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Glocalized Apartheid: Global Apartheid, the Global Implications of Local South African Resistance Movements, and the Creation of Counter Globalization

by Alexis Butts

Abstract: This paper seeks to explore numerous local cases of resistance in South Africa and their connection to global social inequality. The paper links historical and current localized resistance movements to a greater global struggle referred to as “global apartheid.” It shows that similar struggles are ongoing all over the “developing” world, where sentiments of social justice are present, creating a “counter globalization” movement tied to the struggle against global apartheid. This paper also speculates on the overall effectiveness of the notion of global apartheid and its associated movements, and the complications associated with using this term.
Introduction

The South African apartheid government in 1948 mandated racial separateness in all aspects of life for the benefit of a minority of white South Africans. Since its end in 1990, there has been a new concept of “global apartheid” that has emerged. Global apartheid describes a worldwide inequality of basic human rights created by a financially elite minority. Global apartheid constitutes a branch of apartheid that has been repurposed to define many different forms of oppression; the chronic underdevelopment of the “developing” world, the fight for equal rights, unequal representation in global governance and economic bodies all fall under the broad definition of global apartheid.

Similar to its historical counterpart, global apartheid has resulted in staunch resistance. Indeed, opposition movements to global apartheid, particularly in South Africa, have been somewhat hostile to the negative forces associated with globalization, which are often viewed as the main perpetrator of their inequalities. Opposition movements in South Africa, although fighting the negative aspects of globalization, or global apartheid, are interconnected with a larger global movement within the “developing” world. Resistance movements against global apartheid represent a process what academics call glocalization or “the interaction between the local and the global. A key challenge for local activists with a stake in an international issue is to generate sufficient interest from the national government to garner its support.”1 Resistance movements throughout the “developing” world represent a global connection through the reoccurrence of anti-West and anti-globalism sentiments, similar to those in South Africa. An argument can be made against globalism for perpetuating inequality in the “developing” world, however glocalism acts as medium for these movements to be heard and resolved. This paper will explore the motivations for some of these

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local South African movements and how they fit into a global context of resistance.²

Beginning with an examination of the origins of global apartheid, the paper defines the context of the resistance movements’ criticisms. The paper delves into the history of global apartheid and the establishment of a global economic system that supports it, and is followed by the historiography of global apartheid and its progression from local anti-globalization or social justice movements to resistance movements with a global focus. It then proceeds by discussing the local forms of resistance to global apartheid in South Africa and how these movements relate to those in developed and developing countries around the world. It also highlights the misconceptions about global apartheid. Finally the paper will draw conclusions on the possible resolution to global apartheid.

Such an examination is significant because without a holistic analysis of the increasing inequalities in the world connections are left out, and people remain marginalized. Understanding and resolving the worlds’ inequalities are not possible without a working knowledge of why these issues have arisen. The positive effects of globalization are unequal, to resolve why this is, requires a globalized approach to understanding. Furthermore examining these inequalities from all perspectives is necessary, all voices are vital to make connections that bridge the developed and developing world.

² For the purpose of this paper, global apartheid is defined as the maintenance of inequality between the “developing world” and their “developed Western” counterparts who benefit from and seek to maintain this inequality. The use of “developing world” and “West” (both placed here in quotation marks but hereafter without quotations) is to highlight the notion that there is a goal for all nations to achieve in social and economic standards or development; this end goal is also held at a European or Western standard, which is problematic for perpetuating colonialist attitudes. Quotation marks also denote the lack of agency citizens of the periphery experience by being held to foreign standards. Additionally, throughout this paper glocalization and globalization will at times be used interchangeably where glocalization implies a local use of global events.
Globalization in South Africa and the Creation of a Global Economy

South Africa is an interesting case study in how the term apartheid has morphed from racial segregation to be used more recently as a notion of constant social inequality. The initial use of apartheid in this context can be linked back to former South African president Thabo Mbeki 1999-2008, who was vocal about South Africa’s role in the global economy and the negative side effects stemming from globalization. The South African public staunchly supported Mbeki’s criticisms; he however adopted neoliberal economic policies that supported the internationalization of trade and finance, increased power of transnational corporations, and enhanced the role of the Bretton Woods organizations. Mbeki’s economic policies gave him the public image to what Patrick Bond calls “talk left, walk right,” meaning that to the public he denounced global inequality, but in practice, he adopted the very economic policies that promoted it.

