Title: Race and a decolonial turn in development studies

Author name and affiliation: Kamna Patel, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, University College London

34 Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9EZ, UK

ORCID: 0000-0001-9406-7449

@kamnatweets

Email: Kamna.patel@ucl.ac.uk

Biographical note:

Kamna Patel is an Associate Professor of development studies at University College London, UK. Her research activities fall within two themes: (i) housing, land tenure and citizenship in the urban Global South, and (ii) reflexive and postcolonial scholarship on practices of 'development'. Under this second theme, she increasingly engages with race to understand the politics of representation in development studies education and practice.

Abstract

This paper reviews and revives a longstanding conversation about race and development studies, which was prominently explored in a collection of papers on race and racism in the journal *Progress in Development Studies* back in 2006. This revival is timely in the context of a global call to decolonise higher education. Given the central logic of race and racism to European colonialism, and the decolonial argument that colonialism continues in the production and value of knowledge, I examine the presence and absence of race and racism in discussions of decolonising higher education and in development studies. Through a systematic review and content analysis of papers published in six major development studies journals over the past 13 years, I identify where and how race is present in current development scholarship and explore the implications of this for a decolonial turn in development studies.

Keywords

Race, decolonisation, development studies, higher education, whiteness

Introduction

A decolonial turn in development studies is not a statement of fact or even intent, though it is a distinct possibility. There is a wave of calls to decolonise education coming across universities in the global north and settler societies in the global south (Arday and Mirza, 2018; Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu, 2018). The call is faint within development studies departments (though Langdon, 2013; Spiegal, Gray, Bompani, Bardosh and Smith, 2017; Mpofu and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019, are exceptions). Related disciplines, particularly geography, are making greater inroads into tackling some of the thorniest questions concerning the origins of the discipline and its legatorial relationship to colonialism and latter day neo-colonialism (Radcliff, 2017; Noxolo, 2017). This is as a precursor to thinking through the implications for current research and teaching of the discipline. In development studies, such questions are not in the mainstream and any related debates are in their infancy. This article posits they may well come into the mainstream on the back of decolonising efforts in other closely related disciplines, producing a decolonial turn in development studies. If this occurs, this article explores the likely parameters and depth of decolonisation debates in mainstream development studies based on the presence or absence of critical engagement with race and racism in the discipline, this is either as a subject in its own right or in the politics of knowledge production and validation. By foregrounding race and racism, this paper makes explicit the neglect of race in intellectual and practical engagements with development and its study, whilst highlighting the intertwined and inseparable relationship between race and racism and colonialism, its continuity and development studies as a discipline.

Locating race in decolonisation and development debates

This section presents a brief overview of the state of decolonisation and development debates, locating race within them. It is important to clarify here that race is a socially constructed concept that is given meaning only as a category of difference, is it not essentialist or biological. Though, as Shilliam (2014, p.32) and Wilson (2012, p.329) argue, the historic and contemporary effects of race are experienced in profound material ways that are of direct relevance to the core concerns of both decolonisation and development agenda.

The breadth of decolonisation literature and movements is vast and longstanding, and emerges through transdisciplinary engagements with fields including Critical Race Studies, Negritude literature, queer feminism, subaltern studies, postcolonial studies, Indigenous and Pan-African scholarship (Murrey, 2018, p.60; Radcliff, 2017, p. 1). I engage with it at two specific moments: the first is recent high profile student-led calls to decolonise higher education, because these calls are acting as an impetus for action in universities across the globe today and thus illuminate the practical edges of the decolonisation agenda. The second moment is where theorisations of decoloniality (specifically, Mignolo, 2002; 2009) inform and encounter development scholarship, locating the decolonisation agenda within the specific contours of the discipline and its canon. In dialogue, the decolonisation of an institution and discipline gives a contemporary assessment of race and a decolonial agenda for development studies.

