‘Out there’ and ‘close to home’ social attitudes towards restitution as moral imperative

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(Re)Defining restitution

FROM
“Restoring things to how they were before the injustice was perpetrated”

TO
The act of ‘paying back’ for wrongs previously committed

AND
The act of ‘making right’ symbolically or materially

INCLUDES
Philosophical, emotional, theological, psychological, physical and economic elements.

INTRODUCES
The notion of ‘personhood’
Why a study of restitution?

1. To answer the call for a ‘social dynamic’ of ‘justice’ as a moral imperative
2. To address injustice, poverty and inequality – systematically, at multiple levels
3. To align peace processes (TRC), reconciliation, justice, and transformation
4. To showcase theorised models for just action
A multi-year programme of research

To investigate how the notion of restitution may be usefully and theoretically employed as an organizing framework and programmatic principle for social transformation and justice through investigating:

(1) attitudes and narrative towards restitution
(2) theories and policies of restitution, and
(3) models and social movements of restitution.

In ten countries with Global South-North partnerships
Ten Countries

- Canada
- USA
- Chile
- Liberia
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- China
- Germany
- Bosnia
- Australia
Positionalities of actors

Victim  Perpetrator
Positionalities of actors

Victim

Bystander

Perpetrator
Positionalities of actors

- Architect
- Inheritor
- Implementer
- Beneficiary
- Dishonoured
Elements of Personhood

RESTITUTION OF PERSONHOOD

- dignity
- memory
- means
- opportunity
- equality
- citizenship
Domains of agency

Civic

Structural

Interpersonal
This paper – existing social attitudes

1. Existing attitudes towards ‘restitution’ limited
2. First step towards creating a module for surveys
3. Gendered, raced, classed and generational?
4. The belief-behaviour gap somewhat apparent
5. A two-tiered response to restitution”
   • Embracing of restitution for ‘out there social injustices’
   • Less certainty for actual acts of restitution with ‘close to home’ consequences.
6. How do we bridge the ‘belief-behaviour’ gap?
Scope of analysis

1. Surveys
   - South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS)
   - International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)
   - World Values Survey (WVS)
   - Afrobarometer

2. Time frame - 1994 – present

3. Procedure
   - Systematic scan of surveys
   - Existing published results
   - Data analysis using SPSS
## Surveys by country – Rounds of each since 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SASAS</th>
<th>WVS</th>
<th>ISSP</th>
<th>Afro-barometer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bosnia</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Chile</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
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<td>S Africa</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
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## Existing social attitude surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addresses</th>
<th>Omits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Income inequality</td>
<td>• Forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improving economic conditions for poor</td>
<td>• Apologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Government/personal responsibility</td>
<td>• Difference between charity and restitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social grants/welfare</td>
<td>• Voluntary wealth or restitution tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consequences for human rights violations</td>
<td>• Community initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Land (re)distribution</td>
<td>• Guilt and healing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social cohesion</td>
<td>• Action at multiple levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Affirmative Action</td>
<td>• Understandings of restitution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of questions

ISSP 2009: Social Inequality
Differences in income in [country] are too large

ISSP 2006: Role of Government
On the whole do you think it should or should not be government’s responsibility to...

• Reduce income differences between the rich and poor
• Provide decent housing for those who can’t afford it
• Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed
WVS Wave 3
Which of these do you consider the most serious one in your own country?

- People living in poverty and need
- Discrimination of girls and women
- Poor sanitation and infectious diseases
- Inadequate education
- Environmental pollution

Afrobarometer 2008
Which of the following things [Improving economic conditions for the poor] is most important?
**WVS Wave 2**

Which, if any, (a) do you belong to (b) are you currently doing unpaid voluntary work for

- Social welfare services for elderly, handicapped or deprived people
- Local community action of issues like poverty, employment, housing, racial equality

**SASAS**

To what extent do you agree or disagree...

- People who can’t work deserve help in the form of social grants
- Government should redistribute land to black South Africans
Liberia Afrobarometer 2008

Which of the following statements is closer to your view?