Mbeki’s economic policy can be compared to South Africa’s current President Jacob Zuma’s strategies. Zuma held complete support from the African National Congress (ANC) as their candidate after the ANC dropped their support of Mbeki after an internal dispute. At the time of his election in 2009, the global community held a great interest in the direction Zuma’s foreign and domestic policies would differ from his predecessor Mbeki. As Chris McGreal points out, “Zuma, a populist who has at times declared himself a socialist, has been working hard to shore up the confidence of businessmen at home and abroad who fear that his populist rhetoric and backing from the unions and the Communist party will lead to a shift away from Mbeki’s market-oriented

5 Bond, Against Global Apartheid, 134.
economic policies.” Jacob Zuma in many ways followed Mbeki’s neoliberal model. He has been, however, less vocal about fighting these policies than Mbeki had been. Nonetheless, the South African people continue to be very vocal about the inequalities and corruption they face.

Outside of South Africa, protests and acts of resistance to neoliberal policies have been well established, examples are Brazil, Nigeria, and Greece all of which struggle with economic restructuring and forced austerity measures, where their populations experience the worst side effects. These exemplify a small selection of developing countries that were co-opted into Western economic “development” schemes. The economic “development” plans of the mentioned countries are a part of the international economic order established by the Bretton Woods system, which created the foundation for the three main international economic organizations the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The three Bretton Woods organizations essentially control global flows of capital, guide macroeconomic policy, and serve as an authority on economic “development.” As Manfred Steger points out, “the IMF was created to administer the international monetary system.”

The IMF continues to provide policy advice and financing to its 188 member countries in economic difficulties and also works with “developing” nations to help them achieve macroeconomic stability and reduce poverty. “The World Bank was initially designed to provide loans for Europe’s postwar reconstruction however; it was expanded to fund projects in developing countries.” The third entity, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was “established as a global trade

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7 Steger, 38.
9 Steger, 39.
organization charged with fashioning and enforcing multilateral trade agreements. In 1995, the WTO was the successor organization to GATT.” Together these three entities make up the Bretton Woods organizations. The Bretton Woods organizations were created and today are controlled by developed Western nations, which perpetuate macroeconomic policies that serve to benefit their own needs. Many developing nations undertook macroeconomic policies under the guidance of the Bretton Woods organizations, but have yet to experience any lasting economic improvement. These three organizations, and the Western countries which control them, are perceived as the purveyors of neoliberalism and global apartheid. Thus, all three are often a target of the developing world’s protests.

The Bretton Woods organizations had not always employed neoliberal policies on participating Member States; this was a gradual change as neoliberalism gained popularity among ruling Western powers. Steger gives us a good overview of neoliberalism and its origins:

Neoliberalism is rooted in the classical liberal ideals of Adam Smith (1723-90) and David Ricardo (1772-1823), both of whom viewed the market as a self-regulating mechanism tending toward equilibrium of supply and demand, thus securing the most efficient allocation of resources. These British philosophers considered that any constraint on free competition would interfere with the natural efficiency of market mechanisms, inevitably leading to social stagnation, political corruption, and the creation of unresponsive state bureaucracies. They also advocated the elimination of tariffs on imports and other barriers to trade and capital flows between nations. British sociologist Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) added to this doctrine a twist of social

10 Ibid.
Darwinism by arguing that free market economies constitute the most civilized form of human competition in which the ‘fittest’ would naturally rise to the top.11

