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Racism and Discrimination in South Africa's Apartheid Tourism Landscape

Abstract. Tourism scholarship has devoted only a small amount of attention to issues around racial discrimination. This article represents a novel contribution to historical research on racial discrimination and understanding the racialization of tourism landscapes. Under scrutiny is the case of South Africa with its extensive history of racial discrimination during the years of apartheid. As context, the study is situated against the historical record of the racialized landscape of tourism during the Jim Crow era in the United States. Using a range of archival material and secondary sources an analysis is presented of the restricted mobilities of the African population, the evolution of segregated tourism spaces and the contours of the racialized tourism landscape of apartheid. The production of a series of guidebooks in the 1960s by the South African Institute of Race Relations to assist Africans navigate the hostile tourism environment is argued to be comparable, in many respects, to the Green Books of Jim Crow USA.

Keywords: : racial discrimination, Jim Crow USA, apartheid, racialized tourism landscape, South Africa

1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) is the undoubted cheerleader for the global tourism industry (Cheer, 2018). It celebrates the sector with a continuing discourse about its contributions to the advancement of economic, social and cultural development. Tourism is perceived as a force for the larger good because of its capacity to influence socio-cultural structures and narratives (Thakur et al., 2023). Most tourism scholars have "strongly believed in the peaceful nature of tourism and hospitality" (Korstanje, 2022, p. 48). The positive discourse surrounding tourism is furthered by a wealth of international research scholarship which

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underscores the existing or potential contribution of tourism to the attainment of several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The specialized nexus of tourism and peace studies also attracts a growing and vibrant literature which dissects the complex relationships between peace and tourism and in many instances foregrounds its positive role (Blanchard & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Wohlmuther & Wintersteiner, 2014; Farmaki & Stergiou, 2021; Higgins-Desbiolles, Blanchard & Urbain, 2022; Korstanje, 2024a).

Until recent years much less scholarly interest has been devoted to the critical examination of several of the negative or 'darker' sides surrounding the operations and impacts of the tourism industry (Korstanje, 2018; Härkönen, 2021; Wen, Meng, & Ying, 2023; Korstanje, 2024b; Dudley, 2025; Khoo et al., 2025; Korstanje, 2024b, 2025). Duffy et al. (2019) assert that tourism scholarship must be critiqued for an approach which largely concentrates on the business of tourism and accords scant attention to how tourism intersects with social issues such as disaster capitalism, human trafficking, racial violence or the differential travel experiences of people of colour. Benjamin and Laughter (2023) advocate tourism scholars should explore more deeply and amplify the stories and lived experiences of the sector's traditionally silenced groups. Dillette, Benjamin and Alderman (2024) call for research that might challenge traditionally white-centric narratives in tourism scholarship. Joseph Cheer (2018) and colleagues (Cheer et al., 2020) draw our attention to 'geographies of marginalization' and the leveraging of tourism for human exploitation and abuse of human rights. Among a range of tourism-related issues would be those encompassing marginalization, social injustice, prejudice, discrimination and systemic racism (Dudley et al., 2022; Abdullah, Lee & Carr, 2023; Jernsand et al., 2023; Slocum, 2023; Thakur et al., 2023; Korstanje, 2024b).

At its most basic level of understanding, Ringelheim (2022) reminds us that discrimination refers to the unwarranted unequal treatment of persons based on group membership, including of race. Among others Bolles (2024) considers race an 'ideological construction' of how human populations are categorized and segmented. Similarly, Banerjee (2021, p. 731) views the term as "purely a social construct with very little basis in genetic or biological sciences". In 1965 the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was adopted as the first United Nations treaty on human rights. Only during the early 2010s was racial discrimination recognized as an "under-analyzed" aspect of tourism development (Kennedy, 2013). A decade later Korstanje (2022, p. 48) could still assert tourism scholarship has "not given a prominent place to racism and prejudice". This neglect was despite an increasing weight of evidence to demonstrate the significance of race in shaping tourism experiences. Chio et al. (2020) contend the traditionally Eurocentric tourism and travel industry has been a key

agent in the marginalization of groups based on racial categories. Stanonis (2022) highlights race was central to the historical development of the modern tourism industry and imperialism reified a sharp division between the white Western world and the colonized world of people of colour who occupied servile roles in the global tourism industry.

