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Critically Analyzing Biko's Views on Race & Racism

Abstract

Drawing from the work of Mabogo More, this paper will attempt to present a comprehensive analysis of Steve Biko's views on race and racism. The analysis will commence by reviewing and outlining the broad philosophical schools of thought regarding the conceptualization of race, and it's relevance within society, namely; Racial Naturalism, Racial Nihilism or Skepticism, and Racial Constructivism. Subsequently, this paper will attempt to locate More's interpretation of Biko's views as being constructivist, despite the prevalence of *non-racial,* skeptical conceptions within contemporary South Africa. In light of these skeptical conceptions, this paper will apply Biko's philosophical views to specifically answer the following questions: Firstly, *Can black people be racist?* Secondly, *Could racism ever go out of existence?* Finally, this paper will address the question: *Could race ever cease to exist?*

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Introduction

Within the collective South African psyche, particularly the black South African psyche, several authoritative figures emerging from various liberation movements have risen to the status of nationally, and even internationally recognizable icons. Individuals such as former president Nelson Mandela, and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, have achieved both in life and in death the status of global icons of reconciliation, serving as embodiments of the values, ideals, and dreams of countless citizens (du Toit & de Jager, 2014). However, though often not outwardly acknowledged, the ideals and philosophical positions espoused by such individuals, including notions such as Mandela stating "Black is Beautiful," and Tutu's vision of a *Rainbow Nation,* trace many of their philosophical roots to a single scholar, Steve Biko. Operating outside of traditional academic philosophical confines, Biko through his written works grappled with the creation of innovate and novel methods of perception, action, and even thought, specifically centered on the black existential reality within an *anti-black world* (More, 2017: 1-4). However, despite the applicability, and impact of his works Biko is seldom regarded as a philosopher, if even mentioned. It is precisely this lack of recognition that Mabogo More (2017: ix, x) cites as influencing his decision to write 'Biko: Philosophy, Identity, and Liberation' solely analyzing the philosophy espoused by Biko. Central to the discussion conducted by More, and any analysis upon Biko, are the concepts of race, and racism. However these concepts should not be analyzed in complete isolation, but rather in relation to Black Consciousness and the South African liberation struggle as they are inextricably linked. As such, the analysis of these terms will constitute the subject of this papers study, commencing with discussions of race within the Black Consciousness movement.

The *'Black'* of Black Consciousness

Why is race important?

Echoing the sentiments raised above, More (2017: 19-30) begins his analysis of Biko in earnest by discussing the Black Consciousness Movement, tracing its influences within the American Black Power Movement, and the French Negritude Movement. Despite the various nuanced differences between these three movements, the scope of their enquiries all converged upon; the meaning of the word black, questions of identity, and the effects of, and reaction to, racism (More, 2017: 28-29). Consequently, Black Consciousness is fundamentally an enquiry into black identity, answering question of *Who, and What, am I?* specifically from a black frame of reference (More, 2017: 35). Thus, both in this papers, and More's (2017, 34-35) view, as Black Consciousness is founded upon probing the problems of black existence within an anti-black world, philosophically it may be characterized as existential phenomenology.

Reflecting upon Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Biko and other Black Consciousness scholars became aware that possessing self-consciousness, in Hegelian terms, is only possible through encounters, and interaction with other self-consciousnesses. Hegel's framework posits that the possession of self-consciousness primarily distinguishes a human being from other conscious being such as animals. However, as self-consciousness refers directly to human reality, and such reality is inherently social, true self-consciousness can only be formed through the presence of, and recognition by another (Hegel, 1977: 110. in More, 2017: 85). However, this process of self-consciousness takes place at the expense of the other. Here, the moment in which the self becomes conscious of itself, declaring itself as an "I", the other is negated and destroyed. This negation and destruction of the other is the result of it loosing agency regarding the very construction of its own self-consciousness (Hegel, 1868). Cognizant of such a phenomenon, Biko and other Black Consciousness scholars acknowledged that the existential reality of black South Africans existing within *baas/kaffir* dynamics, clearly mirrored Hegel's Master-Slave dialectic (More, 2017: 40), with Frantz Fanon (1967: 184-185. in More, 2017: 30) stating that it relegated black individuals to a *zone of non-being*.