Neoliberalism gained viability as a tool to establish economic independence and vitality following Europe’s economic reconstruction after World War Two. As Susan George notes, “neoliberalism has become the major world religion in 1979 [when] Margaret Thatcher came to power and undertook the neoliberal revolution in Britain. The central value of Thatcher’s doctrine and of neoliberalism itself is the notion of competition, to allocate all resources with the greatest possible efficiency.”12 Western leaders like Thatcher and American President Ronald Reagan’s economic shift toward neoliberal policies, that took place 1977-1988; these two powers essentially changed the rules of the global economy. The English and American economies recovered and boomed during the Thatcher and Reagan eras. As they enacted neoliberal policies such as cutting budgets, reducing taxes, and privatizing sectors, the economy rebounded for a short term. The gains of neoliberalism always come at a great expense, both the United Kingdom and United States experienced high rates of unemployment and a shift in income distribution. As George points out, “another structural feature of neoliberalism consists in remunerating capital to the detriment of labor and thus moving wealth from the bottom of society to the top. If you are, roughly, in the top 20 percent of the income scale, you are likely to gain something from neoliberalism.”13 Neoliberal policies are, however, an unsustainable tool to establish economic stability.

Nonetheless, the economic “success stories” of the United Kingdom and the United States caused a spread of neoliberal policies to the global economy, where the IMF and World Bank

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11 Ibid., 40.
12 Susan George, A Short History of Neoliberalism, Transnational Institute, (Amsterdam: Trasnational Institute, 1999).
13 Ibid.
adopted these policies as an absolute solution for developing countries. Neoliberalism on a global scale carries the same unintended consequences as seen in the United Kingdom and United States model; these effects however are far more corrosive on developing countries’ economies. Neoliberal policies have been carried out throughout the developing world under the guise of structural adjustment programs and a number of other programs under another name for neoliberalism. As George relates, “at the international level, neoliberals have concentrated all their efforts on three fundamental points: free trade in goods and services, free circulation of capital, and freedom of investment. Over the past twenty years, the IMF has been strengthened enormously…the debt crisis has moved it from balance of payments support to being quasi-universal dictator of so-called ‘sound’ economic policies, meaning of course neoliberal ones.”\textsuperscript{14} The developing world has essentially been forced into following neoliberal policies that do not positively contribute to their economic and social advancement.

For those in the developing world, the spread of neoliberalism is likened to the spread of imperialism; the forced acceptance of Western norms is a common criticism of the developing world. Neoliberalism further hinders the process of creating lasting economic and social development for those countries that were once colonized and are seen as an extension of neo-imperialism, and thus a threat for the sovereignty of the people of least developed countries (LDCs). There is an ongoing struggle between members of LDCs and the perceived neo-imperialist West; this struggle is an economic aspect of a global apartheid. The core motivation for citizens of LDCs resistance to global apartheid is to place their nations’ economic prosperity over western corporate gain/profit.

Instances of global apartheid are found throughout the developing world. Citizens of LDCs are cognizant of the corrosive effects global apartheid has had on their governments’ ability to

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
A number of isolated incidents represent the ongoing struggle of globalized economic norms are seen in Brazil, Nigeria, and Greece with South Africa acting as a model for forms of resistance. Leading up to the World Cup, Brazil has experienced numerous protests over the use of government funds for the tournament. Brazil and South Africa have an interesting relationship in terms of both countries hosting the World Cup; globalization has had a mix of influences over these two countries. Nigeria is another country where protests against the Shell Oil Company’s influence over the country are ongoing; the group Boko Haram also highlights an interesting aspect of how corrosive globalization or global apartheid can be in one country. Greece and a number of other countries have also experienced similar protests over the economic and social inequalities they face. South Africa is not a case of isolated unrest; much like the spread of globalization, global protests have responded to its ill effects.

The fight against global apartheid is an interesting incarnation of anti-globalization or social justice movements; where the developing world seeks to remove the imperialist aspect of globalization. The global community has also facilitated this fight against global inequality. Globalization possesses numerous merits and flaws; it has been able to bring the peoples of the world and their concerns and needs to the attention of a global audience. The spread of information alone is one merit of global unrest that cannot be denied. Conversely, the movement against the negative

aspects of globalization should be recognized as protecting the rights of the developing world from unscrupulous government and organized financial bodies.\textsuperscript{18}

The Historiography of Global Apartheid

The notion of global apartheid is relatively new, it has however long been a topic of debate through a number of different names; discussions of anti-globalization, neo-imperialism, and neoliberalism all bring up concerns similar to those voiced in the discussion of global apartheid. Patrick Bond is one of the leading voices on global apartheid; his book titled \textit{Against Global Apartheid South Africa Meets the World Bank, IMF and International Finance}, examines the influence of the financial institutions listed on post-apartheid South Africa and their damaging effects.\textsuperscript{19} Bond also links the problems of post-apartheid South Africa to the general ineffectiveness of the global economy. The ill effects of the global financial institutions experienced in post-apartheid South Africa can also be found in a number of non-western countries who like South Africa were once colonized; Bond however, does not delve into the colonial link global apartheid possesses.

