

RECONCEPTUALIZING RACISM

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Research submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Philosophy by coursework and
Research

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

Supervisor
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Johannesburg, 2018

Abstract

In the literature, the subject of racism has been approached by and large in a particular kind of way. In this paper, I aim to critically engage with standard racism discourse by doing two things. Firstly, I will be showing that the way racism is generally discussed is problematic both for the reasons that (a) its scope is limiting and (b) the way that the concept is used leaves out certain things that are important for what count or ought to count as racism. Secondly, I will be arguing that racism in its most basic form is the undervaluing, the devaluing, and not at all valuing someone else on account of their racial or racialized group.

Thesis statement

What racism has been taken to be (in the philosophical literature) is not as satisfying as it could be, particularly, with regard to its dehumanizing factor. I contend that what it means to be racist conceptually involves the fact that there is an occurrence of dehumanization. The broad argument that I will be making in this paper in terms of racism as dehumanization can be divided into three related parts: racism in the form undervaluing, racism in the form of devaluing, and racism in the form of not valuing at all.

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

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15 Day of March, 2018

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Introduction

Racism has plagued the world over the centuries, especially in the 20th century. South Africa has particularly witnessed this throughout its history, as manifested through apartheid. It is entrenched in society, spaces of education, work and even family units are constantly confronted by it. Little wonder WEB Du Bois declares “...for the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line” (1903: 3). At the same time, solutions are being proposed so that the race relations of the future of South Africa is characterized by a culture of anti-racism and eventually genuine non-racialism. In this thesis, I will be exploring different conceptions of racism. My main objective proceeds from the rationale that if society and individuals are to effectively deal with and find ways of addressing racism, they need to have a proper view of what it really is. As I will show in the research, my general sense (based on various discussions I have had and reading up on racism in the literature) is that there are aspects of racism that are amiss and haven’t been properly articulated even though some of what is discussed and written about as it relates to the issue of racism is quite right.

It is a ubiquitous field of study and there are innumerable ways in which to tackle the subject. Thinkers from different kinds of disciplines will usually be informed by the place out of which they are coming with reference to how they approach the subject. For example, a political theorist may look at the question of racism from the point of view which is informed by the desire to see less racial injustices in the socio-political sphere. A sociologist may also approach this question with reference to trying to make sense of how society works and providing thoughts around racism that are aligned with the aspect of the question they are hoping to address. I’m no different; coming from a background of

philosophy; my general interest is in philosophically thinking about racism but what I'm specifically endeavoring to do in this thesis is to essentially provide some philosophical conception of what it is.

The first issue to which this thesis will turn is to consider some thoughts that have been articulated on the concept of racism, what I call racism discourse in section 1. Though this is not the primary objective of the thesis, it is important to make mention of this discourse on racism, and clearly distinguish it from conceptions of racism (which is a specific objective of this paper). This will be followed in section 2 by a discussion of conceptions of racism. This discussion will be crucial in my arguing the point that there are deficiencies in how racism has been conceptualized by philosophers in the literature, and how this has led to something going amiss in what racism has been defined to be.

Subsequent to this will be a critical analysis in section 3; this will be a discussion that explicitly specifies what about standard conceptions of racism is problematic. This will be followed in section 4 by an examination of the notion of dehumanization. As part of my reflections on the different conceptions of racism and the inadequacies of those accounts, I shall, in section 5, give my own conceptualization, namely that racism is a form of dehumanization. I will go on to delineate three ways in which my account of racism can be expressed. I will finally consider in section 6 some objections and subsequently respond to them.

Section 1: Racism Discourse

Frantz Fanon and Racism

In the foreword of the book "Black Skin White Masks" (2008), a comment is made about (the great) Frantz Fanon's inspiration in terms of the fight against colonial racism which

came in the form of Aimé Cesaire (2008:7). Fanon's work and ideas are ever so inspiring in shaping our thoughts and the ways in which we conceive racism (in general), but particularly within the context of colonialism. One notable factor regarding Fanon's engagement with racism is that he analysed it (primarily) through the lens of psychoanalysis (2008:8). He was much more interested on the effects of racism on those to whom it was aimed and how that affected the view of the self (2008:8) rather than some philosophical conception of it. "Black Skin White Masks" was among the pioneering books in showing distinct dedication toward understanding the psychology of colonialism (2008: 10). It is really about how those that are colonized begin the process of internalizing it and how that internalizing process is linked to improper notions of the self (2008:10). It is evident that the place out of which his work emanates has a specific focus on colonial racism which is distinguished from the stand alone conception and notion of racism as it were (2008:66,101).

Jean-Paul Sartre and Racism

In "Black Orpheus", Jean-Paul Sartre (1965) shares some powerful ideas (among others) with respect to being seen, appearing, and the ways in which racism shows itself in society. He expresses that the white man has for the longest time been in a position where they could be recognized as something, while at the same time, deny those that are not white the right to be seen (1965:15). In great poetry and elegance, he unpacks what life looks like for the white man in virtue of his being white and in the light of how the world is unjustly programmed to service and serve whiteness (1965:18). In contrast, he articulates how though the black man lives in the same world as the white man does, their worlds are worlds apart (1965:20). The socio-psychological and real impact of an anti-black society which is expressed primarily through European superiority and African oppression creates a

platform for the social and multi-generational practice of racism (1965:21). Another important idea shared by Sartre is that of Negritude. Coming from a pretext where the world's objective as inspired by society, is to magnify whiteness and obliterate blackness, he argues that the role of negritude is twofold: "it makes the Negro and the Negro makes it" (1965:48). In other words, negritude exists because the world has denied the Negro the right to be seen, but also, the Negro exists as a means by which Negritude itself could come alive.

Linda Alcoff and Racism

Linda Alcoff's book, "Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self" (2006), articulates some thoughts on racism coming from the specific framework of identity. One of the issues that she looks into as it relates to racism is the question of "racism and visible race" (2006:195). She argues that racial identity is not necessarily a product of race in terms of it being understood as a meaningful biological category (2006:195). Rather, it is an occurrence of a cultural attack toward people who phenotypically look a certain kind of way in order to fulfill an oppressive end (2006:195). She argues that racial identities are an essential part of understanding racism, and that there is an inescapable arbitrariness in utilizing one's phenotype to identify their racial group for the purpose of being racist (2006:197). Alcoff continues to question that if race does not do the job required in order for racism to occur, why is the seeing of race so pervasive and not cease to exist? This ushers her to discussing if we should unlearn racial seeing and a further discussion on colour-blindness and other racism related questions.

Robert Bernasconi, Sybol Cook, Levi-Strauss and Racism

In their book "Race and Racism in continental philosophy" (2003), Robert Bernasconi and Sybol Cook explicate the thoughts of Levi-Strauss regarding what racism is and what it meant (2003:235). According to him, racism is a doctrine which seeks to establish false claims about the moral attributes and mental characteristics of a racial group as a whole and the individuals that represent that group (2003:235). These attributes are supposedly passed down through the generations which implies that they come with some sort of permanence. Furthermore, the over celebration of some cultures over others provides breeding space for race based cultural-racism. Racism then, for Strauss is summed up in four essential points. One, depending on what genetic heritage a person may have, this has a bearing on the intellectual aptitude of a person. Two, the heritage which is associated with those of a certain racial group is commonly shared by all members of that group (2003:236). Three, different racial groups have different evaluative standards which are in line with their genetic heritage (2003:236). And lastly, the "superior" races feel entitled to oppress, suppress and eventually destroy "inferior" racial groups (2003:236). A prominent feature that arises from the Strauss's thought is the idea that racism is more aligned with institutions and material practices rather than individual attitudes (2003:236).

Chukwudi Eze an Immanuel Kant on Race/Racism

In "The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology" (1997), Chukwudi Eze discusses the idea of race as it was envisioned by Kant. One outstanding factor about Kant's thinking about races is that they are best understood in terms of taxonomy. In other words, for Kant, races are to be conceived in terms of a classification which also speaks to their order and level in terms of each other (1997:115). In light of this, it already seems as if Kant

not only had seriously racist ideas but his notion of race was itself racist. Usually, doctrines of racism attempt to construe themselves in ways that understand race such that it is quite distinguishable from racism. However, Kant's classification, by virtue of the fact that it sets out to place a certain group of people on one level of importance over another is constructively (that is, in its design) problematic. And the fact that he places members of the racial group to which he belongs at the top of the hierarchy, articulates his arrogant racism. Another key aspect is that for Kant, race had necessary ties to particular geographical locations (1997:15). Kant followed the Hippocratic idea which held that in the same way as biological phenomena such as animals were classified in accordance with being wild, living on land, existing on air or under the sea, so too are different race groups. Those that he classified as being part of the "black race" were thought to have legitimately emanated from Africa, those that were "white" from Europe, those that were "yellow" from Asia, and those that were "red" from America (1997:15). Lastly, for Kant, race could also be used to predetermine a person's future (116:1997), since he presupposed that it was linked to important traits such as morality, intellect, and the ability to be engaged in respectable rational practice.

