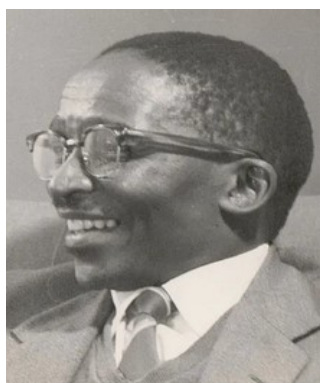




## IB Tabata and Livie Mqotsi on Cultural Heritage



**IB Tabata**

### Myth of "Western Civilization"

As we take a cursory view of this period I hope in passing to demolish the whole myth of what is called "Western Civilization." It is time that our people recognized that they are not step-children of the so-called civilized nations and that there is no such thing as "Western Civilization" created by the Westerners alone. There is only human civilization to which man all over the world contributed.

The people of Africa made as large a contribution to the sum total as any others. If, as we hold, human labor is the originator of all wealth, then we might justifiably claim that the people of Africa contributed a lion's share in laying the basis for the emergence of what is known today as "Western Civilization." This may seem a tall claim, so it becomes necessary for us at once to define our frame of reference. By the basis of "Western Civilization" in this context we mean the series of events that led to the emergence of industrialism in Europe, with its accompany Industrial Revolution.

It is our contention that the Industrial Revolution would have been impossible at the time and in the manner in which it took place, if it had not been for limitless slave labor drawn from the continent of Africa.

For Further Reading: **IB Tabata** - *"The Awakening of a People."*

**IB Tabata (Tabby) - 10 June 1909**  
- 13 October 1990

**Livie Mqotsi - 18 April 1921**  
- 25 September 2009



**Livingstoane Mqotsi**

### From -Tribalism: An Archaism and Divisive Myth

The social system that imperial history over the ages came to categorise as tribalism is a social formation that relates to a particular stage in the development of human society and social institutions. For historical reasons this social formation has come to be associated almost exclusively with Africa. Yet the sociology of recent and more enlightened historiography has demonstrated that this is a fallacy and a distortion of fact. Indeed, evidence shows that the concept of the existence of "tribes" is a myth that has been developed into a fully-fledged mythology by the advocates of "race" differences, racial superiority and its converse, racial inferiority. But the mythology of "tribalism" as a constant and unchanging social reality and its geographical location continues unabated. In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, let me explain in advance. The fact that we are dealing here with a myth does not mean that belief in such an unreality has no real or practical implications. There is a difference between the reality of the belief and the reality of what is believed.

For Further Reading: **BM Kies** - *The Contribution of the Non Europeans to World Civilisation."*

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## HERITAGE DAY, SEPTEMBER 2024

As a former settler colony which has morphed into a neoliberal constitutional democracy, South Africa has cause for some moderate celebration. The chief gains inherited from our struggle against apartheid have been the liquidation of the Bantustan policies of the previous regime, and the overturning of apartheid-era discriminations, such as group areas and colour bar legislation in general. While we can take satisfaction from having won such liberal freedoms as the right to free speech and freedom of association and assembly, what was sneaked into our constitution via the CODESA process was an enabling environment for the ongoing predation of our country by global (and local) Big Capital.

And thus, we continue to evince the hallmarks of all former settler colonies in the Global South. In short, we remain an economy based on extractivism and export commodities; we remain dependent on overseas investment; we remain a highly-indebted nation, whose march to social emancipation was halted in its tracks. We have the highest inequality and unemployment rates in the world. And all the fuss about rainbowism notwithstanding, we continue to be a deeply divided society.

It turns out the chief beneficiaries of this new South Africa are the owners of Big Capital (local and global) and our country's political rulers (including the traditional leadership). They are the collaborators which Orwell depicts so tellingly in his *Animal Farm* – where you couldn't tell the men from the pigs.

We have not been immune from the global scourge of anti-migrationism (to coin a word). As is clear and obvious, capital and technology flow freely across national borders, but not so, labour. In regard to the latter, punitive measures – in some cases amounting to medieval levels of barbarism – are in place to control unwanted mass human inflows into most countries.