A welcome development is the appearance of a small cohort of critical writings on alternative themes in marginalization which include the ramifications of racism within tourism (Jamerson, 2016; Holder et al., 2023; Struwig & du Preez, 2024; Khoo et al., 2025; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2025). Over the past decade, race has surfaced belatedly on the radar screen of tourism scholars (Jamerson, 2016; Ndeke, 2022). Racism is acknowledged as a key driver of inequalities in power, resources and opportunities among different racial groups and represents a social phenomenon that cannot be ignored in tourism (Li et al., 2020). It has been defined as "a process by which individuals and groups popularly categorize and stereotype those whom they feel are inferior" with the construction of stereotypes which result in the production of a 'stigma of otherness' (Stephenson, 2004, p. 64). The impacts of racism in tourism have been documented variously in research which has been undertaken in several countries including Australia (Ruhanen & Whitford, 2018), Brazil (Gonçalves et al., 2022), France (Bunel et al., 2021) and the United Kingdom (Stephenson, 2004; Stephenson & Hughes, 2005). The greatest volume of writings on racism and tourism, however, relates to the United States. It has been demonstrated in several studies that the travel behaviour and destination choices of African Americans are influenced by a history of racism in the USA and most especially of the experience of the Jim Crow years of segregation (Lee & Scott, 2016, 2017; Jackson, 2019; Hudson et al., 2020; Dillette, 2021; Lee, 2024). Racism was manifest most starkly in the establishment of racialized leisure spaces (Dillette & Benjamin, 2022). The ramifications of racism in the United States tourism economy extend beyond that of its own citizenry. For example, Suñga et al. (2022) demonstrate that racial discrimination influences the contemporary travel behaviour of Filipino tourists to the USA as they avoid cities where there are recorded high incidents of racial discrimination.

Struwig and du Preez (2024) maintain that the historical foundations of racial impacts on tourism must be acknowledged as a vital step towards creating a more just travel landscape. Unquestionably, the greatest progress in terms of exploring the historical bases and legacies of racism in tourism relates to the United States and the Jim Crow era of segregation. The novel contribution of this paper is that it shifts the historical debates around racism and tourism away from the documented US experience to explore these issues in the setting of South Africa. With its long and extreme form of racial discrimination South Africa is viewed as a classic case

study environment in which to investigate the making of racism and its effects (Pellicer & Ranchhod, 2023; Tewolde, 2024). Among others Houston (2022) traces the evolution of a racial hierarchy and of white privilege which culminated in the apartheid 'paradise' in which white South Africans enjoyed disproportionate economic, political and social benefits. Taylor (2024) avers that apartheid must be interpreted as constituting a form of 'systemic racism'. For Dubow (2014) racism has been historically an inseparable part of the structure of South African society as notions of superiority, exclusivity and hierarchy have long existed as more or less conscious 'habits of mind'. Indeed, with the advent of apartheid and building upon white supremacist foundations which had been laid decades earlier "South Africa became one of the most thoroughly racialized social orders in the world" (Posel, 2001a, p. 88).

According to Kwet (2020, p. 1) "South Africa's long legacy of racism and colonial exploitation continues to echo throughout post-apartheid society". Arguably, this legacy extends to the impacts for the tourism sector (Struwig & du Preez, 2024). The aim in this paper is to elucidate the makings of a 'racialized landscape of tourism' in South Africa that had been forged by the decade of the 1960s, the period of high apartheid when the policy was most stringently applied in practice (Dubow, 2017). The era of 'high apartheid' — dated as from 1960 to the early 1970s — is when government engaged in a massive project of social engineering which was made possible by the relatively strong economic growth during much of this period (Beinart & Dubow, 1995). By applying the methods of historical geography and the use of an array of sources, the paper explores the evolution of segregated tourism spaces, the contours of the racialized tourism landscape and the appearance of certain guidebooks to assist Africans traverse the hostile tourism environment of the 1960s. As a comparative base, the literature review turns to examine the historical record of the racialized landscape of tourism during the Jim Crow era in the United States. Following a brief discussion of methodology and sources, the analysis turns to overview the history of constraints which were imposed on the mobilities of the African population both in the segregation or pre-apartheid years and into the (post-1948) apartheid period. Although racial discrimination in South Africa was applied to all categories of 'non-Whites' as classified by the 1950 Population Registration Act — including the country's Indian and Coloured (mixed race) communities (Chari, 2024; Tewolde, 2024) — its most intense application was experienced by the majority African (Black) population (Musavengane, 2019). The 1950 Population Registration Act was the legislative cornerstone of racial categorization under apartheid and "set out to assign every South African citizen a single racial classification, which would then become ultimately binding across all spheres of that person's experience" (Posel, 2001b, p. 60).