Sally Haslanger on Racism

Sally Haslanger is one example of what I'm intending to do specifically in terms of conceptualizing racism. Her own account is one which attempts to take the concept of racism and articulate a particular conception of it through oppression (Levine & Pataki 2004). According to her, the common understanding of oppression involves the unfair treatment of individuals or a group of individuals who share a common feature, and in the case of racism, it would be their phenotypical outlook (2004:98). Bearing in mind the thought we may have

a pre-theoretical understanding of what oppression is, it does also tend to be elusive (2004:98). Thus Haslanger explicitly constructs a working definition of oppression. One way she defines oppression is in the following way; “X oppresses Y just in case X is an agent with some power or authority and that Y is suffering unjustly or wrongfully under X as a result of X’s unjust exercise of power ” (Levine & Pataki 2004:98-99).The next issue that she looks into is that of power(2004:99). If racism is a matter of racial oppression and racial oppression is directly linked to power, what then is meant by power and how should we understand it? Before getting to that, Haslanger asks us to note the framework involved between those that oppress and those that are oppressed. There are four ways to understand this: first is that individuals can oppress other individuals; second, individuals can oppress a group; third, groups can oppress individuals, and lastly, groups can oppress other groups (2004:97).

Kwame Anthony Appiah and Racism

Appiah (1992) is another example of a philosopher specifically involved in doing work in definitionally conceptualizing racism and he does so by describing it as being two kinds. The first kind is what he calls “extrinsic racism” (1992:13). According to Appiah, extrinsic racists make a distinction between members of different racial groups; since they have some doxastic essentialist beliefs which they believe have a moral implication on their character. Extrinsic racists usually have the belief that members of different racial groups are different from each other, such that how they are treated in virtue of their racial group should not be the same (1992:13). The content of these beliefs attribute one racial group with positive traits , such as intelligence and good character, while those of another racial group are denied such traits(1992:13). Appiah further argues that if it is indeed true that people were

extrinsically racist (in the pure sense), then evidence which shows the error in their extrinsic reasons for being racist should logically stop them from being racist; but this is not the case. Intrinsic racism is another kind defined by Appiah and he describes it as people who make morally significant distinctions between people of different racial groups (1992:15). In other words, intrinsic racists have different scales of morality for people who belong to different racial groups. In the same way as people make justifications of choosing and even at times harming others to protect those that are family, intrinsic racists invoke the same kind of rationale and extend it to racial groups (1992:15). For intrinsic racists, no amount of evidence suffices to change their beliefs in unfairly treating one racial group over that of their own (1992:15).

Section 2: Conceptions of Racism

Joshua Glasgow: Racism as disrespectful

Glasgow's (2009) basic conception is that racism is essentially disrespect. He thinks that a person is racist if they exhibit relevant racial disrespect (2009:80). One of the motivations behind his theory is that he noticed that most accounts of racism, seem to specify a definition in terms of how they presuppose it (2009:64-65). While he thinks that there might not be something wrong with specifying racism in terms of one's presuppositions of it, he does think that most such accounts do seem to confront a problem of location, which is an idea taken quite seriously by some who write on the subject (2009:66). The idea behind the problem of location is something like this; if one is going to be faithful to a behaviorist account of racism, for example, then it seems like what one can accommodate in terms of identifying things that are racist, strictly speaking, are actions (2009:66). On the other hand, we also want to think that people can be racist even in

situations where they don't act on their racism. So the problem with how racism has been conceptualized is that most of its accounts, specify it only in terms of a single location (2009: 80-81). So for the behaviorist, racism is found only in action and for the cognitivist, it is found only in belief systems (2009:80). Some people may think that it is permissible for a behaviorist to conceive racism in terms of a cognitive account and thus identify it, but at face value, it seems dubious to explicate racism-based action on account of cognitive presuppositions, if it is not defined like that (2009:67).

As a solution to the location problem, Glasgow suggests a location neutral understanding of racism (2009:81). He argues that a location neutral conception resolves the location problem and that it allows us to think of some unifying factor according to which we can classify most racist things (2009:81). The idea can be expressed as follows; the problem of location can be resolved by adopting an account of racism(R), such that it gives a feature or conjunction of features (G), despite the fact that G-ness can be found in situations other than (R) (2009:81). If everything is funny because it is (Y), then we can give a monistic account of funny by saying (X) is funny just in case (X) is (Y), even if (Y) can be a lot of things like jokes ,facial expressions ,people etc(2009: 80-81). It seems therefore, that not specifying a location handles the location problem while also maintaining the idea of a unified account of racism. Of course many cases of disrespect may have nothing to do with racism (2009:83). But the idea is that the disrespect as it is conceived in this case, must be racially relevant. In other words, person X executes racism when he is racially disrespectful towards members of another racial group (2009:83). To put it more precisely, X can rightly be called racist if it is established that X has breached in respecting those belonging to a racial group that is not his own (2009:83). If Glasgow is right, then the biggest merit of his view is that it certainly seems to be a unifying account of racism. Under his view, it can be said of:

actions, beliefs, people, societies, utterances, practices, institutions, gestures, propositions, attitudes and more, that they are racist (2009:83).

Jorge Garcia: The heart and Racism

Jorge Garcia has in a number of articles argued that racism at its core is a thing of “the heart” (1996: 11). The basic idea is that it is derived from non-cognitive states of affairs (1996:6). It is attitudinal and it also fundamentally involves ill-will (1996:6). Another critical aspect of Garcia’s view is that his account is volitional, which means that for him, racism is about the wishes, will and wants of the racist (1996:6). One benefit of this view is that it assists in enabling us to make sense of those kinds of situations where a person may not necessarily have any personal racist commitments, but nevertheless still be racist (1996:6-7). An illustration of this can be expressed in when a person who is accused of being racist, responds by stating that they don’t harbour any racist ideas or beliefs. Though this may at times be true, it does not preclude the fact that they have an attitude of racism which is not always found in cognitive and rational spaces—this is the bigger point.

Garcia thinks that we should conceive of racism at its fundamental level, as being vicious (1996:6). This implies that racism, in whatever way it is expressed, produces a great deal of harm. He continues to say that racism is not only vicious, it is also a disregard for the welfare of certain people, which is informed by racial lines (1996:6). In other words, racism endures for the sake of denying a particular racial group or groups the right to a certain portion and extent of well-being and prosperity, and the way in which it makes this possible is through disregard (1996:6). The aforementioned thoughts relate to how Garcia conceives of racism, fundamentally. In terms of its most vicious and significant form, he argues that racism is race-based hatred (1996:6). Derivatively speaking, he argues that we can tell that

one is racist if one does not care at all, does not care in the right kind of way, or does not sufficiently care, for a racial other. In his journey of conceptualizing his own account of racism, Garcia addresses a common objection which goes as follows, if there are no such things as races, truly speaking, then how could there be racism (1996:7)? His response to this question is that people make classifications of other people along racial lines, even if these classifications are based on something that is not actually real (1996:7). Furthermore, people also make distinctions in their hearts in terms of classifying different racial groups (1996:7). Another distinctive feature of Garcia's account is that it is consistent with a term he borrows from Adrian Piper, called "higher order discrimination" (1996:7). Higher order discrimination involves disliking a certain group based on an assumption that they possess a specific undesirable feature, while in actual fact, it is really the disapproving of a feature because it is associated with an already disregarded group (1996:7). Garcia claims that his account makes room for institutional racism in the sense that it identifies institutions with racist policies and aims, where these play a crucial function in systemically perpetuating racism so as to ensure that it endures (1996:10-11). The point is not that the institution does not actively have a racist person with a racist heart applying unjust principles, but rather that institutional racism can be found in places where there may not actually be racist people (1996:11). Garcia thinks that it is misleading and incorrect to think that just because a person who is racist at a certain time applies racist ideas to an institution, then the racism in that institution stops when the racist person is no longer there (1996:11). The bigger point with regard to personal and institutional racism, according to Garcia, is this: Institutional racism is the result of what happens when there is a multiplicity of personal instances of racism in society (1996: 12). Therefore, personal instances of racism are of more importance since they are the thing out of which systematic racism emerges. The implied thought

therefore is this, institutional racism is only symptomatic, and personal racism is where the real issue lies. Speaking of the moral status of racism, Garcia argues that it is immoral and the reason for this is that it is incompatible with what we know and understand to be just and good (1996:9). In short, according to his account, racism is necessarily wrong, because it is not aligned with that which is associated with goodness and that which is associated with treatment that is as fair as possible.

