectively described as barbaric - despotic but orderly. They were therefore considered developed enough as to hold the possibility of immanent self rule with administrative assistance from higher European powers. The former German territories in West and Central Africa (“B” mandates) required sustained European tutelage because orderly conditions of governance needed to be introduced into the savages so that progress might, in the future, proceed. The former German territories in South-West Africa and the South Pacific (“C” mandates), due to their population size or their “remoteness from the centres of civilisation” were to be effectively re-integrated into the victors empires with little hope of progress towards independence in the medium-term future (Anghie 2005, 3; and for a contemporaneous assessment in the language of civilization and race see Logan 1928).

Thus, under nineteenth and twentieth century European imperialism, the various stages of human being – savage/primitive, barbarian and civilized – were mapped onto existing human groupings as “global racial formations” (Winant 2002). In other words, humanity was differentiated into racial stereotypes that policed the fit between skin-colour and other personal attributes, religion, cultural practices and geographical locations. One would be considered abnormal if one did not do the things expected of those who looked a certain way and inhabited a certain locale. This policing of stereotypes introduced a certain friction into the very notion of progress if global racial formations effectively froze some peoples and cultures in time. Here, as we shall see, the door was opened to the influence of polygenetic discourses of race.

The tension between a framing of racial world order and the expectation of human progress came to the fore in liberal justifications for imperialism. The quintessential nineteenth century liberal thinker, John Stuart Mill justified the exception to the rule of supporting self-governance by implicit reference to the global racial formation of primitive, barbaric and civilized that underpinned the stadial narrative of universal progress. The liberal principle of self-governance, noted Mill in racial undertones, could be abrogated

…when the people, in order to advance in civilization, have some lesson to learn, some habit not yet acquired, to the acquisition of which representative government is likely to be an impediment. The most obvious of these cases .. is in which the people have still to learn the first lesson of civilization, that of obedience. A race who have been trained in energy and courage by struggles with Nature and their neighbours, but who have not yet settled down into permanent obedience to any common superior, would be little likely to acquire this habit under the collective government of their own body. .. A people are no less unfitted for representative government by the contrary fault; by extreme passiveness and
ready submission to tyranny … they would inevitably choose their tyrants as their representative … From the general weakness of the people or of the state of civilization [no politician] is likely to be habitually exempt; except in the case of their being foreigners, belonging to a superior people or a more advanced state of society. Then, indeed, the rulers may be, to almost any extent, superior in civilisation to those over whom they rule; and subjection to a foreign government of this description, notwithstanding its inevitable evils, is often of the greatest advantage to a people, carrying them rapidly through several stages of progress… (Mill 1976, pp.220-221)

In effect, Mill could be read as arguing that any sign of self-governance amongst non-civilized peoples had to be understood as a manifestation of disorder rather than as a sign of progress. The rebellion in 1857 of sepoys (Indian soldiers) employed by the British East Indian company was narrated in Britain not as the First War of Indian Independence but as the Mutiny against India’s civilized benefactors. In this respect, even in liberal thought it was a thin line that separated the category of “unruly or un-reformable natives” from that of “sub-human subjects”.

What is more, the inevitable and universal progress afforded to humanity by the imperial civilizing mission was questioned from outside of liberal thought proper via a set of ideologies deriving from the naturalistic understanding of race. Scientific racism was a late nineteenth century reformulation of the naturalistic understanding of race that mobilised a set of newly developed scientific standpoints to “prove” the polygenic character of humankind. Concomitantly, Darwinian notions of evolution were stretched and broken to explain how each “race” had naturally different propensities and that, in competition with each-other, some would die out and others survive (Hawkins 1997; and Stepan 1982). In the Social Darwinist imaginary, the reproduction of the true human – the civilized white body of the European propertied man – had to out-compete other racialized (and gendered)4 native bodies by either a) making the later body mimic the providential content of the former (the civilizing mission) or b) destroying the native body directly or through benign “neglect”. Colonisation and imperial rule had always had genocidal affects upon indigenous groups from the Amerindians onwards, whether purposefully as in the German attempt to exterminate the Herero and Nama, or as an unintended consequence of land appropriation, the introduction by settlers of disease and alcohol, and the supposedly fatal impact of European cultural value systems.5 Crucially, it was regarding the issue of racial genocide that advocates of the socio-historical understanding of race manifest in the civilizing mission suddenly embraced a naturalistic understanding of race (Magubane 2004, pp.140-141). For example, observing the decimation of Aboriginal and Māori populations in the later nineteenth century, settler commentators - in all other ways believing in the inevitability of liberal progress – often