In relation to Hegelian conceptions of self-consciousness existentialist philosopher Kierkegaard (in More, 2017: 41) states that "To be a self, is to be able to look at one's self, to love one's self, [...] critical of one's self", reflecting what Sartre (in More, 2017: 41-42) terms 'reflective consciousness.' However, with the very term black connoting "evil, disaster, famine, and ugliness" (More, 2017: 39), and these connotations being ascribed upon back individuals, they cannot truthfully self reflect upon their existential realities (More, 2017: 45-48). This destruction of black reflective consciousness, and in turn the reduction of their existential horizons, forces black individuals to perpetually exhibit 'bad faith (More, 2017: 91). Conceptualized by Sartre (1956: 44-49. in More, 2017: 90-92), bad faith is viewed as a form of self deception, namely ones consciousness deceiving itself regarding its existential freedom. Specifically, bad faith is an attempt by ones consciousness to avoid and escape the radical existential freedom it is condemned to, constituting itself as an object without such freedom (Sartre, 1956: 439. in More, 2017: 91). By expressing bad faith, ones consciousness is unable to truthfully encounter and interact with other consciousness, and thus will never constitute true self-consciousness, relegating it towards the realms of 'non human' consciousnesses (Hegel, 1977: 110. in More, 2017: 85). This perpetual state of bad faith ascribed upon black individuals is conceptualized by Fanon (1967: 184-185. in More, 2017: 30) as the 'zone of non-being'.

Race as a way to reclaim consciousness.

It is this 'zone of non-being', specifically attempts to escape it, that necessitate the use of race within Biko's, and other Black Consciousness scholars, writings. Within 'Black Orpheus', written by Sartre as a preface to Senghor's collection of poems espousing Negritude, Sartre argues that in the midst of oppression in the form of; slavery, racism, and colonial alienation, the black person must "continuously descend into the depths of his soul to reclaim his blackness" (Sartre 1988: 291. in More, 2017: 93-94). Rather than accept their externally ascribed existential horizons, Sartre advocates that black individuals must accept their *facticity*, and proclaim as such. Descriptively, Sartre (1998: 296. in More, 2017: 95) states that "Having been insulted, and formerly enslaved, he [the black man] picks up the word 'nigger' which was thrown at him like a stone, he draws himself erect and proudly proclaims himself a black man." Thus for Sartre, and in turn Biko, this necessitates that the first step towards liberation from racial based oppression, is the formation of black consciousness (More, 2017: 95). This is succinctly encapsulated within Odera Oruka's definition of Black Consciousness philosophies. Oruka (1990: 71. in More, 2017: 48) holds the essence of Black Consciousness to be:

1) A black mans awareness that the world is predominantly constituted as an anti-black reality.
2) The black mans recognition of himself as black, as a Negro and to be proud of the fact.
3) The black man's urge to explain away or annihilate the reality described in (1).
4) The conscious move towards the creation of a new reality, distinct from (1) expressing universal humanism.

Thus it is evident both to this paper and More (2017:42-48), that the re-appropriation and destruction of the Manichaeism embedded within terms such as; *black*, *negro*, and *kaffir*, is fundamental to the Black Consciousness movement. However, by constructing their philosophical, and existential, movements upon such terms, we are left to question what constitutes or defines one as *black*, a *negro*, or a *kaffir*?

Philosophical Views of Race

Attempting to provide conceptual clarity on what defines a person as black, More (2017: 48) outlines three broad conceptions of race, namely that being black is defined by:

1) The notion that black people share common and distinguishable, biological, somatic, and cultural characteristics. Furthermore, these characteristics are distinct, and differ from other races.
2) The notion that black people as a coherent group share the common experience of racism, and oppression.
3) Finally, an existentially political conception of blackness.