Tommie Shelby: Racism as an ideology

Shelby (2014) thinks that fundamentally, racism is an ideology (2014:66). For him, Racism organises itself through misleading and falsehoods. Particularly by way of beliefs and attitudes regarding other racial groups. In the greater scheme of society, these misleading set of ideas reign hegemonic in many spheres of life in ways that are inescapable (2014:66). The idea of racism as an ideology is common, but most of these theories have been preoccupied with descriptive aspects of it. Very seldom if at all do they articulate the normative aspects of this position (2014:66). Blum rejects an ideological account of racism on a few grounds. His first basis is that the idea of superior races is really rooted in a false biological argument of racial hierarchy (2014:66-67). However, he thinks that there are racists who don't necessarily have a hierarchical biological racial conception. He argues that racism does not have to entail a sophisticated account of beliefs. Finally, he thinks that things other than ideologies can be racist; things such as institutions, policies, and the like (2014:67). Shelby responds to Blum by firstly claiming that Blum's idea of an ideology is too narrow (2014:67). Ideologies do not have to be stable over time nor do they have to be systematically ordered. Blum seems to restrict the use of the word "ideology" to how it is used in everyday discourse. According to Shelby, ideologies can be broadly held or not, they

can be loosely held beliefs which are associated with implicit judgements that misrepresent social realities, and as a result social injustices are perpetuated (2014:67). Shelby characterizes ideologies as follows; firstly, the ideological content of a belief system may change with time (2014:67). Secondly, ideologies are usually attributed to social groups rather than individuals though this is not always the case (2014:67). They are usually identified in conjunction with the reigning ideas of a particular time and social consciousness and are often taken for granted (2014:67). These racist ideas and beliefs are usually espoused by the average racist person, often unconsciously but some do hold them actively (2014:67). However, there exists a different group of racists who not only espouse, but also pioneer and provide a basis for racist ideologies in the first place. They also known as the “elites” and they make a case for the promulgation of such beliefs in the hope that their ideas are held, defended and built upon. The same ideas which are generated by elites are essentially the same ideas that represent the belief set of the average racist person, but the main difference is perhaps how they are packaged. In sum, there would not be a constant flow of racist ideas for the average racist person to live by if there was not an elite dedicated to making this possible. (2014:67). One obvious point about this is that the average racist person may import some of these racist ideas ignorantly. This may be true, but ignorantly doing something wrong does not make the perpetrator or the crime any less condemnable, in the same way as we don’t pardon road traffic offenders because they plead ignorance to something important that they were not aware of. What really happens in such situations is this; a racist may not be necessarily held accountable for the content of their racist beliefs, but they must at least be charged for how culpably they came to hold such a grievous belief. (2014:67).

Thirdly, making ideology fundamental to racism does not mean that things that are not considered as ideology can't be racist (2014:67). In other words, the classification of racism in terms of ideology is not incompatible with the claim that there exists other forms of non-ideological racisms (Shelby 2014:67-68). For example, actions, symbols and gestures are not necessarily ideologies but all these can be counted as being racist, and there is no inconsistency in this. What is crucial to remember is that there is a distinction between what can be born from an ideology and what actually defines an ideology (Shelby 2014:68). Indeed, actions, symbols and gestures may be things born from ideology, but these are not an ideology in and of themselves. Though these don't constitute the definition of an ideology, they are often used to express one. In sum, the content of racist ideology therefore, can find expression in other non-ideological ways such as: culture, literature, jokes, symbols etc (Shelby 2014:68). Lastly, ideologies are usually epistemically deficient and bear oppressive social consequences (2014:68).

Lawrence Blum: Racism as antipathy and/or inferiorization

In his essay "Racism: What it is and what it is not", Lawrence Blum (2002) explicates his own account of racism and what it entails and it involves two things: antipathy and inferiorization. The former involves hating a person of a different racial group because of their race (this is often accompanied by or associated with feelings of disaffection and hostility), and the latter conceives those of a different racial group as being necessarily inferior to one's own racial group. The essence of his paper is to help us make distinctions between what may smell or even seem like racism, but really isn't (according to him). Part of what has inspired Blum to write this paper is his observation of how the term "racist" is so often loosely used and incorrectly applied. He thinks that one of the devastating results of

this is that society becomes more segregated and this segregation is based on some misnomers rather than society's actualities. He proceeds by making his first distinction which is that of "racist jokes" and "racist persons" (2002:208). One who expresses a racist joke, for example, is not racist in the same way in which someone else is racist through beliefs they possess about those belonging to a racial group which is not their own. It is possible to express a racist joke, according to Blum, while not holding the racist sentiments of the joke. He thinks that the essence of telling a joke is usually to win favour with people and thereby be accepted by them (2002:208). The joke may be racist, but the teller may not be. However, it still remains a really bad thing to tell a racist joke. Some people who express racist jokes are usually rightly condemned by society (but for the wrong reason) and when this happens they apologize, claiming they did not mean to offend anyone (2002:208). However, this is beside the point, telling a racist joke despite the place from which they are coming is in and of itself a bad thing. The confusion of identifying racist jokes with racist people is usually against a background that does not take into account the problem of location (the problem of location is concerned with identifying where racism is actually embedded).

Blum also makes a distinction between "racial stereotypes" and "racist stereotypes" (2002:215-216). This distinction is meant to illuminate the fact that there could be defects in race relations dealings without there being the occurrence of racism necessarily. A racial stereotype could be something like "blacks are good dancers" (2002:215-216). There is something wrong about making such claims; it homogenizes a group of people (2002:215-216). A racist stereotype on the other hand would be something like "black people are lazy" (2002:215-216). This claim expresses a negative thought and the association of laziness is often accompanied by the idea of "not worthy of certain things" and even inferiority. These

should be harshly condemned and rightly called racist (2002:215-216). A final thought on the idea of racial stereotypes is that even though some appear to be “good”, their history may not be.

The last distinction that Blum makes is that of “racial discomfort” (2002:212). This is where a person of one racialized group feels uncomfortable in the presence of people of another racial group (2002:212). According to Blum, it is tenable to suppose that a person with racial anxiety or discomfort may not always in fact be necessarily racist (2002:212).

Section 3: Critical analysis of the standard conceptions of racism and their problematic

Based on the influential thinkers discussed and their accounts of racism, I wish to bring out the some observations. First, Glasgow (2009) sets up the way he wants to make his point reasonably well, especially with regard to the issue of how racism should be conceived in terms of having a unifying factor. But the unifying factor itself for which he argues, which is that racism is best identified by disrespect, is in my view, too weak. One reason is that the kind of damage and impact that racism has caused humanity does not seem to be appropriately and sufficiently described as “disrespectful”. Apartheid South Africa, Jim Crow and The holocaust (among others) were more than this. They were an assault on humanity, they were means of defeating the end of racial justice, they were a false and evil narrative of white superiority, and ultimately, they were a forceful form of human dehumanization. Another reason is that disrespect seems to require that the disrespector recognizes that the thing that is being disrespected in the first place is an actual human being. But this is not consistent with actual racism, which fundamentally does not recognize a being as what they are, namely human (Gordon 2006:3).Citing Michael Dummett, Glasgow explores one of the solutions which can be invoked to address the location problem, which essentially involves

hybridization (2009:69). According to this solution, the location problem can be addressed by taking two different ways of conceiving racism and putting them together (2009:69). For instance, if we take an attitudinal account in conjunction with a doxastic account—this would amount to a hybrid view of approaching the location problem. J. Angelo Corlett, has a hybrid view of racism which he calls “cognitive-behavioural”. According to this theory, being racist necessarily involves having racist thoughts and beliefs to a racial other and acting on them (2009:69). Another way Glasgow considers in resolving the location problem is to disjoin a number of things understood to be racist. In other words, this basically involves the idea of speaking of “racisms”, which involves different kinds of descriptions that may not always go together, but nevertheless seek to describe the same thing. Glasgow’s own proposal to the location problem is through stipulating location neutrality. In other words, Glasgow suggests that location neutrality adjudicates the location problem (2009:81). This seems to be a unique and interesting move, but upon more reflection I think that it seems incoherent because it would lead one to a question as puzzling as this: If account A about racism stipulates location Z, and account B about racism stipulates location neutrality, how is it that racism can be positively be asserted (By account B) as being a real thing when its location is neutral? It cannot. To define and identify racism surely entails that there is also an inherent process which does the work of locating it somewhere, even if it means doing so vaguely and imprecisely.