2. Literature Context

Since 2010 the origins, dynamics, workings and impacts of the Jim Crow era of segregation upon tourism and hospitality have generated a rich seam of writings for the United States (Rose, 2012; Alderman, 2013; Hall, 2014; Alderman & Bottone, 2024; Alderman & Inwood, 2014; Alderman & Modlin Jr., 2014; Duffy et al., 2019; Bottone, 2020a, 2020b; Cook et al., 2020; Jackson, 2020; Kalous, 2021; Bottone 2023; Slocum & Ingram, 2023; Thomas & Love, 2024). The Jim Crow era is traced from the end of Reconstruction from 1877 to the mid-1950s when the mobility of Black Americans was restricted severely due to racial segregation (Tucker, McGehee & Harrison, 2023). A cluster of policies and practices negatively affected the ability of African Americans to enjoy the freedom associated with travel and tourism. Jim Crow "segregated African Americans and whites by law and practice" (Cook et al., 2020, p. 2). The Jim Crow legislation resulted in racial segregation and deprived Black Americans of many of the rights afforded to white Americans. The passage in 1964 of the Civil Rights Act ended the Jim Crow restrictions and of laws that allowed racial discrimination in hotels and other facilities. Carter (2008, p. 265) records that "The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination in public places such as service restaurants, hotels and at various public recreation and amusement sites, therefore removing most of the encumbrances to African-American leisure travel".

Under the Jim Crow system of legal segregation, all tourists and travelers were required by law to channel into racially segregated spaces. According to Sorin (2020) Jim Crow segregation evolved to designate white space from black space, prevent the interaction of whites and blacks and to restrict the mobility of African-Americans. Racial segregation restricted the mobility of African-Americans as many establishments along major highways including tourist accommodations, restaurants and service stations rejected Black patrons. Because of these discriminatory practices journeys for Black motorists "required careful planning and preparation" (Kalous, 2021, p. 11). Indeed, as Alderman (2013, p. 376) states "During the Jim Crow era of legalized discrimination and segregation, African Americans confronted considerable humiliation and harassment when travelling and were restricted to a limited number of segregated parks, beaches, hotels, restaurants, restrooms and other accommodations". Jackson (2020) shows African-Americans were forced to travel in 'separate but equal' train cars and travelling by bus meant difficulties in accessing food as they were prohibited access to many restaurants and so would have to go without food until reaching an establishment that would serve them. In addition, exclusion from resorts, hotels and certain beaches led to the creation of alternative recreation and tourist spaces dedicated to the African-

American tourist (Thomas & Love, 2024). Dillette and Benjamin (2022, p. 464) point out that segregation laws made the early 20ᵗʰ century invention of the automobile "an appreciated alternative to travelling on the railroad". This said while automobiles afforded more freedom "racism's humiliating and violent reach was felt even while driving, as they encountered hyper-policing, sundown towns that disallowed overnight stays by people of color and the humiliation of separate but not really equal accommodation" (Alderman & Bottone, 2024, p. 27).

Arguably, the maintenance of white supremacy in the era of Jim Crow "required the production of black immobility" (Alderman & Inwood, 2014, p. 71). Accordingly, during the Jim Crow years African Americans "faced major roadblocks while travelling and continued threats of violence induced by the deeply embedded history of racism in the country" (Dillette & Benjamin, 2017, p. 1). Throughout the period of Jim Crow white-owned accommodation and hospitality establishments could (and would) refuse Black patronage (Duffy et al., 2019). The segregation of Jim Crow laws was most extensively applied in the Southern states of the usa but its practices extended to other parts of the country. The stringent application of Jim Crow segregation marginalized the growing African American middle class in the us travel and tourism industry (Kennedy, 2013; Jackson, 2020). Jim Crow usa was denoted by "the highly discriminatory history of mobility and hospitality" (Alderman, 2013, p. 376). Mobility must be conceptualized as "an unevenly distributed resource important to the well-being of social actors and the life chances of groups rather than an unproblematic fact of life" (Alderman & Bottone, 2024, p. 26). The racial politics of mobility recognizes that access to mobility is "not socially neutral, but historically shaped by one's racial identity and place within a racialized hierarchy" (Alderman & Inwood, 2014, p. 71). In the usa it is argued that the (im)mobility of African-Americans has been constrained and regulated by white dominated institutions in order to maintain the racial hierarchy. According to Bottone (2020a, p. 113) by imposing controls on movements white Americans attempted to maintain black inferiority through a racialized politics of mobility.

Dillette and Benjamin (2022, p. 463) stress that despite the adversity that African-Americans faced "they have unabashedly participated in the travel industry as consumers and entrepreneurs since the beginning of the twentieth century". A turning point in the history of African-American travel in the United States was marked by the appearance of the Green Books which provided lists of establishments of roadside accommodations that would accept and cater to people of colour (Jackson, 2020). Victor Green, a Harlem postal worker, in 1936 established The Negro Motorist Green Book, a guidebook that detailed accommodation services and locations that were not discriminatory and spaces that were safe for African-American travellers. According to Jones et al. (2024) the objective of Victor Green

was to furnish information on businesses that African American motorists could frequent without jeopardizing their safety. Each guidebook contained a table of contents which was followed by listings of accommodation establishments, restaurants and other establishments organized on a geographical basis. This celebrated guidebook was published between 1936 and 1967 and gave African American travellers a list of hospitable enterprises that they might patronize whilst on their road journeys. Alderman and Inwood (2024, p. 3) consider the Green Books as "a segregation-era travel guide developed to help Black motorists circumvent and resist White supremacy on American highways". Equally, the works of Kennedy (2013) and Briscoe (2024) pinpoint that the Green Book travelogue was a form of resistance and highlights the resilience of African-Americans to the imposition of segregation measures.