4 This chapter does not dwell on the inter-section of gender and race. For an overview of the issues see (Weber 1998) I suggest that a sustained appreciation of the relationship between development and race must at the same time examine the inter-connection with development and gender. In other words, this chapter should be read in conjunction with the chapter on gender. There is, of course, also an intersection between race and class, a less intimate one than gender, and much has been written on this. This chapter should be read as presenting the possibility that in terms of development, race is ultimately the dominant, or perhaps more subterranean relation of oppression.

5 See (Moorehead 1966). The “fatal impact thesis” has been unable to explain the persistence – and in some instances – resurgence of Indigenous culture even in the twenty first century.
described humane colonial governance in passive rather than progressive terms as “smoothing the pillow of a dying race”\textsuperscript{6}. And in general, categorisation of Māori differentiated between “white” savages who could be assimilated, “grey” savages who were dying out due to fatal impact, and “black” savages who were recalcitrant to European rule (Belich 1997).

**Anti-colonialism and the Cold War**

Unlike the tone and tenets of the League of Nations, the charter of the UN presented a deep challenge to European imperialism and its civilizing mission in its affirmation of human rights equally shared by all (Lauren 1988, chap.3-5). Nevertheless, the challenge was mounted most directly by anti-colonial movements and compounded further by the challenge to European and now United States hegemony emanating from the USSR. For if the communist world now presented a clear threat to the “Atlantic community”, Third World independence movements held both the promise of treading the westward path towards the Atlantic community but also the danger of being seduced by the eastern alternative. Indeed, to those elites who, for example, equated civil rights movements in the United States with Communism, the danger was perceived as both internal and external (on this relationship see, for example, Plummer 2003a). These concerns were picked up by the burgeoning literature on “modernization”. A number of American political scientists believed that post-colonial state elites in Asia and Africa might prove allies to US interests but only if they could manage the disorder arising from modernization processes. This question held special weight, because the peasantry were by now understood as the rural mass that might be easily indoctrinated and mobilized by radical nationalist influences, influences that were more often than not conflated with communism (for an overview of this literature see Skocpol 1982).

Prominent modernization theorists advocated a “development through militarization” policy wherein military institutions in Third World states would take the lead in engendering an orderly modernization. In short, authoritarianism was effectively encouraged as a possible counterforce to USSR influence, helping to guide these fledgling societies away from the communist path and, paradoxically, down the path of liberal progress (see for example, Pye 1962; Janowitz 1964; Huntington 1968). In this respect, modernization theory was just one step removed from the ideology of the civilizing mission that had legitimised the mandates system. Savages required a strong orderly hand for their progress to be assured, except that this time, the imperial force would be exerted by proxy through support of particular local elites and their “native” troops.

Exactly whose security the modernization of post-colonial societies should enhance was a question pursued vigorously by a growing group of African, Asian and Latin American states – some newly independent, others not so new – that by the 1960s had coalesced into a Non Aligned Movement (NAM). Through their influence upon the UN system via the Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the NAM argued that self-determination could not be assured only through formal, political independence; the old

\textsuperscript{6} (Brantlinger 1995)
colonial system of dependence and domination also needed to be dismantled in the economic and cultural realms. The NAM project for meaningful self-determination culminated in the 1974 declaration of a New International Economic Order in the UN General Assembly and the subsequent pursuit within the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for a New World Information and Communication Order (see Bhagwati 1977; Carlsson 2003).