Thabo Mbeki former President of South Africa was a large proponent of the downfalls of globalization. In 2000 Mbeki gave an Address to the Commonwealth Club, World Affairs Council and US/SA Business Council Conference in San Francisco,\textsuperscript{20} where he acknowledges the positive and negative effects a global community had brought to the developing world: “[T]he process of globalization has brought about many possibilities for rapid

\textsuperscript{18} Delegation from Third World Network represented by CSUSB, position paper for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, NMUN 2014.

\textsuperscript{19} Bond, \textit{Against Global Apartheid}, 2001.

advancement of humanity…The tragic and unfortunate irony is that “developing” countries continue to be spectators in the globalization process, a process that is undoubtedly irreversible, with devastating results for the millions of people of such countries.”

In tandem with Mbeki’s statement, Walter Rodney’s book *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* shows why globalization perpetuates underdevelopment for countries; their colonial past keeps a wide economic gap between the developed and developing worlds. Rodney makes the argument that the colonial process caused great developmental problems for the African continent, where colonialists purposely kept economic development at a minimum in the countries they inhabited for their own economic profit. The colonial period established the conditions that Mbeki describes, conditions that globalization has perpetuated: “Colonialism increased the dependence of Africa on Europe in terms of the number of aspects of socio-economic life in Africa which derived their existence from the connection with the metropole….European trading firms, mining companies, shipping lines, banks, insurance houses, and plantations all exploited Africa.”

Although Rodney focused on the African continent it was not the only colonized region; similar conditions can also be seen in other colonized areas.

The colonial period established the global economic system of today. David Slater’s article “Post-Colonial Question for Global Times” argues that ideas of the colonial period are being perpetuated through globalization, and need to be replaced with post-colonial perspectives of society. While Rodney and Mbeki note the financial and technological disparities globalization has helped to create, Slater discusses how old colonial perceptions are perpetuated through globalization; the agents of knowledge and

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23 Rodney.
information historically are and continue to be Western powers, they perpetuate the same false images of the global South:

The non-west or south, the historical experiences of being subjected to a variety of forms of exclusion and inclusion, and of being the object of subordinating modes of representation which justify the maintenance of unequal power relations in the world system, tend to generate a subjectivity that is more resistant, and more critically conscious than is generally the case within societies that have benefited.25

This form of globalism perpetuates the ideas and trends of the most prominent Western countries; the developing world however has little to no influence in the global community because of their lack of economic independence.

In further defining the notion of global apartheid Gernot Kholer’s article, “The Three Meanings of Global Apartheid: Empirical, Normative, Existential” discusses the various definitions of global apartheid: “The term global apartheid entails a world view that is empirically based, but also partisan and sympathetic to the needs and rights of the global majority, as opposed to the power and privilege of a global minority.”26 As Kholer describes, global apartheid is a notion that does not pander to the trends or wants of the global minority, or wealthy countries. Kholer argues that global apartheid can be quantified and observed, in many different forms and injustices. Edward Said’s book Culture and Imperialism delves into various ways literature and culture has been Western dominated, an observable form of global apartheid; the voices of the developing world are largely

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ignored and unpublished.  

Said shows how global culture is inherently skewed for a Western audience. Morten Jerven’s book *Poor Numbers*²⁸, and Martin Ravallion’s article “The Debate on Globalization, Poverty and Inequality: Why Measurement Matters”²⁹ both discuss the quantifiable aspects of global apartheid, and how even the “numbers” used to measure poverty can be skewed by a Western based globalization.