Race and decolonising higher education

Calls to decolonise universities have galvanised in recent years spurred by the Fallism movements of South Africa that have subsequently spread to other parts of the world. Beginning with 'Rhodes Must Fall' in 2015, this student-led anti-racist protest mobilised the politics of naming and representation to demand the removal of a statue of British imperialist Cecil Rhodes from the University of Cape Town's campus, where it had occupied a central highly visible position. The

movement soon broadened to encompass a wider agenda, and under an umbrella of 'decolonisation', engaged with the structure and financing of South African universities e.g. Fees Must Fall and End Outsourcing campaigns (Marino, 2019). This activist movement thus made explicit connections between colonialism, capitalism and racism in the structures and very functioning of higher education, building in many ways on the rich theoretical and empirical work of postcolonial scholars of education (e.g. Sidhu, 2005). The movement, to Mpofu and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019) is a demand for cognitive justice related to incomplete decolonisation (divestment of the colonial state) and the negotiated settlement for political power from white settler rule to black African rule, a settlement that left universities largely intact. They write, from Rhodes Must Fall,

> Students [quickly] demanded change to the curriculum; decommissioning of offensive colonial/apartheid symbols; the right to free, quality and relevant education; cultural freedom; and an overall change in the very idea of the university from its Western pedigree ('university in Africa') into an 'African university'. (2019, p.3)

The call to decolonise higher education was thus a call to reimagine an African university starting with front line questions of who studies in the university and how have they come to access it? What are they taught? From whose worldview? Who teaches it? Based on what research? Excavated in what fashion? These questions speak explicitly to the colonial creation of higher education institutions and their white supremacist logic; for race is central to the answer to these questions. In terms of concrete actions, the race-work embedded in decolonisation movements across South Africa includes material change through greater representation of staff and students racialised as black, brown and coloured, restructuring the university to eliminate financial barriers to access, and insourcing otherwise low-paying precarious jobs disproportionately held by black men and women. Alongside more symbolic and discursive race-work, such as felling statues of white supremacists and curriculum redesign to incorporate and centre African theorists and theory in an African context (Mpofu and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019).

Through transnational student mobilisations, many taking inspiration from South African students, the contours of the call to decolonise higher education flexed and adjusted to American and Australasian/Pacific majority-white settler societies and the loci of colonialism in Western Europe, often finding traction with complementary movements. For example, the high profile 'I, too, am Harvard' campaign, reflective of African-American student activism and anti-racist politics, foregrounded the ways whiteness marginalises and renders invisible the distinct voices, experiences and knowledge of black people in elite university spaces (I Too Am Harvard, 2014). Similar campaigns in Oxford in 2014 and 2015 ('I, Too, Am Oxford' and 'Rhodes Must Fall Oxford'[1]) and in London ('Why is my curriculum white?' in 2015 at University College London), foregrounded symbolic and discursive race-work centred on illuminating the workings of whiteness as ontology in academic knowledge production, and its validation when coded into curricula (Elliot-Cooper, 2018; Henriques and Abushouk, 2018). These campaigns have been brought forward by racialised minority students, using their bodies as vehicles to transmit the urgency and need for action; although their demands are interpreted and actioned (where they are actioned) by majority-white institutions.

A key action of the Rhodes Must Fall Oxford campaign, echoed in the UCL campaign, was "Reforming the Eurocentric curriculum to remedy the highly selective narrative of traditional academic – which frames the West as sole producers of universal knowledge – by integrating subjugated and local

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[1] The campaign was unsuccessful. Unlike in Cape Town where the statue was removed, in Oxford the statue remains and was publicly defended as a matter of free speech. In a blurring of symbolic and material anti- anti-racist action, defenders of the statue withdrew financial pledges to donate to the college. See Espinoza (2016).

epistemologies." (cited in Peters, 2018, pp. 265-266)[2]. By focusing on curriculum content, the UK-based campaigns, in contrast to bundling of the decolonisation agenda in South Africa (of curriculum, staff and student bodies and university finances) in order to reimagine the university itself, parses symbolic, discursive and material race-work. In querying the whiteness of curricula, for example, Elliot-Cooper (2018, p.292) reminds us whiteness is not "what people are" (i.e. white bodies) but is "an idea that shapes actions and thoughts". Engaging with whiteness as an idea thus replaces, "…tired debates on diversity and representation that at best result in putting Black faces in high places, or peppering a reading list with a darker face or an exotic name." (2018, pp.292-293). While this can be read as a statement against tokenistic race-equality gestures and a need to engage with the structures of knowledge validation and their racial premise, the assessment itself may arise because of the way race is enfolded within general diversity and equality work in UK universities particularly. This means that the presence of black and brown bodies in the academy (which I have called material race-work) becomes a matter of widening access for students and fair recruitment and promotion for staff (Ahmed, 2012; Alexander and Arday, 2015). In this position as practice for institutional betterment, it is untied from a decolonisation agenda, an agenda that draws attention to the continuity of colonialism and racial hierarchies of knowledge and knowledge producers (Mignolo, 2009, p.178).

