Editorial

The five articles that comprise this edition of *Theoria* cover a range of issues from reconsidering the war on terrorism to defending black solidarity to the abjection of the vagina in Brazil and South Africa. While the subject matter of the five articles is diverse, there is a common thread that connects them: they all touch on the themes of inclusion and exclusion. In an increasingly globalised world shaped by cross-border events like the war on terrorism, we find ourselves connected to one another in new ways, and we are forced to consider the issue of belonging. Global migration brings people from developing parts of the world, some of which are predominantly Muslim, into contact with people in developed parts of the world, like Europe. The cultural and ethnic tensions and clashes that result raise questions about belonging—who belongs and who does not—and who has the right to be included in the state, and who should be excluded. The first two articles examine ways of excluding and marginalising members of society, respectively women and black intellectuals, in ways that are not necessarily obvious to the wider society. The second and third articles overlap in exposing ways of including marginalised people that are shown to be false. The final two articles look at new ways of creating discourses of inclusion through appealing to new forms of moral humanism and moral realism. Behind and through these narratives flows a concern about how, or even whether, one can expand inclusion in old and new discourses, or just reproduce new forms of old exclusions or replace old exclusions with new ones.

Lisa Beljuli Brown's article, 'Abject Bodies: The Politics the Vagina in Brazil and South Africa' looks at parallels between Brazil and South Africa, and the ways in which body parts, in particular the vagina and the womb, are valued and hierarchised in these societies, and how that hierarchy impacts on women, and serves to exclude or marginalise them in their own societies, and even separate them from their own bodies. In both South Africa and Brazil, female sexuality is equated with the vagina both in the media—soap operas—and in certain cultural practices, like virginity testing. The vagina is then perceived as abject, as a threat to the boundaries that uphold the masculine symbolic order. Purifying rituals such as virginity testing are attempts to ward off the threat of the abject. But such rituals can

have long-term negative consequences for women, particularly those living in poverty.

Brown compares the Brazilian context with the practice of virginity testing in KwaZulu-Natal. Here virginity is equated with the return to more traditional African values, particularly relating to female chastity, and supporters see it as a means of detecting the abuse of young girls, and of preventing or slowing the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS in a region with the highest level of infection in the country. In Brazil the loss of virginity is blamed for social ills like homelessness and poverty. In South Africa and Brazil, girls who are deemed to have lost their virginity outside of marriage have shamed their families, and are ostracized from peers lest they prove a bad influence on other girls, and sometimes even from the family home. A loss of virginity excludes them from their social circle. Because their vaginas are abject, and used as a symbol of values and meanings outside of themselves related to national well-being or decline, women also become alienated from their bodies, as the vagina is no longer experienced as a locus of pleasure, and women can no longer have ownership of this part of themselves.

Women in Brazil especially can redeem themselves through becoming mothers, as a mother is perceived to be a 'whole woman'. But even in this case, the womb is used as a symbol of something outside of women themselves, and women are seen useful and valuable only if they are able to reproduce. Brown argues that the ways in which these body parts are valued and hierarchised are experienced by women in damaging ways, although in South Africa much work still needs to be done to assess the long-term implications of subjection to virginity testing for women. Poor women in Brazil creatively re-signify their experiences of alienation and devaluation in order to claim subjectivity, understood as a sense of identity, a feeling of unity, autonomy and a relationship to structures of meaning. In spite of their belief that to be a woman is to suffer, these women, through a complex process of creative deception, use their avid viewership of soap operas (*telenovelas*) to transform the suffering that exists both in their real lives and the fictional world of the *telenovelas* to negotiate negative valuations of their bodies, particularly of their vaginas, and convert suffering into pleasure. What is interesting is that they find their sense of subjectivity or of themselves as 'whole' beings in a world from which they are largely excluded—the world of the *telenovelas*—where the wealthy and beautiful heroines' lives do not resemble their own lives of poverty and suffering. They cannot find this sense of

themselves in their everyday, real lives, but this fictional identification can be experienced without shame because the women's conscious identification is with something else—with suffering, which is the way it is acceptable to affirm oneself as a woman.