Racism is unlike an entirely new unfamiliar concept and phenomenon which would require us to learn its location from a place of total ignorance. Approaching the location of racism as if it were seriously mystical would steer us away from an actual and realistic conception, in which history and the experience of being black (non-white) can be used to contribute meaningfully towards. Lastly, a serious difficulty which would occur if location neutrality

were adopted for racism is that it would unnecessarily complicate how we see racism in terms of those who perpetrate it, and the necessary punitive measures that are applicable. Let me delineate this further. Let us suppose that instead of essentially encapsulating the location of racism in the human person and in institutions, we broaden the scope, such that over and above fundamentally locating racism in people (who come in the form of personal perpetrators) and institutions, we expand it to things that we cannot link to agency and thus responsibility. One possible result of proceeding in this way is that the penalty faced by those found to be racist where the location of the racism is based on an issue which complicates establishing agency and therefore taking responsibility, may serve as grounds for applying different (lighter) punitive measures. In other words, if the location of racism is detailed beyond the institution or person from which it comes, then there may be a temptation to apply less punitive measures on those who may be racist but have not come the realization that they are, or those who hold racism in error. And as I see it, this is not the route that should be undertaken. The consequences which follow from being racist should not depend on how the perpetrator related with their racism, and secondly, the dehumanization suffered by those on its receiving end does not become any less dehumanizing merely because of racism being held in error or ignorance. Another crucial point is that the location problem inherently focuses itself on the perpetrator rather than reasonably taking into account what occurs both from the perpetrator and the subject's viewpoint.

The second point I want to make about the literature on racism, as I observe it, is how the emphasis on dehumanization is conspicuous in its absence. In his Paper titled, "The Heart of Racism", Jorge Garcia (1996) does not at all use the word "dehumanization" or "Dehumanize" with reference to racism nor does he seriously allude to this of idea. In fact,

those words don't appear at all in his paper. This is a particularly salient point, especially when one considers how Garcia's argument served somewhat as a deviation from the norm, in the sense that he wanted his thinking about the matter to be aligned with morality, religiosity and virtue, as opposed to the usual socio-economic framework around the discourse of racism (Mills 2002:31). If Garcia wanted to move away from a socio-economic based discourse of racism and focus on a more individualistic and human level account, then this surely should have warranted that he ought to at least specify what happens to the humanity of those who experience it.

One may ask, "Why is there a need for the words "Dehumanize" to appear or for Garcia to even allude to such an idea?" .One reason is that it is necessary for him to mention it if he will accept the following three basic propositions; first, if he accepts that humans are valuable, second, that racism upsets the human value possessed by those who suffer it, and third, that personal interactions of racism between different racial groups is an instantiation of human value violation. A final reason is because what is involved in articulating the concept of racism is more than merely delineating what happens when racism occurs—it should also involve an explication of how what happens translates in terms of meaning. This is an idea which is rooted in the philosophical school of interpretivism (Chowdhury 2014:433). Let me elaborate on why this aspect plays an important role in contributing towards an appropriate understanding of racism. Consider what it would be like for a person who does not know what is entailed when people get married, in other words, they are not acquainted with the meaning of marriage. Though they witness the happenings of a wedding event, it does not follow that they will know their meaning. And how can claims of knowledge about concepts be made when the meaning of those claims is not sufficiently taken into account? This is a particularly important point especially when one considers the

fact that racism has its root in society, that is, it is socially constructed (as many philosophers agree). If this is true, then it means that part of what we should do as philosophers when we try to conceptualize racism necessitates that we consider questions of meaning in some way. Because without it, our understanding of racism from a socio-philosophical point of view will fall short. And Garcia, as I see his conceptualization of racism, pays no attention to the question of meaning.

Third, when Shelby (2014) gives his account, he defines racism in terms of Ideology. One of the main goals of his account is to sensitize his definition of racism to society. He was interested in conceptualizing racism in a way which would be consistent with the true facts that surround society (2014:57). In other words, the way in which he undertakes to understand and conceptualize what racism is, is significantly predicated upon what happens in society. Though there is certainly some wisdom in this approach, it does cast doubt about the kinds of assumptions that we need to make about society and exactly how much we need to know about it, before we can actually begin to conceptualize racism itself. In other words, Shelby seems to presuppose that we all agree on what society is and the conditions that surround it, but this is far from being true. If there is already such difficulty with finding agreement about what racism is, how much harder will it be to, as a precondition, first agree about the social terms and conditions under which racism exists? Shelby's approach embroils itself in this, and my point is that there is no need to proceed in this way.

Additionally, Sally Haslanger (2016) notes two challenges that ideological accounts of racism face and takes Shelby's account as one such example. The first difficulty which confront ideological accounts of racism is normative (2016:3). If two people are coming from different vantage points about what ought to be the case, and then one of those individuals adopts the vantage point of the person he is attempting to convince, it is not likely that by doing

this he will persuade his opponent to change his view (2016:3). For example, if person X is trying to convince person B of his religious view but does so by adopting person B's religious suppositions and outlook, person X will probably not be successful. And thus Haslanger argues that this way of attempting to address the problem of ideological difficulties in terms of racism, does not produce much results. The other challenge is epistemic. According to Haslanger, correcting epistemic errors which perpetuate racist ideology will not do much good, because the essence of hegemony is to make false claims about racial groups appear real and be rendered legitimate (2016:3).

Another objection which is levelled against Shelby's account relates to the idea that ideologies consist of shared beliefs. Haslanger (2016:5) states that Ideology is not much about the fact that people share common beliefs as it is about their source of beliefs. If ideology is really about a common belief shared by a particular group, how can specific relevant ideological beliefs be identified and picked out (2016:6)? To make the point explicit, Haslanger asks us to consider the case of an oligarchy (2016:6). It is conceivable that an elite can have a particular ideology and structure society in terms of it; while those in society enact the same ideology but for different reasons (2016:6). Another point she makes is that an epistemic based critique of racism as an ideology should not only be about correcting epistemic errors—because it is on account of a particular ideology that certain epistemic errors are formed in the first place.

Fourth and finally, in his paper, "What Racism is and what it is Not", Blum (2002) makes some distinctions so as to help provide clarity about defining racism. One of those distinctions separates racist people from racist jokes. His main basis for this is the long standing problem of location (which I have describe earlier). I think the problem of location is an infinitesimal worry. I shall argue this point by way of analogy. Suppose a terminal

disease like cancer is located in a person's body; it could be small or big. Regardless of where the cancer may seem to be, the usual medical response to this is to take swift action! Or, suppose a small fire breaks out in the midst of a potentially prolific large piece of arable land. Again, the response to such a situation would require a sense of urgency in terms of ensuring that the fire does not eventuate into an inferno. This is the point; I take that good reason would require for us not to be completely ignorant of where the issue is located, but would make most fundamental the fact that there is a problem (cancer, fire, racism) which must urgently be grappled with. Therefore, in my view, it is quite conspicuous that racism, whatever form it may take, seems to be fundamentally located in the human person and institutional structures. Of course it remains to be answered exactly where in the human person racism is located and exactly where in institutions can it be found, but suffice to say, we have a basic general idea of the location of racism. Thus we can thus proceed towards other issues where it is concerned. Given this argument, fundamentally separating racist jokes from racist people doesn't give light on why any one of these racial offences should be more or less punishable than the other; they both execute dehumanization. Blum implies that those that say racist jokes should be condemned differently from those who harbour racist beliefs, but in my view, this does not help. It merely encourages more subtle or inexplicit forms of racism rather than eliminating it from the root. In sum, it is of more importance, conceptually and logically, to make primary, the task of gaining an understanding of what racism is, than where it is located. Besides, if there are some fundamental errors or imprecisions with what we understand racism to be, then the task of finding its location will not bear the desired fruit.

Section 4: The notion of dehumanization

The broad argument that I will be making in this paper in terms of racism as dehumanization can be divided into three related parts: racism in the form undervaluing, racism in the form of devaluing, and racism in the form of not valuing at all. Since the concept of dehumanization plays an indispensable role in the argument I'm putting forward, it is instructive to make some points with regard to it.