Extensively utilized within the South African context, resulting in the categorization and segregation of people who exited as being either; White, Indian, Coloured, and Africa, where beliefs conceptually based upon Racial Naturalism (More, 2017: 49).

Racial Naturalism

Racial naturalism, in line with classical race theories, conceptualizes race in a biological manner occurring naturally due to fundamental differences in the essence of each distinct racial group (Hume, 1754. in Zack, 2002: 15). As such, employing such a conceptualization race has historically represented the division of human beings into several distinct sub-groups, utilizing various criteria including:

1. Races are reflective of an individuals biological foundations or essence.
2. Such an essence produces distinct racial groups. As such, every member of a particular race shares a set of biological characteristics which are exclusive to their racial group.
3. Ones biological foundation, or essence, is inherited from previous generations, and thus races are linked causally to both ones genealogy, and ancestry.
4. Through conducting a genealogical investigation one is able to locate the distinct geographic origins of a given race.
5. Ones inherited biological foundation is primarily expressed physically, although behavioral expressions are also present.

(Mallon, 2006: 528-529).

Emerging from classical philosophical, and scientific thought, and espoused by scholars such as Hume, Kant, Hegel, Locke, and even Marx, such naturalistic conceptualizations existed as the de facto view of race for centuries, defining and reinforcing hierarchical racial relations that would later emerge (More, 2017: 24-39). Through the historic application of such naturalistic race theories, the Occident was able to ascribe a singular mentality, and a homogenous genealogy upon those racial classified as black, defining their existential reality (Said, 1978). It is important to note that the naturalistic conceptualization of racialized classification in isolation, did not result in the subjugation of various racial groups. Rather, it was the combination of such naturalistic conceptualizations, along with enlightenment philosophy; which imposed a unilateral model of progress based upon universal criteria of progress, that permitted and enforced hierarchical racial relations (Hall, 1992). However, despite the expansive impact of racial naturalism, the conceptualization is theoretically weak, relying on invalid premises, that have extensively been proven wrong. As such, prior to discussion other conceptualizations of race, this paper will briefly outline arguments against racial naturalism.

Although premise one (1) and five (5), above can be seen to be supported by modern scientific discoveries such as the existence and function of DNA within the human body, the remaining premises are either invalid, or do not follow from the preceding argument, and the introduction of modern science proves more harmful than beneficial to proponents of such

arguments. Regarding the second (2) premise, the application of modern science invalidates the claim of distinct racial groups existing. The first, and arguably most damming, criticism drawn from modern science regards the supposed distinct geographic origins of races. There is broad consensus among scientists that although various geographically based environmental factors lead to differences in physical attributes such as skin, and hair color, these differences cannot be seen to exist due to preexisting fundamental differences in DNA, but rather emerging as a form of continuous adaptation in line with theories of evolution (Haak *et al,* 2015). Furthermore, these mutations in mitochondrial DNA do no directly correlate with the physical, and mental, traits often associated with racial groups (Rosenberg *et al,* 2002). This is clearly reflected within a landmark study conducted by Stanford University scientists, who concluded that over 92% of all alleles within the human genome may be found within the majority of racial groups viewed as distinct (Rosenberg *et al*, 2002). Furthermore, claims that through genealogical tracking each racial grouping can be traced to a specific geographical origin have also been scientifically refuted. Although cursory analysis of this nature hypothesizes the existence of five distinct races, specifically originating from Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania, and Native America, there exists strong scientific evidence that humanity emerged from a single geographic origin (Haak *et al,* 2015).

