

An argument for the struggles to de-racialise South African sport: The Olympic Movement's response, 1896-1946

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(Received: 08 October 2014; Revision accepted: 17 November 2014)

Abstract

This historical review examines the background to the struggles against inequality, discrimination and the fight to deracialise South African sport. South Africa has a long history of racial discrimination. The struggles for political freedom and for all-race-inclusive or non-racial sport were generally intertwined. The sports struggle's methods and tactics evolved with time given their duration and complexity. This review aims to undertake an historical overview of the influences and precursors to the initiation of the struggles to deracialise South African sport, which culminated in the sports boycott in the 1960s. This is critical particularly if the view that history teaches respect for insights from the past is held and appreciated. Britain and South Africa have always been strategically linked and important to each other and as such the former became the main target of black people's diplomatic efforts after 1910. By the 1950s, the oppressed people's hope had shifted to the United Nations, the newly-independent African states and the Olympic Movement. South Africa's official participation in the Olympic Games between 1908 and 1960 racially discriminated against black sportspersons; the *early* challenge to this problem was observed in the 1940s but radical struggles began in the 1950s. The Non-Racial Sports Movement (NRSM) and the Anti-Apartheid Movement undertook protracted struggles to deracialise South African sport. The NRSM petitioned and challenged the constituents of the Olympic Movement, locally and abroad, for support to resolve the racial problem in the country's sport, until the International Olympic Committee expelled the racist National Olympic Committee of South Africa in 1970. The sports struggles however continued until they were controversially halted in the early 1990s. This is a literature study and is grounded in a qualitative, historical descriptive research design, with the aim of generating a body of knowledge to contextualise the background influences to the initiation of the *early* challenge to South Africa's racial sports problem, between 1890s and the 1940s.

Keywords: sport, struggles, boycott, non-racial, equality, Colour-bar, apartheid, politics

How to cite this article:

Nongogo, P., Goslin, A.E. & Van Wyk, J.G.U. (2014). An argument for the struggles to de-racialise South African sport: The Olympic Movement's response, 1896-1946. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance*, 20(4:2), 1637-1664.

Introduction

This paper serves as a prism to view the influences and precursors to the broader struggles to deracialise South African sport. The struggles, specifically the challenge against the application of the colour-bar policies and later the apartheid policies in sport were long and complex. The discussion is further complicated by an apparent failure to appreciate the fact that the practice of racial discrimination^a in the country and its sports landscape has a deep-rooted history, which is often viewed as *apolitical*, and importantly, predates the apartheid system of 1948 (Van Der Merwe, 2004; Van Der Merwe, 1997; Odendaal, 2009; Murray & Vahed, 2009; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Odendaal, 1977; Magubane, 1982; Odendaal, 1984; Odendaal, 1988; Odendaal, 2003; Ramsamy, 2010). This paper is positioned as a consciously calculated tool to further the ‘ongoing transformation [debate] of South African society’ through understanding of history, and a worthy addition to the growing body of revisionist works on sport (Odendaal, 2009: xix; Murray & Vahed, 2009:xix). In the “Foreword” to *Empire & Cricket*, Odendaal asserts:

...The game has one of the largest literatures of any sport, and histories of cricket have tended to reflect in complacent and nostalgic ways the Victorian, colonial and patriarchal values in which it was drenched until recently. The notion of cricket as a ‘British’ and ‘Gentlemen’s’ game that has somehow been neutral, ‘above politics’ and marked by ‘fair play’ is still widely held, without much critical reflection, in cricket circles. Yet, the game was integrally linked to the spread of British colonialism and social Darwinism at the height of imperial expansion in the mid to late nineteenth century and – in the colonies in particular – it served as a potent symbol of exclusivity and discrimination, shaping patterns of development which continue to influence countries long since independence. [The monograph], *Empire and Cricket* emphatically demonstrates the above point in the case of South Africa... (Odendaal, 2009: xv).

^a NOTE: To some readers, references to groups like blacks, whites, blacks, Africans or natives, Bantus, Coloureds and Indians can be viewed as politically incorrect and re-igniting South Africa’s apartheid experience. However, while sensitive, historically these terms have a certain cohesion, which cannot be summarily wished away. Conflating them in the name of politeness or in the quest for political correctness could be *ahistorical* and this poses a danger in the development of this section of South African historiography.

It is to be noted that there have been instances where mixed sports and inter-racial sport interactions occurred in South Africa's sporting history (Archer & Bouillon, 1982:188). This ought to be acknowledged and reflected in the country's historiography. With reference to the British sports influences in the Cape, van der Merwe declare that:

When British Imperialism reached its height at the end of the 19th century, the empire comprised almost a quarter of the world, with the British Crown represented on every continent. As a result, British religion, language, culture, habits and customs also came to be established in Southern Africa. One of the customs to be transplanted here permanently, was the British form of sports and games...Once the dust had settled during the post-war period, the Nationalists came to power and the issue shifted from languages (sic) [language] differences to colour differences. And an issue it really did become, although this was nothing new. The British Imperial policy was notorious for its class distinctions. In South Africa ... non-whites were treated as political and social subordinates. This obviously spilled over into sport as well. At the Union in 1910, English-speakers were in full control of sport. This resulted in clubs, provincial and national bodies being organised purely on racial grounds. The only mixed sports participation was during goodwill boxing, cricket, tennis, golf and baseball matches. This practice would continue until 1948...sport involved politics from very early on... (Van der Merwe, 2004:99 & 111).

