

# Preface

All books have a biography, and so does this one. Very briefly, its genesis rests on two simultaneous sources: at a broader level with a life-long fascination with what, to my mind, has always been the ubiquitous place of Africa in world history (albeit, like the proverbial elephant in the room, not always acknowledged, let alone understood, even in the halls of academe); and, at the more immediate level, in the palpable dissonance between the views of U.S. civil society (in general), and those of the Reagan Administration on what U.S. foreign policy ought to have been toward apartheid South Africa on the eve of the passage of the *Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act* of 1986 by the U.S. Congress over the strenuous objections of the Reagan Administration—including the exercise of the presidential veto by Reagan, albeit to no avail. This legislative initiative, symbolically at least, sounded the death-knell of that administration's policy of appeasement and accommodation toward apartheid South Africa, which it had fancifully termed “constructive engagement” (doublespeak being one of its particular fortes, if one may recall) and most certainly was among the *external* factors that helped to hasten the demise of the apartheid state.<sup>1</sup> This legislative action forcefully reminded one of how, from time to time, progressive sections of the U.S. citizenry have been, refreshingly, closer to the historically self-perceived U.S. mission in the world of “doing good” than those who have occupied the citadels of power in Washington—who, more often than not, have tended to see that mission in far more narrower, anti-altruistic terms of protecting the corporate interests of U.S. capital (at least in terms of actual policy, if not in so many words).

Of all the countries in Africa today, South Africa is the only country that has had continuous relations with the United States that go back *centuries*, and with which it also shares a number of nationally determinative and intriguing historical parallels, ranging from permanent European settlement, to wars of independence fought against the same ruling power (Britain), to the struggle for freedom and civil rights by the racially marginalized.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, as we look out into the future there are all indications that these relations will strengthen as each continues to struggle with its monumental, historically bequeathed, fortuitous journey of building an authentic multicultural (or nonracial) democracy. In fact, it would not be too farfetched to suggest that historically each, in a sense, has been a mirror for the other.<sup>3</sup> However, as those familiar with the literature on the subject well know, scholarly works on the history of U.S. relations with South Africa that provide a broad overview—meaning going well beyond a survey of only a thematic *slice* of these relations (represented, for instance, by the foreign policy role of the U.S. antiapartheid movement, or economic relations, or policies of a specific administration)—that begin from the colonial period and coming all the way to the present do not, surprisingly, exist.<sup>4</sup>

In this age of “super-specialization” where historians (and this applies to other fields as well) ensconced in their own research world hardly notice the work of fellow historians only a little removed from them in terms of their research concerns will be quick to ask, but what purpose would such works serve anyway? Merely because a bird’s eye view of an entire history—which, after all, by definition would be only a general outline of broad contours—is lacking surely does not in itself justify its enterprise. Harking to the perennial specialist versus generalist argument there is failure to understand that not only is there a place for both, the generalist and the specialist approach, but that in the final analysis the specialist’s obsession with only a piece of “the puzzle” obfuscates the fact that the piece is not supposed to be an end in itself. The ultimate purpose of the piece is that when put in place with other pieces it allows us to see the whole puzzle when complete; that is, the whole picture (the domain of the generalist)—otherwise, all we have is fragments of an incomplete, and therefore distorted, history with all its attendant pitfalls (most especially the failure to see the wood for the trees). What is more, one can even push the point further to observe that the research agenda of the specialist is greatly enhanced from the generalizations that one can elicit from the whole picture. As a corollary of this point, a word of caution however: Because this work is an *overview*, it is important to stress that its usefulness rests on looking at the work as a whole (despite its encyclopedic orientation); any other approach will simply vitiate its purpose. In other words, dear reader, you are firmly enjoined to resist the temptation to consider it based on an approach that fragments it in consonance with your specific scholarly interests.

Consequently, and at the considerable risk of sounding self-serving, it goes without saying that this work constitutes a well-needed addition to the subject. At the very least, as a result of the author’s fortuitous temporal location (at well past the mid-point of the first decade of the twenty-first century) this work is able to employ a much larger temporal canvas, spanning more than three hundred years; thereby providing an unbroken perspective on U.S. relations with South Africa that in addition to a summary of the historical record, permits the discernment of a continuity / discontinuity of themes that may otherwise not be readily perceivable—most important among them being, as indicated earlier, the uneasy tension between the demands of capital and that of the ordinary citizenry from the perspective of what truly constitutes the “national interest.” After all, it is within this tension that the margin of hope resides for those unwilling to succumb to the seduction of cynicism regarding these relations—which so often emerges as the easy answer to what may appear as the unchallengeable might of capital (especially today when hubristic and democracy-corrupting visions of “empire” yet, once more, appear to be mesmerizing those that occupy the citadels of power and their acolytes) in thwarting the common good: a genuinely *democratic* planet where democracy is understood to imply not only its formalistic manifestations *but its substantive ones as well*.<sup>5</sup> However, even as one makes this point it would be highly disingenuous to not also mention that at many points in the course of going through the determinative events that constitute the totality of this work, one’s faith in the redemptive impulse of humanity will be severely tested. At the same time, it should be noted—on a related matter—that while a recurring theme in this work, for obvious reasons, is that of “resistance” the reader should desist from assuming thereby that there has been a failure to escape the trap of the “inverted mirage”—characteristic of UFO sightings—that is, conjuring up an illusionary reality. On the contrary, it must be emphasized at the outset that this work is not an exercise in discovering nonexistent resistance under every rock of history. Humans are extremely complex beings; as in everything else, therefore, their response to prolonged periods of pain and suffering (sometimes spanning centuries) cannot be anything but variate, depending upon both time and circumstance. In other words, their capacity for tolerance of such pain and suffering, as Barrington Moore’s work, for example, demonstrated a long ago, is as infinite as its obverse—*but without necessarily sacrificing their humanity or their dignity*.

