SOCIAL RESTITUTION

Theoretical and empirical reflections and possibilities

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Ongoing inequality and injustice in contexts such as South Africa can be addressed through a programme of social restitution and where a sociology of restitution and reparations becomes part of every conversation about a future that must address the past.
Outline

1. The consequences of injustice in South Africa
2. Social restitution as a substantial solution
   - As a recognition of continuity of historical, legal and contemporary scholarship
   - As conscious (re)positioning of actors
   - As rehumanising or restoring damaged personhood
   - As deliberative and dialogical redistribution
3. A voluntary moral obligation
THE CONSEQUENCES OF INJUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA
Formal restitution

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission and limited reparations
- Employment, business ownership and procurement equity
- Land redistribution
SOCIAL RESTITUTION AS A SUBSTANTIAL SOLUTION
Methodology

1. Started off with conceptual ideas
2. Invited responses using vignettes, labelling activity
3. In depth interviews
4. 60 interviews, 90 minutes
5. Researching intimates
6. Demographically but not statistically representative
7. Ages 21-72, across class
Contiguous scholarship

- Restoring
- Compensating
- Acting symbolically
- Returning rights
- Gain-stripping
- Rehabilitating

Restitution historically and legally
Everyday social restitution

Broadly

Voluntary moral obligation
(Swartz, Barkan)

Across generations
(MacIntyre, Young)

As forward looking
(Calder, Wenar)

As making good
Wiedergutmachung
versus
making right
Wiederherstellen
(Judt, Sanders)
Restoring personhood

Demeaned
Dehumanised
Demoralised

Mayaya (34)
Zethu (40)
Luxolo (29)
Welile (24)
Sizwe (23)
Thamsanqa (32)
Haley (42)

The past in the present
The outrage of entrenched racial inequality

(re)Positioning actors
Hilberg’s Triangle

VICTIM
Dishonoured
Harmed
Damaged

BYSTANDER
Ostrich
Silent
Avoider

PERPETRATOR
Architect of injustice
Implementer of injustice
(re)Positioning actors

1. Differentiating architect and implementer
2. New names for victim – dishonoured, damaged, Adding ‘ostrich’ to bystander
3. Adding ‘beneficiary’ - and ‘inheritor of benefit’; also beneficiary of redress
4. Adding ‘resister’ – then and now
   - More engagement
   - Less checking out
   - Brings the past into the present
     - Nuanced engagement
     - Across generations
Dialogical redistribution

1. Establish a diverse conversation group
2. Discuss how you see South Africa
3. Talk about the effects of past injustice
4. Discuss the meaning and potential of restitution
5. Discuss difference between charity & restitution
6. Locate all participants in the conversation
7. Discuss ideas to restore our damaged humanity
8. Make a plan for implementing ideas
9. Discuss attitudes needed and obstacles
10. Make plans for an ongoing project
## Ideas for social restitution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alongside government</th>
<th>Civil-society initiatives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A tax to eradicate bucket toilet system</td>
<td>1. Challenge ‘whingers’</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Paying for suburban upkeep &amp; cross-subsiding townships</td>
<td>2. Learn language</td>
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<td>3. De-and re-colourising schools (“white flight”)</td>
<td>3. Join boards of NGOs</td>
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<td>4. Referendum on land reform</td>
<td>4. Youth community service</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. A salary-increase moratorium for high earners</td>
<td>5. Address church racial divides</td>
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- Civil-society initiatives
  - 1. Challenge ‘whingers’
  - 2. Learn language
  - 3. Join boards of NGOs
  - 4. Youth community service
  - 5. Address church racial divides
  - 6. Dialogues about privilege
  - 7. Children’s stories
  - 8. Mentoring
  - 9. Sharing inheritances
SOCIAL RESTITUTION

as acts and attitudes for individuals and groups

alongside or independent of government action

in dialogue with those dishonoured by injustice

as a voluntary moral obligation