The limited racially mixed sports activities almost ceased post-1948, sparing the controversial ones that were sporadically "allowed" during the application of the multi-national sports policy in the 1970s and through special permits. It is however important to note that several apartheid policies actually found expression from *early* British laws. For instance, in their discussion on "Sport in South African History – 'The Imperial Age'", in the monograph, *The South African Game*, Archer & Bouillon assert that:

...The supply of labour in the European areas was already preoccupying the authorities, for Africans remained unwilling to sell their labour at the low wages offered. The British therefore introduced laws against 'vagrancy' which forced all Hottentots to acquire a registered address and place of work, and pass laws which required Africans to remain within defined geographic areas unless they were specifically authorized to travel by the Administration.

The boundaries of eight such areas were drawn in 1854 and they have served as a model for the Nationalist regime's... 'Homelands' or Bantustan policy... (Van der Merwe, 2004:21-22; Archer & Bouillon, 1982:15-55). Similarly, Cleophas and Van der Merwe and Alexander argue that '[B]efore the apartheid regime passed the Group Areas Act in 1950, the Union government proposed the Class Areas Bill in 1924' (Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:124-140 & 125; Alexander, 1953:120). It is possible to blame all South Africa's socio-political and socio-cultural racial ills on apartheid regime, yet, the British authorities were the main architects of these problems. Macmillan declares that the Colour-bar in the Cape Colony involved all 'oppressive restrictions placed upon non-White peoples' (Macmillan, 1968:288), and with the introduction of the Union of South Africa, the former was thus included in its constitution, an action that 'gave legal status to a racial divide that had developed during colonial rule' (Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:125), and as such made '[B]oth Boer and British to be equally responsible' (*The Cape Standard*, 1944; Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:125) Cleophas and Van der Merwe assert that the South African Colour-bar was 'used to counteract a perceived Black peril and to unite the White' Afrikaans and English speaking sections of the population (Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:124).

Proper understanding and appreciation of the above historical reality is critical in the study of South African sport. In an attempt to address these dynamics, it is essential to analyse the history of discrimination in South African society and its sports fields as the background and further discuss the major influences or precursors to the struggles for the deracialisation of South African sport, and the subsequent sports boycott. In the literature on South African sport, the sports struggles are discussed with the context of the country's socio-political-socio-cultural transition from the apartheid state to a 'social democratic' (Vawda, 1988, Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011). This paper also discusses the background influences to the racist sport organisation and places the country's sports experiences in the epicentre of socio-cultural research in South Africa; and isolate it from broader discussions on race and apartheid experiences (Montagu & Spector, 2004:n.p.; Spector, 2004:145-166; Mills & Sidiropoulos, 2004). This paper therefore is primarily a prelude to the *early* challenge and the struggles against inequality and the fight to deracialise South African sport. It seeks to trace, document and analyse early interactions "between" South Africa's all-

race sportspersons and separate sports bodies, the latter organisations' participation and successes at national and at international level and the relationship between the South African sportspersons, sports bodies and the Olympic Movement, specifically the International sport Federations (IFs) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC), in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This discussion is extended to the 1950s.

The imperial or colonial influences in South African sport

The majority if not all present day popular modern sports such as cricket, rugby, football or soccer are of British culture and origin. Black and white populations in the country adopted these sport codes mainly from the British soldiers in the Cape and elsewhere in the country (Anderson, 1979; Grundlingh, *et al.*, 1995; Van Der Merwe, 1997; Van Der Merwe, 2004). The British did not only come into the country with their sport but with their social, cultural, class practices including racism.

British Imperial policy was notorious for its class distinction and this was true in South Africa as it was in many of its colonies throughout the world, treating black people under their rule as political and social subordinates (Nedbank Group, 1987; Van Der Merwe, 2004; Murray & Vahed, 2009). Sports literature indicates that this practice was applied in all social facets, including sport. British Imperialists were in control of racially based clubs, provincial and national teams during this period. Life under British rule was complex in terms of race-relations and sport development intentions. There seems to be some considerable disjuncture in the rationale to develop and shaping of community social clubs as opposed to the diffusion of sport in Mission Schools. Diffusion of sport, games and physical education, with its accompanying values within Mission Institutions such as Lovedale seems to have been different from that of the general community sport. The use of sport for the purpose of "civilising" and "Christianising" the young black population in a quest to create "Bantu" Missionaries to spread Christianity within the country and across the continent; and "Black-Englishmen" to serve the British administration agenda, with the "race question" less emphasised, is evident in Mission Institutions of the day (Shepherd, 1942; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004). In contrast, values of segregation and indifference seem to have been "emphasised" among the "unconverted" or "uneducated" adult black adult population (Mayer & Mayer, 1968; Odendaal, 1977; Odendaal, 2003; Nongogo, 2004). The Reverend R.H.W. Shepherd, an eminent Principal of one of the oldest Mission Schools in South Africa, the Lovedale Institution, published a history of the School entitled *Lovedale, South Africa: The Story of a Century, 1841 – 1941*. In this story, Shepherd discussed the role of sport in the civilising mission that the Scottish Presbyterians had set themselves when they established Lovedale Missionary Institution.

...Lovedale is concerned with the whole man, body, mind and spirit. With some 700 young people as boarders constantly within the Institution, special steps must be taken for the safe-guarding of health through games and other recreation. To look over Lovedale's Annual Report in any year is to see a network of activities centring on the sports' field: athletics, rugby, soccer, cricket, netball, and tennis... Recreation is a matter of supreme importance in the eyes of those responsible for Lovedale. Many of the amusement of the unconverted Bantu are incompatible with Christian purity of life, so have to be abandoned by those embracing Christianity. But youth is youth the world over, and therefore among the Bantu, as among all other races, provision must be made for social activities, healthy exercise and profitable employment of leisure. What is and what is not Christian in this connection is a burning question in rural areas and urban centres... (Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004: iv).

