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Against Financialization as Freedom: Errant Investments in Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* and Rehad Desai's *Everything Must Fall*

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Abstract: This article explores investment and inheritance across the generational divide between South Africa's so-called born frees and the protest cultures of the post-Fallism era. Positing that colonized worlds generate investments, financially and affectively, in whiteness and antiblackness, I consider how various South African cultural texts perform labours of disinheritance and disinvestment against the limited legacies racial capitalism bequeaths on its subjects. I analyze texts ranging from the online #Tipgate scandal of 2015 to poetry by Lebogang Mashile, Kopano Matlwa's novel *Coconut* (2007), and Rehad Desai's film *Everything Must Fall* (2018). In the context of a post-apartheid discourse that has structured freedom around notions of financial mobility inherited from racial capitalism, I argue that these texts refuse the lifelines supplied by Eurocentric market capital and direct their subjects toward Afrocentric futures. These futures often involve rejecting the financial as the exclusive metric of social value in post-apartheid South Africa. I discuss the limits of financial freedoms in born free narratives about family and collectivity and in Fallist protests over the Eurocentric legacies of the university. Rejecting pejorative renderings of decolonial work in the Fallist period as essentially destructive—an allegation that, I suggest, derives from paradigms of inherited Eurocentric value—the article emphasizes how the texts under discussion participate in the labour of dismantling certain inheritances and cultivating alternate possible futures.

Keywords: South Africa, Fallism, inheritance, investment, racial capitalism, decolonization

> [A]gainst the backdrop of contemporary market fundamentalism, I am interested in recovering the idea . . . that a good education prepares one to make a world, rather than passively receive or participate in an already given world.
>
> Mohammad Shabangu, "Education" 134–35

In our separate corners
Bound together by
Slavery
Colonisation
Poverty
AIDS
Drugs
Abuse
And ideas that are not backed
By Anglo-Arab conglomerates or American aid
We are holding the blueprint
For the world that the most blessed will inhabit.

Lebogang Mashile, "My Imagined Community" lines 1–12

I. Introduction: #Tipgate

In April and May 2016, amidst the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall student movements erupting across South Africa,[1] #Tipgate also began trending on social media in response to an incident involving Fallist activists Ntokozo Qwabe and Wandile Dlamini. Reportedly, after being given their bill at the Obz Cafe in Cape Town, the two reduced server Ashleigh Shultz to tears when they left no tip and instead inscribed the gratuity line with the statement, "We will give tip when you return the land" (Dolley). The hashtag that proliferated on Twitter and the media responses it generated in South Africa and abroad variously condemned and supported the statement. Condemnations derided the seemingly callous behaviour of the Oxford-educated Qwabe toward the economically poor server who earned only R15 per hour (Behr)—about 1.03 USD—and whose Afrikaaner family "owned [no] land to give back" (Behr). More supportive analyses highlighted the question

of land reform that was obfuscated by the online uproar and the media's frequent sympathy for Schultz ("Forget Tipping"). The incident also became an opportunity for the hollow rhetoric of reverse racism to emerge in defense of Schultz's ostensible economic marginalization; she herself expressed gratitude that "so many people have stood up against racism" ("Tip Ashleigh Schultz"). However, by imagining racism as embedded in the time and place of immediate economic exchange rather than as a set of inherited relations, structures, and practices, this response arguably occluded the very histories of material inequality to which Qwabe's note gestured in the first place.

And yet the incident and its aftermath belied widespread inherited financial and affective investments in whiteness and antiblackness. Gratuities are a form of investment in good service, and servitude is intimately tied to racialized practices that have historically glorified white mastery and exploited the labour of people of colour in South Africa and abroad.[2] The incident at the Obz Cafe may have inverted the traditional racial dynamics of such practices, but the ensuing online activity quickly sought to restore white privilege. Within two weeks, a GoFundMe campaign to give Schultz a tip that highlighted reverse racism grossed $6815 ("Tip Ashleigh Schultz"), and a Change.org petition calling for Oxford University to revoke Qwabe's scholarship there garnered more than 47,000 supporters.[3] If Qwabe's comments drew attention to the idea of inheritance by bringing histories of colonial dispossession into the realm of everyday consumer life, the campaign set up for Schultz quelled any resultant disruption of inherited racial inequality, ensuring (in part by insuring) that white bodies—even those in positions of servitude—are the beneficiaries of global sympathy and economic capital. Indeed, one Facebook respondent's assertion that "many black servers deal with macro and microaggressions on a daily basis, and no social media storm results" (qtd. in Staufenberg) speaks to an unequal distribution of affect and finance along racial lines.

This article reads pre- and post-Fallist South African cultural texts for their commentary on inheritance and investment. #Tipgate offers a useful frame because it strikes a discordant relationship with the political motivations of the disenfranchised youth in the Fallist moment—those

seeking to dismantle colonial inheritances and renew investment in decolonial futures. While a seemingly minor incident in the grand scheme of racial capitalism's endemic inequalities, #Tipgate nonetheless participates in a broader problem that is present in the texts this article analyzes. I argue that in foregrounding the affective pull of whiteness' sympathetic register, #Tipgate and the texts below—Kopano Matlwa's novel *Coconut* (2007) and Rehad Desai's documentary film *Everything Must Fall* (2018)—signal how colonized worlds generate investment, financially and affectively, in hegemonic whiteness and antiblackness in ways that occlude colonial whiteness' unpayable historical debts. In response to this issue, these two texts actively divest from inherited inequitable distributions of resources and affect along racial lines, in part by envisioning breaks from logics that privilege finance as the exclusive metric of social value.

In this article, I am interested in how the financial structures affective possibility in particular ways and how racialized affects generate finance along particular lines of inheritance. I consider how Fallism's decolonial politics contends with neoliberal rhetorics of austerity that render decolonial change naïve, impractical, or untimely—positions, I suggest, derived from a system invested in capital accumulation as the primary metric of social value. As I will demonstrate, financial rhetorics of inheritance and investment frequently align collectivities with normative white modes of family, history, education, nationhood, and consumption. Matlwa's and Desai's texts work against this alignment and challenge not only whiteness but financialization's colonization of inheritance and investment. In instances in which finance acts as the predominant metric of value and success in the seductive lure of a post-apartheid notion of financial mobility as freedom, these texts posit alternate forms of valuation that redirect collectivity and subjectivity away from investments in racial capitalism and toward Afrocentric forms of valuation.