In his article, 'Black Solidarity: A Philosophical Defense', Mabogo P. More engages with the question of black solidarity, and wonders how black people, for example, should respond when they are grouped together and oppressed on the basis of the contingency of their physical characteristics? He tackles this question with reference to the work of Jean-Paul Sartre on group solidarity, and also engages with critiques of black solidarity, foremost from Kwame Anthony Appiah. The basic premise of the position he defends is embedded in a discourse of inclusion and exclusion: the basis for the formation of The Native Club in South Africa—an organisation around which the arguments are made—is in part to combat exclusion and marginalisation; that of black intellectuals from knowledge production and the national discourse. The members of this and other similar groupings argue that black solidarity is an appropriate and proactive response to the ways in which they still feel excluded and marginalised by racist agendas that linger in spite of the fact that apartheid is officially over. The argument More makes could be summarised as an argument for strategic essentialism in order to combat exclusion.

However, the members of The Native Club and similar organisations are criticised for reproducing that which they rail against: racial solidarity that excludes other races from that space. Since apartheid is dead, some people indeed believe that such black solidarity is divisive, irrational, morally objectionable, and racist, and further that such groupings promote racial exclusivity that undermines the Constitution and a national policy of non-racialism. So the question is posed: Should we not just reject black solidarity and embrace interracial or cross-racial anti-racist solidarity instead? Mabogo argues that attempts to argue that this kind of response to perceived exclusion and marginalisation on the part of members of The Native Club and similar groupings is essentialist and exclusive ignore the viciousness of racism, and the value of group identity and solidarity in the face of what is not an 'ideal, abstract and perfect possible world in which everyone is colour-blind', but rather a real world shaped and influenced by real racist and racialist consciousnesses.

Responses to a threat such as racism, and exclusion on that basis, cannot be dealt with individually—such a threat can only be faced and challenged by autonomous individuals who constitute themselves as a

group. This appears to be the kind of reasoning that underpins such groupings as The Native Club. However, Appiah critiques this kind of thinking, based on his adherence to liberal values and ideals. Appiah's view is that black solidarity constitutes racism of a special kind, namely: intrinsic racism. Intrinsic racism consists in giving preference to one's own 'racial' group to the exclusion of other groups simply on the basis of racial solidarity with members of one's race. Appiah's argument against racial solidarity is also informed by his belief that race is a false concept, and there is no genetic or scientific proof that races exist. Based on this view, Appiah then insists that racial solidarity should be rejected because if races do not exist, he concludes that race is an unworthy basis for identity and political solidarity.

More argues against Appiah saying that even if there is no scientific or genetic basis for believing that races exist, the South African context is informed by a racist consciousness that sees colour, even if it doesn't always include or exclude on that basis. An appeal to liberal individualism, such as Appiah's, would leave black people without recourse to oppose the racism to which they are still subject because it would negate the value of the group as a part of one's identity, and of solidarity as an important way in which to challenge the viciousness of racism. Thus the kind of strategic essentialism represented by organisations like The Native Club can be legitimately defended.

In his article, 'What Conditional Amnesty is Not', Patrick Lenta engages with Wilhelm Verwoerd's arguments in support of conditional amnesty, and aims thereby to contribute to the ongoing debate about its moral status. Conditional amnesty, granted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to individuals who committed gross human rights violations between 1 May 1960 and 10 May 1994, is the South African response to the 'difficulty of confronting successor regimes which come to power immediately following transitions from authoritarianism to liberal democracy', and of deciding on an appropriate political and moral response to those who committed these human rights violations, on all sides. Conditional amnesty is, however, criticised for violating the 'fundamental priority of doing justice', since it does offer immunity to those who receive it. Lenta understands Verwoerd's argument as a claim that that in every case in which the granting of amnesty was consistent with equity, it was also and at the same time an instance of mercy and forgiveness. Lenta's intention is to show that this is in fact a false assertion, and that if conditional amnesty is justified, it is for reasons independent of Verwoerd's three arguments. In this article is an implicit argument that the TRC was less about reconciliation than it was about truth. The aim

was not so much to include both victims and perpetrators of violence in a national dialogue about how to forge a future for South Africa inclusive of all South Africans, former oppressor or formerly oppressed, but rather to expose the truth of what happened during apartheid, using the discourse of reconciliation and inclusion as a means to hearing those truths.