Although many mainline U.S. historians continue to labor under the long shadow cast by a narrative historical methodology, fortunately there has been movement over the past five to six decades away from this approach. It is not that this approach does not have its place (and in fact can never truly be abandoned in its entirety if history is to remain history), but rather that it has sufficient shortcomings nonetheless to permit an effective comprehension of the complexity and totality of the relations that developed between the United States and South Africa and which the present work has sought to capture—albeit within the very real constraints imposed by the economics of a paper-based book publishing. Narrativism, therefore has had to be tempered by a structural historical ap-

proach. In other words, methodologically, too, this work differs from the others in that it is written from the perspectives of both traditional narrative history *and* Khaldunian interpretive historical analysis; consequently, it also sits at the interdisciplinary interstice of political economy and sociology in which the motor of history is viewed as an outcome of, in the last instance, materialist forces—but whose operationalization is to be found in the dialectic of the structural/ideational binary.<sup>6</sup>

Simultaneously, it must be strongly stressed that this work should not be viewed from the perspective of the narrow confines of bilateral international relations; given its wide temporal and spatial horizon, it must be seen as part of that field of history that over the past several decades has steadily been coming into its own, namely, *world history*. However, it must be emphasized that this approach is not a matter of personal preference but of the recognition that any history of a nation-state that refuses to go beyond its geographic boundaries can be nothing more than a jingoistic rendition of it; that is, a highly distorted history. From the perspective of the U.S. academe, it is a testimony to the power of hubris-inspired ignorance that many mainline U.S. historians—even in this day and age—have never managed to grasp the simple fact that the United States is a creature of world history even as it has also helped to shape that world history. The notion of “U.S. exceptionalism” is one of the most bogus concepts with which this profession has burdened the citizenry of the United States (to the great detriment of their well-being). The fundamental historical truth is that no modern nation-state—as Bender (2006), for example, reminds us—is an island unto itself. It follows then that the imprint of the historiographical approach characteristic of pioneers such as Fernand Braudel and Barrington Moore should be palpably discernable in this work—to the chagrin of those who prefer a simplistic and circumscribed (and therefore, ironically, ahistorical) reading of history.<sup>7</sup>

In light of the above, a warning, dear reader: there might be occasions as you go through this book when the temptation to throw one’s hands up in the air while groaning in exasperation: “Yes, this is all very interesting but what does it have to do with U.S. relations with South Africa?” will prove almost irresistible. The answer is that, in actuality, a great deal. Consider, for instance, a statement such as the following: International capital—including that from the United States—was drawn to South Africa, more than anywhere else on the African continent, in considerable part because apartheid guaranteed large investment returns that rested on a plentiful, relatively docile, and cheap supply of black labor. Now, to leave this statement as is, is to simply engage in clichés (there is an unstated assumption behind the statement, which it is felt requires no further analysis: apartheid equaled aberrant white racism directed at blacks, and therefore it was logical that black labor would be exploited for purposes of maximizing profit). For, the essential question here is, precisely *how* did the apartheid system imbue black labor with such characteristics? What does one mean by “cheap” labor in the context of capitalist production? Did “cheap” labor mean the same thing for all sectors of the apartheid economy? Or consider this perennial question that has bedeviled South African historiography for ages: Was white supremacy (regardless of the forms it took) *inherently* inimical to the interests of capital? The answer is both yes and no. It depended upon time and circumstance. In other words, in the United States (for instance) the supporters of greater economic engagement with South Africa and those who championed disengagement were, in a sense, both right: the policy of each would have helped to undermine white supremacy, *but* depending upon the time period under consideration—though to undermine something does not necessarily guarantee its demise one should also add.

In other words, dear reader, this work, to reiterate the foregoing, is also an interpretive work of history (which is the only kind of history upon which a work of this kind can build its credibility). And still on this point: one must be cognizant, furthermore, of the fact that the relations of any country with another country are always a product of the sum-total of permutations of a variety of factors—which include the internal dynamics of the countries involved *independent* of relations with each other as well as the configuration of relations toward each other as a dialectical reflection of these dynamics (in addition to such more obvious ones as direct responses of each to the clear initiatives of the other)—but many of which, at first glance, may appear to deserve no attention on the assumption that they are beyond the confines of the subject at hand (in this case U.S. relations with South Africa). For example, U.S. relations with South Africa were a permutational outcome of, at the very least, these variables:

1. The historically determined internal dynamics of the United States.
2. The historically determined internal dynamics of South Africa.
3. As a response to South Africa's independent responses to item 1.
4. As a response to South Africa's independent initiatives toward the United States as a reflection of item 2.
5. As a response to South Africa's response to U.S. relations with South Africa.
6. U.S. relations with other African countries besides South Africa.
7. U.S. relations with other countries outside Africa (especially Europe).
8. South Africa's relations with other countries besides the United States (especially Britain).
9. As a response to South Africa's independent initiatives toward other countries (especially in Africa) besides the United States.

Therefore, an effort has been made to capture in this work (to the extent space has permitted) the totality of these permutations—at the risk of being accused of veering off from the subject. Consequently, the author begs your indulgence.