One of the epigraphs to this article is from Lebogang Mashile's poem "My Imagined Community" and provides inspiration for my discussion of inheritance and investment in affective and financial terms. The poem's title is an obvious riff on Benedict Anderson's foundational but

Eurocentric framing of national community in his 1983 text *Imagined Communities*. However, Mashile's community marks a break from the implied kinship that, in Anderson's analysis, is promised by national identity. Instead, she focuses on the lives discarded in financial capital's destructive wake. This community extends beyond the space of the nation and is amassed out of the collective aspirations of those dispersed Black lives refused the lifelines of capital. The poem's focus on a collectivity of Afro/diasporic identities also rejects neoliberalism's efforts to encourage a shift from communalism to individualism (Ferguson 183). Mashile's poem instead opens a space of utopic re-worlding in those "holding the blueprint / For the world that the most blessed will inhabit" (lines 11–12). In focusing on the "dreams of black babies" (22), the poem disseminates desire for another world through a figure of futurity: the child. However, the poem's utopic promise emerges not out of a freedom sustained by capital that re-treads the pathways carved out by neoliberal rhetorics of possibility. Instead, the positionality of those peripheral to neoliberalism's promise enables the imagination of futures different from financial capital's vision. The poem promises inhabitation not in the world that has already been inherited but in one that is yet to be. By embracing those ideas "not backed" (Mashile 9) by capital accumulation (in the poem's reference to Anglo-Arab conglomerates) or whitened liberal humanitarian systems of giving (in its reference to American aid), the poem also refuses to inherit the racial dynamics that systems of colonial capital bequeath to their subjects.[4] The potential of the world to come does not reinscribe networks of value that sustain a neoliberal financial order but instead derives value from the collective labour and desires of those whom that system dispossesses.

II. Affective and Financial Economies: Exploring Kinship and Education as Sites of Inheritance

With the legacies of neoliberal capital's effects on South African space in mind, this article is divided into two sections that explore inheritance in two overlapping social arenas: kinship structures and education. I contend that both institutions involve the transmission of value generationally, across time and space. The first section looks at Matlwa's

Coconut. Though published in the decade prior to Fallism, during what is often termed the born free generation for those born or coming of age in the supposedly liberated post-apartheid period after 1994, it offers insight into Fallism's eventual rejection of Eurocentric education that the second section's turn to Desai's film interrogates. The novel, I suggest, emphasizes the diminishing returns for the born free generation of the mythology of finance as freedom by exploring how that mythology orients notions of family and home around whiteness and overwrites Afrocentric memory and history. The novel's protagonists, while entrenched in neoliberal rhetorics of possibility, redirect the lifelines supplied by whitened capital's legacies. The second section of the article shifts to the emerging "post-Fallism present" (Poltera 6) and traces inheritance in the context of education. It takes a cue from *Coconut*'s cautions against privatization's effects on kinship and explores how Desai's *Everything Must Fall* counters the privatization of education and pedagogy in the neoliberal university. It also emphasizes the Fallist movement's rejection of the university's Eurocentric inheritances in favour of the cultivation of Afrocentric knowledges. The section challenges the rhetoric of free education as solely no-cost education, explores how the Fallist movement posits notions of freedom beyond the financial, and considers how Desai's film extends Fallist publics beyond the screen by affectively rallying viewers around investments in decolonial politics. This article provides a limited consideration of a few texts and as such does not offer a totalizing account of a pre- and post-Fallist national sentiment. It does, however, offer examples of a cultural politics concerned with inheritance in two interlinked strata of contemporary South African discourse—kinship and education—to emphasize the broad reach of its arguments.

In addition to tracing inheritance in two social arenas, I divide my analysis along two periods in recent history—the before and after of Fallism—for two reasons. First, in putting the two periods in conversation with one another, I emphasize the continuity of certain inheritances across periodic breaks in contemporary South African history, such as the ostensibly new South Africa, the born free era, or the Fallist moment, all of which arguably reneged on their promises of radical departures

from unjust pasts. Anne-Maria Makhulu's analysis of debt economies in contemporary South Africa signals the continuity of apartheid's legacies of economic inequality across periodic boundaries:

> Already a grossly unequal society in 1994, given the many systematic indignities of apartheid and the settler colonialism that preceded it—among these, land expropriation, mass deskilling, forced removals and dispossession—those inequalities deepened *after* 1994 suggesting that the inherited contradictions of apartheid political economy had played into the processes by which South Africa's markets were then globalized. (220; emphasis in original)

In tracing inheritance across periods, this article aims to understand how the Fallist movement's concern with dismantling apartheid's legacies was precipitated by the purportedly free era that preceded it. Second (and this point emphasizes the usefulness of the periodic break that Fallism represents), these sections foreground a prevailing culture among disenfranchised South African youth of affective refusals of racial capitalism's inheritance that, in the Fallist moment, direct bodies and collectivities toward alternate pasts and futures than those offered by ongoing colonialism, apartheid, and antiblackness.

In linking the affective and financial across these two periods, this article is attentive to what Sara Ahmed terms "affective economies" in which both finance and "emotions *do things*" and "align individuals with communities—or bodily space with social space—through the very intensity of their attachments" ("Affective" 119; emphasis in original). The affective is not reducible to emotion, but is one component of a broad field in which bodies, objects, and systems of value implicate one another. The analysis below also foregrounds affective economies to rectify the limits of purely economic analyses, an undertaking Mohammad Shabangu gestures toward in his robust critique of how even desires for liberation have "been co-opted by a certain capitalist ontology" ("Education" 138). For Shabangu, "any question of liberation has to be approached by way of desire" (138). Thinking through inheritance and investment beyond the constraining metaphorics of financialization

promises to elucidate the relationship between the supposedly material (but nonetheless symbolic) world of labour and resources and the supposedly ethereal (but nonetheless material) world of emotional investment and affect.