Firstly, It strikes me as thoroughly disturbing that the idea of dehumanization has garnered very little attention in general, within the field of philosophy (given the fact that it is quite loaded), and almost no attention at all in relation to the philosophical concept of racism. My first thought is affirmed by David Smith who is an important contributor on the literature of dehumanization (2014:1).

Secondly, taking from David Smith's (2014) paper titled "Dehumanization, Essentialism, and moral psychology", I shall give a brief account of what has been said about dehumanization in the literature and delineate in what sense I'm specifically using it. Citing Mackinnon (1987), Smith describes one meaning of dehumanization as "actions which subject others to indignities" or treating others as though they were a means to some end instead of treating them as if they were an end in and of themselves (2014:2). A second understanding of dehumanization is by Bar-Tal (1989) and he describes it as practices which involve metaphorically treating human beings as non-human or insentient objects (2014:2). Third, Lemoncheck (1985) delineates dehumanization as that which denies the agency, individuality, subjectivity and humans distinctiveness of others (2014:2). Fourthly, Mikola (2011) argues that dehumanization is centered around refusing to recognize other persons as having that which is normally identified with all other humans (2014:2). And lastly,

Smith's own proposal of dehumanization involves conceiving others as subhuman, in other words— necessarily seeing them as less than human(2014:3).

Smith points out three important characteristics which encapsulate most conceptions of dehumanization. The first is that which relates to the appearance of a dehumanized group and their actual nature (2014:4). While the being human of humans cannot be denied, those that seek to dehumanize falsely argue that the visible appearance of the groups they despise is nothing more than a resemblance of humanness (2014:4). The second characteristic is described by alleged metaphysical propositions about the target dehumanized group (2014:4). An example of such metaphysical propositions includes making claims about the soullessness of the individuals who belong to a despised and dehumanized group(2014:4). The third and final key feature which is common among most articulations of dehumanization is that it places those that are dehumanized on a lower scale of moral value and capacity on the moral hierarchy(2014:4).

According to Smith, the two main contributors on the literature of dehumanization are Jacques-Philippe Leyens and his colleagues as well as Nicolas Haslam. I shall briefly outline what these thinkers had to say on the subject. Leyens (2000) cited by Smith, labels what we call "dehumanization" today, "infracommunication" (2014:9). According to Leyens, infracommunication is about the presence or absence of certain kinds of emotions. He argues that to those groups that are regarded as representing and emulating "secondary" emotions which include the following: sorrow, admiration, fondness, disillusion, conceit and conceit, possess true human making traits (2014: 9). According to Leyens, when those that dehumanize go on their mission, they use the aforementioned traits and associate them with and claim that they belong only to true humans. As for those that possess "primary" features which are described by: joy, surprise, fear, anger, and

disgust—are regarded as not really fully human (2014:9). Those who dehumanize other groups of persons tend to do so on the basis of claiming that the despised group possess such states of emotion, which only go as far as affirming their nonhuman animal status (2014:9). It is from such an analysis, that Leyens and his fellow thinkers derive the term “infrahumanization”. It is used to denote the idea that those that dehumanize possess an essence in them which allows that they be recognized as fully human, in contrast to those that don’t have that essence (2014:9).

Another significant contributor to the literature in terms of the subject of dehumanization is Nicholas Haslam (2006). He notes that an understanding of dehumanization logically depends on the concept of what it is to be human (Smith 2014:13). In this regard, he suggests two possible ways of understanding what it means to be human (Smith 2014:13). The first way involves the idea of possessing “uniquely human traits”, while the other fundamentally involves “human nature traits” (Smith 2014:13). Uniquely human traits are tantamount to what Leyens calls secondary emotions, for Haslam these include: being civil, having a high cognition ability and being subjected under a moral law (Smith 2014:13). Human nature traits, on the other hand, are used to describe humanness in terms of making distinctions between humans, animals and objects. This description is akin to what Leyens calls primary emotions. From this understanding, Smith infers that when dehumanization occurs in virtue of denying another human their uniquely human traits, then animalistic dehumanization has occurred (2014:13). Secondly, when a human is denied their human nature traits, it means that mechanistic dehumanization has taken place (2014:13). Both these forms of dehumanization can be implicit or explicit.

My own use of the term dehumanization is not too different from what other accounts have tried to capture but there are few thoughts which are distinct about the way I’m using it.

The first point is that my use of the word necessitates that there must be an evaluation (scaling, judging or measuring the human worth) of one (racial group) by another (of a different racial group). The second point is that this evaluation can take different forms. One example is when a person of one racial group explicitly evaluates those of other racial groups as having lower human worth than those of his own racial group. Another way may include what I call “racial group consciousness” which refers to the general evaluations and judgements made by one racial group towards another. These may not always be apparent to the conscious mind nor be explicit in one’s own thinking. A final example of how evaluation can occur is through the adoption of social norms and culture, which communicate the value of one racial group by society and therefore by those in society—primarily through the way it treats them. Therefore, a major implication of how I am using the term “dehumanization” is that it cannot occur without some kind of evaluation being passed or judgment being made.

One may object and say that not all instances of racism seem to pass an evaluation, for example racist symbols, jokes and gestures don’t seem to pass any kind of evaluation, *prima facie*. My response is that this worry is misguided; other non-human things such as symbols, jokes and gestures do in fact make an evaluation of racial groups. Let us consider the recent debate around changing the name of Rhodes University. Despite the arguments that may come from both sides of the spectrum, the very fact that this debate exists already implies that the name of a university, which is deeply symbolic already means something, and if it means something then it also communicates a value. The same point holds for jokes, gestures and the like. One reason for my use of the term dehumanization is that the usual definitions that have been proposed, in my view, lack an important component. Let us think through them. The Kantian (and quite widespread) use of the term “dehumanization”

focuses on treating others as means rather than an end in themselves. However the conceptual difficulty with such an understanding is that it fails to appreciate that a person can be treated in one way but be seen in another. For example, some systems of patriarchy though they purport to value women (and if we assume that some of such claims may be true), they nevertheless still treat women as means to an end. A husband and wife situation is another example. A sexist patriarchal husband may enamour his wife but still not recognize and relate with her as an end in herself, and that she possesses abilities independent of what he may do (or in fact be more able to do for herself more than what he can do for her). The important point to be realized here is that there may be a mismatch between what one values and how one demonstrates that value.

Another understanding of dehumanization connects humans with non-human animals and objects through certain practices (Smith 2014:2). While there is some wisdom in thinking of dehumanization in this way, it misses the fact that though certain practices may change, things can still remain the same in their essence. The implementation of the practice of affirmative action, for example, does not necessarily mean that racial injustices have ceased or that they will. It therefore means that people can still be dehumanized even in the midst of “progressive”, “democratic”, “non-sexist”, “non-racial” social atmosphere. Even though these are in theory meant to convey practices that affirm all human value, if something more fundamental than practice is not addressed, racially based dehumanization will still persist if not increase.

The denial of agency and distinctively human attributes is another common description of dehumanization (Smith 2014:2). This view does not go far enough in explaining exactly what it is about these denials that amounts to dehumanization. In other words, it fails to pick out the exact feature in virtue of which a denial of “x” results in dehumanization. Let’s think

through the following examples; one could argue that prisoners are usually denied some rights and privileges such as their subjectivity and agency is to some extent denied, while still maintaining that they are regarded as fully human as those that are not in prison .In sum, the thrust of what I'm getting to is that over and above the denial of certain attributes which belong distinctively to humans, there must be something that grounds what we call dehumanization.

This is why I have linked dehumanization with making an evaluation on the human worth of another. In my view, what racism has been taken to be and understood as, is not as satisfying as it could be, particularly, with regard to its dehumanizing factor. It seems strange to me that one could plausibly comprehend what racism is, without at the same time appreciating what dehumanizing effect it has on those who are on its receiving end. Yet, the philosophical literature on the subject as I see it, has proceeded, and continues to unfold in this strange kind of way. To put it in other words, part of what it means to be racist conceptually involves the fact that there is an occurrence of dehumanization, that is, when a person is racist he or she violates the right of the person in question to not only be seen as an equal, but to be seen at all as human. In sum, the explicit explication of the dehumanizing factor of racism is missing in the literature and a way to address this is by (re)conceptualizing racism in way that is consistent with and sensitive to the fact that it dehumanises others.