As a last point of critique, although positing the existence of distinct racial groups, racial naturalist theories are unable to designate clear boundaries between these groups. For example, assuming the existence of distinct racial categories, what racial category should be ascribed upon an individual of mixed race or genealogy? Such cases may easily be dealt with in first generation individuals, who express equal proportions of characteristics of their constitutive races. But where the continued interbreeding of 'distinct races' occurs, and ones expression of these races is ambiguous racial, naturalists are unable to provide a clear racial categorization. This inability logically results in one having to constantly decrease the scope of racial groups, such as distinguishing between Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean races specifically, rather than broadly referring to Europeans for example. Logically, such distinctions would continue ultimately reducing the size of racial groups to possessing single individuals (Zack, 2002). In dealing with this inadequacy, several society imposed further considerations within racial classification, such as the One-Drop Rule in the United States. This social and legal principle, was historically used in the United States dictating that an individual who possessed a single ancestor of African heritage, regardless of how far removed, they where considered to be black, or *negro* (Davis, 2015). Although such an ad-hoc policy allowed racial naturalist to initially ignore the implications of mixed race individuals, it undermined their premise that racial groups where biological distinct. This is due not only to the fact that all humans can been seen to possess common ancestry, but also as over successive generations an individual who possessed African heritage, and should be deemed black under this rule, may express vastly different racial heritage resulting in a differing racial expression.

Racial Nihilism/Skepticism

Due to the plethora of existing arguments, such as those discussed above, racial naturalism is broadly accepted to be false, both within scientific and contemporary circles. As such, a large group of scholars emerged positing that as racial naturalism is false, races conceptualized in any manner do not exist. This results in Racial Nihilism or Skepticism, where scholars argue that races cannot refer to any actually existing phenomenon in the natural world, necessitating one discards the very concept of race (Appiah, 1996). Broadly, the argument for the adoption of racial nihilism can be characterized as follows:

1) Because of its historical conceptualizations, the term race can only refer to a distinct group of people, who alone share biologically specific differentiating biological features (Appiah, 1996: 70-74).
2) Such genetic isolation, resulting in the exclusive possession of such biological features, could only feasibly occur within group that possess high levels of inbreeding (Appiah, 1996: 73).
3) This genetic isolation can only be seen to exist within grouping such as the Amish in America, or the Irish Protestants, but such groups cannot be categorized within historic distinct racial categories (Zack, 2002: 67-70).
4) Thus, the concept of distinct races can only be applied to groups not typically deemed races (the Amish and Irish Protestants), and cannot be applied to groups typically deemed distinct races (Africans, Europeans, Asians, etc).
5) Thus, a mismatch occurs between the conceptualization and application of the term race.
6) As such, the concept of race must discarded, and or eliminated, due to this logical incoherence (Mallon, 2006: 525-533).

From a philosophical stand point, this paper acknowledges the broad validity of the argument raised by proponents of racial nihilism. As it exists outside the scope of this paper, premises two (2) through five (5), will not be discussed in great detail. Rather, to illustrate how the argument raised by racial nihilists is unsound, the first premise (1) will briefly be discussed. As stated by racial nihilists such as Appiah (1996), and Zack (2002), this paper agrees that historically race has almost exclusively been conceptualized in relation to, now disproven, assumed biological factors. However, this paper disagrees that due to this history, race may only be conceptualized in such a manner, in line with the views espoused by More.

Racial Constructivism

Locating Biko's conceptualization of race as encompassing both; the notion that black people as a coherent group share the common experience of racism, and oppression, and an existentially political conception of blackness, More locates Biko's views as being racially constructivist in nature (More, 2017: 48-53). As a conceptual framework, racial constructivism argues that although biological races, such as those posited by racial naturalists, do not exist, races have been socialized into existence, and continues to exist through the various actions, cultures, and decisions undertaken both within historic and contemporary contexts that up hold