The de-centring of racialised minority bodies in the academy within decolonisation agenda, is at odds with work on 'theorising from the south', which is built on a recognition that knowledge is epistemically rooted and affected by one's identity (including race), place and position (Murrey, 2018; de Sousa, 2014). As Murrey points out, this distinction between north and south is a false one and that efforts to decolonise knowledge and education must recognise the "intersections between academic research, colonialism, global racialisations and power" (2018, p. 63) in the context of global north-south partnership and a turn to theories from the south. She adds, that any approach to knowing differently, must be "founded on an open assessment of racial and geographical inequalities within the university [in the north] (including authorship, citation, language, promotion and everyday practices such as those encounters in classrooms and corridors)" (Murrey, 2018, p.63). Murrey consciously shifts our attention on to the 'northern' university and racial inequality as an essential reckoning and foundation to decolonial engagements *outside* of the university, of the kind encouraged in current discourses of 'partnership' and the 'co-production' of knowledge.

Within this recognition, the role of the white academic in decolonisation work is to engage and help to produce anti-racist theories, but without centring their bodies, values or epistemic position. Murrey (2018) calls this "radical friendship". Noxolo (2017, p.318) speaks more pointedly to racialised minorities in decolonisation work, and referencing Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o, states "decolonisation begins from the scholarship of black and indigenous peoples, and should be led by that scholarship". She highlights an important consequence of the absence of racialised minority scholars and the (mis)appropriation of decolonial scholarship, adding,

> there are indigenous scholars studying in the UK, from around the world, but they are few and far between; along with BME [black, minority, ethnic] scholars there are few indigenous scholars in geography; and structures that privilege white Euro-American scholarship mean that theories coming out of indigenous scholarship are often deployed without being fully acknowledged. (2017, p.318)

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[2] The two other areas Rhodes Must Fall Oxford tried to address included removing colonial iconography and the underrepresentation of black, minority ethnic (BME) students. Of the three areas, curriculum reform is most widespread as a focus for action by students and academic staff across the UK.

While of course being a racialised minority body does not automatically or innately produce decolonial knowledge. In the context of being, and training oneself to be self-aware and critical of one's surroundings, a grounded decolonial epistemology is possible that works to de-centre racialised-Eurocentric knowledge production and validation. And although decolonisation efforts that centre on curriculum content and the research that underpins it, can become a site to explore and work through race politics of the body, more often it does not. This means the practical edges of decolonisation work, in UK higher education particularly, tend to extend to pedagogy and research, specifically curriculum content and research practices, the discursive and symbolic parameters of race-work, and rarely cover material race-work and the physical presence and experience of racialised minority staff and students and their encounters with knowledge.

The implications of the state of race and decolonisation debates in higher education institutions play out at the departmental scale where disciplinary fields are housed. In development studies departments, chains of correlation run along links of who is employed on a permanent academic contract; what is their epistemology or what could it be; what is their research agenda and what knowledges do they produce; from what historic or contextual position do they engage with development; and then subsequently teach (future) development practitioners.

Decolonisation, race and development

Decolonisation as a contemporary movement and influential body of thought in social sciences, is traced by Bhambra (2014, p.115) to South American scholarship and the works of Walter Mignolo and Anibal Quijano on the intertwining of modernity and colonialism, and its production of a European world order that is regarded as universal, good and a suitable aspirant for others. This scholarship is closely linked to world systems theory, dependency theory, postcolonialism and post-development, marking a longstanding connection to critical development studies. Given the vast connections between dependency, postcolonial and post-development critiques of imperialism, colonialism and development (Kapoor, 2002; Sylvester, 1999; Escobar, 2012), the literature reviewed here is necessarily selective. In this section, I foreground two of Mignolo's papers (2002; 2009) that heavily influence current decolonialisation debates and a decolonial agenda for the social sciences. While, of course, such an agenda has many other threads, including indigenous scholarship (e.g. Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Tuck and Yang, 2012), Mignolo's register and scale speaks to international and global systems that are directly relevant to the macro themes and global geo-politics of development studies. In my reading of Mignolo's papers, I trace two core aspects of his argument to more mainstream critiques of development, locating race within them. The first is the geographies of world-systems for development and the second, geographically situated epistemic erasure and value in knowledge production for development.