1. Those who are responsible for human rights violations committed during past conflicts should be granted amnesty, which means they would never be subject to criminal prosecution or other consequences for their actions

2. Those who are responsible for human rights violations should be held accountable and face consequences for what they have done
Evidence from 10 countries: Existing social surveys

1. Inequality
   - Income inequality/Poverty
   - Improving economic conditions for the poor

2. Government vs. personal responsibility
   - Social or welfare grants
   - Affirmative action
   - Participation in welfare organizations and activities

3. Social cohesion
   - Diversity and unity/Trust/Help others
Aversion to inequality

Most serious problem facing country: People living in poverty and need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>Chile</td>
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<td>China</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: WVS 2005-2008

Most important national priority: Improving economic conditions for the poor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
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</table>

Source: Afrobarometer 2008
Aversion to income inequality

“Differences in income in [country] are too large” (% agree or strongly agree)

Source: ISSP 1999: Social Inequality III, ISSP 2009: Social Inequality IV
### Aversion to inequality

“Incomes should be made more equal (1) vs. We need larger income differences as incentives (10)”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Bosnia</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Chile</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Germany</th>
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<th>Rwanda</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** The mean scores presented in this table are based on a 10-point scale where 1 = incomes should be made more equal and 10 = we need larger income differences.

*Source: WVS*
Government responsibility: Percentage that agree or strongly agree

- It is the responsibility of government to reduce the differences in income
- The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed
- The government should spend less on benefits for the poor

Source: ISSP 2009: Social Inequality IV
"Definitely should be the government’s responsibility to..."

- Reduce income differences between the rich and the poor
- Provide a job for everyone who wants one
- Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed
- Give financial help to university students from low-income families

Source: ISSP 2006: Role of Government
Participation in voluntary ‘justice’ social activism

Attitudes towards restitution in South Africa (SASAS)

1. Strong aversion to inequality
2. Belief that action must be taken
3. Less certainty towards concrete measures of restitution
   - Affirmative Action
   - Racial disparities in level of support
4. Belief-behaviour or principle-implementation gap
Attitudes to income inequality
## Attitudes to income inequality (SA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Type of society South Africa is today</th>
<th>Type of society South Africa ought to be like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>A small group of rich people at the top, very few people in the middle and the great majority of people at the bottom.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B</td>
<td>A society with a small group of rich people at the top, more people in the middle, and most at the bottom.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type C</td>
<td>Similar to Type B except that just a few people are at the bottom.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type D</td>
<td>A society with most people in the middle.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type E</td>
<td>Many people near the top, and only a few near the bottom.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Can’t choose)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: 100 |
**Mean**: 30.9 |
**Mean**: 87.6

**Source**: Analysis based on HSRC SASAS data as part of an ongoing ESRC Pathfinder grant (Roberts & McLennan)
Attitudes to income inequality

Source: Analysis based on HSRC SASAS data as part of an ongoing ESRC Pathfinder grant (Roberts & McLennan)
Support for redress measures

- Income differences in South Africa are too large
- It is the responsibility of government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes
- Preferential hiring and promotion of women
- Preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans

## Support for redress measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Race-based redress measures:</strong></th>
<th>% support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government should redistribute land to black South Africans.</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans in employment</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There should be racial quotas in national sports teams.</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Class-based redress measures:</strong></th>
<th>% support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The government should provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The children of the economically well-off and the poor should be educated together</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government should provide more chances for children from poor families to go to university, even if it has to increase taxes</td>
<td>75.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * The mean scores based on reversed scales. Support = strongly disagree and disagree. ‘Do not know’ responses were excluded from analysis. Source: Analysis based on HSRC SASAS data as part of an ongoing ESRC Pathfinder grant (Roberts & McLennan)
SA population statistics by ‘race’

- Census data (2011) - Total population = 51,770,560

- Black African, 79.2
- Coloured, 8.9
- White, 8.9
- Indian/Asian, 2.5
- Other, 0.5
Support for Affirmative Action by ‘race’

Support for the preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans (% agree or strongly agree)

Summary of findings

1. General aversion to inequality
2. Support for government intervention – ‘out there’
3. Affirmative action not supported – ‘close to home’
4. Few participate in voluntary ‘justice’ social activism - China a surprising exception
5. Inconsistent data across all 10 countries
6. Belief-behaviour implementation gap well illustrated in South Africa
7. Insufficient data to illustrate in all 10 countries
8. Scope for a larger study on restitution