III. Racialized Affective and Financial Economies: Inheritance and Investment Across Post-Apartheid Periods

In addition to "Affective Economies," Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology* is a helpful companion to thinking through inheritance, especially for envisioning investments in futures that break with racial capitalism. Her analysis considers how "bodies are shaped by histories of colonialism, which makes the world 'white' as a world that is inherited or already given" (*Queer* 111). Race, for Ahmed, is "what we receive from others as an inheritance of this history" (111). Inheritance can also project colonial history into the future "through the social pressure to follow a certain course, to live a certain kind of life, and even to reproduce that life" (17). Racial inheritance also propels colonial forms of valuation into the future via a reproductive logic of investment. As Ahmed suggests, "[f]ollowing lines [of inheritance] also involves forms of social investment" that "'promise' return" (17). This is the process by which "subjects *reproduce the lines they follow*. In a way, thinking about the politics of 'lifelines' helps us to rethink the relationship between inheritance (the lines that we are given as our point of arrival into familial and social space) and reproduction (the demand that we return the gift of the line by extending that line)" (17; emphasis in original). The family might be a primary site of inheritance, as I explore below, but its apparatus also extends to broader social futurities, as scholars of queer time have shown by uncovering the resonance between familial and national affective orientations.[5] Read in this way, this article's turn from kinship to education in its second section emphasizes the way that both register interlinked forms of inheritance and investment that extend from the family to wider publics. Ahmed's queer phenomenological project involves forms of disorientation, of losing one's way and moving beyond the directives of normative familial and communal lifelines. The texts dealt with in the ensuing analysis involve peoples—often those who do

not find themselves in the annals of Eurocentric models of whitened collectivity—who cultivate social ties from their experiences of individual and collective disorientation.

The possibility contained in directions that break with the trajectory of inheritance and investment also resonates with Julietta Singh's recent discussion of the "errand." Inheritance's line-extending apparatus delivers value from a social or familial past into the future; because of this, it echoes Singh's account of the errand as a "missive . . . made from on high and . . . authorized as deliverable" as well as the way she describes "the activity of carrying it" as "both the message and its embodied traffic across space and time" (568). Whether in fictional characters' redirection of family lines or Fallism's protests against the Eurocentrism of the university, I consider how those who have inherited particular neoliberal errands either refuse them or propel them in errant directions. My analysis is especially inspired by Singh's articulation of an "inventive public project of *wild erranding*, of collectively performing missives for the wild, the unruly, the antipolitics of dissent—in the abiding effort to live toward an ungovernable future-present" (569; emphasis in original). Singh's efforts to "play fantastically with origins" and "think collectively of ways to take errands and make them veer off the slated course" offer modes of "becoming errant-erranders as a wild strategy for making and extending community" (571). We can extend this notion of the errant to Fallism's decolonial project. As an assembly of protestors troubling the authority of the university, the #FeesMustFall movement involves collectivities refusing to shoulder the errand of Eurocentric knowledge into the future.

The inheritances of Eurocentrism and whiteness, for both *Coconut* and *Everything Must Fall*, engender futures characterized by antiblackness. In working through models of kinship and collectivity, their refusals work against forms of relationality whereby, as Shabangu's analysis of whiteness argues, "Black people who come into contact with a white world, and South African non-whites in particular, . . . continue to experience their Blackness (non-whiteness) relative to a hegemonic whiteness" ("Precarious Silence" 53). Shabangu's emphasis on "non-whiteness" gestures toward the negative position to which Blackness is relegated

amidst the relational dynamics inherited in contemporary South Africa. Indeed, if race "has been established relationally" (54), *Coconut* and *Everything Must Fall* redirect these relations toward alternate modes of sociality. While this article is specifically devoted to South African texts, it nonetheless resonates with broader global movements against anti-blackness, particularly in its attention to Fallism's "congruen[ce] with other alter-globalization movements' stances on the marketisation of society" (Garton 414). For example, Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake* posits "antiblackness as a total climate" rather than a localized formation (21), and the notion of living "in the wake" helps us to think through the inheritances that antiblackness bequeaths as well as possibilities for errant futures for living (Black) life. For Sharpe, living "in the wake" simultaneously connotes collectivities "with no state or nation to protect us, no citizenship bound to be respected" and future-oriented positionalities that provide ways "to think and be and act from there" (22).

Although *Coconut* and *Everything Must Fall* think and act toward Afrocentrism—a term implied by the first section's texts and explicitly mobilized by Fallist protestors in the second—my use of this term is not an effort to define a monolithic or immutable Africanness. Such efforts inevitably generate exclusion, as in the case of ideas and identities being called "un-African" in recent years.[6] A much-cited provisional definition of Afrocentrism useful for this analysis perhaps counterintuitively involves not a spatial centre so much as "a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person" and feature "Africans as . . . key players rather than victims" (Asante, "The Afrocentric" 172).[7] However, rather than a singular perspective, the texts under discussion amass a multiplicity. For them, Afrocentrism is also less a point of arrival than a process of struggle that links with strands of Black radical thought. Insofar as these texts implicate and contest finance as one of the structures to be dismantled, their Afrocentric work also involves grappling with unresolvable debts of colonial history that, as Stefano Harney and Fred Moten suggest, "can never be made good" (20). This article proceeds from the assumption that capitalism is built on such debts and is always already imbued with histories of racialization.[8] Resisting the continued colonization of the social that occurs via

the rhetoric of a whitened financialization, the texts below refuse to resolve historical inequality through finance as freedom—that is, by way of restitutions that aim to redeem inherited inequality through freedom of consumption that would only work to reinforce capital's colonizing sway. They instead offer a politics that is "not about debt collection or reparation. It's about a complete overturning" (Harney and Moten 151). Insofar as overturning involves process, *Coconut* and *Everything Must Fall* posit Afrocentrism in processes of becoming and disinvestment more than in Africanness as a prescribed ontological fixity.

In foregrounding financialization's imbrication with the inheritances of whiteness, this article also builds on work that demystifies the promise of liberation through marketization in South Africa. This promise, as Deborah Posel suggests, is wrought out of a "historically constitutive relationship between the workings of race and the regulation of consumption" (160). Posel argues in the context of South African history that the "desire and power to consume was racialized, at the same time as it was fundamental in the very making of race" (160). As a system of exchange that reinforces rather than resolves historically unequal relationships, the consumptive freedoms offered by market liberalization fall short of liberation. This is aptly stated by Helene Strauss in her response to Posel; she observes that "to yoke liberation goals to the promises offered by consumption is necessarily to court disappointment, given that access to the material resources—even in the form of debt—required for conspicuous consumer spending continues to be circumscribed for most South Africans" (476).[9] This disappointment helpfully signals the trajectory of my analysis. Because finance as freedom deepens the divide between the privileged few and the poorer masses, the texts in the next section divest from its promises, often in kind with the disappointment Strauss traces. They reject inherited wealth and instead ascribe value to kin networks and collectivities of Afrocentric becoming.

