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978-1-107-02693-3 - Migration and National Identity in South Africa, 1860–2010

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Migration and National Identity in South Africa, 1860–2010

An extraordinary outbreak of xenophobic violence in May 2008 shocked South Africa, but hostility toward newcomers has a long history. Democratization has channeled such discontent into a nonracial nationalism that specifically targets foreign Africans as a threat to prosperity. Finding suitable governmental and societal responses requires a better understanding of the complex legacies of segregation that underpin current immigration policies and practices. Unfortunately, conventional wisdoms of path dependency promote excessive fatalism and ignore how much South Africa is a typical settler state. A century ago, its policy makers shared innovative ideas with Australia and Canada, and these peers, which now openly wrestle with their own racist past, merit renewed attention. As unpalatable as the comparison might be to contemporary advocates of multiculturalism, rethinking restrictions in South Africa can also offer lessons for reconciling competing claims of indigeneity through multiple levels of representation and rights.

Audie Klotz is Professor of Political Science at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University. She received her PhD from Cornell University and has taught at Haverford College, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Stellenbosch University. Her first book, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid* (1995), won the Furniss Prize in security studies. Her coauthored book, *Research Strategies for Constructivist International Relations* (2007), has been translated into Korean. She is the coeditor of *How Sanctions Work: Lessons from South Africa* (1999) and *Qualitative Methods in International Relations* (2008). Funded by the National Science Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation through the Social Science Research Council, and the Fulbright program, her work has also appeared in top-ranked journals such as *International Organization*, *Review of International Studies*, and *European Journal of International Relations*. She coedits the book series *Palgrave Studies in International Relations*.

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Preface

South Africans have the curious habit – at least in the eyes of this outsider – of talking about “going to Africa,” as if they themselves are not part of the continent. Such comments, in private conversation as well as the media, first caught my attention during a five-month stay in 1998. Whites were not the only ones saying such things, and thus I wondered how it was that South Africans of all hues came to see themselves as somehow separate from Africa. Sadly, such views manifested themselves in sporadic reports of xenophobic violence, a decade before widespread attacks riveted national and international attention in 2008. Although I also suspected this shared perspective would influence the country’s new role in regional and international affairs, I did not anticipate how deeply historical the roots of contemporary attitudes and practices would turn out to be, nor how fascinated I would become with the intricacies of pre-Union politics.

Like many both inside and outside South Africa, my understanding of its politics originally revolved around apartheid, so I expected dramatic changes in the aftermath of the first universal-suffrage elections in 1994. Call it Mandela-mania, or simply well-intentioned optimism, most people wanted the injustices of the past to be overturned quickly in a new era of equality. Such sentiments seemed incompatible with attacks against

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foreign-born Africans that increasingly appeared in the news. Why were Mozambicans and Zimbabweans, including those who had been living in the country for many years, assaulted on the commuter trains and in their township neighborhoods? Surely, their economic position had not shifted overnight. Had views truly changed, or was it merely that the media now reported them as news? And what was the government doing to dampen or inflame the situation?

In trying to understand and perhaps ameliorate the violence associated with xenophobia, I think it is crucial to remember South African history, and not just the apartheid era. Linking contemporary politics (regardless of individuals in power) with previous white-minority rule will undoubtedly be unpalatable to some. Going back to its colonial era highlights shifts in South Africa's ontological position within Africa and toward Africans from the region. Symbolism adds significance to this longer historical view, as we reflect back one hundred years after formation of the Union, establishment of the African National Congress, and Mahatma Gandhi's return to India.

Even more than is typically true for someone writing about South Africa, always a provocative subject, I must reiterate that many people deserve thanks for helping me to develop and hone my arguments, but no one else bears responsibility for my controversial claims. As with any large project, I owe big intellectual debts, far beyond those recognized in the references. Because I have presented bits and pieces of this research over more than a decade in many venues, I cannot possibly list all who helped. Instead, I offer gratitude to everyone who took time to attend my presentations, read drafts, and debate my inferences. A few people and institutions deserve further recognition.

