



Colonialism - put back on the agenda by the inimitable Helen Zille who, like Trump, confuses twittering ravings with cold hard policy, forgetting political correctness and empirical impact.

The trumpeter's compulsion to the issuing of shorthand complex ideas via Twitter might result in a world war. Ill-thought-out statements draw forth rage, retribution and revenge. Better to write boring, impenetrable and philosophical exegeses that argue the point methodologically and theoretically with references.

Studiosness requires irrelevance, well ensured by the time that publication is secured. That's the value of academia. Think, theorise and then teach – the three Ts. Much safer.

But I think - as usual - we make a molehill out of a mountain. We regress into the dark subterranean murk rather than climb mountains and see the world clearly from a bird's-eye view. But that was the - now lost - Mandela moment.

When I first visited Ghana in 1994, I met President Jerry Rawlins and folks from across Africa participating in the African Council for Communication Education (ACCS) conference.

We South Africans were the flavour of the moment. Heroes all, we were welcomed into the African fold, and immediately educated as to the failure of colonialism in West Africa, in contrast to its perceived success in East and Southern Africa. This was expressed in the recurring epithet, "The British did not take West Africa seriously enough". Eh? I muttered.

Our new-found West and East African colleagues pointed to road, rail, port and civil infrastructures and institutions and functioning rules and regulations that had outlasted the departure of those groups known by sloganeering students as our "colonial masters". If they were our masters, then why did they leave? Did the kids become too unruly? If so, then the

relationship was never fully a master-servant one. That's what the sizable South African contingent in Accra signified. Repression is never complete. Resistance is always under way. Democracy is always alive, if under the surface. The "masters" are never fully in control – even if, as Zille naively suggested, "colonialism was not all bad".

While in Ghana I found myself in the President's vehicle, loaned to the conference to speed up organisational arrangements. His chauffeur was allowed to drive on the wrong side of the road to escape the interminable traffic jams on decaying single lane arterial roads. Quite scary. I doubt that the car even had a blue light and there was no noisy, speeding and aggressive cavalcade of self-important VIP security within which our own Prez wraps himself.

The wrong side of the road privilege was accorded to Rawlins's car only - in Johannesburg most taxis think that they are part of Rawlins's entourage as they are mostly on the wrong side and red lights mean not much at all. Stop streets are ignored by everyone. Arrive Alive means nothing. Arriving dead seems to be the objective here in Johannesburg. Since Rawlins's limousine was the only one allowed on the wrong side all motorists knew that it would not be followed by phalanxes of reckless opportunists riding in its slipstream. No Twitter in Rawlins's day, but when he spoke off script at the opening of the conference, the Ghananean media turned their microphones off. They missed the real news.

What to do with the twittering twits who create real news? Take away their electronic hand-held devices. Black-list them with the cellphone companies, remove the temptation of texting from the hip. Essay writing is a lost art, thanks to Twitter, Facebook and smspeak. And, just consider the consequences of the urge to comment immediately on everything and everything at a moment's notice. We should make essay writing (with references) respectable again. Rhetoric, argumentation and thoughtfulness, and a consideration for the consequences of ill-advised raving must be taught.

Oh, and what of colonialism, whether British, Arabic or Soviet? Some benefits were that folks learned to write, read and do maths. It also generated resistance and helped to forge national identities and new nations. But mostly, colonialism's most significant import was Christianity, whether of the theological or happy clappy kinds. Helen's nemesis, Pastor Mmusi Maimane, owes his religion, his suit and his political position as leader of the opposition to our British colonial heritage, rather than the Shakan way. But by charging Helen, the DA now gets, ironically, to project an image of a Black anti-colonial party in a state that is being colonised

by the new colonisers: a corrupt comprador bourgeoisie captured by the Zuptas, the Russian nuclear industry and SANRAL.

You ain't seen nothing yet as we cede our economy to foreign interests that will indebt us forever. There can be nothing good in this form of colonialism – what we can call comprador monopoly capital.

I do not participate in the twittersphere. Too many hashtags, truncated philosophers and people who have lost their jobs or fined for their rants. Send me an email if you want to haze me.

One of my regular correspondents wrote on a previous column on whispering and the dogs-eye-view: 'As to dogs, they transformed *themselves*, from fierce wolf-pack predators into man's best friend 14 000 years or more ago. This has meant that unlike other wild animals, they no longer had to work for a living usually. This is why they love us no matter how neglectful we are. Give me a dog's life and I'll lick your ass (sounds like SA). But note at least that dogs will quickly learn to run away from people who abuse them. Not so South Africans.' Could my respondent be referring to the new colonialism – or what is now called "state capture"? Capture is the project being forced by the acolytes of Guptaistan and in new period of what former UKZN staffer, Chris Merrett, calls the Second Liberation Struggle [2]. Something indeed stirring.

Just who is colonising who? In the meantime the Zille-twitter must be better managed by the DA.

1. See William Saunderson-Meyer, Political correctness is more stifling than religious dogma <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/opinion/making-treason-out-of-reason>

2. Merrett, <http://www.fromthethornveld.co.za/uncle-kathys-legacy-and-south-africas-second-liberation-struggle/>

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*Disclaimer: The views expressed in this column are the author's own.*