them (Mallon, 2007: 94-96). Accepting the critiques of racial naturalism raised by racial nihilists, proponents of racial constructivism argue that race, and racial categorization, although not biological based, still possess importance and thus should not wholly be dismissed (James, 2004: 16-19). Summarily, constructivists state that due to the historic practice of ascribing racial categories, and the resulting race based differences in material and abstract resources, race as a concept should be preserved. This preservation is necessitated in order to facilitate race based social policies, that aim to redress and correct the socially constructed but nonetheless socially relevant racial differences that exist (James, 2004: 17-21). While discussing a constructivist conceptualization of blackness More (2017: 49) succinctly summarizes the position stating that "blackness has nothing to do with phenotype, chromosomes, or the colour of the skin" rather that blackness within an anti black world "is used as a unifying tool to combat [...] oppression." Although not initially apparent, Biko (1996: 97. in More, 2017: 180) extensively utilizes such a conception of blackness, even emphatically stating "[...] we are oppressed because we are black. We must use that very concept to unite ourselves and to respond as a cohesive group." Underpinning such a conceptualization is the assumption that rather than being linked together by biological factors, racial groups are linked due to a shared existential reality (Mallon, 2006: 535-537).

Biko On Race

Drawn from the above it is clear that Biko, among other Black Consciousness scholars, conceptualized blackness not in biological terms, by rather as a multifaceted signifier of collective oppression, and the resistance to it (More, 2017: 52). Although logically sound, and justifiable, Biko's view of blackness, particularly the collective nature of such a conceptualization, was in contention with prevailing ideologies, specifically the individualist core of liberal social ontology (More, 2017: 176). Emphasizing the primacy of the individual over the collective, for More liberals are guilty not only of stating that collective consciousnesses do not exist, and that groups cannot be oppressed (Rand, 1967: 16. in More, 2017: 178), but also that subsumption within a group, *or series*, renders its constitutive members to be individually socially impotent (Sartre, 1965, 1988. in More, 2017: 176-178). Definitionally, Sartre views a series to be a collection of individuals who are socially connected only through external attributes, specifically proximity, or immediacy (More, 2017: 176). In other words, Sartre (in More, 2017: 176-178) views such a grouping of individuals to merely consist of a collection of "unselfconscious, isolated, passive, autonomous individuals brought together exclusively by a common product or object situated outside the collective." By existing within a serial grouping, Sartre (in More, 2017: 177) posits that members become interchangeable due to a lack of social differentiation, thus no individual action emerging from within the serial can alter the existential attributes and condition of the serial as a whole.

Regarding the above, rather than deconstructing the argument raised by liberals, such as the one articulated by Sartre, Biko broadly dismisses liberal individualism. In line with Black Consciousness scholar Fanon, Biko viewed liberal individualism as morally abhorrent as it primarily served to diminish the importance, and stunt the growth, of black collective consciousness, upholding the *status quo* of white dominance over the black body and psyche (More, 2017: 178). Biko went as far as to place the demolition, and removal, of individualist thinking within urban black individuals as one of the initial objective of Black Consciousness (More, 2017: 179). Although Biko's arguments against liberal individualism may be valid specifically within the black African, or *kaffir* context, through the utilization of race to reclaim black self consciousness, it cannot be assumed true within the various self-defining racial groups Biko subsumed under his definition. As such, Biko's variegated conception of blackness which included those classified as African, Coloured, or Indian, can be seen as not possessing the strong shared existential reality of oppression Biko assumed it did (More, 2017: 52). Speaking specifically on this aspect of Black Consciousness, Heribert Adams (1985: 173-174. in More, 2017: 52 - italics added) stated that "The weakness of the shared movement lies precisely in this abstract political bond, not backed up by shared experiences of everyday perceptions, *save political exclusion.*"