The specific theoretical guidelines that ensue from the method that undergirds this work need to be spelled out at this point.<sup>8</sup> Any work that comprises a historical study of any part of the world that underwent European colonization carries with it an inherent mandate to bring balance, from the perspective of historical agency—especially when the objectives of the study require a temporal gaze that traverses centuries, commencing from the colonial period coming all the way to the postindependence present. Consequently, it must include in the study at least a peek at the historical antecedents that shaped that colonization and its aftermath within the colonies but from the viewpoint of the colonized (that is those categorized in much of European history until recently as the faceless “Other”—Mark Twain’s “the person sitting in darkness,” or as Eric R. Wolf 1997 [1982] has called them, similarly tongue in cheek, “the people without history”).<sup>9</sup> Anything less would be to open oneself up to the legitimate charge of producing a distorted and incomplete history; that is, one that is in thrall to “Eurocentrism” (of which works such as the *Age of Jackson* by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. [1945], for example, are emblematic). Now, dear reader, just in case you are tempted to hurl charges of capitulating to “identity politics,” a disclaimer: “The point is that in a hierarchized world,” as Krishna (1993: 407) pointed out some two decades ago, “some discourses dominate others who are condemned to remain a people without history.” So, yes, whiffs of identity politics may at places seep out of this work subtextually, but it will not be the banal or destructive kind. To turn to Krishna again: “Ironically, the purpose or telos of this identity politics is precisely to go beyond it, to render one’s place and position unremarkable as it were, into a world where differences are not the occasion either for chauvinistic celebration or for annihilatory violence, but just simply are” (p. 407).

At the same time, one must also register a caveat on a related but separate matter: No generation has the ability, regardless of the depth of its capacity for agency, to completely remake the history it inherits (though, of course, neither is it wholly a prisoner of that history). In other words: one must also, simultaneously, be very careful in not tilting the balance too far to the other side; something that social historians of late, particularly those seduced by post-structuralism—much of it cant and the fact that the most prominent homes of it appear to be English departments in itself speaks volumes—are particularly guilty of (this is not by any means to cast aspersions on their good intentions: to move away from a Eurocentrist reading of history). The problem can be illustrated by way of a homespun analogy: yes, of course, it is most laudable that one managed to sneak in a couple of bone-breaking whacks with the baseball bat but the fact that the thieves still managed to make away with most of the family jewels and even worse, in the process, fatally wounded a couple of family members casts a sobering light on one’s agency in the whole event. The truth, then, is that no work of history that fails to acknowledge that there is a necessary relationship between structure and agency can be anything more than an exercise in obfuscation. This is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the case of major social transformations, that is those that change societies permanently. They are always an outcome of a relationship between agency and “historical structures,” which is best expressed by the concept of the *conjunction of fortuitously propitious historical factors* (see Sanderson [1995] for more on this point.) In fact, to really complicate matters consider, for instance, this point: that the present-day U.S. Euro-American working class can trace its subordinate position all the way back to the era of the Roman Civilization when much of its ancestry constituted slaves and peasants—despite the huge social transformations along the way represented by feudalism and industrial

capitalism (not to mention the geographic disjuncture). In other words, the permanence of the broad contours of the U.S. social structure that consideration of this historical trajectory of the provenance of the U.S. Euro-American working class throws up, renders the significance of historical agency in a wider scheme of things highly problematic.

This work does not attempt to consciously take sides on the validity or invalidity of a radical, or liberal, or conservative theoretical approach to the writing and interpretation of history. Purists will of course wince at this (woe to the person who should dare to stake out a claim in the intellectual middle ground of theory). To suggest, however, that a *single* theoretical approach can capture the complex totality of all human experience across a wide swath of time, and across widely dispersed societies, is to take hubris beyond the bounds of unmitigated absurdity. Simply no single theoretical approach has a monopoly on all “historical truth.”<sup>10</sup> Consequently, this study is guided by theoretical eclecticism but with this qualification: insofar as the radical approach signifies a materialist emphasis to historical interpretation the overall theoretical balance must perforce tilt in that direction. Here is the problem: a human being is first and foremost a biological entity and not a spiritual entity; the one precedes the other. (This is a truism that perplexingly often appears to escape even the most learned—perhaps because of the “tunnel vision” that is the occupational hazard of disciplinary over-specialization that the political economy of modern-day Western academe demands.) A dead body cannot contemplate spirituality; therefore, primacy must be accorded to the material over the cultural and ideological. Of course, in stating that human beings are first and foremost biological entities is by no means to imply that there is no place for the ideational, the ideological, the cultural or the spiritual in explaining what motivates human behavior. The point rather is that there is a dialectical relationship between the two but one that is set in motion initially by the biological. For the vast majority of the European settlers (if not all) in the United States or in South Africa, or anywhere else for that matter, the goal was always betterment of their standard of living; and for capital that accompanied them, the iron-law of accumulation, needless to say, were its permanent shackles. Consequently, if these twin imperatives of European colonization required the creation of a “racial formation” (to borrow a term originally coined by Omi and Winant [1994]) then no amount of ideological rationalization could apologize for it. In other words, the rise of the racial formation was always at heart a materially-driven enterprise, ideology was simply the cover—a palliative for social conscience.

On the basis of the foregoing then, it makes sense not to be wedded exclusively to a particular historical approach; both the radicals and the liberals have something to offer. In other words, there is place in this work for a positivist perspective (albeit attenuated), as well as the normative; and from the perspective of the latter, for the dialectic in the base-superstructure dyad, and, as the term “critical” in the title also implies, for the dialectic between the Gramscian approach to critical theory, and that of the Frankfurt School.<sup>11</sup>

The reader should also note that an effort has been made to write this work from the perspective of ordinary people too, not simply those who occupy the citadels of power and influence; for when it comes to “truth” in history the obligation of the historian is to present the perspective of the masses as well, without which it becomes little more than mere apologia for the powerful. The monarch *and* the commoner must each be allowed her/his place in the story. The problem was best presented by Barrington Moore, Jr. in his magnum opus some thirty years ago:

[A]ny simple straightforward truth about political institutions or events is bound to have polemical consequences. It will damage some group interests. In any society the dominant groups are the ones with the most to hide about the way society works. Very often therefore truthful analyses are bound to have a critical ring, to seem like exposures rather than objective statements, as the term is conventionally used.... For all students of human society, sympathy with the victims of historical processes and skepticism about the victors' claims provide essential safeguards against being taken in by the dominant mythology (1966:523).