In terms of equity, Verwoerd takes up the case of Eugene De Kock to argue his point. Briefly, De Kock asked for amnesty on the grounds that he was not morally responsible for what he did during apartheid because he was following orders; orders he believed to be right and good because of his racist Afrikaner upbringing. However, Lenta argues that, assuming De Kock was motivated to commit murder by what he mistakenly took to be moral reasons, the gravity of his wrong is thereby mitigated by lessening its culpability, but he nevertheless committed serious crimes, and equity would demand retributive justice for such crimes. Granting De Kock amnesty however constituted a 'sacrifice of retributive justice' and in this case then, amnesty is inconsistent with the demands of equity. Lenta further points out that Verwoerd is mistaken to identify conditional amnesty with mercy; not every suspension of a deserved punishment is an instance of mercy, and not every recipient was granted amnesty because they were deserving of mercy. To count as an instance of mercy, leniency must be shown for the right reasons—reasons of compassion or charity that are based on a recognition of the need to alleviate the wrongdoer's plight. Lenta argues that an examination of De Kock's case shows him to be a candidate for mercy, and that the reasoning for this is based on an understanding of an upbringing and history beyond his control, that shaped him into a person who could commit the human rights violations he is guilty of. Further, he was a candidate for mercy because he demonstrated remorse, and committed himself to making reparations for his wrongs.

Finally, Verwoerd claims that amnesty represents unilateral forgiveness of perpetrators on behalf of tertiary victims. Lenta argues that this cannot be so because in order to receive forgiveness, a perpetrator must be contrite, and show remorse for the wrongs he has done against these victims. The TRC made no such stipulation for recipients of amnesty, thus amnesty is distinct from forgiveness. Thus, concludes Lenta, Verwoerd is mistaken in the claims he makes in defence of conditional amnesty, and one is left wondering if a possible way of justifying such amnesty is as a means to an end: exposing the truth of apartheid violence and atrocities.

In 'Bridging the Heterogeneity of Civilisations: Reviving the Grammar of Islamic Humanism', Bassam Tibi argues for a new kind

of inclusive thinking to create as bridge between Europe and Islam in an effort to pursue peace and mutual understanding and acceptance. In a Europe increasingly fragmented along cultural and ethnic lines, centred on the practice of migration into Europe of peoples from predominantly Muslim backgrounds, an effort to find commonalities rather than highlighting differences is a difficult but necessary task. This article argues that the intercivilisational conflict between Europe and Islam can be resolved through cross-cultural bridging and sharing grammars of humanism in the pursuit of an international set of common values and morals. It also highlights the importance of the fact that the classical heritage of an Islamic rationalism includes a cultural variety of humanism which served as a bridge between the civilisations of Islam and Hellenism—that Europe and Islam have borrowed from and leant on one another historically as their civilizations have been built and rebuilt over the years. That bridge is worth being rebuilt in our age of intercivilisational conflict.

Building a bridge to reconnect these previously shared values in Europe and Islam may help to challenge the damaging confines of cultural relativism as well as the absolutism of political Islam (or Islamism). Islamism chooses to engage in a politics of polarisation and contests in the name of purity and authenticity any bridging between the civilisations of Islam and the West. Islamic humanism can counter this exclusionary mindset, and can contribute to alleviating the tensions that have led to intercivilisational conflict in Europe in the very recent past. Humanism is a secular concept that locates humans at the centre of the universe, understanding them to rationally understand the world and to be able to change it to satisfy human needs. The incorporation of humanism into Islam predates the emergence of humanism in the West. Humanism thrived amongst Islamic philosophers from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, and was later passed back to Europe just before the Renaissance began; the following decline in the Islamic tradition of humanism, replaced as it was by exclusionary and absolutist theocentrism, was paralleled by the rise of humanism in Europe. However, what Tibi highlights here is that, in the history of ideas, Islam and the West are related to each other. Once, they shared a human-centered view of the world that overcame theocentrism; thus there is a possibility of turning to this ‘forgotten grammar of humanism’ to overcome the neo-absolutism of shari’a-Islam.