**Local Forms of Resistance in South Africa**

Following the fall of the apartheid government in 1990, and after its first democratic election in 1994, South Africa has experienced a great deal of protest to the various manifestations of global apartheid. The South African public following Mbeki’s example have been very vocal about the inequalities they face. Mbeki although having been vocal against political and social forms of global apartheid has been largely criticized for his neoliberal economic policy that bolstered the Western dominated economic system. Unlike Mbeki, South Africa’s current president Jacob Zuma did not publicly reject the West or its neoliberalism, Zuma widely accepted the benefits of these policies. In response to South Africa’s policy transitions, the public has become gradually more vocal over the problems they continue to experience, and the government’s lack of support.

In 2007, Soweto experienced riots and protests over growing unrest at the failure to improve the lives of South Africans who have resorted to stealing electricity for basic needs such as cooking and heating.³⁰ In a *Mail & Guardian* news article on the

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protests, Ngethembi Myaka a mother of two, voices her frustration over the lack of improvements for the community: “It is like we are not living in South Africa, we are not part of the democracy everyone enjoys.” Myaka’s sentiments are echoed across Soweto and throughout South Africa, where the stealing of utilities is seen as a fight against globalization and South Africa’s active role in the global economy. Patrick Bond’s article, “Power to the People in South Africa” makes this connection more evident. Bond discusses Mbeki’s push for privatization of government-owned services to be more profitable on the global market and its cause for the unrest. Mbeki’s policy usually favored more neoliberal economic policies, which have been the global trend, and most profitable for those in power. The privatization of electricity, telecommunications, and transportation was hotly protested when these mandates were first proposed in 2000. These protests are ongoing on a smaller scale, as poor communities are largely still not serviced.

Anita Von Schnitzler’s article “Traveling Technologies: Infrastructure, Ethical Regimes, and the Materiality of Politics in South Africa” examines instances of resistance to global apartheid in Soweto. She discusses the use of prepaid meters to regulate the access to paid use of electricity; in 2011 a violent protest occurred in Chiawelo an area of the Soweto Township over automatic shutoffs of electricity when the user does not pay for access: “In the past two decades, and in a context of neoliberal reforms

dwellers-vent-fury-at-government.
31 Mangena.
prescribing, ‘cost recovery’ on the one hand, and widespread nonpayment of service charges on the other, prepaid meters are primarily deployed in poorer, historically black townships and informal settlements…. ‘Living prepaid’ with an always-precarious connection to flows of water or electricity has thus become an increasingly normalized condition.”\textsuperscript{35} The use of electricity meters primarily for poorer communities and the protest of their use is an ongoing struggle in Soweto and many other townships in South Africa. The outcome of the use of meters is a never-ending cycle; once protests end, Eskom the local provider installs a new type of “unbreakable” meters, which is bypassed by residents. In Chiawelo the cycle of innovation and subversion,\textsuperscript{36} as Von Schnitzler puts it, is an act of resistance against a local implication of global economic trends.

Von Schnitzler’s article “Performing Dignity: Human Rights, Citizenship, and the Techno-politics of Law in South Africa” also examines resistance to global apartheid in Soweto and a number of other townships in South Africa over citizens constitutional right to water.\textsuperscript{37} Five members of Phiri, a poor area in Soweto, initiated a lawsuit over “Operation Gcin’amanzi (Zulu for “Save Water”), a controversial, large-scale project initiated by the recently corporatized Johannesburg Water utility to install prepaid water meters in all Soweto households.”\textsuperscript{38} Violent protests had erupted after cutoffs of water. In 2008, Phiri residents won the case. Justice Moroa Tsoka “maintained that the utility had shown an apartheid-style ‘patronization’ of poor township residents, and that water prepayment technology was unconstitutional. Most importantly, he ruled that free lifeline of water per household satisfy basic needs. Guided by international human rights norms advocating a specific ‘minimum core’ of economic and social

\textsuperscript{35} Von Schnitzler, “Traveling Technologies.”
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
The Phiri victory against the privatization of water is one example of a successful resistance movement against neoliberal policies. Global trends in economic policies can affect otherwise unknown communities, globalization has brought citizens of all LDCs closer together through their refusal to be marginalized by possible profit.