It is a bitter irony that the countries of the Global North – the US, EU, Canada and Australia – through rampant exploitation of the Global South – have done the most to cause a refugee crisis of planetary proportions, including mass unemployment, the coronavirus epidemic, global warming and war, but act strenuously to evade the downside consequences. So, desperate, displaced masses of refugees arriving at their borders are dealt with ruthlessly.

- Building border walls, separating families, caging children, banning Muslims, overturning minimal protections for refugees and undocumented migrants.
- Training and backing “rampaging military death squads that commit genocide, including massacres, rapes, disappearances, kidnappings and torture” are all part of the stock-in-trade of the border control regime of Global North countries.
- Installing “virtual border walls” via high-tech drone surveillance and infrared technology.
- Using warships to intercept and destroy migrant boats in the Mediterranean Sea.

The above points provide the merest glimpse into the nightmarish lives of millions of people around the globe – masses of people who are the ultimate victims of ongoing, pitiless racism, exploitation and denial.

In South Africa, a number of parties contesting for parliamentary seats in the recent elections stirred up anti-immigrant fervour among the local electorate, as part of their campaign

strategies. In a May 2024 article, *Human Rights Watch* made the following disclosures:

- Rise Mzansi, in its manifesto, said it would “fix the asylum seeker system: stop its use as a de facto permit for economic migrants,” feeding into the narrative of bogus asylum seekers.
- Herman Mashaba, leader of ActionSA, in a tweet in December 2023 stated that foreign nationals who run tuckshops use their businesses as illicit drug channels, destroying small businesses in townships and villages, and disrupting communities' way of life.
- On November 26, 2023, the leader of the Patriotic Alliance, Gayton McKenzie while speaking at the political party's 10-year celebration said of foreign nationals: “they must go home” contending that foreign nationals are responsible for crime, drug peddling, unemployment, and other problems. “We don't want illegal foreigners here.”

Rise Mzansi and the Patriotic Alliance both subsequently became members of the GNU.

It is well-known that the leading party within the GNU – the ANC – has little sympathy for the rights of migrants in this country. In a May 2024 article, Bastien Dratwa comments:

Migrants were overlooked in [ANC] government efforts to mitigate the harms of [the coronavirus] lockdown measures. They were also denied access to government relief schemes, such as food parcels and vouchers under the Social Relief of Distress Grant. Many politicians overtly implied that it was more important to protect South Africans from COVID-19 than migrants. Their advocacy for reduced refugee rights and xenophobic policies found an apt platform in the pandemic mitigation efforts.

As we ponder our Heritage in September, and seek out any positives to celebrate, we should also be deeply disturbed by the darker aspects of what we have inherited, and what continues to exist (and thrive) in our so-called Rainbow Nation.

[NB: An article such as this can do no more than draw attention to the policies and practices of how neo-liberal regimes manage their “surplus people” problem – policies and practices which ultimately serve to control, divide and weaken the global labour force. This is part of what James Petras once referred to as “class struggle from above.”]

## THE ILLS OF THE FREE MARKET SYSTEM

The free market system, better known as capitalism is purported to be the panacea of all economic ills. So powerful is the propaganda against any other economic system that all but the resolute defenders of socialism are filled with reservations about its effectiveness.

The negotiations that gave birth to “*democratic*” South Africa after 1994 have failed to bring real freedom to the masses of our citizenry. It had not been formed after the ideas of the various political organisations that have evolved as a result of the struggles of the people over the past three hundred years. The full implementation of the Freedom Charter, the Azanian Manifesto, or the Unity Movement’s Ten Point Programme of Minimum Demands has NOT been realised. This means that the complete change as expected is in dispute. What the dispute is all about is that radical change was not instituted. The substance of the programmes of the various political programmes has remained unchanged. If the changes are thus now seen as cosmetic, can it be a case of “*old garbage in new bags*”.

There exists evidence that poverty can drive citizens to the depth of depravity. Do the effects of inequality in society influence depravity as experienced in our country in July 2021? Do the results of joblessness result in depravity? Is looting part of such depraved behavioural patterns? To answer these questions, we have to analyse the effects of the policies of the current political system.

If revolution is defined as the overthrow of one class by another, then our country was never involved in a revolution. What we have experienced is mere regime change. The ruling party (ANC) has been bourgeois since its inception. It was more about including the black emerging middle class as part of the governance of this country. Indicative of the political programmes of the ANC was the successive deputations to the royalty and the British government soon after its establishment in 1912. The dominant tendency in the ANC, the conservatives and the liberals were always going to be in control and plot the course for the masses.