Some form of "mixed" racial or interracial community sport participation was however observed during goodwill boxing, cricket, tennis, golf and baseball matches and continued until 1948 (Mbaye, 1995). There is evidence however that as early as the late 1800s, issues of race-relations were not harmonious in South Africa. Cleophas and van der Merwe (2011) argue that [B]etween 1890 and the early years of the 20th century, a persistent feature of the collective mentality of a section of the South African White population was a public outcry against the dangers of political, social and business contact between Black and White (Maqasho, 2000; Nongogo, 2004; Bolsmann, 2010).

The aftermath of the second 'South African war' (Grundlingh, 1987:47), also known as the "Anglo-Boer War", (1899-1902); brought fundamental changes on how the country was governed, at least on the side of the white population. The 'British authorities wanted to unify the White "race" and legislation was needed' (Cleophas & Van der Merwe, 2011:125). After the war the School Board Act of 1905 was passed, with the purpose of making 'school attendance and education provision compulsory for Whites children' (*The Cape of Good Hope*, 1905:417). The situation worsened for black people in the country in 1948, when the NP won the white-only election. The new government quickly consolidated and legislated the already racially charged and polarisation populace, moving from the language question to hard-core Colour-bar politics.

The literature of South African sport demonstrates that sport, race and Empire are related. This is particularly so in cricket especially in its most critical formative periods, the late Victorian and Edwardian era that underlined ‘the extraordinary direct involvement in both cricket and politics by the same tiny group of imperialists, white colonists’ (Murray & Vahed, 2009:vii), African people, coloured people and peoples of Indian descent. The South African sport was from early on organised and administered on racially unequal basis and the black sports persons were generally denied and excluded from the country’s teams.

Consequently from the 1940s to the early 1990s, a broad range of struggles to deracialise South African sport, were undertaken to challenge this status core.

The beginnings of international sport participation

South Africa has a long and rich historical tradition of sport participation, both amongst South Africans within the country and internationally (Van Der Merwe, 2004; Odendaal, 2009; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Odendaal, 1977; Odendaal, 1988; Nauright, 1997; Odendaal, 2003). The country is sometimes described as a “sports-mad” nation. South Africa has enjoyed international sporting successes from the early 19th Century. Literature from the early Dutch colony, hardly ever mentions sport. What there was, is of a generally informal nature (Marquard, 1952:63; Leonard & Affleck, 1947:423; Anderson, 1979:35; Nongogo, 2004:16). The arrival of the British in 1795 initiated a new era in sport in South Africa. The British brought a capitalist system and formal military organisation (Leck, 1977:4; Anderson, 1979:35; Nongogo, 2004:16). Organised sport in South Africa began to show signs of developing at this time (Leck, 1977:4; Anderson, 1979:35; Nongogo, 2004:16). On 23 August 1862, the first recorded rugby match, between the military and civilians, took place at Green Point Common in Cape Town (Odendaal, 1977; Anderson, 1979, Nongogo, 2004).

It is generally accepted that the *earliest* recorded international participation by a South African was in 1884, when E.L. Williams and E.W. Lewis reached the final of the first men’s doubles at Wimbledon Tennis, albeit they lost (Anderson, 1979). In 1893, Laurens S. Meintjes became South Africa’s first world record holder in cycling. He won the sixty-two mile international championship at the World Fair Cycle Meeting in Chicago.

Later that year in Springfield, Massachusetts, he set a world record in the hour's race. In 1896 when the modern Olympic Games were revived, South Africa won its first rugby test ever, against Great Britain (Anderson, 1979).

South Africans have had a long and special relationship with the Olympic Movement. The 1904 games were scheduled for Chicago, but eventually took place in St Louis and coincided with the World Fair (Van der Merwe, 2004). Eight South Africans participated unofficially in the 1904 Games in St Louis. Five "Boers" took part in the Olympic tug-of-war event and tied in fifth place with a Greek team and three men including two black runners, Len Tau and Jan Mashiani. One white athlete, Robert Harris, took part in the Olympic Marathon in August 30, 1904 in extremely hot (32° C) and humid conditions and finished in 9th and 12th places respectively out of 32 runners from 5 countries (SRSA, 2013).

The third athlete, Robert Harris dropped out of the race. Len Tau also competed in the mile race and finished third. There is evidence that the two black South Africans got the "opportunity" to participate in the Games by chance as they were there as part of the work team of the "Anglo-Boer War" show that was put on at the World Fair (SANOC, 1987; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987; Al-Tauqi, 2003). This was a first and last time that black sportspersons participated in the Olympic Games. South African official Olympic teams racially excluded black sportspersons between the 1908 and 1960 Rome Games, as the country was suspended by the IOC from participating in Seoul Games and Mexico Games in 1964 and 1968 respectively and eventually expelled in 1970, until the country was controversially re-admitted into the Olympic family in 1992 (De Broglio, 2009; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Ramsamy, 1982; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004).

The origins of racism in South African sport

South Africa's sporting participation was not always totally fraught with discrimination (Van Der Merwe, 2004; Odendaal, 2009; Murray & Vahed, 2009; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Odendaal, 1977; Odendaal, 1988; Magubane, 1982; Nauright, 1997; Odendaal, 2003). This practice was deliberately introduced into the country's sport and –posed a major problem in later years. Evidence of bigotry in South African sport is complex and longstanding, and is traceable from colonial and imperial times and predates apartheid (Odendaal, 2009; Murray & Vahed, 2009; Bolsmann, 2010; Cleophas & Van der Merwe, 2011).