IV. Errant Lifelines in Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut*

Cognizant of the consequences of financial capital's alienating effects on a supposedly born free generation, Matlwa's *Coconut* examines family structures in the ostensibly new South Africa from the perspective of

two women emerging into adulthood.[10] For its protagonists, entrance into the benefits of financial capital comes at the cost of fashioning the self and the family along whitened lines of success until whiteness becomes the central orientation of communal life. In *Coconut*, futures promised by whiteness might bring wealth to an alienated few but require giving up kinships that connect contemporary Black life to shared histories, languages, and senses of becoming-in-common.

The novel is divided into two parts that emphasize the broad sway of whiteness and antiblackness. The first half is narrated by Ofilwe, a member of the economically affluent Tlou family whose patriarch works for a white-dominated tech company and is a beneficiary of Black Economic Empowerment, a South African government program designed to reconcile apartheid's racialized economic inequalities. The second half is narrated by Fikile, an economically poor woman living with and supporting her sexually abusive uncle in the townships. The two women come from vastly different class positions and appear to share little in common. Nonetheless, the novel foregrounds how the racialized inheritances that structure post-apartheid South Africa create the conditions for their mutual constraint. The two narratives unfold over a single day and are only connected by the notion that Ofilwe's family eats breakfast at the Silver Spoon—a restaurant with a primarily wealthy, white clientele—where Fikile is their server. Matlwa's author's note, provided at the end of the novel, suggests that "[i]t is our story . . . as we feel it every day. It is boring. It is plain" (191). While the temporality of the story might follow the supposedly mundane occurrences of a single day, that day is steeped in histories that reveal the domination of everyday life by colonial and apartheid inheritances that portend bleak futures for the protagonists.

Coconut's take on inheritance and investment is intimately tied to the question of home, which both emphasizes the constraint placed on its protagonists' horizons of possibility and highlights potential points of departure that generate more Afrocentric modes of investment and inheritance than those offered by whiteness. For Gugu Hlongwane, Matlwa's narrative "urges . . . lost South Africans to *come home* to themselves and their cultures" as part of its "investigation of the power of

whiteness even in a black governed South Africa" (10; emphasis in original). For Meg Samuelson, home is on the one hand a fraught location, "structured out of worldly entanglements, complicities, and contaminations," and Matlwa's text is exemplary of "the damaging inscription of whiteness on the interior worlds of its characters" (132). On the other hand, *Coconut* offers, alongside other works of post-transition South African fiction, "new textual homes from which women can foray out into the public sphere" (132). If pejorative assessments posit that born frees are an "apathetic, apolitical generation that is profoundly unaware of the history of struggle that made freedom and desegregation possible" (Mpongo 95), the novel dispels that suggestion. By extending the supposedly unremarkable everydays of its characters into the public sphere, the text reveals the confluence of political inheritances that intersect at the juncture of the supposedly private location of the family and the home. Indeed, the novel is a kind of errand in that it extends the private lives of two women into a public domain of readership, and Matlwa's closing address ("It is our story") instantiates a collectivity that goes beyond the individual lives of the women in the text.

The novel signals how whiteness as both inheritance and aspiration inscribes the protagonists' bodies in a number of harmful ways. These range from the title, *Coconut*, which references the pejorative trope of being Black on the outside but white on the inside,[11] to its characters' struggles with beauty standards that reveal a "racially homogenous ideal . . . based on a template of whiteness" (Murray 101). More broadly, the text reveals the "cultural tensions created by the historical legacies of apartheid" (Spencer 68). Fikile emphasizes the economic promise of whiteness (which is for her simultaneously the denigration of Blackness) when she states what she does "not want to be: black, dirty and poor" and focuses instead on believing in what she "will someday be: white, rich and happy" (Matlwa 118). Her aspiration bears the marks of Lauren Berlant's notion of cruel optimism with its unrealizable promise. Fikile calls this future-oriented promise her "Project Infinity" (118)—infinity being a figure for an abundant but ultimately unquantifiable metric. Her affirmations embody the classic paradox of utopic thinking in that they are idealized but simultaneously unreachable.

The novel foregrounds the lack of return on investments in whiteness its characters experience through their affective and material orientations. Whiteness is a supplantive force in that inheritance of its supposed benefits involves trading off cultural and familial memories that do not fit within its purview. This cost is evident in Ofilwe's melancholic narrative of her family's financial success. Her father praises the financial prowess of "white people," those who in his eyes "know how to utilize their money" (68), but his success is accompanied by declining communication between him and his wife, Gemina, as well as his extended family. That Ofilwe's world is situated in relation to Anglicized history as a result of this success also positions her as having no history at all. The first illustration of this absence comes at the end of the novel's opening chapter, in which Ofilwe addresses the reader from an Anglican church. She states: "I understand nothing of the history of the church. I do not know what the word 'Anglican' means nor can I explain to you how the church came to arise. . . . I come here because I feel I belong. That is all. The traditions of the church are my own. I do not have any others" (10). On the one hand, the church offers a modicum of belonging for Ofilwe; on the other, that belonging is figured as an absence of history and collective memory. Although capital and orientations toward whiteness promise financial success for the family, they also remove Ofilwe from any belonging in history; she "do[es] not have" any other history, and her belonging is sustained by the eradication of any sense of a narrative of the past that might be her own.

Similarly, her mother, Gemina, must actively work to negate aspects of herself in order to inherit the freedom of consumption that comes with financial privilege. One passage shows her putting on makeup in preparation for her monthly visit with thirteen women who become unlikely friends for her. Ofilwe observes: "In another era, in a different land with a less controversial history, none of these thirteen women would be friends because no two of them have anything in common. Except, of course, the one thing they do have in common. . . . All of these women are trying to forget" (63). For Gemina, success comes with the active labour of eradicating memory.