As may be surmised, undergirding this entire work is the view that the ultimate purpose of all writing of history (of human societies) is to chart the progress and the obstacles toward “civilization” and “democracy”—the former to be understood not only in terms of the development of material artifacts but also in terms of life-nurturing human relationships; and the latter to be understood not in the *procedural* sense to which it is often debased by the ignorantsia but in its broader *corporeal* sense, as defined, for example, by the preamble to the U.S. Declaration of Independence. To quote the key paragraph: “WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all [Persons] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” (Of course, even as one turns to that document, one cannot help but imagine how great that document could have really been if only its architects had at the same time agreed to consider other peoples, such as the enslaved U.S. African Americans and the Aboriginal Americans, as worthy of these same rights too; instead they not only went on to label the latter as “merciless Indian Savages,” but made them the source of one more grievance among the many listed by the document against the British Crown.) As a corollary of this view, one must also draw attention to this fact: There is the bizarre and most ahistorical notion espoused by many mainline historians in the Euro-American ecumene that the capitalist order is necessarily predisposed toward a *just* racial order specifically, and democracy generally. Yet, history is replete with a long and unbroken chain of examples to the contrary. Barrington Moore (1966) provided us with an exemplary study more than thirty years ago that showed quite clearly that capitalism can go hand in hand with any kind of political order, including a totalitarian one—vide Nazi Germany, and modern-day China (to take two examples from different parts of the world, and from different eras).

Now, in light of the above, it also follows that this work carries with it a special burden to make explicit, from a definitional point of view, key concepts, theories, and terminology.<sup>12</sup> Consider, for example, the fact that it is impossible to discuss U.S. relations with South Africa without at the same time also taking into account that elephant in the room: “race”—not only because these relations were to some degree colored by it but also because it was and remains a critical determinant of the kinds of societies that the two countries have evolved into today. Yet, terminology designating ethnic categories, not surprisingly, has been a source of considerable commotion (not altogether illegitimate). Consider: in South Africa, the aboriginal Africans have been labeled by the European interlopers at various times in history as Kaffirs, Natives, Africans, Bantu, and Blacks. The preferred designation today, of those so characterized, is either Africans or Blacks. Similarly, in the United States people of African ancestry have been variously labeled by the European interlopers as Africans, Niggers, Negroes, Coloreds, Blacks, and African Americans (the last being their own preferred designation today). Therefore, as one would expect, ethnic categories can acquire bewildering designations in societies that are highly dependent on juridically-based ethnic classifications as among the foundational organizing principles of their social structures. This being most especially true of South Africa (and to a somewhat lesser extent the United States as well), the reader is enjoined to consult the glossary for semantic relief. (Note: should the designations indicated in the glossary, and by implication the text, cause some particular ethnic group today grief, it is absolutely not intentional.)<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, it is unfeasible to write a history of U.S. relations with any country outside the European West that dates as far back as the eighteenth century, and earlier, without running into such concepts as “capitalism,” “colonialism,” “imperialism,” “racism,” and the like; that is words that raise the hackles of some, and are the stock-in-trade of others. The glossary and the appendix provide an indication of how these concepts are defined from the perspective of this work. While going through these definitions, the reader is enjoined to keep the following in mind: if the price of dragging the peoples who were the target of European colonization projects into modernity was the dispossession of their lands and/or labor and even their lives on a most gigantic scale—a belief espoused by many in the West today (vide the resurgence of the obsession with “empire” among even liberal academics)—then what exactly has that modernity meant for the descendants of the dispossessed, when contrasted with what the descendants of the dispossessors enjoy? In other words, terms like those just mentioned are relevant to the discourse on U.S. relations with South Africa because they not only help to correctly identify the processes involved in the post-1492 saga of European dispossessions but also assist us with comprehending the ongoing reverberations of their legacy *today*. Consider, for example, a question that one often encounters in classrooms: How is it possible that a small population of settlers came to dominate an entire region populated by millions of aboriginal Africans? There is no easy answer to this question that does not turn on essentialist discourse; the best answer that one can come up with is that it was an outcome of a combination of, both, the ability to effect armed duress (in itself an outcome of a conjuncture of fortuitously propitious historical factors, dating back scores of centuries, in the Afro-Eurasian ecumene), as well as the specifics of the precapitalist modes of production and their interaction with the capitalist mode—but to be considered always in the context of the general march of Europe toward global economic hegemony that the “Columbian project” so *inadvertently* set in motion.<sup>14</sup>