Another example of dissent to the South African government’s neoliberal policies can be seen in the 2012 Lonmin Marikana mine protests, which resulted in police opening fire on protesters who were also armed, leaving thirty-four dead. Mineworkers had been protesting over a wage raise, also the long-established National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the newly formed Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) were initially thought to have triggered the violence over competition between the two unions. Marikana workers and those living in the surrounding community were also frustrated over their poor living conditions; one unnamed woman told reporters “Lonmin has done nothing for the local community. They take our platinum and enrich themselves but where is our royalty money going? We don’t have tar roads and our youth are unemployed.”

While unions have traditionally been the voice of workers, the Lonmin Mining Company has been free to abuse those in Marikana. Onyekachi Wambu, Director of Engagement and policy for the African Foundation for Development, voices the larger implications of the mine protest in the New African Magazine:

The shooting of miners and the attempts to level murder charges using old apartheid legislation have now starkly forced us all to confront the issues of

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39 Ibid.
how we truly reform the neo-colonies we inherited at independence. Removing the old colonial racial order is welcome - but far more critical is controlling the military/security services, and ensuring that the economy benefits ordinary Africans and not just the national elites, who have shown time and again their willingness to maintain the old economic order, with its structural inequalities.  

Wambu makes a precise connection between the Marikana protests and the government’s stand with neoliberalism. At the heart of the protests in Soweto and Marikana is the government’s maintenance of global apartheid; South Africa’s economic growth has benefited those in power, but not for the average citizen. The South African economy is structurally unequal and a continuation of the continent’s colonial past.

Global Protest of Global Apartheid

Like South Africa, similar injustices and protests can be found globally. Neoliberal policies and globalization are likewise the forces behind the repressions that are being committed. Many nations like South Africa seek to be a force in the global economy and obtain the perceived wealth being a global economic power brings. Although the benefits of neoliberalism can be profitable for those in power, those at the bottom of society remain overlooked.

Leading up to the World Cup in 2014, Brazil experienced numerous protests over the eleven billion dollars the government

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spent to prepare for the tournament while social services were ignored. Workers in three Rio de Janeiro airports had gone on strike leading up to the World Cup over a lack of wage increases: “Check-in assistants, baggage handlers, mechanics, and engineers are among the workers taking part in the 24-hour strike. For months, they’ve been seeking salary raises of at least 5.6 percent. A court has ordered the unions to keep staffing at 80 percent of normal levels or face a $22,400 fine.” While Brazil spent billions on preparations for the global event, those living in Rio de Janeiro were either ignored or forcibly removed. In attempts to “modernize” the city for the games and the coming Olympic Games, the Brazilian government has prioritized their global image over the needs of its public. As Owen Gibson and Jonathan Watts point out, “at least 19,000 families have been moved to make way for roads, renovated stadiums, an athletes’ village, an ambitious redevelopment of the port area and other projects that have been launched or accelerated to prepare the city for the world’s two biggest sporting events.”

Brazil, like South Africa, is a BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) country, and both experienced social unrest due to their actions leading up to hosting these sporting events; these two countries have actively worked to be a part of the global powers at the expense of their public.

Similar unrest over nations’ desire to compete in the global economy rather than mitigate domestic issues can be found in Nigeria and Greece. In Nigeria, the Shell Oil Company has been a long source of strife for those living in the oil rich region. Nigeria is the wealthiest country in Africa and partially from its oil

reserves; Nigeria although rich has become worse off by their forced entry into neoliberalism.\(^\text{48}\) As Olumide Victor Ekanade points out:

> Under the reign of neoliberalism in Nigeria, capital and wealth have been largely distributed upwards, while civic virtues have been undermined….Under attack is the social contract with its emphasis on enlarging the public good and expanding social provisions…all of which provided both safety nets and a set of conditions upon which democracy could be experienced.\(^\text{49}\)

Shell is the best example of the ill effects of neoliberal policy, where a corporation is unchecked by government, watchdog groups, or the international community; Shell left unchecked has let a number of environmental and social atrocities occur. In response to Shell’s disregard of any social responsibility “armed groups began sabotaging pipelines and kidnapping oil company staff from 2006, with a ceasefire called in 2009 by one group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta. A year later it announced an “all-out oil war” after a crackdown by the Nigerian military.”\(^\text{50}\) The communities in the oil region have been partially successful in gaining awareness for these abuses.