For Alderman and Bottone (2024, p. 27) the Green Book brought "attention to the fact that highways, cities and towns were never open to everyone" and offered a listing of destinations that would welcome Black travellers and allow them to avoid the humiliation and often violence which was associated with mobility discrimination. Bottone (2020a) avers that places listed in the guide allow tourism and hospitality to be conceptualized as a form of resistance against white supremacy. Black Americans created an entirely separate tourist infrastructure and travel agencies that directed travelers to places and spaces where they would be welcome without fear of humiliation (Bottone, 2020a, 2020b; Jackson, 2020). One facet was the phenomenon of the tourist home which provided a 'home-away-from-home' and accorded "black travelers the confidence needed to become mobile within a system of white supremacy that sought to keep African-Americans immobile" (Bottone, 2020a, p. 115). It is shown by Bottone (2023) that these tourist homes occupied an important position in providing welcome and other forms of hospitality to travelers. Tourist homes were different to, for example, bed and breakfasts as they were not the destination but rather just a stop along the way (Bottone, 2023). These tourism homes represent examples of so-termed 'Black counterpublic spaces' and through the construction of home-like environments became "spaces that served as moorings within larger mobility networks, countering white supremacist attempts to immobilize and disadvantage Black Americans" (Bottone, 2023, p. 1005).

Unquestionably, the Green Book was "an important historical tool created to assist African Americans in navigating segregation" (Cook et al., 2020, p. 2). Duffy et al. (2019, p. 2430) assert the Negro Motorist Green Book helped Black Americans "navigate through the hostile landscape of the United States during a period of discrimination and segregation". The Green Book testifies to the racial inequalities and the repression of Black travel but at the same time "its mere existence is evidence that Black Americans challenged the status quo" (Kalous, 2021, p. 15). Furthermore,

for Kalous (2021, p. 25) the Green Book "remains an important document that bore witness to the courageous struggles and triumphs of African American travelers in their defiance of segregation and racial discrimination" and allowed them to venture into White dominated spaces and thereby to challenge the racialized spatial order.

3. Methods

This study utilizes different research approaches. First, a bibliographical survey of existing scholarship on racial discrimination in tourism was conducted. As is evident in the contextual literature review the United States record of the Jim Crow period is the best documented. Both American and South African scholars have drawn parallels between the historical segregation record of apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow USA. One analyst elaborates as follows: "South Africa and the United States share similar origins and histories. Both nations have culturally and ethnically diverse populations. Both South Africa and the United States were founded by colonists, and both nations instituted slavery. In the twentieth century, both nations discriminated against non-white citizens. South Africa implemented a series of legislation and institutionalized segregation named 'apartheid', and the United States implemented similar measures through 'Jim Crow' laws. Both institutions were designed to segregate and disenfranchise the non-white population" (Zinkel, 2019, p. 229).

With specific reference to travel and tourism, geographers such as Bottone (2023) as well as Rogerson and Rogerson (2020, 2024a) have isolated similarities in the historical tourism records of the two countries. Although close parallels exist between South Africa and the United States in terms of their racial histories it is important to acknowledge significant differences. The most salient is that in the United States whites constituted a numerical majority whereas in South Africa the white population always has been a numerical minority.

Second, the research on the apartheid racialized landscape of tourism applies the methods of historical geographers, including the mining of primary source materials from archives and the gathering of other evidence in secondary literature. The benefits of archival research for geographers have been pointed out by several observers (Beckingham & Hodder, 2022; Byron, Blytheway-Jackson & Peters, 2024). For investigating the historical geography of tourism the merits of archival investigations are demonstrated in several research works produced both for the USA (Kennedy, 2013; Alderman & Modlin Jr., 2014; Bottone, 2020a, 2020b, 2023) and South Africa (Rogerson, 2017; Rogerson, 2020, 2022, 2024; Rogerson & Rog-

erson, 2024b; Rogerson & Sixaba, 2024). For South African historical geographical scholarship, archives offer a particularly useful entry point into the hidden histories of the marginalized and dominated (Crush, 1992; Rogerson, 2025a, 2025b; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2025). This research draws upon material secured from several archival sources. Research was conducted at the National Library depot in Cape Town and most especially of the collections there of the South African Institute of Race Relations and at the Historical Papers of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

4. Results — The Emergence of the Racially Discriminatory Tourism Landscape

Racial discrimination was well-entrenched in the colonial and segregation eras that preceded apartheid in South Africa (Maylam, 2001). The state of South Africa was consolidated as a country only in 1910 through legislation uniting the two British colonies of the Cape and Natal with the ex-Boer republics of the Transvaal (South African Republic) and Orange Free State. The apartheid state was created after 1948 when the National Party came to govern. Dubow (1998) stresses that as a system, apartheid distilled the practices and assumptions of some 300 years of racially exclusive rule extending back to the beginnings of European settlement at the Cape in the mid-seventeenth century. For centuries it is argued the settler colonizers marshalled surveillance technologies to control the mobilities of subjected populations, including through the machinery of pass laws (Kwet, 2020).