Mignolo's 2002 paper, 'The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference', presents an important discussion of dependency theory and world-systems theory critiqued through the lens of modernity/coloniality. Dependency theory emerged as a critical response to the power and prevalence of Modernity as a universal prospect and coordinated outcome for development. A central tenant of dependency theory is a geographical binary of core and periphery to explain the workings of capitalism, specifically the location of industry and the global division of labour. World systems theory, associated mostly with the sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein, is rooted in dependency theory. To Wallerstein, race is built into the world-system through the racial ordering of the global work force and the unequal distribution of capitalisms rewards (in Mignolo, 2002, p. 79). Mignolo clearly does not disagree with Wallerstein's assessment, writing in 'Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom' (2009, p.161), "the fact that regions and people around the world have been classified as underdeveloped economically and mentally" is a colonial

wound and that "Racism not only affects people but also regions". In these big picture assessments, race and racism serves to describe global difference and intonate a centre against which 'progress' and 'lack' is measured. In this vein, although the language of core-periphery has fallen out of fashion, the preferred nomenclature of global north and south (a critical response to postcolonial critique of developed and developing) is a distinction that is of course still racialised particularly when used as geographical shorthand (as Murrey, 2018, too recognises).

Mignolo's (2002) approach to world systems theory from a position of modernity/coloniality, pushes the analytical value of race much further in a critical rethinking of development and the value of knowledge production for development. He argues that rethinking world systems and macro-narratives of development is not a project of liberation and cannot be a decolonial option, without considering "colonial difference" in theorising western hegemony in global economic and political systems. The colonial difference is an epistemic subaltern position of liberation, not just a critique of Eurocentrism. Mignolo mobilises this concept to engender reflection on spatial points of view, arguing, "Wallerstein's reconceptualization of spacetime remains within the domestic ideology of Western cultures of scholarship, with the assumption of their universal scope, valid for all time and all societies" (2002, p.70). That is, the impulse to homogenise remains within core-periphery (or north-south) conceptualisations and the world-systems that are subsequently theorised from it. He adds, without considering colonial difference, "epistemology cannot be detached from or untainted by the complicity between universalism, racism, and sexism" (2002, p.78).

In his 2009 paper, Mignolo brings into clearer dialogue race, the geographies of development and underdevelopment and epistemic location. He writes, "Racism, as we sense it today, was the result of two conceptual inventions of imperial knowledge: that certain bodies were inferior to others, and that inferior bodies carried inferior intelligence" (2009, p.178). Mignolo's idea of racism is embedded in what he terms 'the geo-politics of knowledge and the geo-politics of knowing'. Race, therefore, serves as an analytic to unpack the process of knowledge production starting from the site of its excavation and including points of 'value added' in western universities. This line of argument complements post-development scholarship and querying of the subject-position occupied by entire countries in Africa, Asia and South America, and the people living there, within the fields of development studies and practice (Escobar, 2012 [1995]; and revisited in Esteva and Escobar, 2017).

Through mobilising the idea of a "decolonial option", which essentially means understanding 'we have our own ways to speak' (2009, p.176), Mignolo illuminates epistemic erasure and value in knowledge production for development. In dialogue with other strands of decolonial thinking and post-development theory, he layers the foundational racism of imperial knowledge and its work in processes of knowing, with seemingly progressive latter-day ways of approaching knowledge. With particular resonance for development studies, he argues, "You can still argue that there are 'bodies' and 'regions' in need of guidance from developed 'bodies' and 'regions' that got there first and know how to do it. As an honest liberal, you would recognize that you do not want to 'impose' your knowledge and experience but to 'work with the locals'. The problem is, what agenda will be implemented, yours or theirs?" (2009, p.178). Implied by Mignolo's position is a critique of the panacea offered by technologies of participation in lieu of critical engagement with race, racism and knowledge production for and of development.