By the same token, given the deeply profound ideological differences across social differentiations—whatever their manifestation: gender, races, classes, and so on—and, of course, across geopolitical boundaries of the nation-state, in the conception of not only the means *and* the end (a “civilized” society) but the very definition of the humanity of a human being (a problem, for instance, that all slave-owning and racist societies have had to grapple with), a work of this kind cannot escape from the use of such ideological descriptors as “conservative,” “liberal,” “neoradical,” “neofascist,” “reactionary,” and the like.<sup>15</sup> Consider, for example, this problem: Regardless of how flawed the means (“dictatorship of the proletariat”) to an end (“from each according to her/his ability to each according to her/his needs”) may be as proposed by the radical left, we must not lose sight of the fundamental difference between the left and the right, considered *generically*—that is, regardless of the factional variations within each—in what constitutes the very essence of humanity, and civilization. Hence, whereas the latter believes that the pursuit of self-aggrandizement through untrammelled *systemic* greed (capitalist accumulation) is not only the epitome of civilizational achievement but constitutes a response to a genetic trait fundamental to the human species—even though completely unsupported by scientific evidence, or even religion for that matter to which the rank and file of the right is often in thrall. The former, on the other hand, with science (e.g. mirror neurons research)—and, ironically, even religious scriptures—providing support, argues that because human beings are social beings from birth to death, altruism is not only an essential part of the genetic makeup of the human species that guarantees its survival but it constitutes the very essence of civilization itself and the means to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for *all*. Here again, then, the glossary, together with Appendix II, will come in handy in determining how these ideological descriptors are used in this work (and thereby serve as an effective antidote to any perception that may arise that the use of such descriptors is nothing more than an ad hominem exercise in name-calling).

A word or two about the constituent elements of the book that have shaped its organizational structure are in order at this point. While it is not necessary to discuss all of them since even a cursory perusal of the descriptively listed contents page should quickly unearth what they are, it will be of some help to the reader to highlight those that give this work its *elan*, so to speak. Given the mandate of this book to commence its historical survey from the earliest beginnings of U.S. relations with South Africa (that is, even long before they acquired their present national forms), a section of it has been devoted to consideration of the processes that led to the emergence of these two national entities in the first place but in which the fate of the aboriginal peoples looms large. (For, to be sure, colonialism does imply marginality for the dispossessed but it can never be a marginality where the center can avoid a permanent albeit involuntary “dialogue” with the margin—unless the dispossession also implied extinction—because, at the very least, there is no center without a margin.) That particular section constitutes Appendix I.<sup>16</sup>

Before entering the body of the work, however, it will be evident to the reader that it is preceded by an extensive chronology. It has been deliberately made as comprehensive and as detailed as possible in order to allow the reader a quick purchase on the basic themes that undergird this work. One is encouraged to go through it with some diligence because it also, though crudely, serves as a rough summary of this book. (Moreover, some items in the chronology, though relevant to this work, are not mentioned again in the text.)

No work of this magnitude can avoid acronyms and abbreviations; these have been collapsed into a larger entity, the glossary, which structurally serves as the bookend counterpart to the chronology. Again, it may be fruitful for the reader to look through the glossary first before plowing into the body of this work. As already hinted, all histories, by definition are contentious, especially ones that not only traverse large spaces in time and geography but also seek to be critical in historiographic orientation; a detailed glossary, therefore, helps to serve as a necessary instrument of navigation. The theoretical subtexts (as expressed by concepts, ideas, theories, and so on) that a work of this kind must of necessity be accompanied by, are made explicit in some of the chapter epilogues, as well as in Appendix II. While these parts of the book may be viewed, in a sense, as an extension of the glossary, their role is best understood in terms of permitting one to see what is really going on under the hood, so to speak.

Although the book is organized, for the most part, on the basis of a temporal structure, it is important to stress that this is merely a device of convenience dictated by the need to impose a semblance of coherence—to facilitate readability—on a confusing terrain of facts, processes, events and

the like that always constitute historical reality. The fundamental truth is that historical reality has a continuity that crosses any and all boundaries of periodization that a historian may wish to impose upon it. For example, the reader is enjoined to always keep in mind that there is no evidence in history of temporal disjunctures of the sort historical narratives imply (wantonly or otherwise) between, say, colonial South Africa and the independent Union of South Africa, or between the pre-apartheid era and the apartheid era, or between the apartheid era and the postapartheid era. To put the matter differently, the excision of the past from the present or the present from the future is only possible within the historian's imagination; it does not conform in the least bit to historical reality.<sup>17</sup>

All historians worth their salt know that an exasperating structural limitation on their craft imposed by the exigencies of publishing is the fact that they cannot say everything there is to be said about whatever they are writing. One workaround to this problem, though by no means an entirely satisfactory one, is the lowly but functionally useful footnote—or in the case of this work the equivalent *chapter* endnote. Of course the problem with this workaround, in this day and age, is that as an expression of the anti-intellectual and anti-scholarly tradition that runs through the entire three-hundred and fifty year history of the plebeian-dominated intellectual culture of United States (itself an expression of the station in life that most of our immigrant forebears sprang from) we are often burdened by an annoying impatience with notes.<sup>18</sup> (As a possible antidote, Grafton's [1997] marvelous work on the provenance and function of the footnote would, perhaps, be of some help here.) The fact, however, is that the nuances of the complexity of a subject such as the history of foreign relations of a country that has for good or ill left a large footprint on global affairs—especially one with a subtopic that attempts to cover, at the considerable risk of pretentiousness, a huge swath of time—simply cannot be captured entirely in the text without, at the very least, seriously damaging its organizational coherence, and hence readability. With this justification, then, dear reader you are urged to put aside your prejudices and diligently read the chapter endnotes too. (In fact, quite possibly, some may even find that for them that is where all the action is!<sup>19</sup>)

A special note about the bibliographic section: The general tendency for scholarly works of history is to bury their sources in endnotes—instead of disaggregating them into a separate bibliographic section—thereby denying the reader an opportunity to quickly get a feel for the “orientation” and “depth” of a given work. The reader will be pleased to note that this frustratingly annoying practice has been avoided in this work. Consequently, a quick scan of the bibliography, almost all of which comprises works cited in the text (together with the unusually detailed index), should prove worthwhile in assessing the usefulness of this book to the reader.