These cases of racism were initially observed when South African sport was under the control of the British, in the second half of the 19th century. During this period, the development and organisation of sport occurred along racial lines, where sporting clubs and associations at local, regional, and national levels seem to have adhered to strict policies of segregation. In the *early* recorded incidents of racialism in South African sport, the story of Krom Hendricks is legendary. In 1894, ‘Krom Hendricks, a black cricketer was barred from participating in the South African tour of England’ (Murray & Vahed, 2009: viii & xvi-xvii). The black Orange Free State association football tour of Europe in 1899 received significant negative and racist press coverage in South Africa (Bolsmann, 2010). In 1919, a New Zealand army rugby team member and a decorated forward, A. “Ranje” Wilson, was not welcome in the country as part of the touring side, which was invited by the South African Rugby Board. Similarly, when the Springbok team toured New Zealand in 1921, racism was noticed, when a South African journalist subsequently wrote critically against the fact that ‘the “Bokke” had to play against coloureds’ (Van der Merwe, 2004:111).

In 1928, the New Zealand rugby controlling body had to leave their full-ball Maori, George Nepia behind in an attempt to avoid confrontation in the South African tour, which sparked retaliation by the Maori team, which refused to play against the touring Springboks in 1937. It is therefore apparent that the racial practices in South African society and its sport do not only have a long history (De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982) but were also *exported* to other countries as well (Paton, 1959; SASA, 1959, IOC, 1959; O’Brien, 1981; Woods, 1981).

Perhaps the most significant racial problem by South Africa’s establishment sport was observed in the late 1930s (SAHO, n.d., n.p.; Mbaye, 1995; Odendaal, 2009; Murray & Vahed, 2009). South Africa was contemplating applying to host the Empire Games, which were later called the Commonwealth Games. When it dawned on the country’s white sports administrators and Government that hosting the Empire Games would also entail hosting athletes and officials from the Asian and Caribbean countries like India, Pakistan, Jamaica and others (UN, 1971); the former quickly abandoned the idea and ‘the “problem” was... solved’ (Mbaye, 1995:131; SAHO, n.d., n.p.). In fact, in 1939, Comte Henri Latour, the President of the International Olympic Committee ‘stated that the Colour Bar prevented South Africa from staging an Olympic Games’ (Cleophas & Van der Merwe, 2011); saying this in direct reference ‘to White discrimination against Black athletes’ (*The Cape Standard*, 1939:2).

In 1933 a national weight-lifting federation was formed by a group made up of all sections of the South African population. Inter-racial contacts were established and competitions held until 1939 (Mbaye, 1995:76), when another case of overt racial exclusion in the country's sport was observed. The previously racially integrated Weight-lifting Association started to bar black people from being members. It was perhaps this *new* development and reason that Milo Pillay, a famous weight-lifter and physical culturist planned to attend the South African weight-lifting conference in Transvaal in 1945, with the intention to propose that the ban on inter-racial weight-lifting competitions be abolished (*The Cape Standard*, 1945:4; Cleophas & Van der Merwe, 2011:127). Several scholars have reported similar contacts and interracial competitions during this era in South African sporting history (Leonard & Affleck, 1947:423; Marquard, 1952:63; Odendaal, 1971; Anderson, 1979:35; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Grundlingh, Odendaal & Spies, 1995; Odendaal, 2003; Nongogo, 2004). It is apparent that the 1930s broke this *tradition* (Van der Merwe, 2004:111), specifically 1931 until 1939 (Mbaye, 1995; Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:127) and ushered in blatant racialisation in South African sport. During this period, some of the white-only sports bodies included racially exclusive clauses in their respective Constitutions. Cleophas and Van Der Merwe declared:

... Officials of the South African Amateur Athletics Union (SAAAU) stated that under no circumstances would they deviate from government policy. Dr Danie Craven, president of the South African Rugby Board (SARB), initially argued in favour of laws like the Group Areas Act. The South African Olympic and Commonwealth Union, through its chairman, B.C. Simms, admitted that it had a racially exclusive constitution because it was the law of the land and his union would apply segregation despite international pressure... (Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011:128; *Die Burger*, 1957:1).

It is apparent that these developments were not isolated practices. The Colour-bar phenomenon was entrenched. In 1931 the SAAAU declared publicly that it intended to apply racial segregation. The South African Cricket Union (SACU) also followed, taking a decision to 'select only players of European (white) origin' (Van der Merwe, 2004:111). Further, the Constitution and rules of the white South African Football Association (SAFA) stipulated members had to be of "full European descent." As a consequence, SAFA refused to accept an invitation in 1931 to play in Java due to the possibility of playing against teams of other races. In 1934 white football authorities refused to field a team to play against an all-India touring team (Archer & Bouillon, 1982). Van der Merwe declares that:

... Even after the Second World War, the white sports controlling bodies showed very little interest in their non-white peers. In true British tradition, everything outside politics was regarded as an institution. White-controlled sports bodies acted as guardians for non-white sport by representing it at international level...When the National Party came to power in 1948, racial segregation was well-established, but not entrenched by legislation. Since apartheid formed the cornerstone of this party, it affected sport as well. This resulted in a considerable increase in resistance during the fifties. In 1955, the Committee for International Recognition was founded in Durban with the aim of supporting all national sporting bodies in their efforts to achieve international recognition... (Van der Merwe, 2004:111-112).