Ofilwe, however, demonstrates a hint of imagining otherwise with her caveat that "in another era, in a different land" things might be different. In other moments, too, the novel redirects its characters' affective investments away from the failed promise of whiteness' lifelines. For example, Ofilwe's brother, Tshepo, applies to university, writing in his desired degree as "'Bachelor of Arts Majoring in African Literature and Language' and not Actuarial Science, which Daddy and he had agreed upon" (79). Tshepo's desired future deviates from the family plan and redirects his line of investment away from the stewardship of financial capital that the actuarial represents and toward Afrocentric knowledge. This is perhaps one of the novel's few notes of possibility for surviving whiteness' eradicatory impulses. It sits alongside Ofilwe's lament that "[i]n every classroom, children are dying. . . . IsiZulu forgotten. Tshivenda a distant memory" (93). She, an Anglophone unable to speak her parents' Sepedi, also redirects the family away from its orientation toward an anglicized success. She begins "inciting quarrels" between her parents, using "their debates to collect words for [her] Sepedi vocabulary list" (69). For Ofilwe, investment involves not the accumulation of finance but of language. With each word, she "mouths [it] repeatedly so as to master the pronunciation. [She] fix[es] the words in [her] brain so that they can be added to [her] vocabulary list when [she] get[s] home. [She] figure[s], if all else fails[,] . . . at least someday [she] will be able to argue in Sepedi" (69–70). This process of making her parents argue interrupts the family's movement toward futures dominated by Anglophilic whiteness. Ofilwe's initiation of argument puts the family's trajectory in crisis and affectively envisions a "someday" lived against Anglo-imperialism and borne out of familial struggle.

The close of the novel extends its work against colonial linguistic inheritances to Fikile, whose reaction to a man she encounters on the train emphasizes the movement of history in uncertain directions. In *Coconut*'s final pages, Fikile heads home after possibly being fired from her job and the failure of her "Project Infinity." She meets a man on the train who, having picked up his daughter from a school with a predominantly white student body, laments: "She refuses to speak a word

of Xhosa, and I know that it is the influence of that school" (188). He describes watching his daughter on the playground, seeing "little spots of amber and auburn become less of what Africa dreamed of and more of what Europe thought we ought to be. . . . I saw a dark-skinned people refusing to be associated with the red soil, the mud huts and the glistening stone beads that they once loved" (189–90). The man's melancholy over a fading history is future-oriented, focusing as it does on his daughter as a symbol of futurity.

That this passage occurs on the train accentuates the temporality of inheritance in at least two ways. First, it signals movement through space and time that parallels a linear conception of the movement of history. Second, the train is a marker of particular inheritances; it is an erranding technology that freights bodies and resources and whose routes have been established amidst South Africa's racialized and extractive systems of labour.[12] While it is tempting to read this passage in terms of a unidirectional movement away from tradition and toward modernity given the man's lament over receding markers of local heritage, which echo the reductive tradition/modernity dichotomy in relation to which much African literature has been read,[13] the directions the text implies are more complex. Indeed, Fikile disregards the man. "I look away," she states. "I do not know what to say to this man and I hope he will stop talking soon" (189). When the train stops, she "pick[s] up her bags and quickly get[s] out" (190). If the train can be read as a stand-in for inherited trajectories in the wake of history's movements, Fikile's movement, even as movement away, connotes an agential gesture beyond them. As a mode of disinheritance, against the linear upward mobility of the "Project Infinity," this final movement in the novel mobilizes uncertain futures that move errantly beyond the prescribed thoroughfares of history and capital.

V. The Decolonial Politics of "Free Education" in Rehad Desai's *Everything Must Fall*

Whereas Matlwa's text redirects whiteness' prescribed lines of inheritance in the context of the family and home, Desai's *Everything Must Fall* does so in the context of the wider publics enrolled in the neoliberal,

Eurocentric university. Focusing on student protestors grappling with the increased privatization of public institutions and the mounting financial burden placed on poor Black students, the film covers the early days of the #FeesMustFall movement at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in 2015. Primarily shot in the streets alongside student protestors in the movement—though it also contains interviews with student leaders, Wits professors, and institutional representatives—the film places the viewer in a position of civil disobedience. As I will show, the film also extends the obligation of a decolonial politics to its viewer.

The film's focus primarily on student protestors highlights the generational labour of disinheritance that marks decolonial politics in the post-apartheid period. This generational labour is signaled by the film's epigraph from Frantz Fanon: "Each generation must out of relative obscurity discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it" (206). In viewing Fallism as an extension of the born free era's disinvestment in neoliberalism's lifelines, I echo Khwezi Mabasa's figuring of post-apartheid youth as "born unfrees" (99) and the discourse around them as "ignor[ing] the structural socio-economic inequalities reproducing a racialized capitalist social order" (96). Indeed, for Mabasa, Fallism embodies born frees' efforts to "dismantle the epistemological, cultural and linguistic hierarchies associated with colonial conquest" (108). Whereas *Coconut* traces how such hierarchies structure the private lives of citizens in the born free generation, the Fallism engaged in this section marks a moment in which colonialism's legacies came under public scrutiny and contestation. Insofar as Mabasa highlights racial capitalism, this section is concerned with how Desai's film approaches Fallism's tackling of inheritances that render education exclusively in the financialized terms of the commodity. Against this logic, the film—and the protest it covers—also follows youths cultivating investments in forms of Afrocentric value and pedagogy that resist notions of finance as freedom. Fallism in Desai's film thus breaks from the lineages of a financial discourse that, as noted earlier, are intimately tied to whiteness and antiblackness.

Alongside the #RhodesMustFall protests, #FeesMustFall explicitly sought to contest post-secondary education's inherited Eurocentric whiteness that actively excludes Black lives. As the film reveals, after an

average annual increase of nine percent to tuition fees in the years spanning 2008 to 2015, Wits escalated them by 10.5 percent in October 2015, preventing many poor and Black students from attending university and completing their degrees. The film also notes that ten percent of undergraduates at the time were "excluded from further study" and that "45% of Black students do not complete their degrees" (Desai).[14] The film's emphasis on the attrition rates of Black students foregrounds how the financialization of education invests in futures that exclude Black lives from the benefits of higher education. Moreover, Wits Student Representative Council President Shaeera Kalla emphasizes the affective force of the Rhodes statue outside the University of Cape Town and notes that it "symbolizes the exclusion of Black bodies from a particular space, and it stands there proudly at the entrance of the university" (qtd. in Desai). The film cuts to images of the statue's removal and one protestor's shout, "This is the end of white power. This is the first step we are taking" (Desai). In doing so, the film connotes the movement's divestment from whiteness but also—as a "first step"—the ongoing labours of that process borne out of the protestors' daily vigilance. Indeed, the film's closing message, which extends that labour toward the viewer and beyond the event of the film's screening, states that "the fight for free decolonized education for all continues . . ." (Desai). Both the statement and the use of ellipsis drive home the continuity of the struggle.