Section 5: Racism as dehumanization

(i) Racism in the form of undervaluing

I shall unpack the idea of racism in the form of undervaluing by way of an illustration.

Suppose there was a man named Mark (a white man), who was a university lecturer. Mark

was entered into a competition which required him to select the best of his students from the classes which he lectured. Among Mark's most intelligent students is a young black man whose name is Themba. Though Mark is aware that there is a student by the name of Themba, he has not been closely and actively engaged with him or any black student in his lecturing career. And since one of the key activities of this competition is going to require that lecturers work closely with their students on a continuous basis, Mark decides against taking Themba along, despite Themba's deserving academic acumen. From these set of facts, one could infer a few conclusions regarding Mark and his choice not to take Themba. The first possible conclusion one can make regarding Mark is that his apprehension of those from other racial groups is negatively affecting his decisions about who to take to competitions. And that if he took reasonable steps towards integrating with students of other racial groups he would be better suited to fairly select who he should rightly take to future competitions (Blum 2002: 212-213).

A second possible conclusion concerning Mark would be to assert that he has made a poor choice by not choosing Themba, which will reduce his chances of being successful in the competition. Additionally, one could use Mark's choice of not taking someone who is most deserving as a basis for an indictment against his character.

Thirdly, and I think most appropriate, I would contend that what Mark's most grave deed is, is a failure to recognize Themba's humanness above all else. For one reason or another, Themba's race is a stumbling block for Mark and it is mainly why he does not see him as an equal. Mark should have not only seen Themba as equally human as him but also regard him as such. And if Mark regards Themba as fully and equally human, then he will appreciate the fact that Themba is endowed with certain privileges his humanness affords him. An example of one of these privileges is the entitlement to be involved in human

activity. Mark has essentially hindered Themba's potential success by not allowing him to participate and possibly lead to the increase of his welfare as a student and in life. Themba's academic excellence was not taken into account because of the racial group to which he belongs. For Mark, how Themba looked took precedence over what was actually required. Mark is undervaluing Themba because of his race. Therefore, to value a human first for what they can do, without recognizing them as having an already existing human value, will result in their undervaluation.

Another instance of human undervaluation can occur by means of racial paternalism. It would be expedient to first turn to the question of what paternalism itself actually is. Adam Swift introduces the concept of paternalism at its simplest by likening it to a parent child relationship, where the parent is the custodian of the child and takes care of them (Swift 2006:72). Another way of thinking about paternalism is in terms of one interfering with another's right to exercise their autonomy, such that, the paternalist is able to prevent the other from being harmed (Swift 2006:72). To put it differently, the paternalist thinks to himself that the action he is performing is justifiable, despite the fact that by doing this, he deeply upsets the natural human rights of another.

One counter argument against paternalism is that it takes away and disregards the autonomy of the one who it assumes to not be rational enough to foster appropriate action (Swift 2006:72). According to Rawls, "Paternalistic intervention must be justified by the evident failure or absence of reason and will" (A Theory of Justice). Swift identifies three factors of paternalistic behaviour. Firstly, paternalistic behaviour supposes that whatever it has recognized and coerces people towards is necessarily good (2006:72). Secondly, when paternalism is enacted, the freedom of another is inhibited (2006:72). And thirdly, paternalism not only inhibits the freedom of another, it works against it (2006:73).

Let us turn to the notion of benevolence which is usually closely linked with paternalism. The Blackwell dictionary of Western Philosophy outlines benevolence as the feeling of wishing good and well-being for others (2004:81). Love, compassion, charity and altruism are among the alternative expressions connected to benevolence. For B Williams, "The term ['benevolence'] stands for a positive reaction to other people's desire and satisfactions, which the benevolent person has only because they are the desires and satisfactions of others" (2004:81). Drawing from the aforementioned description, one could infer that paternalism is fundamentally paved with the intention of wanting to help with dispensing good to others. One may oppose the proposition that if something is paternalistic, it is a good thing, and when racism occurs, it is bad thing--how then can these two terms be used to express something wholly bad (racism), without contradiction?

At this point, I shall look into this objection, namely, that of paternalistic racism. There are two possible ways to undertake this objection. One way is to take the position that it is an error to describe benevolent paternalistic occurrences that seem to have a racial underpinning as racist. The second approach is to deny that some forms of paternalism are compatible with benevolence. For the purposes of this thesis, I shall only engage and briefly comment on the second claim. In this regard, my position is that some of what we take to be paternalism is incompatible with the true idea of benevolence, especially racism which disguises itself as a form of paternalistic benevolence. Let me briefly motivate my position. Firstly, in my view, paternalism has three cardinal inherent commitments. The first one is that it purports to have the answer to the question, "what is the most rational thing to do?" (Swift 2006:80). Its subsequent fundamental point is that it purports to have the answer to its first commitment and that those who are asking the question "what is the most rational thing to do?", do not have the rational prowess to truly bring themselves to the answer. The

third and final commitment from paternalism is that it assumes a higher way of reasoning than that of the non-paternalistic subject.

As far as these commitments are concerned, the first and the second are simply not statements of truth. The first commitment is problematic because it crudely seems to assume that there is a hierarchy under which reasons are subjected. In other words, that there are some reasons that supremely reign and are of a higher order than others. This may be true, but the paternalist is wanting to take this claim even further by making it an unqualified one—that is what I don't agree with. Claims about which reason is more preferable over another can only come into effect once there is an actual case to which reasons can be proposed and evaluated. And with a topic as ubiquitous and vast as that of racism, there couldn't be an all-encompassing "most rational thing to do", in all instances and at all times. Racism is too complex a subject to have one eternal response to the many questions that are related to it. However, this does not mean that we shouldn't do our best to give serious thought in systemically thinking about racism as a social justice issue and begin generating reasonable ways of understanding and combating it. That said, it is equally salient to realize and acknowledge the magnitude of the problem relative to our ability to contribute towards it. For example, downplaying the problem of racism and arguing that because things such as democratic progressive states now exist, racism has largely been addressed, will certainly take us further from having a tenable view of it, and therefore what to do about it. It essentially seems that the paternalist assumes that what is "most rational" has more to do with where it comes from rather than the substance of what is being said independent of the source or subject.

The second latent commitment, in my view, describes paternalism as being indispensable in arriving and acting in "the most rational way" where a subject is concerned. The main idea is

to seek to demonstrate that without its guardianship, a subject cannot independently enact “the most rational way”. The paternalist generally does not accept this kind of critique. He may argue that all subjects are more than capable of making the best decisions for themselves by themselves— the difficulty is that it does not tend to happen by itself. Hence the necessity of the idea of pushing someone towards their own freedom. The paternalist also tends to contend that paternalism exists because subjects already know what “is the most rational thing to do and way to act”, its part therefore, only pertains to application. But my argument is that in the midst of such a line of reasoning is another implicit supposition by the paternalist, namely that even if the agent (subject) knows what is in their best rational interest, it cannot be attained without coercion. I don’t think that this is plausible. Even with a fair amount of charity, the most rational thing to do can be clearly separated from how one gets there, let alone through force. Additionally, the desire to do what is most rational is perfectly consistent with respecting the independence with which an agent arrives there. Thus even if there was a case to make for unifying paternalism with benevolence, it still does encroach upon the respect and self-sufficiency of the subject in a way that is so grave that it is tantamount to dehumanization.

Second, it seems to me that one of the main ideas of benevolence is to magnify how aligned it is with intentions, specifically good-intentions. While the crux of the concept of paternalism is to get persons with a capacity to be rational to consider and enact that which emulates “the most rational thing to do”. Therefore, these two concepts have different essences regarding what they are seeking to communicate, instantiate, and arrive at. These two concepts both have different and unrelated distinguishable objectives.

Thirdly, if one were to attempt to unite the objectives of benevolence and paternalism respectively, one would arrive at the following: paternalistic benevolence seeks to educate

us as well as administer that which it takes to be aligned with the most rational thing to do. And lastly, these two aims leave little if any room at all for autonomous action. The forth thought is implausible and untrue. Any person with the capacity to exercise reason in the way that it ought to be exercised and utilized does not always have to have an outside factor forcing him towards that direction. In other words, the practice of good reason is logically and actually possible to obtain without force (even if there may be some possible factors that may cause us to choose less rational options), and more importantly, belonging to this or that racial group does not make a person more capable of being reasonable than another.