Apartheid in South Africa

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word meaning ‘apartness’ (Brittain, 2011:1165). It came about at a time when imperial rule was receding and enforcement of segregation was being relaxed. However, South Africa went against this world trend by strengthening barriers between black and white people and attempting to rationalise this in terms of ideas about racial purity (Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012; Cashmore, 2011). At a time when many nations were moving away from using race as a device for social division, South Africa continued its segregationist policies (Archer & Bouillon, 1982; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Odendaal, 1977; O’Brien, 1981; Woods, 1981; Ramsamy, 1982; Odendaal, 2003; Nongogo, 2004). ‘Since the defeat and death of Adolf Hitler, South Africa is the only avowedly and systematically racist country remaining in the world’, (O’Brien, 1981:10; Woods, 1981:10). In 1948 after the Nationalist Party won the “national” elections in South Africa, the party quickly institutionalised and legislated the already segregationist way of life in the country. The main policy it enacted came to be known as apartheid. The policy of apartheid comprised of numerous pieces of legislation that controlled almost every facet of people’s social life in South Africa and was fundamentally racist based and oppressive to all black people. The NP had a choice to move away from racism but chose apartheid over racial harmony and peace.

Whalley-Hammell (2006) claims that the cultural imperialism of colonial racism in apartheid South Africa was informed by specific interpretations of the Bible and of biology to justify withholding civil rights from those deemed 'inferior' (Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012; Whalley-Hammell, 2006). Tatz describes the underlying cultural ideology of the Afrikaner as being based in 'fundamental Calvinism, their belief in a divine calling or mission in life to preserve white civilisation, their Puritanism and fanatical nationalism' (Tatz, 1983; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012). Frank Braun, the President of the whites-only SANOC, once 'scientifically' (Tatz, 1983; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012) explained why there were no qualified "non-white" swimmers in South Africa by stating that 'some sports the Africans are not suited for. In swimming, the water closes their pores so that they cannot get rid of carbon dioxide and so they tire quickly' (Brittain, 2011:1170) Whalley-Hammell (2006) argues that the function of this ideology was to preserve, protect and perpetuate minority white power, and that ideology and power, in combination, served to maintain power and dominance with such effectiveness that the white minority group wielded the majority of power and the black population, who make up the statistical majority, was accorded minority status (Whalley- Hammell, 2006; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012).

Ben Turok claims that the National Party maintained its power through the introduction and maintenance of various Acts, and they then used the legal system in order to enforce its discriminatory practices. For instance the Natives Land Act was enacted to prohibit Africans from gaining any legal rights to any lands outside their so called "traditional" areas (Turok, 1976; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012). Further, racial classification was entrenched in the 1950 Population Registration Act (Klee, 2012:155-170; Archer & Bouillon, 1982), and the Group Areas Act of 1950. The latter assigned areas to different racial groups and was later used to exclude black spectators from certain sports stadiums. The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 segregated public spaces (Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Klee, 2012). Various pass laws were introduced that strictly regulated the movement of black South Africans in designated white areas. White sports authorities, particularly in horse racing and football, relied on black spectatorship as an important source of income. Separate gate entries, toilet facilities, and stands were erected to keep racial groups apart, (Archer & Bouillon, 1982).

These laws were often enforced through police brutality. Fear was used as a means of ensuring compliance. Any attempt to protest or challenge the status quo would often result in the protesters being seriously injured as in the large numbers of protesters who died in Sharpeville in 1960 and Soweto in 1976 (Seedat, 1984; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012).

This practice continued beyond World War II, with white-controlling sport bodies excluding black counterparts and only prepared to act as their guardians for sport by representing them at international level. This was to become the major battlefield for almost half a century, when the scales in this struggle seemed to tilt in favour of black or non-racial sportspersons in the *early* 1970s, and the racist South African sports establishment sport was near total isolation from international sporting competitions and the Olympic Games (Mbeki, 2004; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004).

Apartheid, South Africa sport and the Olympic Movement

The application of the racist policies in the country's sport meant that no black sportsperson could officially be part of a representative South African team in international competitions or Olympic Games. The apartheid system failed to meet the basic requirements as outlined within the Olympic Charter, which forbade any form of 'discrimination in sport' (IOC, 2011:7). The interesting feature about apartheid is that the National Party did not introduce specific legislation to prohibit racially mixed sport or sports specific policy or law until 1954's 'Boxing and Wrestling Control Act' (Murray & Merrett, 2004:50; Fleming, 2011:56-57), which naturally affected these two sporting codes.

South Africa's overarching sports policy was only pronounced in 1956 (Guelke, 2012; Mbaye, 1995, De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; De Broglio, 2009; De Broglio, 2005; Ramsamy, 1982; Booth, 1998; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004), because before this period the white-only "national" sports bodies strictly voluntarily applied racial segregation and Colour-bar policies in sport (IOC, 1955a; Indian Youth Congress, 1955; SASA, 1959; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Booth, 1998; Nauright, 1997; Merrett, 2005; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012). The apartheid legislation was naturally so all-encompassing, that it militated against integrated sport by such methods as making travel extremely difficult for non-whites and having specific sports facilities for each of the races, with white facilities being vastly superior in quality and quantity to non-white facilities (Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Booth, 1998; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012; Whalley-Hammell, 2006).