Three subsections of discussion are given. In turn these deal with (1) the constraints imposed on the mobilities of Africans, (2) the growth of a travel movement by Africans, and (3) the character of the racialized tourism landscape in high apartheid South Africa.

4.1. Controlling African Mobilities

By the beginning of the 20th century in the Cape there had evolved a system of passes and controls to restrict the numbers of Africans migrating or simply travelling into urban areas (Savage, 1984; Medien, 2023). Frankel (1979, p. 200) observes South Africa's notorious pass laws predate the ascent to power of the National Party by almost 200 years as "the notion of controlling black movement in the interests of social order, to prevent crime and over-urbanization, or to channel black labour from rural to urban areas, originates as far back as 1780".

In the segregation years following the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the passage of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was deemed "a significant milestone in establishing the racial framework of twentieth century life" (Parnell, 1998, p. 147). At the heart of this legislation was the Stallardist doctrine which laid the legislative foundations for the system of influx control (Frankel, 1979). The 1923 Act is viewed as a triumph for the doctrine that proclaimed urban areas in South Africa were essentially the creation of whites and the African's presence there could be justified only in so far as they 'ministered unto the white man's needs' (Rich, 1978). Savage (1984, p. 1) argues that the apparatus of pass laws and influx control regulations served to control the mobilities of the African population and further by acting to disorganize were "a key part of the legal-administrative apparatus aimed at maintaining white domination". Overall, Frankel (1979, p. 206) determines that "the pass laws are the most tangible expression of racial discrimination since they subject blacks to a series of laws carrying a criminal sanction which do not apply to the white community".

During the pre-1948 segregation years therefore one critical facet of urban policy in South Africa was curbing the entry of Africans into urban areas (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024c). In a comparative analysis of the discrimination experienced by African-Americans in Jim Crow USA, as early as 1944 it could be observed that there is "much evidence to support the contention that discrimination against the blacks in the Union of South Africa is more far reaching, more cynical than in any other self-governing country in the modern world" (Leyburn, 1944, p. 495). Under the sub-section 10 (1) of Act 25 of 1945, the Natives Urban Areas Act of South Africa it was legislated that no African is allowed to remain for more than 72 hours in a proclaimed White area or in an urban area in which he is not employed. In the event of a visit which exceeded 72 hours Africans were required to obtain a visitor's permit from the local authority with the permit to show purpose of visit and permitted duration of stay. The pass laws subjected all Africans in urban areas of South Africa to a despised system of "serialised documentation involving particulars of birth, employment, movement and association, the effect of which is to open each of their lives to the scrutiny of authorities" (Frankel, 1979, p. 207). With the 1948 apartheid election of the National Party government the commitment was reaffirmed that Africans should remain in urban areas only as long as their labour was required by whites. According to Savage (1984) this represented a major turning point in pass law administration and application.

Hindson (1985, p. 402) points out that on coming to power in 1948 the National Party began implementing an urbanization policy premised on measures "which would slow down and eventually reverse the movement of Africans into White-controlled urban areas" and with the long-term apartheid goal being "to settle

all Africans in territorially segregated areas on an ethnic basis" and which were planned "to be developed into economically and politically independent units". The apartheid state's racial ideology cast Africans "as fundamentally rural and cut off from modernity, solely allowed in the city to provide labour. In this imagination black people were seen as city people by day only and should disappear at night to sleep" (Fleishman, 2023, p. 529). The 1950s decade and the early 1960s witnessed therefore a tightening of influx control measures including in 1964 the introduction of an embargo on the entry of African women into urban areas other than having a visitor's permit for a determined period. Consolidation of legislation about the pass laws occurred with the Natives' (Abolition of Passes and Consolidation of Documents) Act of 1952 (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024c). According to Rabkin (1975, p. 13) this deceptively titled Act "was most hated by Africans" as it represented an extension of older pass laws and severely limited the personal freedom of Africans in urban areas. Although this legislation notionally eliminated many of the passes it replaced them with a single 'reference book'. This document contained "the Africans employment contract, tax receipt and other references of which proof was formerly required in the form of a separate pass" (International Commission of Jurists, 1960, p. 28).