In Greece protests against neoliberal policies have been ongoing since its six-year recession and debt problems boiled over.\(^\text{51}\) During this period the European Union and IMF have been


\(^{49}\) Ekanade, 1.


\(^{51}\) Helena Smith, “Greek Protesters Rally Against IMF and EU Inspection,” *The Guardian*, November 5, 2013, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/05/greek-protesters-rally-against-
pushing Greece to employ austerity measures to deal with their debt, these measures however lower the quantity and quality of services provided by the government, making life much more difficult in an already weak economy. Helena Smith argues that

Relentless spending cuts and tax rises have resulted in Greeks losing 40% of their disposable income since the crisis began…with unemployment nudging 30%, Greece has been hit by record levels of poverty – the price of making the biggest fiscal adjustment of any OECD state since the second world war.  

While Greece is not considered a developing country or member of the developing world, it is a victim of the global economy. The European Union and IMF have been able to force Greece to enact these measures to maintain the Union, against the demands of the Greek public. “Many of the demonstrators who took to the streets told reporters they had been directly affected by public sector dismissals demanded by the EU, IMF and European Central Bank. The prospect of yet more austerity measures being meted out to plug a looming fiscal gap has sent passions rising further.”  

Two years later, the European Union and the IMF are still in negotiations with Greece to resolve their debt crisis; the groups are withholding aid until such an agreement can be met. 

The nations mentioned above have diverse social backgrounds and economic bases; all have become entangled in the global economic system, which purports neoliberal policies as the key to being an economic power. The people of these nations

imf-eu-inspection.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
are protesting the failures of their government’s lack of protection over the global interests of the country. Globalization’s main export for these countries is a greater gap between the rich and poor and lowered government safety nets.

**Criticisms of Global Apartheid**

The fight against global apartheid can at times be inherently contradictory. Global apartheid has been defined as “the de facto division of the world’s states into rich, powerful, majority-white states and poor, weak and dependent majority-non-white states,” with globalization used as a tool to perpetuate these standards. This has given rise to many movements against globalization and global apartheid. However, it can also be argued that globalization has facilitated this dialogue against the rich-poor divide. Without the connection of communication and information globalization provides, the injustices experienced in the developing World would continue. Globalization has created not only a cause for protest but also an outlet for these movements to be heard by a larger community. Without the rapid spread of information globalization creates, this outlet would leave these resistance movements largely unknown.

Aside from globalization, the issue of anti-neoliberalism and the rejection of neoliberal policies are somewhat problematic. Like globalization and global apartheid, neoliberalism has an obscure definition that can be altered by its user. James Ferguson’s “The Uses of Neoliberalism” aptly distinguishes between the ways the term “neoliberalism” has been demonized and is used in a variety of contradictory ways; this misuse is similar to the use of global apartheid and anti-globalization movements: “With respect to poverty and social policy, for instance, it is simply not the case that neoliberal government ignores poverty, or leaves it to ‘the

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To say that neoliberal policies contribute to the economic underdevelopment of LDCs is unsound, there is far more at play in each country’s government and economy. Furthermore, the connection between neoliberalism and neocolonial/imperialism that is often made is false on similar grounds. “Neoliberalism, in this sense, has become the name for a set of highly interested public policies that have vastly enriched the holders of capital, while leading to increasing inequality, insecurity, loss of public services, and a general deterioration of quality of life for the poor and working classes.” 57 Although this is often a side effect in neoliberalism, it is not the case that poverty is ignored, neoliberalism is employed to remedy poverty and economic underdevelopment. This discussion of global apartheid is incomplete without a discussion of neoliberal policies; they fuel the sometimes misplaced dissent of one another.