It is, of course, important to realise that Western and Islamic values are quite different. It is also important to note that, considering the global history of European expansion and cultural imperialism, non-

Western civilisations would be wary of being invited to engage with Europe in a discourse about shared values. However, one should not assume that there can be no such discourse. Tibi points out that if one takes a clear and inclusive view of history, particularly that of the relationship between Europe and Islam, one will see that there is a basis for a call to find a shared humanism based on a search for common values and for a value consensus in terms of international morality. An Islamic grammar of humanism would be one example of an indigenisation of the individual human rights that have emanated from European humanism. A shared humanism would also contribute to reducing the ever-increasing cultural fragmentation in international society.

In 'Rethinking Realism (or Whatever) and the War on Terrorism in a Place Like the Balkans', Rory Conces examines the importance of moral psychology in influencing foreign policy decisions, and the trends that are currently shaping the war on terrorism. Political realism remains an influential theoretical framework in thinking about international relations in general and the war on terrorism in particular, and a fairly traditional view of political realism in relation to foreign policy-making is that nation-state actors are involved in a struggle for power: hence, foreign policy-making is influenced by national interest defined in terms of power. Further, some realists and non-realists go one step further in their characterisation of realism by arguing that its stress on national interest and power weakens, if not cuts, its ties with morality. Conces takes a contrary view, and argues, with strong reference to the works of Hans J. Morgenthau among other realist theorists, that there is a compelling case to be made for including the moral virtue of prudence, as well as various moral principles within political realism.

He cites a current trend towards ethical foreign policy-making, for example, prioritising human rights in the decision-making of Western foreign policy-makers. He points out that there has been a shift in Western states' policy framework away from the narrow pursuit of national interests towards focusing on human rights in areas where these states may not have vested economic or strategic military interests. Conces believes this shift can also be applied to an analysis of the war on terrorism. He argues that broadening the war on terrorism debate to include human rights issues may simply mean that realism, as constrained by national interest defined in terms of power, can be moralised, and that it can be thinly moralised or thickly moralised, depending on the moral psychology that is at work among the policy-makers. So perhaps what underpins this shift in policy-making trends is

a shift in the moral psychology of foreign policy-makers, rather than a particular realist system of belief. Conces aims to discuss the connection between moralised realism and the war on terrorism within the context of moral agency though which an individual becomes a being who makes moral judgements and who actively intervenes in events.

Conces turns to the Balkans to examine how decisions such as whether allies of the U.S. should include themselves in the war on terrorism or remain outside of it have more to do with the moral psychology of leaders than with making politically expedient judgements based on information available to them at the time. Conces contends that the obligation placed on allies of the U.S. to enter the war on terrorism can be overruled by their duty to their own interests, but that their perception of the situation that leads to this duty can be explained through an empirically informed theory of moral psychology, like an inflationary model of morality. Policy-makers may experience a moment in which they as moral agents are tempted to be prudent and to decide in favour of inclusion, yet they face the morally praise-worthy choice of an alternative to fighting in the way in which they as allies are asked to fight. Bosnia is an interesting case study in terms of choosing between these two options because the country has experienced the horrors of genocide, and thus has the capacity for an empathetic response to those designated as 'Other' in the war on terrorism. Thus, even though choosing prudence, based on thinly moralised realism, is the more desirable choice—as inclusion is, arguably, more likely to earn the respect of the U.S. and other strong allies—a country like Bosnia may choose the more praise-worthy option based on a moralised conception of realism thickened by the moral horror of genocide and ethnic cleansing and the subsequent realisation of the need for reconciliation in order to build a stable and lasting peace within its borders, and perhaps elsewhere in the world. While much of the time prudence and expediency may triumph, Conces argues that there is a moment for an alternative to be contemplated and chosen. It is possible, through a thickened moral realism, that policy-makers may rethink their inclusion in the war on terrorism on any grounds, which would entail a fundamental shift in believing that preventing moral horrors like 9/11 from without through going to war with adversaries, real and perceived, is morally less important than preventing horrors like genocide and ethnic cleansing from within.

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