If, by this point, dear reader, you should insist on a summary of a work that covers a period spanning more than *three hundred years* of relations between two nation-states that today dominate their respective continents, then the one coming up momentarily will have to do. First, however, a necessary preamble by means of quotes, presented chronologically, from three men who each in their struggles against oppression have left their mark, for good or ill, on world history (albeit to varying degrees) but who at the same time, for obvious reasons, are not necessarily held in high esteem in the Euro-North American ecumene; they are: Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi, and former Cuban president Fidel Castro.

In an article for *Foreign Affairs*, published in 1943,<sup>20</sup> Du Bois would write among other things:

[W]e must repudiate the more or less conscious feeling, widespread among the white peoples of the world, that other folk exist not for themselves, but for their uses to Europe; that white Europe and America have the right to invade the territory of colored peoples, to force them to work and to interfere at will with their cultural patterns, while demanding for whites themselves a preferred status.... The most dangerous excuse for this situation is the relation between European capital and colored labor involving high profit, low wages, and cheap raw material. It places the strong motive of private profit in the foreground of our inter-racial relations, while the greater objects of cultural understanding and moral uplift are pushed into the background.

When a U.S. representative asked Mahatma Gandhi in the spring of 1947 if he had any advice on how relations between the United States and India could be deepened, Gandhi replied:

By the employment of unselfishness, hitherto unknown in international relations.<sup>21</sup>

In his memoirs published in 2007, Castro (2007: 565 [English translation]) observes:

I don't think a Fascist-type regime could ever emerge in the United States. Within their political system, grave errors and injustices have been committed—and many of them still survive—but the American people have certain institutions, traditions, educational, cultural and political values that would make that virtually impossi-



ble. The risk is in the international sphere. The powers and prerogatives of an American president are so great, and that country's network of military, economic, and technological strength is so immense, that in virtue of circumstances that have absolutely nothing to do with the will of the American people, the world is threatened.

We can now proceed with the summary. If there is a single—though by necessity dyadic—theme that we may condense from this survey of U.S. relations with South Africa, then it is this: behind all the policies, trends, and objectives, captured by terms such as “open door policy,” “cold war,” “constructive engagement,” “human rights,” “democracy,” “sanctions,” “globalization,” and so on, has been a single unifying determinative force that runs through the entire history of U.S. relations with the rest of the world (against the backdrop of the chronologically almost linear transmutation of a predominantly Western-domiciled capital, at the planetary level, from mercantilism through industrialism to “techno-financialism,” as it marches, on the pain of extinction, to the beat of the iron law of accumulation) almost from the moment the country emerged as a self-conscious national entity with the ratification of the *Articles of Capitulation* at Yorktown on October 19, 1781. It is one that is constituted from a loosely woven tapestry of two basic dissonant strands colored, usually subtly, by an aura of a Manichean struggle: on one hand, the drive to make the world safe for U.S. capital as a principal item on the foreign policy agenda of the U.S. American state in collusion with capital; and on the other, to “humanize” capital, as the principal objective of progressive sections of the U.S. citizenry, in consonance with the democratic intent of the U.S. constitution—as amended (either legislatively or interpretatively) through their agency by means of, among other things, such traumatic national upheavals as the abolitionist movement, the U.S. Civil War, Reconstruction, the suffragette movement, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, and so on, which they helped engineer in their drive to expand, often in the teeth of massive opposition by capital and its allies, the definition of the concept of democracy beyond the domain of the *procedural* to that of the *corporeal* (hence constituting a marriage of the *means* to the *end* that capital and its allies, in this instance, so disdain).

At the same time: beginning from almost the very moment that the first European interloper stepped ashore, black South Africans (like their aboriginal counterparts in the Americas) became embroiled in a racialized struggle, though not of their choosing, with the interlopers from overseas to retain their independence, freedom, and dignity in the land of their birth even as their societies were steadily, through the centuries, permanently transformed by the juggernaut of international capital in its various manifestations under the aegis of an evolving and transmuting ethnically-riven whiteness-inspired racialized colonialism of the European interlopers that in time, like its counterpart in the United States, ceased to be an externally-sourced intrusion as it became “nativized” (historically expressed by the eventual nullification, by means of armed duress, of the *Natural Law of Prior Claim* with the *Law of Historical Irreversibility*).<sup>22</sup> In this struggle—emblazoned by such historical markers of both conflict and nation-building as the Hundred-Year War, the Great Trek, the Xhosa Cattle-killing, the Anglo-Boer War, unification, independence, apartheid, the Defiance Campaign, the Freedom Charter, the Sharpeville Massacre, the Rivonia Trial, homelands, the Soweto Uprising, “total strategy,” the Groote Shuur Minute, Codesa, and national democratic elections (and bracketed by two historically iconic figures, Jan van Riebeeck on one side of the centuries-long struggle and Nelson Mandela on the other)—the protagonists not only drew upon their own internally-derived ideological and material resources but they also turned, through both circumstance and design, to the world outside, including, and most especially, the United States, for support. Moreover, today, on the eve of the second decade of the twenty-first century, even as the social structural salience of race slowly recedes into the background as class comes to the fore (with all that it portends for the black masses of South Africa) as the development of a PQD watered-down version of capitalist democracy moves apace, under the guidance of a brash and unashamedly self-aggrandizing compradorial elite that only yesterday had mouthed revolutionary slogans, the hand of United States in this process—against the backdrop of such disquietingly burgeoning manifestations as global-warming-induced climate-change, “commodity famine,” and a relentlessly ever-widening global income and wealth inequality of the ever-tightening choke hold of Western-dominated globalized corporate capital on a seemingly hapless planet—remains ubiquitous.

Now, we can proceed to one of the more pleasant aspects of scholarly endeavor, the acknowledgments.