I have foregrounded Mignolo because so much of his work is central to current decolonisation debates in the social sciences and his ideas are of specific relevance to the macro themes of development studies. Race, in my reading of these two papers, serves as an analytical lens to deconstruct knowledge of and for development, and to understand categories of difference and global differentiations under which development as practice labours. In this, Mignolo's papers

continue and engage with a longer line of work on race, racism and development studies, work that does not necessarily engage with decoloniality. In this scholarship, race is a social construct and is treated within development studies as a category of difference. The idea of difference is essential for a programme of intervention that mobilises racialised discourses and imaginations of peoples and countries as lacking. In much the same way European colonialism carried a moral imperative to civilise 'others' who are categorised as different from Enlightened and progressive Europeans, development as a subject of enquiry (in the form of development studies) and practice, is rooted by Denise Ferreira da Silva (2014, p.40) in two formulations: moral deficiency and ethical imperative. The former bounds the (to be) *developed* in a discourse of lacking and incapable of remedying their deficiency alone, the latter the *developer* as justified and legitimate in helping the racialised 'other'. Shilliam (2014) further anchors the relationship between race and modern world development in a longer history that includes Atlantic slavery, a period where, "world development was structured as a hierarchical and racialized ordering of social beings" (2014, p.32).

That race permeates every aspect of development from its history and discourse (Wilson, 2012; Power, 2006; Pailey, 2019; da Silva 2014), agenda setting (Kothari, 2006a; White, 2002; White, 2006), targeted programmatic interventions (Wilson, 2015), staffing (Kothari, 2005) and in the everyday encounters of development practice (Crewe and Fernando, 2006), cannot be disputed. Yet, Kothari (2006b) shows that race in the work of critical development scholarship (namely dependency theory and post-development theory) was often implied and did not appear as an analytical lens through which hierarchies of knowledge embedded in the development industry and in concepts of progress, were seen. Mignolo's papers (2002; 2009), potentially, bring recent theorisations of decolonisation, and its pointed analysis of race, into productive dialogue with longer standing race and development studies scholarship. The case for this dialogue is all the more pressing because within recent explicit contributions to decolonising development scholarship, race is not prominent. This very small body of work is largely centred on pedagogic responses to Eurocentric curricula and inclusive access to learning in universities in the global north (Langdon, 2013; Spiegel, et al., 2017). The absence of explicit critical engagement with race, is reflective of wider scholarship and activism to decolonise higher education in the global north.

Reading studies on race, racism and development alongside the nascent set of papers on decolonising development studies, suggests there is a gap in explicitly bringing race into current discussions on decolonising development, despite compelling theoretical grounds to do so. Thus, as the field of work on decolonisation picks up in the discipline and with pushes from related disciplines that explicitly brings race into conversation with geographies of the global south (e.g. Noxolo, 2017; Radcliff, 2017; Murrey, 2018), it is worth asking where and how race might feature in a prospective decolonial turn in development studies, and how well placed are we to respond to the impetus to decolonise, by undertaking a contemporary reassessment of race in development scholarship.

Methodology

In order to survey race and development studies literature, I undertook a systematic literature review and content analysis of six widely read journals of development studies. The journals are the *Journal of Development Studies, Development and Change, World Development; Progress in Development Studies; Third World Quarterly* and the *Journal of International Development*. These are all mainstream, well known and long established journals for development studies and all have a broad remit i.e. there is no specialisation or focus from the editorial notes on the journals to a subset of development studies concerns. I contend that if there are debates on the state of the discipline and that these form or are likely to form common concerns for development scholarship, they are more likely to be found in a broad remit journal. I thus deliberately exclude more specialist

journals and journals in related disciplines that have declared an interest in race, through for example, commissions and special issues dedicated to the subject (e.g. *Antipode's* 2014 special issue on 'Race, Space, and Nature'). I have also excluded books and book chapters. By focusing on the six prominent journals of development studies, I investigate an important but bounded range of development studies literature in order to identify if or how race is a concern of the discipline, in the main.