Moreover, the NAM believed that those pursuing meaningful self-determination in the Cold War world would have to be cognisant of the racial hierarchies inherited from colonialism and imperialism that still informed Western (and Eastern) policy towards the Third World. To tease this belief out further, it is useful to return to the Bandung Conference of 1955, the conference of “Afro-Asian” solidarity that many take to have launched the NAM. The opening speech of the conference by the host, President Surkano of Indonesia, stated the solidarity of the ex-colonial world thus:

We are united, for instance, by a common detestation of colonialism in whatever form it appears. We are united by a common detestation of racialism. And we are united by a common determination to preserve and stabilise peace in the world. . . . And, I beg of you do not think of colonialism only in the classic form which we of Indonesia, and our brothers in different parts of Asia and Africa, knew. Colonialism has also its modern dress, in the form of economic control, intellectual control, actual physical control by a small but alien community within a nation. . . . We, the peoples of Asia and Africa, 1,400,000,000 strong, far more than half the human population of the world..(Sukarno 1955).

The Bandung Conference was approached with great suspicion and worry by US politicians (Borstelmann 2001; M. Jones 2005). John Dulles, Secretary of State, was worried that a conference of non-white statesmen might look upon the race problem in the American South and conclude that, even if not a main architect of African and Asian imperialism in the nineteenth century, the US was no different in its preservation of racial hierarchies than that of the European colonial powers. Moreover, Dulles worried that Bandung might encourage transnational racial solidarity between African-Americans and the ex-colonial Afro-Asian masses thus providing a backdoor for communist infiltration. The later concern was extremely overstated, yet the linkages did buoy the growing civil rights movement (Plummer 2003b). Only two public African-American figures ended up attending Bandung and in a private capacity. One of them, Richard Wright, a famous writer, had this to say of the experience:

At the moment when the US was trying to iron out the brutal kinks of its race problem, there came along a world event which reawakened in the hearts of its 23,000,000 colored citizens the feeling of race, a feeling which the racial mores of American whites had induced deep in their hearts (cited in Rollins 1986, pp.63-64).

In my concluding remarks I shall return to the challenge mounted by anti-colonial national and international movements against the prevailing racial ordering of thought and practice of modern world development.

The post-Cold War world: development without race?
In the above discussions I have made the point that the dominant thought and practices of modern world development have depended upon the segregation and/or differentiation of human groups ascribed in racial terms according to moral, economic and political hierarchies. Moreover, this segregation has relied variously upon naturalistic or historical understandings of the ontology of race in human nature, although both understandings have never entirely been eclipsed by the other and have usually combined in the description of the “bad”, unruly or unreformable native. As we shall now see, these racial hierarchies remain as master-frameworks within contemporary development thought and practice. However, unlike the past, these hierarchies are no longer directly formulated in the language of race.

During the 1990s the nature of the threat that Third World instability posed to the West became re-articulated away from its Cold War reference. Certain areas of the Third World were now seen as potential breeding grounds for disease, crime, and migrants (see for example Kaplan 2001). The humanitarian focus on weak society-state relations was steadily re-focused around the problem of state failure (for example, Helman & Ratner 1992), and after 9/11 and with the start of the “war on terror” all these concerns have agglomerated around the issue of terrorism (for example, Rotberg 2002). The idea of modernization had already, as I have noted, framed the development of post-colonial societies by reference to the Cold War security concerns of the Atlantic community. However, the present day securitization and militarization of development proceeds by reference to broader and far less politically distinct threats to Western civilization: “fundamentalism” and “terrorism”. Yet as I shall now discuss, if fuzzy and indistinct, these categories are still given meaning by the continued racialization of development discourse.