The final factor of paternalism is that it inferiorizes other ways of reasoning at the expense of making itself supreme to them. In my view, the entire concept of paternalism depends on the supposition of a hierarchy of reasons and thought. The very idea that it imposes itself on those who it accuses of not acting in the most reasonable way is telling of its nature. In the same way as we can make deductions about governments, systems and people who shut down other views and opinions for the sake of exalting what they deem right, so too can we conceive paternalism, whether benevolent or malevolent.

Let us consider an example that combines paternalism, racism and benevolence. This example is popular amongst black radical thinkers and is described as the “white man’s burden”, a view which received inspiration from Kipling’s 1899 Poem. The synopsis of this view is hinged on the idea that those belonging to the white racial group consider themselves intrinsic to the resolution of racism. In other words, they see themselves as indispensable assets in solving the problem of racism. This is so deeply ingrained in them that they believe, that without them, all propositions to the issue of racism are incomplete, ineffectual and fruitless. One fault in this view is the supposition that it makes, which is that

those of the white racial group see themselves essentially different in nature from those of other racial groups, thereby thinking of themselves as superior. Ultimately, it requires that they perceive themselves, and are perceived as messianic figures, while black people are seen as being incapable of combatting whatever racial injustices they may face, independent of a white helping hand. The implausible shift in this line of argument is that it designates differences in nature according to one's appearance. This is not only misguided, but it is also a very dangerous line of thought given the racial violence and historical carnage such an idea has produced.

In conclusion, the idea that racism is justifiable if the action which is being implemented is for the sake of the eventual good of the oppressed racial group, is incompatible wishing well on others. In other words, racism does not cease to be a bad thing because it comes from a place of "benevolence" rather than malevolence. What makes it objectionable and wrong is not what it means to do, but rather what it is in itself, namely its conception. If paternalistic forms of racism are fundamentally racists (and they are), what reason is there to attribute them as "benevolent"? Therefore to make the assumption that a caregiver would make with regard to other races, that is to take on a paternalist role, is just to undervalue other races. This is racist because it does not uphold (consciously or unconsciously) the value of another human being, and since this failure to appreciate is paved along racial lines, it is a form of racism.

(ii) Racism as devaluing

One devalues when one takes a person who was formerly valuable on account that they are human, and judges them as less valuable, on account of their racial group; this is usually associated with an accompanying rationalization. In other words, it is racist to devalue

another human being on account of their racial group, where they were once judged as valuable for their humanity. Race-based slavery is a case in point. George Fredrickson's book, "Racism: A Short history" (2002), explicates the fact that in the early centuries, slavery was not always underpinned by racism (2002:28). It was more about status, wealth and other factors that would normally be associated with social power and influence (2002:28-29). The number of slaves one had served as one of the tools to measure their worth. This means that slaves may not have been seen to be valuable in and of themselves, but they were nevertheless a representation of some kind of value (2002:31). It was only after a certain period of time (and there are many debates about when this time was), that slavery became racialized and eventually transfigured into one of the many forms of racism. Thus before this time, one could arguably hold that though slaves were not necessarily valuable, questions of value were also not completely detached from them. A question which may help illuminate racism through devaluation is this: what are slaves recognized as first and foremost? The motivation behind this question is to show that black and non-white people went through a process of being dehumanized and devalued when their "human" status was overshadowed or became less significant than their "slave" status. This translated them (us) from human value status to having the kind of status which is associated with property. This seems to imply that it would be better to be a person of colour and a slave, than being a person of colour and not a slave (which is completely counter-intuitive and objectionable). In other words, the one way in which a person of colour could attempt to make themselves appear valuable, was on account of being a slave. Slaves served as a means to express their masters worth and power. Even conceptually, the notion of slavery or being a slave logically depends on or co-exists with that of master (2002:63). Having said that, I'd like to return to a question which I suggested would help in

illuminating our discussion about devaluation and slaves. When it comes to race based slavery, the slave is not fundamentally identified and recognized in terms of his humanity and that is where the key issue lies.

In sum, the racialization of slavery shows us the following; when slavery didn't have a racial signature, the dehumanization of certain groups of races by means of slavery could not occur on a racial basis. But once slavery was racially designated, then the human value of those who suffered from it was diminished. This example can be generalized to include other examples which can be expressed as follows: if A (who belongs to one racial group) recognizes and values B (who belongs to a different racial group) at time (t1) first and foremost on an account of his human worth, and then A sometime later (t2), recognizes B first and foremost as being valuable on account of something else other than his human worth, because of B's racial group, then A is racist.

Another example of racism in the form of human devaluation relates to the role played by beliefs (doxastic racism). In this case, the role of beliefs is indispensable in creating an incorrect and epistemically untenable narrative of one racial group by another. This results in the devaluation of the person belonging to the racial group concerned or his/her entire people. Such devaluation may not be articulated, but it is clearly demonstrated in the structures of institutions, socio-economic settings and in daily human interactions (Shelby 2014:59). According to Shelby, racist beliefs are meant to systemically instantiate and continue a social racist ideology (2014:59). The important point regarding belief based accounts of racism that I want to show is this: those that have racist beliefs and ideologies can also be condemned with being guilty of devaluing that racial group, necessarily.

The most common expressions of racism through ideology were perpetuated through false biological explanations (also known as biological racism) and ideas about black inferiority

(Shelby 2014:59). With the passing of time, these fell out of favour and so ideological racism had to regenerate itself, predominantly in ways that are inexplicit and unsuspecting so that it could conceal itself more(Shelby 2014:66-67).With more resistance to explicit racism from society, pressure mounted for more nuanced ways of dispensing racial injustices. That said, 'behavioural pathology' arguments and false claims about the "cultural backwardness" of non-whites and more specifically, those identified as black people began to be levelled and in some cases became hegemonic (Shelby 2014:67).The thrust of the social ideology of racism is to continue to solidify racial injustices and. My account of racism bears witness to what racist ideology does, namely, to demonstrate the idea that non-whites and Black people are devalued precisely in virtue of their racial group. It is implausible, as I see things, how racism can be clearly and coherently articulated as being related to false beliefs regarding the inferiority of those of another racial group, for example, without at the same time demonstrating a message of human devaluation(Shelby 2014:67). In other words, entailed in the content of inaccurate and false race-based beliefs of one racial group by another, is the idea of human devaluation.

One of the most conveyed ideas about racism (in some ways implicit and others explicit) is that the group or person belonging to a particular racial group, is devalued. Value may seem to be granted on account of what their abilities or capabilities are (or some other reason), but the same are devalued on account of their racial group to a subhuman level (Shelby 2014:66).In short, though racist beliefs are objectionable and problematic, they also sabotage the proper human value due to all. Instead of placing all humans on an equal scale of value they disproportionately exalt one racial group for the sake of devaluing another. In other words, though a person may be valued on account of some other basis apart from the

fact that they are humanly valuable and in this regard possess fundamental human worth, his/her racial group fundamentally alters this.

(iii) Racism in the form of not valuing at all

The final form which my conception of racism takes is through the failure appreciate that the human is valuable, on any account. While racism through undervaluing and devaluing are respectively engaged in taking the human and placing him on some scale of value, this kind does not even take the human on any scale of value at all. The aforementioned forms of racism are no less racist than this form, they do at least seem to suppose that the racial other fits into some scale of value (they get the actual scaling wrong, but they nevertheless think that there is a measurable value to the racial other). This kind of racism (racism through not valuing at all) simply does not do that, nor does it attempt to. This implies that a person who manifests racism in this kind of way, though he interacts and engages with those of other racial groups, he does so in an extremely strange way (Gordon 2007:10). On some level, he relates with them as far as witnessing them in his experience is concerned. But on the other hand, he fails in appreciating their human worth, he only sees them as that which is less than human and invaluable on all accounts (2007:10). Citing Franz Fanon, Gordon (2007) calls this phenomenon putting a racial other in a zone of "non-being" (2007:10-11). We know that according to Kant, humans should be treated as ends in themselves. But there are those who treat humans as means to an end (and there are some ethical issues and objections to this). Consequently, when one relates with a person of another racial group because of the benefits that may be attained, then one instrumentalizes others. This is what happens when a person is racist, he fails to see those of another racial group in terms of more than just a means-end relationship. Fanon (as cited by Gordon)

introduces another dimension with regard to how racist people compartmentalize those who they think are of an inferior racial group (2007:10). This is when those that are considered to be the damned of the earth neither appear or disappear (2007:10). Usually, racism is imagined in terms of different racial groups and their juxtaposition to one another. But the zone of non-being is illustrated in how whiteness conceives of itself relative to other racial groups, namely, it conceives itself in terms of itself (2007:11). This is a point where to be an "Other" is not the lowest possible point of reference. To put it simply, there is a degree and level of racism which is so evil and self-obsessed, that it moves from being a "black and white" type of dichotomy and, to being a "white and nothing else" dichotomy. With this expression of racism, the idea is that whiteness and only whiteness is the correct and only point of legitimate, recognizable and appropriate form by which to conceptualize humanity (2007:10-11). Non-whiteness therefore, is not recognized and not recognizable, and if whiteness is a prerequisite of any form of recognition, this kind of racism is not only self-obsessed, it is also totally dehumanizing.