The Soweto uprisings of 1976, initiated by the Black Consciousness Movement, changed the course of the political landscape in our country. The imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction led to what was later referred to as Soweto '76. The whole country went up in flames. The masses then realised that despite the armed forces of the apartheid regime, the oppressor could be overthrown.

Fast forward to 1985. The world was told that PW Botha would announce major reforms including the abolition of apartheid and the release of Mandela. Instead, Botha merely reiterated stated government policy. The corporates from Europe and the USA then spun into gear, capitalism-imperialism fearing a backlash from militants in our country as well as in the ANC, instituted immediate and far-reaching sanctions that, 1) removed PW

Botha and installed the more favourable FW De Klerk as president, and 2) Set the scene for a negotiated settlement by releasing Mandela and most of the political prisoners. Meetings between the ANC and big business, the Stellenbosch mafia, trade unions, sports bodies, including the South African Council on Sport and professional unions were held to lay the groundwork for the negotiated settlement.

Can we thus say that the ANC government betrayed the interest of South Africans? – the answer is an unequivocal NO! The ANC was never on the side of the workers and the rural poor and never on the side of the oppressed majority in South Africa. Their class interest was the same as that of the ruling class. This is the major reason why the ANC is now facing growing opposition on the home front – why the electoral system is rejected by the majority of the population. Whilst the citizenry may not at present be able to organise the masses into a coherent resistance, this day cannot be far-off.

South Africa has reached a political and economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Political in the sense that far more than half the voters of our country do not participate in the party political processes. Economic, in the sense that the free-market system that is supposed to create wealth for its citizenry only creates wealth for the super-rich. The result is that the gap between the rich and the poor is expanding at a rapid rate.

State and local governments collect tax from three sources: income tax on money from salaries/wages, sales on property including moveable stock and live-stock, and the value of a property. Income and Value Added Tax (VAT) make up most of the combined state tax, while property taxes are the largest source of tax for local governments. Beneficiaries of the free-market system are inclined to claim that only a small percentage of the population pays tax. Is this true? Those that work,

have to pay Personal Income Tax (PIT). Those that do not earn a salary/wage obviously cannot pay any PIT – yet they pay tax on services – on going to the doctor, the pharmacist, many becoming ill because of the squalid circumstances under which they are forced to live, without sanitation, without electricity and in the decrepit shantytowns dotted around the country. They have to pay taxes when going to work, when getting in a taxi, for the almost non-existent electricity, for irregular water provision, for taking a bus or train or when buying food. Because of their joblessness, they can ill afford the value-added tax (VAT). Added to this there are hidden taxes such as school fees, fees at churches and entertainment arenas. The poor are thus further impoverished in this way.

Companies pay tax on the profits they make and not on their investments - this totals a mere 20% of the income of the tax revenue. What scandalous exploitation of the workers of this country? Company tax was at 50% from 1980 – 1986. Companies paid for the maintenance of the apartheid state. Yet, in 2023 tax has dropped to 28%. This is exploitation of the workers on a massive scale.