The review spanned the past 13 years (February 2006 - August 2019), starting after the January 2006 publication of a collection of five papers on race and development under the editorial 'Critiquing 'race' and racism in development discourse and practice' by Uma Kothari (2006a) in *Progress in Development Studies*. Kothari's second paper in the collection, 'An agenda for thinking about 'race' in development', revealed "silences about 'race' in development ideologies, institutions and practices" (2006b, p.1). The paper gave a rationale for thinking through a race lens and an assessment of the dangers for development of not doing so. This review therefore provides two outcomes: the first is a survey of where and how race is present in development studies scholarship and feeds the argument in this paper, and the second shows an overarching state of progress since the publication of Kothari's agenda.

The review followed a three-step process (detailed by Kuckartz, 2013, ch 2). Based on the aims of this paper to assess the contours of any decolonial turn by the presence or absence of race, the first step to identify the categories for data selection was based on a review of decolonialisation literature and decolonisation and development literature (presented above). These literature named the word 'race' where race was discussed, sometimes in addition to (but not instead of) terms such as whiteness, blackness and white supremacy. 'Race', 'racism' and 'racial' therefore were the most appropriate categories for data selection. The second step was a systematic literature review that used frequency counts of 'race', 'racism' and 'racial'[3] in keywords, titles and abstracts to survey a vast amount of literature in order to narrow the field for the third step, a qualitative content analysis of papers that mentioned race (book reviews were excluded). In this final step, the review identified the context in which the three words were used in the paper. The extent to which race formed a key part of the argument was noted alongside the argument itself. If race did not form a key part of the argument, the paper was coded as either a 'marginal reference' or 'part of another argument' and the argument noted.

Findings and Discussion

In total, 9280 papers were surveyed[4], and of these 32 papers (0.34%) mentioned 'race', 'racial' or 'racism' in either the paper title, keywords or abstract[5]. Of these 32 papers, 17 were from a single journal, *Third World Quarterly*. Given that these are all broad remit journals, this does raise questions concerning why authors feel able to discuss race in some journals, and not at all in others (see Table 1).

[Insert Table 1 Frequency of race in journal survey about here]

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[3] Henceforth, I integrate the terms into 'race'.

[4] I used four different advance search engines for the six journals (SAGE journals, Taylor and Francis Online, Wiley Online Library and Elsevier/Science Direct). There is some difference between the engine functions, for example, the date range in some engines was by year only, in others by month and year, meaning that the total number of papers surveyed is approximate.

[5] It was not possible to search abstracts in the advanced search feature for Taylor and Francis Online, which may have affected the number of papers captured for review from the *Journal of Development Studies* and *Third World Quarterly*.

Of the 32 papers reviewed, four papers made marginal references to race using the term idiomatically e.g. "race to the bottom", "race for a cure" or in a metaphor, a "horse-race". Four papers made a passing reference to race in the abstract though the focus of the papers was on other subjects e.g. *mobility* with racialised minorities mentioned as a category of concern; or *economic decline* with racism noted as one possible outcome; or *colonialism* with race mentioned in the logic of colonial rule. Of the remainder, some 24 papers, the range of critical engagement with race and racism in the discipline, either as a subject in its own right or in the politics of knowledge production and validation, varies widely.

The 24 papers are categorised based on how race featured in the paper. The first category is race as a variable in quantitative studies. 10 of the papers reviewed fall within this category and sit broadly within the sub-field of development economics. The fields of inquiry covered by the papers included inequality in school attainment and educational outcomes, game theory and decision making, labour market discrimination and voting patterns. The geographical field covered was specific to single country case studies in South Africa, Brazil, Peru, Mexico and Venezuela. Common to all of these papers, race which was sometimes used as a proxy for Indigeneity and for poverty and/or class, served as a variable and was treated as a structural constant. That is, not as a productive concept that is explored in a way that produces an identity or meaning. Race is a descriptive container, a fixed category, even though some papers acknowledged race as a social construct. This treatment of race does not countenance race as an analytical lens or an affected position. Race rather simply serves as a neat and somewhat reductive category of being.