Although such a poignant observation indicates that Biko's conception of blackness may be guilty of ascribing a category upon a heterogenous serial of individuals, through their proximity to political exclusion, this paper does not find this to be its fundamental weakness. Rather, by placing African, Colored, and Indian individuals within a singular alliance directly opposed to the exclusionary practices, oppression, and subjugation of Apartheid expressed by White Racism, Biko reduces what Lewis Gordon refers to as 'black anti-black racism' to the invisible (More, 2017: 53). Consequently, through his use of an almost dichotomous *black-white* binary view of oppression, Biko unintentionally restricts the domain of racism exclusively to white supremacy, ignoring the question of supposed racism emerging from black individuals directed either upon fellow blacks, or towards white individuals (More, 2017: 52-54). In the subsequent section, this paper will provide formal conceptualizations of what constitutes racism drawn from More's writings, briefly illustrating how both these, and Biko's, conceptions fail to adequately encompass *black racism.*

Biko and Racism

What is racism?

Although defined as encompassing the oppression, and segregation of the Apartheid regime, More does not succinctly, or explicitly, provide the reader with specifically what Biko constituted racism to be, outside of the above. As such, the reader is left with the task of synthesizing Biko's view from those brought forward by More, which can broadly be categorized as either agent or act centered theories of what constitutes racism.

Utilizing Singer's approach, *for the sake of the argument*, take the position that the term race can be, and is conceptualized as referring to distinguishable human characteristics that are:

1) Hereditary, or *believed* to be so
2) Shared by a large number of people, while not being universally held.
3) Readily, or explicitly, apparent to ones sensory perception, particularly ones sight.

(1978: 155. in More, 2017: 123).

Operating from this conceptual base, as illustrated by More (2017: 123-125), defining what constitutes racism is trivial, and is achieved by appending the following two beliefs:

- 4) These characteristics (1-3) necessarily determine, or signify hidden; physical, mental, emotional, and cultural traits.
- 5) These racial traits are relevant to how a racial group should be viewed and treated.

(Singer, 1978: 156. in More, 2017: 124-125).

In light of the above, one is viewed as being racist by virtue of both their belief in different races, and their subsequent belief in differential treatment of individuals based upon such races. Thus, an individual can be seen as acting in a racist manner when they engage in, or encourage; racial prejudice, exclusion, domination, and oppression, based upon their belief in (1) through (5) (More, 2107: 125). Although the above conceptualization of racism is simplistic in its nature, More (2017: 124-126) does not delve deeply into its analysis, rather proceeding immediately to the views of Michael Philips. Despite this, this paper will briefly discuss the short falls of Singer's conceptualization before proceeding.

As have been extensively discussed throughout this paper, the foundations of Singer's conceptualization are false, namely the racial naturalism espoused in premises one (1) through three (3). Although an individual may false feel justified in holding such beliefs, their presence within the argument weakens its conceptual utility. As such, for such a conceptualization to posses any contemporary utility, these premises should be discarded in favor of views currently held. Thus, this paper adopted Biko's conception of race, specifically blackness, in favor of the above, in order to critically evaluate the praxis of Singer's theory. Following such a substitution, it becomes apparent that Singer's view of racism necessarily constitutes any action based up racially motivated differential treatment to be racist. Although this may initially appear favorable, specifically within the South African context is raises questions regarding 'positive discrimination' such as; affirmative action, along with Black Consciousness's attempts to reclaim control of individual and collective black self-consciousnesses.

Shifting the scope of analysis from the beliefs of the perpetrator, towards the experience of individuals Philips (1984 in More, 2017: 125) proposes an act-centered theory of racism, contrasting Singer's agent-centered approach. This theory posits that a racist action **R**, can be seen as being performed by person **X** , upon person **P** when:

- **X** does **R** in order to harm **P**, because **P** is a member of a specific racial group.

Or

- Regardless of intention or purpose by doing **R, X** can reasonably be expected to mistreat **P,** specifically as a result of **P's** membership within a certain racial group.

(Philips 1984: 77 in More, 2017: 125).