The fight against global apartheid and globalization alike target the West as the main culprit for their underdevelopment. The overuse of these notions can be problematic for the LDC criticizers. Placing sole blame on the West for poor choice in economic and social policies gives no agency to the developing world. This is akin to arguments made against colonialism as being necessary for developing African, Asian, and Latin American countries: “Technical prescriptions for “making poverty history” seem irrelevant because they presume the central actors to be states—and well-financed, bureaucratically capable, poverty-fighting states that resemble twentieth century European welfare states. Couldn’t the Democratic Republic of the Congo solve all its problems, reformers seem to say, if only its government would start to behave like that of Sweden?” 58

Prior to the widespread use of the notion global apartheid, the power divide of the world was referred to as colonialism and neocolonialism; all refer back to similar circumstances. In this

57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
sense global apartheid is somewhat of an all-encompassing popular phrase to reinvigorate the criticism of the wealthy West. Global apartheid although an interesting concept, primarily reiterates the same awareness and dissent of Western superiority. The awareness global apartheid creates is undeniably useful, it has created a new channel for the discussion of inequality of the world.

**Conclusions**

Racial apartheid in South Africa mandated the separation on races for the benefit of white South Africans; this form of inequality has lent itself to creating a culture of protest within South Africa. Today, South Africans are leading protests against global apartheid. South African citizens are versed in the global policies that affect their daily lives, and how their local resistance can impact global perspectives similar to the ending of racial apartheid South Africa. Neoliberalism and other forms inequality are one of many sources of oppression South Africans and other citizens of the global community face; resistance movements and glocalization for now are truly effective solutions to curbing global apartheid.

Discussing global apartheid is also a discussion of anti-globalization; a small number of Western countries reside as global powers that control global flows of capital and ideas, the nations in power contain a constant criteria of being Western and traditional colonial powers. The West perpetuates a neoliberal economic structure that maintains its influence over the poor and marginalized developing world. Globalization is a mechanism that both brings the peoples of LDCs closer together; and at the same time economically further away from each other. There is an ongoing struggle within LDCs to reach the same living standards of their Western counterparts; this has manifested itself into a vast network of resistance movements throughout the developing world. The movement against global apartheid should be
recognized as an awareness of the rights of communities of the developing world.

Resistance movements against global apartheid can be defined as glocalization, which highlights the action of local actors on global issues. Global apartheid creates glocalization through the developing world’s mutual dissatisfaction with neoliberalism and other forced foreign trends. While these movements foster and utilize anti-Western sentiments, a community is created.

Through the gaze of glocal movements the West is seen as an oppressing force, these actions are traced back to the colonial period. In response the BRICS countries have made their own path against Western-centric power. These countries have recently begun talks to create a “New Development Bank,”59 which would be competition for the IMF and World Bank as the only global financial lending institutions. The creation of a BRICS development bank would, if not replace the Western institutions, overshadow them. The creation of a LDC-centric development bank would be a great achievement for the countering of global apartheid, but would this institution employ the same neoliberal policies as the IMF and World Bank, and essentially replace the West as the new power center? Is the global economy inherently skewed to one wealth base, or is it the states in power that perpetuate this?

The aforementioned examples presented on South African global apartheid show the possibility for maintenance of the status quo; both Mbeki and Zuma have bent to Western styles of economics and done little to enhance glocal processes. It may be as also plausible that a shift from neoliberal or any Western-centric form of “development” is impossible for LDCs; perhaps neoliberalism is so prevalent because it is the best available system. Perhaps the world is inherently unequal. The developing world may yet be as “power hungry” as the West, which has the

potential to create a whole alternate set of conclusions about globalization.


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Glocalized Apartheid


Author Bio

Alexis recently graduated from California State University, San Bernardino in 2014 with her Bachelor of Arts degree in History concentrating in African History, and a minor in Political Economy. During her time at CSUSB Alexis has been a proud member of the Model United Nations Team. This research was started during Alexis’ time in South Africa, part of CSUSB’s study abroad program, she would like to one day return and delve deeper into these issues. She would like to thank Dr. Tiffany Jones for sparking her interest in African history and her continued support in making this research possible. She would also like to thank Dr. Grisham for his guidance and the opportunities he has provided her while at CSUSB. Alexis also warmly thanks her family and friends who have been a constant source of love and support.