On March 29, 1961, the South African Minister of the Interior, Jan De Klerk, announced that the government would not approve of the participation of mixed teams in global sporting events; that mixed teams from other nations would not be welcome in South Africa; and that only separate white and non-white teams could compete abroad in international competition (Keech, 2001; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012). The white sporting federations in South Africa, which were affiliated to the international federations and controlled

access to international competition, did not allow for non-white membership. This made access to international sport, including the Olympic Games, almost impossible for non-white sportspersons (Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011). The non-white sportspersons who managed to compete for South Africa at the international level were not awarded the “Springbok Colours”, as a form of national recognition and proof that an individual had represented the country in international sporting competition), which were reserved purely for white competitors (Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012). Interestingly, for decades it seems the IOC, while aware of racial discrimination and practices in South African sport, did not view this matter as problematic and was utterly indifferent towards the majority “excluded” black sportspersons in South Africa. Consequently, the leadership and the athlete-makeup of the Olympic Games and other international sports competitions were for many years, predominantly white and male (Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Guelke, 2012; Mbaye, 1995, De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; De Broglio, 2009; De Broglio, 2005, Ramsamy, 1982; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004; Nauright, 2012). Naturally, “the *early* history” of the IOC and the Olympic Movement proves to be highly discriminatory, on the basis of race and gender, albeit purporting to be otherwise (IOC, 2011:15; Nauright, 2012; Ramsamy, 1987:1-16; Kidd, 1987:3-4 &5-6; Mbaye, 1995).

Sam Ramsamy writes that Pierre de Coubertin’s views on sport and people were controversial, ‘sexist and racist’ (Ramsamy, 1987:6).

Some form of resistance to the Colour-bar and apartheid system by individuals, the black “national” sports bodies were probably first observed in the mid-1940s (Ramsamy, 1987; Archer & Bouillon, 1982). The struggle against apartheid in sport and the fight for political liberties by black people in South Africa were always intertwined (Lissoni, 2000; Montagu & Spector, 2004; Spector, 2004). In South Africa, therefore, the cliché that “sport-and-politics do not mix” (Ramsamy, 1987:7-16; Mbaye, 1995) is not only misguided but mischievous (Al-Tauqi, 2003).

The IOC rebuffed South Africa’s non-racial sport bodies, the South African Sports Association (SASA) in the 1950s and South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) in the 1960s and opted to continue recognising the racist South African National Olympic Committee (SANOC). The IOC under the leadership of Avery Brundage insisted that ‘even though SANROC uses the word “Olympic” in its name, it would have nothing to do with it’ (IOC, 1963; SANROC, 1963). In fact, the IOC threatened to take harsh action if SANROC did not stop using the word “Olympic”; forcing it, at some point in 1963, to replace it with the word ‘Open’ in order to be known as the South African Non-Racial Open Committee (IOC, 1963; SANROC, 1963).

South Africa's National Olympic Committee and the Olympic Movement

South Africa's initial contact with the Olympic Movement and the IOC was made by the upper class or the socio-political elite and was on a racist and capitalist problematic basis. *Africa's First Olympians* by Rudolf W.J. Opperman and Lappe Laubscher (IOC, 1987; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987; SANOC/SANOK, 1987) documents how the social difficulties of the South African war (Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Nauright, 1997; Bolsmann, 2010; Cleophas & Van Der Merwe, 2011) were dealt with by 'rich men' including Abe Bailey, Sir Leander Starr Jameson and Henry Nourse, together with their close and strategic contacts in London. They decided to 'use sport' to promote harmony and peace between the English and the Afrikaners (Odendaal, 2009: xvi; Cleophas & Van der Merwe, 2011:124). Significantly, no mention of black people is made in this arrangement. It is interesting to note that Abe Bailey personally financed a cricket tour by a white-only "South African team" to England (IOC, 1987; SANOC, 1987; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987). It would appear as though that this development was from the onset an imperialist, class and racial exclusionary in nature and character.

These *early* contacts therefore initiated a strong social-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political polarised sporting base in the country and explains the stark racial contrast between the "1904 and 1908 South African Olympic teams" in St. Louis and London, albeit one 'unofficial' (IOC, 1987:3; SANOC, 1987:3; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987:3) and the other an official team. In fact it is interesting to observe that the first South African official Olympic team was white-only and that the IOC did not take issue with this racially comprised team despite the non-discrimination Rule in the Olympic Charter, especially Articles 24 and 25 (IOC, 2011). In order to understand the dynamics and complexities in how the IOC works, a brief review of its structures and operations, especially around the South Africa's racial problem, is necessary.

International sport was and is still generally governed by the respective IFs for each code and by the IOC, which specifically focuses on the Olympic Games. The IOC is the highest authority in international sport but does not control the IFs. 'The relationship is best described as interdependence' (De Broglio, 2009: n.d., n.p.). The IOC is constituted by individuals selected and nominated by the President and his executive. The total number of IOC members, according to the latest version of the Olympic Charter, 'Bye-Law Rule 16', may not exceed 115 (IOC, 2011:30). Some countries have more than one member and many countries have none. The IOC members represent the IOC in their respective countries, rather than the reverse. In the "SANROC Story", Christian Dubrue de Broglio asserts that:

...It is obvious that there is a moral responsibility on IOC Executive members to ensure that the Olympic Charter is respected, that fair play is upheld and that all are guaranteed unhindered participation in the Olympic Games and International Sport. This duty was not discharged by the IOC members towards Black South African sportsmen who have been discriminated against from the time South Africa became a member at the turn of the twentieth century. It appears that South Africa never gave the guarantees which are required of all new members. It appears that older members of the IOC have long persisted in covering up for Apartheid South Africa with full knowledge of the extent of racism in South African sport. From 1948 onwards the IOC played its full part in the merry-go-round with the White South Africans. Petitions and appeals which were sent by representative organisations of Black South Africans were referred back to the offending body in South Africa, the South African Olympic Committee. The IOC member, Mr Reginald Honey, was not instructed by the IOC to demand that these racist practices be abandoned. As life president of the South African Olympic Committee he was in fact responsible for the continuation of these racist practices... (De Broglio, 2009: n.p.; IOC Archives 1955b; 1958; Emery/South African Olympic & Commonwealth Games Association, 1958; Brundage, 1955 & 1958; Steel/American Committee on Africa, 1958; Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, 1955; Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, 1955b).