Although Boaz long ago criticised the anthropological conjoining of primitive culture with global racial formations, a new articulation of this conflation developed during the late 1970s in the form of what has come to be known as the “new racism” (Ansell 1997; Barker 1982; É. Balibar 1991). Gaining ground under the New Right politics of Thatcher and Reagan, new racist thought effectively replaced the naturalization of racial differences with that of cultural differences. Culture (usually conflated with “ethnicity”) was rendered by the same ontology that allowed liberal thought to construct an autonomous and atomistic individual as human nature. In effect, humanity was said to exist in a radically egalitarian “state of nature” where the war of all cultures against all could be mitigated and constrained only by institutions of global governance. Critics call this way of thinking about difference between human groups as a new racism because it mirrors many of the naturalistic assumptions of scientific racism yet replaces racial phenotypes with cultural/ethnic markers. However, it is still almost impossible to think of these markers without imagining some kind of racial attributes. Indeed, these markers – i.e. the attributes which define and segregate cultural groupings - have often been lifted out of pre-existing racial discourses. It is no exaggeration to say that the dominant understanding of Islamic culture in the West, especially post-9/11, draw from the deep reservoir of nineteenth century Orientalist assumptions about the passion, irrationality and decadency of near and middle eastern peoples (Said 2002; Biswas 2004).
The new racism also intersects with the failed states discourse and its associated development policies (Duffield 1996). For example, the continuing destabilization of societies in exotic areas of the globe, especially Africa (but also Europe’s “intimate other”, the Balkans) are now taken to be examples of the destructive power of the cultural “state of nature” if allowed to exist unmediated by institutional constraints (for example, Kaplan 2001). Those fleeing this state of nature – Third World migrants and refugees – are now considered security threats in their capacity as to act as conduits through which the social ills that thrive in the breeding ground of the state of nature, e.g. disease and fundamentalism, travel to the First World. Now poverty per se rather than simple primitivism is taken to be the signifier of social pathologies that threaten to degenerate the global polis such that it might return to the cultural “state of nature”. And it is urged that this degeneracy must be guarded against by return failing states back into the international community through the building of “civilian capacity” (for example, Krasner & Pascual 2005): In order to deal with these threats to global governance state failure might even require the civilized Western world to pursue a militarized humanitarianism.

It is regarding this pursuit that the naturalistic framework of racial difference, re-inscribed as the cultural “state of nature”, joins uncomfortably with a rejuvenated historical framework of racial difference that speaks of the civilizing mission but in an ostensibly non-racialized language of “neo-trusteeship” and “postmodern imperialism” (see, respectively, Fearon & Laitin 2004; R. Cooper 2002; and more critically, see Paris 2002; Biccum 2005). Neo-trusteeship pertains to the (supposedly) transitional external governance – or at least strong direct influence – of the political-economy of fractured societies (such as Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan) by international institutions, foreign government and non-governmental organizations. This form of governance that can be at least partially understood as a suspension of the right to self-determination has been increasingly justified by reference to the notion of postmodern imperialism, wherein foreign rule is seen as ostensibly consensual and guided by a respect for universal human rights.

Robert Cooper – influential advisor to the recent British prime minister Tony Blair – has candidly justified this form of imperialism by using a framework that segregates societies into three different kinds: those who are post-modern in so far as they inter-relate with other societies in a democratic, consensual and orderly manner (typified by the EU); those who are modern and although orderly nevertheless still self-interested and potentially conflicting in their inter-relation with other societies (for Cooper, the US, Russia, China); and those who are pre-modern and lack order and civility (African failed states etc). If some kind of via media can be reached between post-modern and modern states, the chaos arising from pre-modern societies threatens all, and because the post-modern society shows all others the image of its own future it is best suited to hold trusteeship over the areas of chaos. Cooper’s framework maps almost directly onto the stadial narrative of savage, barbarian and civilized deployed by the “civilizing mission” justification for nineteenth century imperialism. What is absent from Cooper’s framework is a direct racialization of the different categories of groups, and yet all other attributes of
the global racial formations of savage or primitive, barbarian and civilized remain. As does the thinness of the line that conceptually - but rarely substantively - separates “unruly or unreformed “natives” from that of “sub-human subjects”.