The second category is race as an affective construct that *does* something, and is socially situated through time and space. The remaining 14 papers treated race in this way through there is considerable variation between these papers in terms of the fields of inquiry and disciplinary conversation. Seven papers in this category sit within the disciplinary field of international relations (IR), they are all from the same journal *Third World Quarterly*. They explore the politics of race, racial hierarchy and racial difference in international agenda including securitisation, present-day colonialism and the global division of labour. They examine the effect of race on (de)colonial discourse, processes of 'othering' and offer an ontological reading of contemporary events including Brexit and the election of Donald Trump through a critical race lens. In these papers, 'development' as a discipline or practice is not mentioned.

Two papers (from two journals) explore how race affects agency and power in practices of international development. These papers build an understanding of the effects of racialized representations of 'others' in discourses and imaginations of 'development', particularly in the racialized crafting of global saviours and victims. They both treat race as an analytical lens and as a category that conveys meaning between different development actors. One of these papers makes explicit a methodological approach that privileges the voice and knowledge of black African 'development subjects', suggestive of an epistemological de-centring in the process of knowledge production.

The remaining five papers that treat race as an affective construct, sit somewhere between the set of seven IR papers and the two development studies papers insofar they speak clearly to the content raised in the development studies papers and make inference to development, though sit within an IR discipline and/or critical engagement with the politics of race. These papers are from the same journal (*Third World Quarterly*) and many are part of a recent special issue in the journal on 'Violence and ordering of the Third World'. Common to all the papers in this group, is the centrality of a critical race lens to examine north-south international relations and the various mobilisations of black and brown 'others' in the making of global racial hierarchies of caring, saving and killing. These

papers explore the contemporary effects of historically rooted ideas of race and worth in modern day variations of a white man's burden. Again, they do not explicitly mention development, though there are clear inferences between key ideas of development and race.

Reading the 32 papers together, the literature on race and development studies is dominated (10 papers to two) by a reductive understanding of race as one variable among many that can be used to explain single-country phenomena. Race as an affective construct or as a critical lens in its own right, that can inform us about development as a subject and as practice, is a tiny field of scholarship (0.02%). More broadly, understanding the historic and contemporary inscription of race into north-south relations and the construction of development subjects and saviours, is clearly a research agenda that is not driven by development scholarship, but by related disciplinary fields (particularly IR) that are represented in only one of six widely read development studies journals.

Conclusion

Returning to the questions posed in the introduction to this paper, I set out to inquire the likely parameters and depth of decolonisation debates in mainstream development studies based on the presence or absence of critical engagement with race and racism in the discipline. I located this debate within wider institutional debates on decolonisation and race in UK universities particularly, in order to make visible where and how institutional engagements with race might be replicated within the discipline. Through a scalar reading of this knowledge landscape and a granular review of the disciplinary field, I intended to identify the contours of a decolonial turn in development studies, should one take place.

The discipline of development studies has a long standing critical engagement with decolonisation, within which race is a clearly identifiable theme. The relevance of thinking about race and development is a case that was pointedly made 13 years ago (Kothari, 2006a). Yet, based on the systematic review of papers in six major development studies journals, it is clear that in the 13 years since Kothari's (2006b) compelling call for deeper engagements with 'race' in development scholarship and practice, the response across the board is negligible and that the field of scholarship on race and development has narrowed. The implications and danger of this, especially in light of an institutional reluctance to intertwine material and discursive race-work in moves to 'decolonise the centre', is a hollow skirting with decolonisation and the parsing of deep engagement with the power of whiteness in shaping the content of our disciplinary discussions and the environment in which knowledge is produced and valued.

This discussion raises an important question for self-reflection from development scholars and practitioners, why? Within our disciplinary debates and research (with implications for development practice through our teaching of would be practitioners), why is race largely absent as an analytical lens? A lens that is entirely appropriate and relevant to understanding the creation of development subjects, the origins of development as a discipline, and inherent development logics in notions of progress and the normative signifier of good change. Within institutional spaces in higher education, where development scholars tend to circulate, why do nascent engagements with radically rethinking curricula and pedagogy in the name of decolonisation, fall short of radically re-imagining who belongs in such spaces also under the rubric of decolonisation? Engagement with such questions must raise the prospect of the impossibility of decolonial gestures in development. For if a decolonial turn is not at its core race-conscious and anti-racist in all its articulations, just whose decolonial turn is it and what purpose does it really serve.

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