The grammar of the film's title, "Everything Must Fall," and its presentation in the opening credits performatively invite a decolonial response from the viewer under the rubric of disinheritance. Its modal auxiliary verb "must," as in its usage in the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall movements, is an indicator of possibility, of an imperative yet to be realized. Like Mashile's poem, its focus on the yet to come orients the audience around the inadequacy of current social structures and toward the necessity of their dismantling. The title's subject, "everything," communicates the expansive resonance of Fallism's decolonial imperative. The way the title of the film is introduced to the viewer foregrounds the wide implications of #FeesMustFall as extending beyond educational restructuring and toward a set of interlocking global institutions. Before the film's title appears on the screen, the film cycles through a series of

phrases, appearing almost like political placards before the viewer: "Fees Must Fall," "Racism Must Fall," "Patriarchy Must Fall," "Outsourcing Must Fall," "Homophobia Must Fall," "Privilege Must Fall," and "Inequality Must Fall" (Desai). The flashing of these phrases gradually accelerates, mimicking the mounting urgency of tackling the dispossession engendered by the interlocking institutions to which they refer. The film then arrives at a sustained image of its title, *Everything Must Fall*. The film begins by confronting the viewer with a series of slogans before embedding the majority of its filmic gaze alongside the bodies of protestors; its narrative trajectory shifts the viewer's positionality from being confronted by Fallism toward enrolment in it.

Accompanying the opening sequence is the sound of rapper Sizwe Mpofu-Walsh's "Singamasoja," a Fallist anthem that foregrounds the generational project documented by the film. Lamenting that "[t]his is our future," the lyrics also centre protest as a practice inherited from martyred forebears, but one whose line has been violently disrupted by the state: "Look at the freedom charter / sent the police in armored V's / but our fathers were martyrs" (qtd. in Desai). Rejecting the born free generation's rhetorics of freedom—ones *Coconut* positions as being determined by failed financial promises that come with a steep cultural cost—the song states: "We were never born free of deceit and desperation. / They say we set fire to the nation, / but all we want is decolonization" (qtd. in Desai). Against the assumption that Fallist protestors "set fire to the nation," a sentiment echoed by many of the movement's detractors,[15] the song's embrace of decolonization and emphasis on repressive state forces suggest that a "born free" moment has not yet occurred; rendering visible the legacies of colonialism that imbue the present, the film's title and the song call into question celebratory discourses of post-apartheid liberation and instead orient themselves toward the continued labour of decolonization.

The film also extends the question of inheritance beyond the university and into South Africa's legacies of protest. For those interviewed in the film, decolonial work is a set of inherited practices intimately tied to gendered forms of belonging that the film works against. As student leader Vuyani Pambo tells the viewer, "We can't protest the way we used

to protest" (qtd. in Desai). Moreover, Prishani Naidoo, a Wits professor and member of Academics for Free Education, states that the self-conscious project of Fallism involves "also changing the character of the movement. It's not just marginalization and sidelining that's being put on the table. It's also the ways in which we speak to each other. It's masculinist forms of organizing that are being questioned" (qtd. in Desai). The protest thus explores metrics of value that go beyond the costs of education, and in particular centres intersectionality as a demand directed not only at education but the pasts and futures of protest itself.[16]

As part of its reconsideration of protest, the film unearths histories of dissent that have long been in tension with the university's institutional memory. Early on, the film shows the inaugural speech of Adam Habib, then Wits Vice-Chancellor and the film's primary representative of the institution. His speech's celebration of Wits' legacies glorifies patrilineal sentiment, financialization, and, as the images the film intercuts with his speech reveal, the historical inequalities of the South African university. In his speech, while paying lip-service to the supposed diversity of Wits, Habib nostalgically states that the university is his "alma mater" as well as that of "Nelson Mandela, the father of our nation" (qtd. in Desai). In doing so, he signals his ties to a powerful paternal figure whose legacies, despite their undeniable role in shaping post-apartheid South Africa, have come under scrutiny in recent years for failing to reckon with inherited inequality.[17] Habib pledges to "collectively work towards creating a safe, student-centred, non-racial[,] . . . cosmopolitan academic environment" (qtd. in Desai). However, as he speaks, the film intercuts tumultuous scenes of apartheid-era public protest with footage of predominantly white bodies moving casually through Wits University grounds. These images and the differing modes of mobility they depict—animated protest juxtaposed with the lackadaisical stroll of mainly white students and faculty through academic space—reveal what #FeesMustFall activist Leigh-Ann Naidoo states in an interview in the following scene: "These institutions were made primarily for white, middle-class men. These institutions were in fact a primary part of building and developing apartheid South Africa and colonial Africa" (qtd. in Desai). The film therefore visually disrupts Habib's nostalgic rhetoric of

inclusion and nonracialism by foregrounding the unequal inheritances that structure the university's institutional space. The scene also demystifies the now questionable language of nonracialism by drawing attention to the divisive histories out of which it sprung.

In contrast to the film's emphasis on the financial constraints placed on poor and Black students, Habib's comments also consistently align the university with the financial over and above the pedagogical. He states: "My mandate is to keep this university a quality institution, and that means I need to keep its income streams, so there's no way I'm giving [a] zero [percent fee hike] until the state makes up that money" (qtd. in Desai). The emphasis on finance as a metric of pedagogical quality extends to his recent book, *Rebels and Rage*, whose preface states:

> Universities can only successfully contribute to addressing inequality if . . . they produce enough professional graduates that these skills do not command a premium on the market and . . . they enable access for students from poor communities. These two goals require universities of sufficient quality to enable throughput—but that are either priced appropriately or have sufficient financial aid to allow poor students to access them. (Par. 3)

This financialized language, its commitment to aiding poor students notwithstanding, frames the project of the university in the grammar of production and commodity value; akin to a processing plant, universities produce "throughput" that must be "priced appropriately." In addition to rendering students mere commodities in the marketization of education, Habib stakes notions of a successful education in financial terms that place limits on students' aspirations for success. His interest in producing students whose skills do not command a premium on the market foreground the bleak future the marketized university cultivates. A recent reviewer of Habib's book, inverting criticism that decried the purported destructiveness of Fallism, calls Habib's work a "wrecking-ball of a book[,] . . . [not] so much a book as it is a workshop manual for management, justifying the course pursued and directing how to stay this course until the company is on track to make a stable

profit once again" (Mbao). Indeed, Habib perhaps misses the point of the demand for free education that—as I read it—might not only be the demand for no-fee education but the freedom of education from financialization as the exclusive metric of value. The interpellation of "free education" into the hegemony of capital's financializing rhetoric only obscures the notion that "ideologies of freedom are not singular, but rather multiple" (Mpongo 95).