Indeed, colonial ventures that, in the past, directly sought to wipe out indigenous populations or simply pursued a policy of benign “let die” remain influential in the present. Areas such as the Gaza strip or the Afghan-Pakistan borderlands are effectively treated in the same exceptional way as colonies used to be. That is to say, these areas are effectively extricated from the norms of international law that seek to reproduce on a global scale the good life of the liberal domestic sphere. In short, human rights and political obligations are not expected to apply in these territorial spaces in the same way that they are required to do so elsewhere (Balibar 2001). While it would be hard to say that the Gaza strip or the Afghan-Pakistan borderlands are typical sites of the current Development project – they are not – the point is that for some time now the Development project has become increasingly “securitized” (Duffield 2001). That is to say that there is a noticeable trend among states to tie aid to their discrete foreign policy objectives and especially to the reconstruction of failed states or post-conflict communities (see for example, Woods 2005). As in John Stuart Mill’s day, the Western preference for order seems to be trumping the desire for progress. And I would suggest that it is in this nexus of order/progress that the monogenetic and polygenetic discourses of race still combine to inform the contradictory framework of the Development project. To be provocative, it is not beyond the pale to imagine that Western governmental and inter-governmental perceptions of Gaza, Afghanistan, the DRC, Bangladesh, Haiti, etc are based on two fundamental assumptions: first, some racially interpolated groups are worthy of development, and others worthy only of a slow physical and/or cultural death (Mbembe 2003; Blaney & Inayatullah 2009, 5); and second, for those groups that might be worth saving, the path to salvation lies in their becoming honorary whites, following a cultural framework for production, accumulation, distribution and exchange while never quite being able to claim ownership of this framework through filial descent (see Fanon 1986).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it might well be the case that modern world development – in all its varying forms, even those based upon liberal premises – is a congenitally racialized set of discourses and practices. If that is the case, and in order to cultivate a post-racialized world order, we might need to think of continuity, change and differences within the human condition by reference to a post-development discourse (for example, Escobar 1995). Key, in this respect, would be the cultivation of a form of global social solidarity that would help to regulate continuities and changes within and between different human groupings absent the organising racial hierarchies tied to narratives of civilizational progress and instantiated in various forms of colonial rule.

This, no doubt, is a very challenging project, yet one begun by past social struggles. It is true that anti-colonial nationalist projects have paradoxically reproduced – and often depended upon - colonial structures of governance, if not personnel. Robert Mugabe, for
example, kept renewing the legal state of emergency, originally declared by Ian Smith, throughout his first decade of rule in post-colonial Zimbabwe in order to violently forge an authoritarian one-party state.\(^7\) These repetition of colonial rule have led to widespread disillusionment over the future prospects of development of the “third world” by the third world (Scott 2004).

Yet such close fidelity to the colonial project has by no means always been the case (Jones, 2010). For example, one important current within the “liberation theory” that arose out of de-colonization struggles in the 1950s and 1960s was an anti-racist humanism that, arguably, surpassed the faux cosmopolitanism of liberal-racial theory (The classic text is Fanon 1965). Within this humanism, national culture was not imagined as a parochial, exclusivist commodity valued within a racial hierarchy of human being, but as the autonomous site within which a post-colonial, post-racial, post-developmental humanity could be imagined. It is fitting to finish the chapter with a statement by Samora Machel, commander-in-chief of the anti-colonial Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO):

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We are not fighting to become Portuguese with black skins. We are fighting to affirm ourselves as Mozambicans, without this meaning contempt for the Portuguese people or any other people. In this respect, FRELIMO reaffirms its wish to fully co-operate with all peoples in the world on a basis of independence, equality, respect and mutual interest (Cited in Jones, 2010).
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\(^7\) My thanks to Kaspar Beech for pointing this out to me.
Bibliography