Another way to articulate racism through not at all valuing is in terms of the concept of disregard. Gorge Garcia's "Heart of racism" is an appropriate example to consider since he gives some insights about disregard (1996). For him, disregard is an attitude of consciously and unreflectively relating with a racial other. Key to this idea is a "not taking into account". To put it differently, if a person fails to take into account other race groups in situations that they should be. Secondly, if one does not have the consciousness to realize the necessity of considering those from other racial in situations where race may not seem to be a factor, and lastly, if the respect of other racial groups is not a perpetual state of affairs in the life, thought, action and ideology of one towards those of other racial groups. All these three factors all constitute racism in terms of not at all valuing the racial other.

Section 6: Objections and responses

It is worth noting that what I essentially argue for in this paper, namely, that one veritable way to conceive racism is expressing it through undervaluing, devaluing and not at all valuing a person of a specific racial group, may have striking resemblance with what Glasgow identifies as racial disrespect. Glasgow's meaning of disrespect is used in the Kantian sense (who uses the term distinctively). When explicating the term, he cites Stephen Darwall (1977) who himself undertakes and argues for a Kantian (1959 L.W Beck's translation) notion of respect (1959:36). It is thus instructive for me to delineate in what ways my argument of dehumanization distinguishes itself from what some may call a Kantian notion of disrespect.

First, I want to make clear the fact that one of the most fundamental truths of the view of racism for which I argue, is that it heavily relies on the principle of humanism. In other words, I envision what I'm arguing not only as a way to make sense of what appropriately thinking about a conception of racism is, (secondly) I'm also deeply sensitized and advocate the centrality and value of all humankind to come to the fore. And while Kantian disrespect maybe imported into articulating what I'm envisioning to argue for as the former objective is concerned, it fails to take the latter objective into account. And the reason it fails to do so is that Kant was himself a racist. Arnold Farr (2002:18-19) cites Kant's deeply racist and offensive attitude towards African people in the following quote,

"The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling. Mr. Hume challenges anyone to cite a single example in which a Negro has shown talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who are transported elsewhere from their countries, although many of them have been set free, still not a single one was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praiseworthy quality, even

though among the whites some continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through superior gifts earn respect in the world. So fundamental is the difference between these two races of man, and it appears to be as great in regard to mental capacities as in color” (Kant: Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime).

This quote evidences the fact that the value and centrality of all humankind was not present in Kant’s thinking. Kantian disrespect therefore, (if we consider his racist views) is paved with the assumption that what it means to be human according to him, is not the same as what it means to be human for the genuine humanist.

The other reason why my account differs from Kantian disrespect is that a number of accounts of racism (certainly those discussed in this paper), attempt to construct a one-sided and therefore incomplete conceptualization on how to think about racism. Let me elaborate on this. The view of racism as racial disrespect articulates itself by arguing in terms of what the agents of racism are essentially doing when they are engaged in their racist ways. However, what I’m endeavouring to do is to not only provide an account of racism simply in terms of the agents of racism and how what they do could be articulated, I’m also taking into account what subjects of racism relate with when they are confronted by it. In other words, my view is not only a unilateral agent-based account of racism like the disrespect thesis is, my view is an agent-subject-based account of racism. Put plainly, I’m wanting to conceptualize racism not only in terms of where we see racism coming from, but also where it is going to and what all this means.

Andrew Pierce (2014) is another thinker who demonstrates the difference in my thinking and Glasgow’s. One key feature of Kant’s (and therefore Glasgow’s) use of respect is that it is something attributable only to humans (2014:2). In other words, it is a uniquely human feature. What this implies is that it would make little sense to refer to an earthquake or

hurricane as being disrespectful (2014:2). My conceptualization however, is not necessarily committed to the claim that dehumanization is a uniquely human feature. In other words, dehumanization is not the kind of thing to be necessarily brought about by humans only. There are certain states of affairs for example, such as the state of being in unbearable poverty, and such states of affairs are not always clearly traceable to another human who has caused this. In fact, a resource related issue such as poverty is often fundamentally based on a lack of sufficient resources. Therefore a situation of being in a serious state of poverty is itself dehumanizing. Another example where dehumanization is not necessarily linked to other humans being (necessarily) causally responsible for it, is when an adult person who was once able to fully function normally incurs (through no fault of another human) a disability so grievous, that it results in a total lack of agency and proper functioning. This case demonstrates that my use of the word dehumanization is not limited to the idea that it can only be materialized by one to another; there are also states of affairs which are themselves dehumanizing.

A second possible objection to my account of racism relates to the role of valuation. It is common knowledge that not all instances of racism necessitate that the racist perpetrator be involved in actually putting a person in question on a scale of value, consciously. In other words, people can be racist without knowing that they are. And if they unconsciously evaluate, it has not occurred to them (consciously) that they dehumanize others. Therefore if it is possible for one to be racist without knowing that one is being racist, does the conscious undervaluation, devaluation and not valuing at all, provide an adequate perspective in delineating racism?

This is a particularly strong objection and can be responded to in the following way. First, the fact that certain forms of racism don't mean to bring harm does not imply that they are

not worthy of strong condemnation and even punishment. For example, when missionaries came to Evangelise Africa unto what they believed to be good news, that didn't preclude the fact that in their evangelical missions, they did not value those of other racial groups in virtue of their humanity as they ought to. Which is why there was the eventual perception that the hands that will save Africa (Economically, religiously, technologically etc) from its alleged state of crisis, will come from somewhere else other than from its own people. This was shaded and continues to be presented in more subtle ways but the narrative still remains. The narrative is that there is a fundamental aspect which is missing in Africa such that its help can only come from elsewhere. The implied thought in such a thinking process is simply that people from Africa themselves require those from out of it to bring them rescue.

Second, not all undervaluing, devaluing and not valuing occurs at a conscious level. When I argue that racism is dehumanization expressed in these three ways, I don't mean that the racist himself engages in a serious evaluation process every time he executes his racism. All I mean is that this does happen in one way or the other: consciously or unconsciously, maliciously or well-meaning, from one's own thinking or from importing from the socio-economic norms. In sum, Racism as dehumanization can occur in complex and sometimes seemingly hard to explain ways.

Conclusion

It has been my aim in this paper to conceptualize racism in a way that I believe will make it more abhorrent and show that it is the most egregious racial offense, since it takes away from what those who suffer essentially are, human. Accounts of racism have been preoccupied with analysing it in terms of the racist agent. I have shown that a one-sided

view of racism is at best incomplete and at worst a perpetuation of what happens to the voices, visibility and value of those who are the object of its aim. This is why my account is not only an agent-based account nor is it subject based, it brings the two together to find an appropriate median. Another key reflection considered in this paper is that it answers the crucial question which is: "what makes racism such a bad thing?" On most accounts, this question is answered by something quite apart from how racism is itself conceived. But according to my account, what is found to make racism such an abhorrent thing is found in how it is itself understood. Another point which I see my work contributing to, is bringing to the fore the simple fact that human beings are valuable. If this does not take pre-eminence in our thinking about racism, then there is a possibility that there will not be an appropriate comprehension of what it is that really takes place when a valuable human being(which includes all humans), is subjected to racism. Sometimes philosophers who write on this subject seem to miss this and as a result be overly concerned about concept definition and providing precision, without being set on the sure foundation of why we do what we do when asking ourselves questions about racism. We ought to think about racism not because we are keen on coming up with lofty and complex definitions which are clothed in esoteric language. We ought to think about it not because we seek to make the word less or more used or usable. We ought to think about racism first and foremost because we realize that people are valuable and that racism disturbs this. It disturbs the value which we ought to project on our fellow humans. If our understanding and appreciation of thinking about the concept of racism is absent of this, I believe that something will be gravely amiss about our analyses, our views, definitions and as a result, even our action plans on combating racism will lack the fortitude and effectiveness we hope for them to have.

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