The period 1948–1959 has been styled as apartheid's 'ascendant phase' (Chari, 2024, p. 160). From the early 1960s and into the early 1970s — the so-called golden years of apartheid — the implementation of influx control greatly intensified (Hindson, 1985, p. 404). Indeed, until its abolition in 1986 the regime of influx control in South Africa required that reference books had to be carried on the person of Africans and produced upon demand for officials with the failure to do so being a criminal offence. Those Africans whose book was not in order or failed to produce it on demand were liable to imprisonment, being 'endorsed out' of urban areas and sent back to the rural 'tribal homeland' (Rabkin, 1975; Savage, 1984; Hindson, 1985).

4.2. An African Travel Movement in South Africa

Notwithstanding these restrictions on the mobilities of the African population there is evidence of the emergence of an African travel movement with its first stirrings recorded as early as the opening years of the 20th century (Dlamini, 2020). For the 1930s several sources point to the growth of a leisure-focused travel movement by certain privileged (mainly) urban Africans (Sixaba & Rogerson, 2019; Rogerson, 2024). One critical provision in the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act was the distinction drawn between 'exempted' and 'non-exempted' Africans. Only the latter were compelled to comply with regulations concerning mobility restric-

tions through the pass laws (Crankshaw, 2005). Exempted Africans therefore were a privileged elite who could travel "in ways not available to most Africans" (Dlamini, 2020, p. 90).

This group comprised what Crankshaw (2005) terms middle-class Africans who owned property or were employed in a profession. The small group of (often mission-educated) Africans comprised doctors, lawyers, journalists, teachers or writers and many with tertiary qualifications. As Dlamini (2020, p. 91) observes: "it was from their ranks that the people with the means to pursue holidaying, motoring and hunting were to be drawn". This new class of Africans adopted so-termed 'European (whites)' methods of locomotion" forming the first group of Africans to own motor-cars in South Africa. For this elite, leisure and recreation were necessary for African progress and they pursued their own leisure and developed their own separate travel and tourism infrastructure geared to their needs (Turner, 2020). Dlamini (2020, p. 93) draws attention to the publication from 1930 of the *African Who's Who* "a collective biography of the black elite in colonial Africa". This guidebook supplied information on the first established African-owned hotels or boarding houses where they could stay and eat. One early manifestation of a separate infrastructure was found in the coastal centre of Durban (Fig 1) where boarding and lodging was advertised by the Abantu Hotel which wished to accommodate "educated and civilized Africans" (The Bantu World, 1932).

Fig. 1. Location Map of South Africa in the Decade of High Apartheid
Source: Author

The reasons for Africans growing participation in travel were little different to those of whites — leisure, business, health, religion, and visits to friends and relatives (Rogerson, 2024; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024c). It was made clear that for these urbanized Africans "travel involved movement at a time when colonial control made such movement difficult for most blacks" and "entailed a process of discovery and visits to places of interest" (Dlamini, 2020, p. 95). Among these places of interest was the iconic destination of Kruger National Park (Fig. 1) which accepted (if not always welcomed) African visitors ever since tourism began there in 1923. Thousands of Africans travelled there from the 1940s to 1970 driving themselves to the park, viewing game and spending time with one another in segregated rest camp facilities to which they were restricted until 1981 when desegregation occurred of tourism facilities in Kruger National Park. Turner (2020, p. 199) argues that travel to Kruger National Park for Africans was viewed as "a means to improve themselves, to connect with 'our kind of people' and to familiarize themselves with nature and with the country they claimed as their own".

4.3. The Racialized Tourism Landscape

During the early years of the roll-out of apartheid legislation the absence of an infrastructure of accommodation services was, however, a major limitation for African travelers. The racial separation of facilities was formally institutionalized by the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 and by national government insistence in 1955 that lodging facilities for Africans be provided almost exclusively in the segregated spaces of 'townships' such as Soweto in Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2020). The legal scholar Higginbotham (1994, p. 38) makes clear that under the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the Group Areas Act "hotels were not required to serve more than one racial group". In detail, this Act empowered any person in charge of a public premise "to reserve it for the exclusive use of one race without making a similar provision for other races" (Higginbotham, 1994, pp. 17–18). Such racially discriminatory legislation made a pressing issue the building of a separate travel and tourism infrastructure specifically for African travelers. Legislation for 'hotel apartheid' triggered the birth of the 'non-White' hotel as a separate infrastructural network of accommodation services apart from that available to white South Africans (Rogerson, 2020). This said, not all of the 'non-White' hotels that were established in South Africa during the late 1950s and 1960s would accommodate African visitors; instead many of these establishments would provide lodging only for Coloureds (mixed race) or Indian South Africans.