In contrast with Singer's conception of racism, the above proposed by Philips adopts a more granular approach, allowing for a more nuanced analysis of racism, importantly encompassing 'visceral racism' (More, 2017: 125). Unaccounted for in Singer's conception, acts of visceral racism are not consciously intended to be racist, or negatively racially motivated, by a given actor, but encompasses any action that results in the harm, hurt, or mistreatment of its recipient (Philips, 1984: 77 in More, 2017: 125). Furthermore, by explicitly including the harm caused, wether intentional or not, such an approach allows for positive differential treatment based upon race. As such, unlike Singer's conception, this conceptualization of racism differentiates between harmful actions, and actions intended to redress past injustices, such as those espoused by the Black Consciousness movement.

However, Phillips's conception is not without fault the most pertinent of which, for this paper, is its *colorblind* nature. By not explicitly including an agents race within his conceptualization, Philips essentially views anti-black racism espoused by white individuals as equatable to racially motivated *harmful* actions emerging from black individuals. Although the notion of '*reverse racism'* is gaining increased use within contemporary South Africa, it is infeasible that this alleged *racism* be equated, or viewed as comparable to that espoused by white individuals, fundamentally due to the socialized power dynamics of the parties involved. For example, it seems inconceivable for this paper that a black individual referring to a white person as a '*Settler', 'Whittie',* or *'Honkey'* is comparable to the use of terms such *'Slave', 'Nigger',* or *'Kaffir'* by white individuals to blacks. While this paper acknowledges the harm that the former may inflict, it is negligible in relation to the latter, primarily due to their historic utilization.

Thus, for this paper the fundamental shortfall of Philips's conception and those of a similar nature, that limits their practical use within contemporary contexts is their ahistorical constructions. As discussed by proponents of racial constructivism, race is inextricably linked to its historical use as a tool of oppression, and as such racism cannot be conceptualized without cognizance to this. The necessity of historical considerations when analyzing race, and racism was not absent within Biko's writings, with More (2017: 129-130, 199) summarizing Biko as defining racism to be "discrimination by a group against another for the purpose of subjugation or

maintaining subjugation." Regarding this matter, Biko (1996:35. in More, 2017:199) stated that "one cannot be a racist unless he has the power to subjugate." The power to subjugate was fundamental in historic racism, as the very ability to not only classify individuals as being within a certain race, but also segregate individuals into either oppressing, or oppressed groups within society was built upon it (More, 2017: 199). Furthermore, by necessitating the power to subjugate within his conception, Biko is able to adequately address *the problem* of 'black anti-black racism'. Through the above it is clear that for Biko the oppression of blacks by other blacks through 'black anti-black racism' cannot be viewed as equatable to white racism due to it lacking the ability to subjugate, and should rather be viewed as misguided internalization of racism, which Black Consciousness sought to remove (More, 2017: 50-51, 199-220). The application of this lead to the differentiation between ones 'degree of blackness' within SASO, and other Black Consciousness writings. Such a differentiation distinguished between a *real* black person; an individual who actively rejected and opposed the conception ascribed upon them, on the one extreme, and '*non-white*' individuals; who consciously, and willing supported and participated within the oppression of other blacks, due to their *misguided* acceptance of black domination (More, 2017: 51).

Cognizant of the above, it is clear to this paper through the use of the conceptions of race discussed by More, that black individuals currently posses neither the ability to express racism towards other blacks, nor the ability to espouse *reverse* racism. However, although this position may currently hold true, one may question if a black individual could ever posses the ability to be racist? This paper will briefly discuss this question, along with questions regarding the extinction of race, and racism, within its subsequent and final section of analysis below.

The Extinction of Race and Racism

Within his introductory chapter More (2017: 1-7), questions the necessity of race based philosophies in light of the non-racial democratic dispensation that prevails in South Africa. Such a question was drawn from the misguided beliefs of South African liberals that since legal institutional apartheid, which espoused racial naturalism views has been defeated, so to has racism (More, 2017:5-6). However, through the use of racial constructivism, it is clear both to More, and this paper that neither the use of race as a meaningful categorization too, nor racism have been eradicated within South Africa.