The film's resistance to the limited scope of financial valuation first appears during its opening credits. The opening shot, prior to the title sequence, involves a high-angle aerial pan of the Johannesburg cityscape, encapsulating that location's hierarchical structures and mobilities, from the high-rises that house the vertically stratified assemblages of capital, to the flows of bodies and resources symbolized by the movement of vehicles through the arterial thoroughfares of the nation's economic capital. In this establishing image, the film marks its purview as not limited to the university but instead extending to broader societal structures. The only sound accompanying this shot is the repeated deep double-tapping of a low, hollow bell. Resonating almost like a heartbeat alongside the images of urban circulation, the sound and scene connote the uninterrupted flows of capital, the biopolitical regimes via which life is regimented, exploited, consumed, and utilized in the interest of economic mobility. The cut away from this scene, as well as from its sonorous nod to the circulatory lifeblood of capitalism, interrupts this smooth mobility. After this point, the majority of the film has the camera follow alongside the bodies of protestors disrupting mobility by occupying the streets and the Wits University campus. The remainder of the film narratively removes viewers from a top-down examination of the social structure, instead embedding them amid those bodies that oppose its structural hegemony. That is, while the film might take on an entire social structure as its subject, its critique emerges not from the outside but from inside, alongside bodies that labour both within and against that structure.

In addition to the disruption of consumer flows enacted by the protestors' occupation of the streets, the film highlights encounters that look beyond the lifelines of capital and toward Afrocentric pedagogies. In an

interview, #FeesMustFall activist Ntokozo Moloi states: "If we can have an education that is, number one, Afrocentric, where African ideas are at the centre, and are important and are as overemphasized as Western ideas are, where we have African ideas being valued, African knowledge systems being valued, then—for me—that is decolonization" (qtd. in Desai). During the interview, the film's gaze takes the viewer outside the university's walls, toward signs labeled "Decolonizing Minds" that have been erected in public space. These signs feature covers of books by African authors and Black radical intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, Marimba Ani, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, and Tsitsi Dangarembga. The film positions itself against the rhetoric of Fallism as destruction and generates encounters that orient viewers toward Afrocentric pedagogical futures. As A. Kayum Ahmed argues, "Fallism is . . . not only about the destruction of old symbols, but it is also predicated on the creation of new knowledge and ideas that enable the humanization of black bodies." The film lingers on these signs and, as it does so, bodies move through the street and sometimes in front of the camera's lens. This scene's encounter with Afrocentric knowledge thus positions the viewer in public space, highlighting Fallism's investment in non-Eurocentric forms of knowledge as well as its mobilization outside the walls of the neoliberal university. Read in relation to the opening scene's view of the linear flows of capital through city streets, this scene's enduring focus on the errant directionality of protesting bodies accentuates the film's departure from established lines of inheritance.

The film foregrounds a notion of decolonization not as destruction, but of care oriented around investments that exceed pedagogies of consumer futurity.[18] A central part of the students' struggles in the film involves challenging Wits' outsourcing of cleaning staff to private contractors, which, as pointed out by Wits worker leader Deliwe Mzobe, began at the university in 2001 and resulted in workers losing pensions and "up to half their benefits," as well as "no longer [having] medical aid" (qtd. in Desai). As student leader Fasiha Hassan observes in the film, "Not only are students oppressed by the violence of the system in that they're financially excluded, but so are workers. And to an even worse extent. . . . In some ways the university needs [students] to exist,

as opposed to workers who can be more easily replaced" (qtd. in Desai). Emphasizing that outsourcing "is part of the same struggle," Kalla likewise posits student resistance to outsourcing as part of a desire for "a decommodified university" (qtd. in Desai). These commentaries echo Sarah Nuttall's recent calls for a "redistributed university," one that involves not only dismantling colonial artefacts and institutions but also "a radical politics of reparation and change" (282). Nuttall's work helpfully illuminates the reparative acts of Fallism that demand "the insourcing of workers, [and] operate along redistributive logics deeply invested in social justice" (282). Nuttall underscores that, at "Wits University, by early 2017, workers had been insourced, earning more decent salaries and with the option to send their children to Wits. This has produced a poorer University in general but one in which the price of a more just community has begun to be partially paid" (282). Accounts of decolonization as destruction thus occlude the reparative and intersectional gains of Fallism.

One point merits further consideration before this article's close: in both my own analysis and Nuttall's, an economic lexicon reigns. Fallism's divestment from financialized futures might also question the constraining metaphorics on which such languages rest—for example, in my reliance on the financialized language of inheritance and investment or Nuttall's assessment of the "price" of insourcing, the language of partially paid debts, and the resultant "poorer" university. Such languages risk quantifying colonialism's debts and suggest that redress can be economized. We might ask: What makes the university "poorer"? Also, casting a critical eye on my own analysis, might as-yet uncertain futures find articulation in rhetorics other than the economic? It is useful to consider how Fallist protestors might offer more generative languages than the financial tropes of historical indebtedness and reparation. For Kalla, struggling against outsourcing is not exclusively about paying debts but also about what Donna Haraway might call "making kin" (103); Kalla states that "we see the workers as our mothers and fathers" (qtd. in Desai). Resisting outsourcing is, as Nuttall stresses, part of a reparative (rather than destructive) decolonial process, but also one whose reparation grounds itself in forging kin-based

socialities that acknowledge mutual responsibility over economized discourses of indebtedness.

The reparative project of Fallism extends to how protestors cultivate ecologies of care in the wake of colonial education's destructive histories. One scene of the film shows Moloi stating, "We have been, as Black people have, excluded from the education system for such a long time. If we are interested about this thing called transformation then we have to ensure that there's justice" (qtd. in Desai). This statement is interspersed with footage of Moloi working in the community garden at Wits, the harvests of which, as she later recounts, are part of a "food security project. Whatever food is produced from here goes to the food bank and gets given to the students that are beneficiaries of the food bank program" (qtd. in Desai). As the film's intertitle documents, the program feeds the "1000 students [who] stand in line for a meal every day" (Desai). The film's extended focus on Moloi participating alongside others in gardening points to alternate forms of futurity than those proffered by the university's financial bodies. Whereas Habib highlights financial growth, the scenes of Moloi and others tilling, harvesting, and washing crops in the garden foreground growth of a different kind. They emphasize, alongside the film's depiction of protest and dismantling educational inequality, a decolonial praxis of care, cultivation, and concern. This article began by exploring Qwabe's insistence on the ongoing dispossession of land experienced by Black South Africans; the film's shots of the food security project focus on land-based efforts to materially nourish Afrocentric community. If Qwabe's comments oppositionally spotlighted a history of colonial dispossession of land, the work of care in this scene sees land-based ties being reconstituted not only through refusal but through care and stewardship as well.