Table 1. The Geographical Distribution of Commercial Hotels for Africans c. 1967–1968

Province	Number of Hotels for Africans	Location Details
Cape Province	11	Of the 11 hotels 3 were in Cape Town, and one each in Paarl, Mossel Bay, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, East London, and King Williams Town. In addition, two hotels operated in Transkei at Cala and Willowmere.
Orange Free State	1	Bloemfontein, the provincial capital
Natal	12	5 hotels available to Africans in Durban and 3 in Pietermaritzburg. Other hotels were at Umzinto (2), Verulam, and Donnybrook.
Transvaal	3	All three hotels in Johannesburg.

Source: Author construction based on South African Institute of Race Relations (1968)

By exploring archival material and use of business directories a national picture for the 1960s can be reconstructed of the available infrastructure of commercial accommodation services for Africans in apartheid South Africa. Table 1 shows the results for hotels. Across the entire country there were only 27 small 'non-White' hotels that furnished accommodation for African travelers. In terms of geography the largest clusters were situated in Cape Province and Natal which together accounted for 24 of the 28 registered hotels that were open for Africans. The territory of the Transkei with two African hotels was carved out as self-governing territory and established as the model Bantustan by apartheid planners in 1963. At the provincial scale it is striking to observe the extensive areas with accommodation deficits. These spaces encompassed most of the Transvaal, South Africa's economic heartland, and the Orange Free State. At the urban scale the leisure coastal destinations of Durban and Cape Town were leading foci for accommodation provision for African visitors. By contrast is the minimal accommodation available to African travelers in the urban areas of the Transvaal where only three small hotels in Johannesburg would entertain African visitors. This should be compared to the 124 registered hotels in Johannesburg which in 1965 were for use only by white patrons. The geographic space in which no hotel facilities existed for African travelers included the important road corridor connecting Johannesburg with Kruger National Park as well as the entire northern part of the Transvaal stretching to the border with colonial Rhodesia. Significant urban centres in the Transvaal with no commercial hotel accommodation for Africans included Pietersburg, Middelburg, Nelspruit and South Africa's national capital city of Pretoria (Fig. 1).

Beyond the minimal accommodation facilities provided by commercial 'non-White' hotels, the options therefore for African travelers were restricted to stays at the homes of friends and relatives, a scatter of small boarding houses and private accommodation providers or to seek accommodation, where available, in the single-sex hostels that mainly offered inhospitable accommodation for migrant workers in large cities such as Johannesburg (South African Institute of Race Re-

lations, 1968; Rogerson, 2025a). Other travelers necessarily resorted to sleeping in cars especially if traveling in those extended spaces across South Africa which represented 'accommodation deserts' for Africans during the apartheid 1960s. A racialized apartheid landscape of hospitality services paralleled that of the 'non-White' hotels as racial segregation and discrimination were widespread in eating facilities (Rogerson, 2025b). In some parts of the country a 'backdoor' hospitality service might be offered to Africans allowing them food service in separate areas to those reserved for white patrons (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024a). It was stressed that "racial discrimination in restaurants was particularly problematic for Africans traveling long distances" by road (Higginbotham, 1994, p. 38). In language reminiscent of the stories told by African-American travelers during Jim Crow USA Lelyveld (1985, p. 37) highlights a newspaper article in which an African woman stated "We of colour always have to carry a coolbag, folding chairs, bowls of prepared food and loo paper because we do not know on long trips where we can obtain something to eat and drink, and even where we may use a toilet".

During the formative apartheid years Dlamini (2020) asserts that the enactment of legislation such as the Population Registration Act of 1950, the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 radically impacted the everyday lives of those classed as 'Africans' and influenced where and how they might travel for leisure and recreation. It was against this backdrop of the multiple challenges confronting Africans (and of all 'non-Whites') as travelers during the apartheid period that the South African Race Relations (SAIRR) issued several guidebooks as information resources to assist the growing flow of such travelers to navigate the apartheid tourism landscape. As Webster (2018) documents the SAIRR had been founded in 1929 as a liberal research institution which was targeted at improving race relations in South Africa. During the 1960s this organization produced two national guidebooks aimed to assist the leisure travel of 'non-Whites' (Keyter, 1962; South African Institute of Race Relations, 1968). The rationale for the two national guides was given as follows: "to bring useful information to the notice of all those who are planning holidays" (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1968, p. 1). The guides provided information on the main holiday, travel and recreational facilities which at that time were open to 'non-White' travellers and holiday makers and with details of accommodation and recreational facilities classified on a geographical basis. For South Africa's the major urban centres, including Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London, additional information was given on recreational facilities concerning sports fields, playgrounds, community centres, cinemas, camping sites and of the racially-segregated beaches. Further, the guide supplied critical and cautionary information on restrictions to travel and the necessary visitor permits that pertained to African travellers.