Within his book 'Here Is a Table' Ndumiso Dladla (2016) outlines the general argument espoused by those who posit that black individuals can be racist as reliving either on 1) conceptions of racism similar to those discussed previously, or 2) arguing that at least some black currently enjoy both the necessary, and sufficient economic, political, and social power to be deemed racist. Subsequently Dladla (2016), illustrates in a similar manner employed by this paper the invalid nature of 1), proceeding to providing a conceptual differentiation between the broad forms of power alluded to in 2), and what he terms historic power. Dladla's conceptualization of

historic power, is vastly similar to Biko's power to subjugate discussed above. Through such a lens, Dladla (2016) states that the presumption of inferiority towards blacks through racism, is inextricably linked to a historical politically constructed ontology. Thus, Dladla (2016) posits that for a black person to be guilty of racism, they would have to draw from, and posses control over, a well-established systemic conception of white individuals, one that is not only historic but in fact continues to act against the humanity, and value of a subjugated white race. Stated simply, under Dladla's (2016) view along with this papers, for a black person to be racist towards a white individual it would be necessary for them to; conquer and subjugate the white race, inferiorise them within social, cultural, and juridical spheres, along with denigrating white cultures, ascribing theirs as the standard mode of human existence. For Dladala, the required power blacks need to possess in order to be deemed racist far exceeds the mere monetary, or political power mentioned in 2), rather akin to the power possessed by white individuals, namely the power to structure global economies against white individuals towards black individuals, resulting in blacks flourishing, and proliferating while the white race atrophied due to its exclusionary, and marginalizing nature.

As such, utilizing Dladla's framework, for a black person to ever truly be racist one would have to distort, and re-write the entire history of black-white relations, utilizing this *new* as the foundational justification for the subjugation of white individuals. Simply, it would be necessary to either completely redefine the history of race, or move far beyond it, before a black individual could be considered racist.

As the former is necessarily inconceivable, this paper is left to question the latter, namely; Could race ever cease to exist? Although many racial nihilists argue that conceptually race has already gone extinct, or ceased to exist, this paper has provided large justification for the contrary. Despite this, within the racial constructivist approach utilized by this paper, could race as a meaningful concept feasibly cease to exist? Conceptually, one could hypothesize such an outcome could occur if the historic power conceptualized by Dladla ceased to exist. Although appearing enticing, delinking race from its use within historically racist acts of oppression does not necessarily force race out of existence. Rather, it is conceptually feasible that although the dominating power dynamics surrounding race no longer exist, that race may still signify divergent material, and social standing created by historic racism. Thus, although lacking continued subjugation and reinforcement, race would still be deeply connected to historical racism. It is the belief of this paper that the only feasible antecedent precipitating the extinction of race, is complete, and continued homogeneity of racially signifying somatic characteristics. Only if such a point where to be reached, and sustained, would race loose all meaningful conceptual use, as embodied within each, and every member of society would be equal parts oppressed, and oppressor. Such a reality would finally put an end to dialectical white *thesis*, and black *antithesis* dynamics, reaching Hegelian equilibrium in *synthesis,* making racial categorization as useful as the grouping of individuals within a bus line.

Conclusion

Drawing from the work of Mabogo More, this paper attempted to synthesize, expand upon, and critically evaluated the views on race, and racism espoused by Steve Biko. The analysis commenced through the review, and discussion of broad philosophical schools of thought regarding the conception of race, and its relevance within society. Subsequent, to outlining the arguments espoused by racial naturalists, nihilists, and constructivists, this paper contextualized where Biko's views can be seen to be located. The discussion of Biko's views on race necessitated this paper to discuss his views upon racism, illustrating the conceptual weaknesses present with the positions outlined by More. In conclusion, through the use of Ndumiso Dladla's conceptual framework, this paper discussed the necessary and sufficient conditions for black racism, along with for the extinction of both racism, and race in general.

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