## Acknowledgments

As will be deduced, from the perspective of time spent researching and writing, this book has been many years in the making. Consequently, while it goes without saying that like all books, this work could not have seen the light of day without the moral support of family and friends, and the material assistance of many others during the stages of research, writing, revisions, proofreading, etc., in this particular instance this point has to be doubly emphasized. It is with deep gratitude, therefore, I register vociferously profound thanks to all of them, but deserving of immortalization by being listed here by name are those among the latter. Other than the anonymous reviewers, they are the folks at Peter Lang USA, most especially my editor Phyllis Korper who saw merit in this project long before it was complete (though I am still smarting from being bludgeoned into drastically paring down the manuscript—smile), and production supervisor Sophie Appel for her admirable patience and for regular and necessary but gentle reminders that helped me stay on the straight and narrow; followed by the library folks, most especially G. Johnson-Cooper, J. Ortner, K. L. Reid, and E. Urbanek, together with their extremely helpful and diligent support staff, who time and again went beyond the call of professional duty—many, many thanks guys. Special thanks are also due to the people in the Dean's office, above all Deans Bruce D. McCombe and Charles Stinger. The rest I will list alphabetically: S. (Beza) Alemayehu, J. Callender, R. Clarke, T. J. Davis, K. Henry, D. Hewett, D. Lal, A. M. McGoldrick, J. G. Pappas, and M. Todeschini. I also feel compelled to thank my physicians, most especially J. L. Dusse, Y. M. Gonzalez, N. H. Rabadi, and S. Siddiqui. (Hey Glendora, Fino and Marilyn, this book is also for you!) Needless to say, none of the people listed here necessarily share the conclusions reached in this work. Finally, no work of this kind can be produced without standing on the shoulders of others; my debt to them is indicated by their listing in the bibliography. Of course, I take full responsibility for any errors—of fact, interpretation, or otherwise—that may have slipped through in this work.

## NOTES

1. It may be noted that Reagan's "constructive engagement" policy was, in one sense (though not one envisaged by its architects), quite ironically, a policy for the very social change sought by antiapartheid activists: by championing vigorous global-oriented capitalist economic development in South Africa it inadvertently helped to accelerate the long gestating structural changes within the economy with its concomitant contradictions—which in turn would be among the key factors that would help to produce and nurture the second "decade of antiapartheid rebellion," further deepening the contradictions in a dialectical fashion, leading to the eventual demise of apartheid itself.

2. Massie (1997: xi) draws our attention to a wonderful opener in a speech delivered by Robert F. Kennedy while on a visit to South Africa, on June 6, 1966 at the University of Cape Town, that really drives home this point: "I come here today because of my deep interest in and affection for a land settled by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, a land taken over by the British, and at last independent; a land in which the native inhabitants were at first subdued and relations with whom are a problem to this day; a land which defined itself on a hostile frontier; a land which was once an importer of slaves and now must struggle to wipe out the last traces of that form of bondage." Now, up to this point the audience must have surely thought that he was talking about South Africa—until he delivered this punch line: "I refer, of course, to the United States of America." On a different but related note: U.S. relations with South Africa throughout the centuries have also been a function of language: in any situation, relations between two national entities will always be that much easier when they share a common dominant language (in this case, English—thanks to British colonialism).

3. Or, perhaps more correctly a "mottled" mirror, as Massie (1997: xi) puts it, where, in his words: "Political leaders, social commentators, and average citizens have all, from time to time, glanced over at the other country in search of some revealing image. They have searched for different things: for excuses and examples, warnings and prophecies, heroes and villains, reassurance and reproach. Each country," he observes, "has served as a refuge for the imagination of the other, a mottled mirror in which anxious souls have found the portraits they have most admired and feared."

4. There are two or three that come to mind that come quite close, but they still, however, temporally (as well as in terms of breadth of overview) fall considerably short—though this is not in any way whatsoever to cast aspersions on their work, which after all have greatly informed the present work—they are Booth (1976), Hull (1990), and the two books by Noer (1978, and 1985) when considered together. Perhaps one may also include here Duignan and Gann (1984), even though their purview goes beyond Southern Africa to include the rest of the continent and not to mention their heavy tilt toward a cold war-infused conservative perspective. (After all, these were the same gentlemen who had sought to predict in a work chock full of drivel [Gann and Duignan 1981] that, in not so many words, the apartheid state was not only virtually unassailable—with the exception of limited reformist tinkering at the edges—but that it was

better for all concerned to come to terms with that fact. What is more, they had arrived at this conclusion despite the fact that they had the “lessons” of both Zimbabwe and the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire [had they chosen to be aware of them] to disabuse them of this notion of the permanence of white supremacy in Southern Africa.) And if pressed, we may also include among these few works the more journalistic survey by Rosenthal (1968). A survey of published work that looks at only facets of U.S. relations with South Africa that has been produced in recent years, going back no more than a decade and half or so, would almost certainly bring up (excluding, without prejudice, doctoral dissertations): Baldwin (1995), Culverson (1999), Hostetter (2006), and Nesbitt (2004), which all examine the U.S. anti-apartheid movement but through a U.S. African American lens; De Villiers (1995) which is also about the U.S. anti-apartheid movement, but from a more general perspective; and Borstelmann (1993), Crocker (1992), Hesse (2001), Lyman (2002), Massie (1997), Mokoena (1993), Thomas (1997), and Thomson (1996), which all consider foreign policies of specific U.S. administrations. To these recent books, one would also add Campbell (1995), a marvelously insightful study of the U.S. African American presence in South Africa, and Nixon (1994) which brings a unique cultural approach to the study of U.S.-South-African relations. For older work, see the annotated bibliography by Lulat (1991).

5. The distinction here is between the two halves of all authentic democracies: the *corporeal* in contrast to the *procedural*, where the former is the end while the latter is the means (see also the glossary).