Figure 2. Example of the City Guides for Africans issued by the South African Institute of Race Relations
Source: Author from National Library, Cape Town

In addition to the national guides issued in 1962 and 1968 the SAIRR compiled city guides specifically for African visitors to Cape Town and Johannesburg (Fig. 2). In the introduction to the booklet produced for African visitors to Cape Town it was explained the guide was compiled "in a spirit of service and helplessness and the hope that its appearance will make life a little easier for those who are excluded from so much in this land" (Parks, 1969, p. 1). The Johannesburg booklet was described as having the objective "to guide Africans to the amenities available to them in the city area of Johannesburg" (Suttner, 1966, p. vi). It included information on the limited accommodation and hospitality service options available to Africans visiting the city. A second and revised edition of the booklet appeared in 1967 with a similar stated rationale, focus and contents to offer assistance and advice on the problems of daily living in the city, including how to navigate the city in terms of places to stay, eat and spend leisure time. As a whole the content and rationale of these guidebooks produced in apartheid South Africa is similar to those publications produced in the USA during the Jim Crow era and designed to support African-American travelers. In particular, clear parallels exist between the SAIRR publications to assist Africans navigate the maze of apartheid regulations with *The*

Negro Motorist Green Book travel guidebooks produced to help African-Americans travel without humiliation and circumvent institutionalized discrimination.

5. Conclusion

Bolles (2024) reminds us that racism and the belief in racial superiority can be one of the featured elements of tourism and warrants the greater attention of scholars. This paper contributes to the small international scholarship around racism in tourism with its specific originality that of reorienting historical debates around racism and tourism away from the well-researched experience of Jim Crow USA and instead to explore these issues in the setting of apartheid South Africa. It was demonstrated that apartheid policies institutionalized and strengthened an extended history of controls on the mobilities of the marginalized African population. Despite tightened controls on their movements by the decade of the 1960s it is evident that Africans were travelling in growing numbers for purposes of leisure, visiting friends and relatives, and for business.

As an outcome of customary racial segregation a separate travel and tourism infrastructure for Africans had been formed as far back as the 1930s. With the strictures imposed by apartheid this separate racial infrastructure was essential and gave birth to the phenomenon of 'non-White' hotels, many (but not all) of which provided hospitality to African travellers. Landmark apartheid legislation such as the Population Registration Act of 1950, the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 fundamentally reshaped the everyday existence of those persons racially classed as Africans as it impacted where and how they might travel for leisure and recreation. It is within this policy environment that the series of guidebooks produced in the 1960s by the South African Institute of Race Relations are highly significant. From the American experience the tourism geographers Derek Alderman and Ethan Bottone (2024, p. 26) assert that "struggles to claim, occupy and move through spaces and hence access resources and opportunities in those spaces — is crucial to the welfare, sustainability and rights of historically marginalized groups". In South Africa the SAIRR guidebooks presented vital and much-needed information to assist the growing numbers of African travelers to navigate safely across the hostile apartheid tourism landscape. These guidebooks could function to support the mobilities of African travelers in much the same way to that assumed by the Green Books in the USA. Unquestionably the impact of racial discrimination and the making of a racialized the tourist landscape had real and enduring con-

sequences for Africans in South Africa as it had for the similar experiences of African Americans in the era of Jim Crow.

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Conceptualization, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, writing review and editing — CMR.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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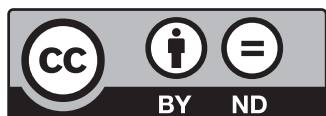
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Rasizm i dyskryminacja rasowa w krajobrazie turystycznym apartheidu w RPA

Streszczenie. W piśmiennictwie turystycznym poświęcono dotychczas niewiele uwagi kwestiom dyskryminacji rasowej. Niniejszy artykuł stanowi nowatorski wkład w badania historyczne nad dyskryminacją rasową i zrozumieniem rasistowskich krajobrazów turystycznych. Analizą objęto RPA z jej bogatą historią dyskryminacji rasowej w latach apartheidu. Kontekstem badań uczyniono historyczne zapisy rasistowskiego krajobrazu turystyki w erze Jima Crowa w Stanach Zjednoczonych. Korzystając z szeregu materiałów archiwalnych i źródeł wtórnych, dokonano analizy ograniczonej mobilności ludności afrykańskiej, ewolucji wydzielonych przestrzeni turystycznych i granic rasistowskiego krajobrazu turystycznego apartheidu. Stwierdzono, że wydanie serii przewodników w latach 60. XX wieku przez South African Institute of Race Relations, w celu umożliwienia Afrykańczykom poruszania się po wrogim dla nich środowisku turystycznym, jest pod wieloma względami porównywalne do Green Book Jima Crowa w USA.

Słowa kluczowe: dyskryminacja rasowa, Jim Crow USA, apartheid, krajobraz turystyki z elementami rasowymi, Republika Południowej Afryki