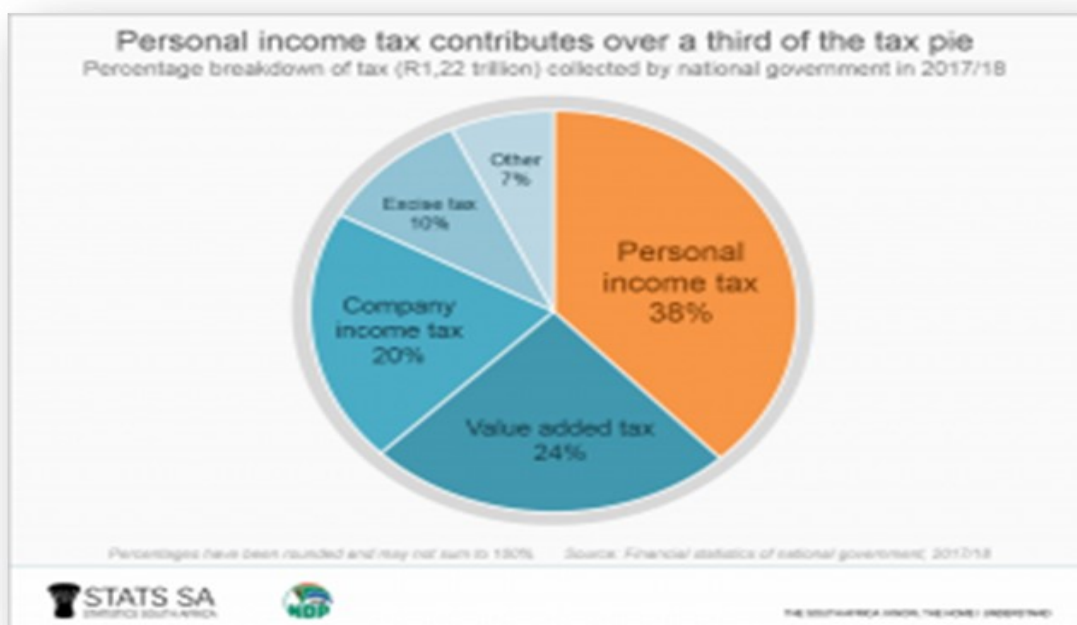
This is a pie chart by Stats SA of the tax revenue collected.

social disintegration and the current economic policies. The expanded unemployment stats in the rural areas can be as high as 60%, with the official youth unemployment (ages 15 – 24) reaching 64.18%. Indications are that the unemployment rate in South Africa is edging toward the 40% mark. This will be disastrous for the country.

Inadequate food supply and limited access to clean water are major causes of poverty in South Africa. In the shantytowns, it is a case of survival for many.

Have we gained our freedom in our country? Have we achieved a better life for all? If the answer is NO, then we have to continue the struggle.

Taking the above into account we have now entered a new and more difficult phase of the struggle for the complete liberation of the masses. The struggle for non-racialism has to be intensified. The struggle for equality and jobs for all have to be prioritised. In this task, we must not be distracted by the acclaims of the parliamentary clique, the wabenzi elite. Our duty as part of the world movement is to put out of business those that are in the business of wishing to sustain the economic status quo.



We don't seem to realise that the free-market system produced 'homeless street people'. It is estimated that approximately 200 000 people live on the streets in South Africa's urban areas. Studies have shown that this dates back to the apartheid era. It is exacerbated by increasing unemployment, lack of affordable housing,

**Statement from the  
NEW UNITY MOVEMENT  
on  
PALESTINE**



New Unity Movement

**SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE**

The New Unity Movement fully supports the Palestine Solidarity Campaign's efforts to overcome Israel's illegal occupation of Palestine and the ongoing genocide of Palestinians by Israel. We stand in solidarity with your 5<sup>th</sup> October march to demand South Africa's complete boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel.

The march also simultaneously calls for the end of Apartheid Capitalism in South Africa. Just like the poor and marginalised in SA are suffering the ongoing Imperialist project of neo-liberalist capitalism, Palestinians are bearing the brunt of American and European Imperialism. The Imperialists spread the myth of superior and inferior "races" across the world in order to keep their colonial subjects in subjugation for the exploitation of their labour and ever-increasing profits. Israel's rabid ethnic nationalists viz. Zionists, have been America and Europe's convenient hunting dog on a loose leash guarding their interest in the Middle-East arena since 1948.

Now, totally unleashed, Israel's genocidal war on Palestine is taking place under the watchful eye of the United States. America's continued supply of weapons and military hardware to Israel belies their feeble public protestations at the murderous excesses of Israel both in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank. The devastation of life and property in Gaza quenches the thirst of the racist nationalist zeal of the Zionists and sates the greed of the military-industrial complex of the American capitalists.

In co-operation with the PSC and other progressive forces, we must ensure that Israel is pointed out as the pariah and skunk that it deserves to be and that the butchers of Tel Aviv are held accountable for the devastation. The New Unity Movement calls for the immediate cessation of Israel's hostilities in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank and the return of the whole of Palestine to the people of Palestine as well as an end to Apartheid Capitalism in South Africa.

THIS WORKER IS PRODUCED BY THE PUBLICATIONS COLLECTIVE OF THE NEW UNITY MOVEMENT

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