6. As a reminder: Writing nearly 700 years ago, the celebrated Afro-Arab historian, Ibn Khaldun, had observed in his *Muqaddimah*: “History is a discipline widely cultivated among nations and races.... Both the learned and the ignorant are able to understand it. For on the surface history is no more than information about political events, dynasties, and occurrences of the remote past.... The inner meaning of history, on the other hand, involves speculation and an attempt to get at the truth, subtle explanation of the causes and origins of existing things, and deep knowledge of the how and why of events” (Khaldun 1967, Vol. 1: 6). It is this latter trait, in addition to the obvious matter of a careful examination of sources, that encompass, at one level, the concept of critical history in this work. In other words, the critical part in the book title is not a marketing ploy. Rather, it speaks to two basic elements of method in this work: an iconoclastic approach to cherished shibboleths, and a critique of power relations (understood in their broadest sense), in terms of both the sociology of the production of knowledge (here one means, for example, examining the ideological underpinnings of questions asked, conclusions reached, etc., and the historical data itself—for instance the actual form of U.S. relations with South Africa at a given moment). In other words, what this also implies is that the “critical” also speaks to the effort to place positivism in its proper place in historical analysis by also turning to the theoretical perspective that has come to be known as “critical theory”—à la Gramsci and the Frankfurt School.

7. For canonical examples of their work, see Braudel (1982–1984), and Moore (1966).

8. A disclaimer: it is important to emphasize that contrary to what the lay public thinks, and possibly many in academe as well, the production of all history is a fundamentally contingent process in which such factors as the role of “established” historians, the production and editorship of journals, the production of Ph.D. dissertations and the hiring of their authors as faculty, the organizing of conferences, and above all the “tenor of the times,” all collude to rendering it as such.

9. Incidentally, Twain’s satirically scathing critique (Twain 1996 [1901]) of Western imperialism and the U.S. project for bringing democracy to the Philippines titled “To the Person Sitting in Darkness” is a sobering *déjà vu* read at this particular moment in history; you are strongly enjoined, dear reader, to seek it out.

10. Fortunately, there are others who also share this view. For example, at least one work on South Africa that is guided by this principle is the anthology put together by Beinart and Dubow (1995). Here the brief but excellent historiographical surveys by Maylam (2001) and Saunders (1988) are also relevant, for they both remind us that contrary, for instance, to the positivist view of history, it is also always “political.”

11. See the excellent seminal overview edited by Jones (2001) on what a critical theoretical approach to the analysis of international relations implies. See also Dunn and Shaw (2001) which provides us with an exemplar of the practical, though not necessarily self-conscious, application of the critical theoretical approach to an analysis of Africa’s international relations.

12. There is a Eurocentric tendency for some academics to assume that all books published in the “West” are going to be read only by Westerners. Consequently, they may find information in this work that will appear redundant (or perhaps even perplexing). To minimize frustration, they are enjoined to broaden their perspective to include the rest of the planet who, at the very least not only form a majority, but some of whom have been integral to “Western” history either directly or indirectly from almost the beginning of the emergence of the so-called “West.”

13. Of course, it is not simply the matter of terminology that the subject of race brings up: Given the divergent historical trajectories that the two countries eventually followed on this matter, it was bound to be a source of severe contention in U.S. relations with South Africa at the level foreign policy. In other words, this work does not shy away from dealing with such questions that this issue generated as: Did the U.S. have any business becoming involved in what SAAG always argued was an internal policy matter? To what extent were the various U.S. administrations affected by their own views on race in how they approached the matter of apartheid? Could the various U.S. administrations have done more to assist with a speedier ending of apartheid? How did race relations within the United States itself color foreign policy toward South Africa? And so on.

14. The last point is discussed at some length in the first two appendices to Lulat (2005).

15. Interestingly, the term “liberal” has pejorative connotations in both the United States and South Africa but from opposite ideological perspectives: in the United States, to the right-wing a liberal is synonymous with someone on the left, whereas in South Africa, to the left-wing a liberal is synonymous with someone who is a conservative (but masquerading as someone from the left). Therefore, in both instances a liberal is viewed as someone who is not to be trusted. In this work, depending upon context, either definition informs usage of the term. It is important to point out

too that from the perspective of race relations the integrity of white liberals (regardless of their geographic location) must always be suspect given their concealed adherence to the ideology of whiteness. (See also the discussion in the section titled “The Penury of Liberalism” in Chapter 3 of Rob Nixon’s [1994] work.)

16. Lest there is the hasty judgment that the placement of this topic in an appendix suggests its peripherality to the central concerns of this work, it must be emphasized here that any such notion is absolutely erroneous. Its placement in an appendix is merely an outcome of the desire to ease the burden on the reader, in a lengthy work of this kind, of having to grapple with a complex variety of issues all at once.

17. Similarly, one would be guilty of a grave error in assuming that South African history exists entirely separately from African history in general, or Southern African history in specific.

18. In fairness one ought to also point out that printers too did their part in discouraging the use of notes, most especially footnotes, considering them a nuisance because of the difficulties they created during typesetting. One solution they found was to bury the notes in the back, a generally nefarious practice that continues to live on to this day, but that simply did not help matters. However, we live now in the age of computerized typesetting; this should no longer be an issue other than the weight of tradition.

19. Over half a million words make up the text of this work, of which one third comprises endnotes (numbering over a thousand altogether).

20. The article is reproduced in a Du Bois reader edited by Sundquist (1996: 663).

21. The U.S. representative was Raymond Hare, a career diplomat who was sent by the State Department on a goodwill mission to India as the latter was preparing for independence. (The quote appears in Kux [1992: 54].)

22. See glossary.