At the earliest stage of my research, the University of Illinois at Chicago funded two short trips in 1996 and 1997. It also facilitated my acceptance of a Fulbright fellowship in 1998 that sent me to Stellenbosch University for a stint teaching the Political Economy of North America. During those visits, the Centre for Southern African Studies at the University of the Western Cape and the Political Science Department at Stellenbosch

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hosted me, for which I am grateful. Peter Vale at UWC and Philip Nel at Stellenbosch fostered thriving intellectual environments in their respective institutions within which I learned immeasurably about South African society, past and present. With grace and good humor, Tim Shaw and Jane Parpart shared the inevitable challenges and joys of being temporary residents in another country. Marion and David Sinclair provided the emotional support of a home away from home, as well as the indispensable loan of a bicycle. Janis van der Westhuizen remains a wonderful sounding board, with a sense of humor that puts politics in perspective.

In later phases, the Political Science Department and Maxwell School at Syracuse University funded research assistantships and provided time away from teaching. I have had the privilege of working with an extraordinary group of graduate students (many now launched in their own careers). The members of our “identity” reading group have contributed in countless ways to my thinking about theory and methodology. I have benefited enormously from writing together with Asli Ilgit, Deepa Prakash, and Braden Smith. For superb research assistance, I am grateful to Li Hong, Vlad Kravtsov, Jooyoun Lee, Wagaki Mwangi, Heather Pincock, Emily Rodio, Braden Smith, Matt Smith, and Jeff Wiczorek. Asli, Deepa, and Jooyoun also offered insightful reactions to portions of the manuscript. With additional ammunition from Richard Price and Paloma Raggio, Heather and Jeff did their best to educate me about Canada, while tolerating my unconventional comparisons.

Mainstays outside the walls of common institutions, Cecelia Lynch and Patti Goff have deepened my understanding of identity politics, regardless of whether we agree. Herman Schwartz and Bob Wolfe always spur me to think more precisely and never cease to amaze me with the breadth or depth of their knowledge. Exhibiting great patience, Dar Vigneswaran kept me engaged in these issues, even when other commitments pulled me away from schemes for collaboration. Paul Nyoni continues to be an invaluable nonacademic interlocutor. Under a tight timeframe, Chris Anderson provided this interloper with detailed feedback on Canada that saved me from many errors. Once again, and

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probably not for the last time, Dave Black's encouragement pulled me across the finish line.

Generous with their time and insights, Jim Hollifield and Mervyn Frost provided extensive comments on the first, very rough draft of the manuscript, leading me to invest more time than I ever anticipated in major revisions. Thanks to Lew Bateman, comments from two terrific reviewers then helped to hone my arguments. In addition, I benefited from manuscript reviews of my related article, "South Africa as an Immigration State," which appeared in *Politikon: Journal of the South African Association of Political Studies* 39 (2), 2012, 189–208. Condensed elements of the article reappear here in Chapter 4, with permission from the publishers, Taylor & Francis Ltd.

That I still owe my husband a trip to the Okavango Delta in Botswana serves as just one reminder that this project started a long time ago and allowed too few vacations. Paul's steadfast support for my work – and enthusiasm for meeting my friends from far and wide – has been unstinting. Although not an academic, he enjoys reading history and employed his jargon-detector on this manuscript, to the benefit of its readers. Most of all, I am grateful for his encouragement of the nonprofessional activities that keep our family healthier and happier. I hope that when our daughter Emma is old enough to read books with bigger words and fewer pictures, she will forgive my absences at the office, recognizing them as an investment in fostering a tolerant world in which she can thrive.

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Abbreviations

ACA	Aliens Control Act
ANC	African National Congress
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
CoRMSA	Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DNA	Department of Native Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NP	National Party
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
OAU	Organization of African Unity
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAHRC	South African Human Rights Commission
SAMP	Southern African Migration Program
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei (nominally independent Bantustans)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UP	United Party