The report of a commission which visited South Africa in 1967 (IOC, 1967; SANROC, 1967) shows that the matter was 'discussed in 1959' (De Broglio, 2009: n.p.; Brittain, 2011: 1165), obviously through the pressure of the South African Sports Association (De Broglio, 2009:n.p.; IOC/Brundage, 1955; IOC/Brundage, 1958; Emery, 1955; Emery, 1958; Campaign Against Race Discrimination in Sport, 1958; Steel/American Committee on Africa, 1958; Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, 1955a; Youth Congress, 1955b). At this meeting the President of the IOC accepted without reserve the declarations of Mr R. Honey that there is no discrimination in South African sport in spite of detailed evidence to the contrary supplied in a memorandum by Dennis Brutus as secretary of SASA (IOC, 1959; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Mbaye, 1995; Nauright, 1997; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004; De Broglio, 2005; Brittain, 2002; Brittain, 2011; Brittain, 2012).

It is evident that imperialism (Murray & Vahed, 2009), politics of class-differential and racial segregation underpinned the early Olympic sport organisation in South Africa (IOC, 1960; De Broglio, 2009; IOC, 2011b; Nongogo, 2011). Politics and political representatives played a major role in formalising the contacts and getting the country closer to the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games. It was through the influence of the Office of Sir Starr Jameson who at the time was the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, that the British National Olympic Committee was mobilised that an invitation be extended to “South Africa” to take part in the fourth Olympiad, which the city of London was to host (IOC, 1987, SANOC, 1987; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987). There is evidence that in its meeting in The Hague in May 23, 1907, the IOC unanimously carried a motion that saw the four South African constituent units comprising the British Colonies, the Cape (Colony and later a Province) and Natal, and the two “Boer Republics” of the Orange River Colony (or also widely known as the Orange Free State) and the Transvaal (IOCA, 1987; SANOC, 1987; Opperman & Laubscher, 1987:3; Archer & Bouillon, 1982: 21-30 & 15-20 & 31-55), invited into the Olympic Movement family. This hypocrisy continued to pervade both South Africa’s white-only National Olympic Committee and the IOC over the years.

The majority of the IOC members, IFs leaders and the Olympic teams of this period were predominantly white. The ‘racist and sexist history of the IOC and the Olympic Movement is long’ and was naturally evident in the *early* days of the modern Olympic Games and any challenge to these practises was simply suppressed as politically motivated (Ramsamy, 1987:7-16). For instance, in response to the end of the Second World War, the IOC held an Executive Committee meeting in London in August 21st-24th, 1945, which point 4 of the minutes, states:

...[T]he Committee decided that letters should be sent to the National Olympic Committees suggesting that they resume their activities, stimulate public interest in the Olympic Movement, stress the principles of true amateurism, etc. Political influence in the movement should be avoided... (IOC, 1945:2).

Yet it is common knowledge that South Africa’s National Olympic Committee excluded black sportspersons on political grounds and the IOC was aware of this fact. When the IOC and the host City Organising Committee extended an invitation to the racist SANOC for the Mexico City Games in 1968, the IOC President, Avery Brundage wrote:

... [T]here seems to be a serious misunderstanding of the action of the International Olympic Committee at its meetings in Grenoble last month. It did not approve either the Government of South Africa or its policies. It does not deal with governments nor with the political policies of any country... (IOC, 1987:5).

It is well-established that the South African Olympic and National Games Association (SAONGA) had voluntarily chosen to exclude black sportspersons, in direct response and alignment to its government's racist policy of apartheid. The IOC and its President were well aware of this reality. The IOC resolution on its relationship, attitude and approach towards SANROC as captured in *Annexure V* of the minutes of IOC Executive Board in Munich 1959 (i.e., to snub SANROC albeit using the word "Olympic" in its title) is an indication of this hypocrisy and bias. In its annual report for the 1983-84 season, the SAONGA reports that: '...Morally, it is equally wrong for the IOC to boycott sportspersons in accordance with political acceptability or not...' (IOC, 1959b, n.p.).

There is evidence that the Olympic Movement and the IOC did not only tolerate white-only South African indifference towards the country's black sportspersons for a long time, but also sympathised and supported the racist regime (De Broglio, 2009:n.p.; IOC/Brundage, 1955; IOC/Brundage, 1958; IOC/Otto Meyer, 1955; IOC/Otto Meyer, 1958; Emery, 1958; Campaign Against Race Discrimination in Sport, 1958; Steel/American Committee on Africa, 1958; Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, 1955; Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, 1955b). The IOC's Presidents' view (Avery Brundage and Lord Killanin) that sport and politics do not mix was not only flawed, within the South African context but biased towards black sportspersons. This approach also furthered the racial divisions in South Africa and promoted the black exclusion from the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games. The latter occurred in the face of strong protestations by the non-racial sports movement and the Anti-Apartheid Movement. That the IOC specifically and the Olympic Movement generally, never co-opted nor elected a black South African sportsperson is an indictment on their part. That the IOC opted to snub SANROC as opposed to working closely with it, even after it had suspended and later expelled the racist SANOC since 1960 and in 1970 respectively, is bizarre. There is evidence that both the IOC Presidents, who reigned between 1952 and 1980, shared the view and belief that even though SANROC used the appellation "Olympic" in its name, it should be dismissed with contempt because it was led by "politicians" rather than sportspersons; a view also shared by the suspended racist South Africa's NOC (IOC, 1983:3; SANOC, 1983:3; Archer & Bouillon, 1982). *Annexure V* in one of the IOC Sessions in 1959 reads:

...The International Olympic Committee resolved that, whilst SANROC uses the word “Olympic” in its title, neither the International Olympic Committee nor any of its officials shall have any communication or dealings with it... (IOC, 1959b:n.d).

It is no exaggeration to believe that this stance delayed the liberalisation of South African sport from apartheid and denied many of South Africa’s youth from taking their rightful place within the Olympic Movement. Available literature on the sports boycott shows that SANROC and AAM were not inherently boycott-enthusiasts but non-racialists and were reconciliatory driven. There is a body of knowledge that illustrates that to the non-racial sport movement, boycotts were a potent weapon and last resort. It was only after considerable efforts to persuade the establishment sport structures to organise the country’s sport on a non-racial basis that black sportspersons contemplated and eventually initiated sports boycott campaigns to eject apartheid sport from the Olympic Games and the Olympic Movement. In the process the non-racial sport movement outlined its primary objectives to campaign for the total eradication of the Colour-bar in the country’s sport; that it should be organised on a non-racial basis; replacement of white-only racist sport from the international federation with the non-racial sport organisation and expulsion of South African Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association (SAOCGA) from the Olympic Games (SASA/Brutus,1958; IOC, 1959; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Nauright, 1997; Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004).

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to trace, document and analyse the influences and precursors to the emergence and development of the struggles to deracialise South African sport and the subsequent sports boycott to force change towards an egalitarian sport organising in the country. South African sport was racialised and thus needed to be changed and organised on “a non-racial basis”. The paper outlines South Africa’s *early* Olympic sporting experiences and participation from the late nineteenth century, the early twentieth century up to the mid-1940s, when some form of challenge to racial sport organisation was observed (IOC, 1959; Brutus/SASA, 1959; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Van der Merwe, 2004). Here the pertinent sports bodies and leaders of this era, the country’s white-only sport bodies and their participation in international competitions and their relationship with the commonwealth counterparts, were outlined.

This paper therefore assessed the position and responses of the Olympic Movement, specifically the IFs and the IOC, to the racial situation in South African sport. To achieve this objective, this paper traced, from the late 1800s and those, more specifically between the 1930s and 1950s, documents and analysed the *early* colonial or imperial sporting experiences and transformation towards apartheid South Africa's Olympic sporting experiences and sport participation by the country's sportspersons, pertinent sports bodies and leaders of this era. The country's white-only sport bodies, their participation in international competitions and their relationship with the commonwealth counterparts were outlined, with the purpose of locating this study not only within a historical context but also on a 'situational analysis' pathway (Habib, 2013:14). To this end, a brief socio-cultural and socio-political dispensation of the country was discussed to map a background against the racist sports landscape and to set the scene for the emergence of the struggles to deracialise sport in South Africa.

It is concluded that "race" mattered greatly in South African sport and this created problems within the Olympic Movement and the sports movement globally. Apartheid was an over-all government policy which affected all aspects of people's lives, including sport. Under apartheid people were classified and re-classified into four main racial groups and further sub-tribal groupings with the purpose of "dividing-and-ruling/controlling" them better.

This paper provided a brief background to the campaigns by the NRSMB, for the organisation and administration of sport in the country, on a non-racial basis as opposed to the "official" establishment and racial basis, during the period under discussion. It set the scene for the challenge to the white-only sport establishment by the individual sportspersons, the sub-committees of the "national" black and/or non-racial sports bodies and eventually, NRSMB (National Convention Documentation (NCD) 1984). This paper also illustrated that the country's sport was not always "inherently" organised solely on a racial basis and that it did not have to be kept organised on a racial basis (Mbaye, 1995). Racial segregation in South African sport was deliberately introduced by the white sports leaders and not necessarily by subsequent Governments (NCD, 1984; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Odendaal, 1977; Odendaal, 1984; Odendaal, 1988; Mbaye, 1995; Van Der Merwe, 2004; Odendaal, 2003; Odendaal, 2009). Further, it showed that South Africa's Olympic sport developed from a "relative non-segregationist" interaction to a racist establishment landscape; and discussed the IOC's initial position and reaction to this development. The country's racial situation, it would appear, provided a springboard to the initiation of the struggles to deracialise the country's sport.

This paper also demonstrated that racism in South Africa and thus in the country's sport did not start in 1948 (Odendaal, 1977; De Broglio, 1970a; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982; Odendaal, 1984; Odendaal, 1988; Odendaal, 2003; Van Der Merwe, 2004; Odendaal, 2009). The latter was preceded by colonialism and imperialism, which brought the Colour-bar policies (De Broglio, 1970; De Broglio, 1970b; Ramsamy, 1982; Archer & Bouillon, 1982). It was against this background that black sportspersons, black sports organisations and later, the broader Non-Racial Sports Movement (NRSM) and the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) launched a protracted challenge against the application of the Colour-bar, apartheid policies and initiated the sports boycott. It is vital to note the main NRSM grievance was the call for the organisation and administration of sport in the country to be on a "non-racial basis" as opposed to the "official establishment" racial basis.

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