VI. Conclusion

The images of Moloi participating in land-based cultivation and nourishment are a helpful coda to my analysis, one that foregrounds intertwined labours of decolonization, disinheritance, and disinvestment. After all, while these efforts involve forms of dismantling, the texts dealt with in this article are also generative. Just as Moloi's efforts to nourish the life

of Afrocentric community reveal that processes of dismantling also involve public acts of cultivation and care, *Coconut*'s decolonial view of the privatized family also posits micro-efforts to nourish belonging that Desai's film extends to wider publics. In *Coconut*, for example, Ofilwe's subjection of her family to argument connotes struggle, but it is also a generative act in its capacity to nourish the narrator's linguistic starvation and reconnect her to a Sepedi lineage severed by her entrance into the mythology of finance as freedom. Each of the texts cited in this analysis posits metrics of value that extend beyond the financial and lay out lifelines that—even in the uncertain aftermath of Fallism—offer generative modes of reconstituting severed affinities and communities. They also point toward hopeful futures that, while not fully realized in the present, offer potential for overturning the failed promises that have structured the post-apartheid born free generation. While none of these texts arrive at a fully realized vision of decolonization, their emphasis on care and cultivation illuminates fruitful directions for decolonial politics.

Notes

1 As this article later demonstrates, these interlocked student movements marked a break from widespread South African public sentiment in the years prior to 2015. What is often termed Fallism is a set of decolonial perspectives derived from the 2015 student protests that opposed fee hikes that prevented poor and Black students from attending university, as well as academic institutions' Eurocentric legacies by insisting on the removal of Cecil Rhodes' statue from the University of Cape Town. The Fallist movements were widespread and nearly dismantled post-secondary education across the nation. As a result of the movement, decolonial Fallist perspectives have infused multiple aspects of South African life and a distinctive political era of renewed protest across the nation has begun.

2 This argument is not an effort to reinforce discussions of "wage slavery" that too hastily flatten the differences between the dispossession of lives of colour under Atlantic and Indian Ocean slave trades with waged labour. Still, the contention that service labour in South Africa is linked to apartheid's racist histories builds on work that notes South African labours of service that have historical roots in the racially divisive histories of apartheid and colonialism and that continue to mark racial disparities in the service industry. These analyses are wide-ranging and include gendered and racialized systems of domestic labour that persist in the post-apartheid period (see Fish), the exploitation of Black service workers in

the university (see Desai), the racialization of service in South Africa's tourism industry (see Rogerson and Rogerson), and slave memory's infusion of multiple aspects of the South African public sphere (see Gqola and Putuma). Matlwa's novel *Coconut*, which this article analyzes, emphasizes the ongoing racial dynamics of the South African service industry. Two of its Black characters, Tshepo and Fikile, navigate being restaurant servers to wealthy white clients. Retaining their jobs frequently depends on their ability to remain silent in the face of their clientele's overt displays of racism. This issue arguably resonates beyond South Africa, however, and my critique of the gratuity issue echoes Kincaid's famous rejection of the dehumanizing tourism economy in 1980s Antigua. In *A Small Place* (1988), Kincaid links the history of slavery with tourism's service industry, represented by the island's "Hotel Training School, a school that teaches Antiguans how to be good servants, how to be a good nobody, which is what a servant is. In Antigua, people cannot see a relationship between their obsession with slavery and emancipation and their celebration of the hotel training school" (55). In the context of my argument, service industries in South Africa and abroad are haunted by racial capitalism's histories of dispossession.

3 See "Oxford University" for further details.

4 For discussions of the "hierarchical nature of humanitarian work" in terms of race, antiblackness, and whiteness, see Benton (268). The relationship between Western forms of giving and African need has been well established. In the rhetoric of development discourse, this dynamic props up an "Africa rising" narrative that positions wealthier global locations as the central agents in its successes. As Pierre points out, this narrative "is primarily for the benefit of the Western business elite and governments whose control of and investments in Africa's resources need the occasional justification" (14).

5 See, for example, Halberstam's assertion that the "time of inheritance refers to an overview of generational time within which values, wealth, goods, and morals are passed through family from one generation to the next. It also connects the family to the historical past of the nation, and glances ahead to connect the family to the future of both familial and national stability" (5).

6 Queer sexualities have been the most prominent examples of behaviours and identities being denied citizenship on the basis of being "un-African" in recent years. For example, see Vincent and Howell's work on renderings of queer sexuality as "un-African."

7 See also Mazama, as well as Asanti's *Afrocentricity* for lengthier discussions of this framing of Afrocentric thought.

8 See Robinson for a more robust definition and analysis of racial capitalism.

9 Strauss' discussion of spectacles of promise and disappointment usefully maps the way these dueling affects have structured the post-apartheid period.

10 This article's consideration of family structure in South Africa draws on a long history of colonial and apartheid social engineering disrupting Black family life

(such as that articulated by Budlender and Lund), as well as colonialism's upending of local systems of kinship (as articulated by Radcliffe-Brown and Forde). While speaking primarily of the effects of colonialism on Indigenous kinship systems in what many now call North America, Morgensen's work on "settler sexuality" (106) as a mode of regulating colonized lives is nonetheless relevant to thinking through discussions of settlers' supplantive systems of sexuality in South Africa.

11 In terms of the connection between "Coconut" as a pejorative title for some South Africans that ostensibly reinforces whiteness and the rise of Fallist sentiment, I draw on Chigumadzi's comments on the term. Calling the "coconut" "that particular category of 'born free' black youth hailed as the torchbearers for Nelson Mandela's 'rainbow nation' after the fall of apartheid," she emphasizes that "the same category of black youth . . . are now part of the forefront of new student movements calling for statues of coloniser Cecil John Rhodes to fall, and for the decolonisation of the post-apartheid socioeconomic order."

12 See Pirie for more information on racial segregation and South Africa's railway system.

13 See Barber for a critique of the reductive ways in which the tradition/modernity binary infuses studies of African literatures and cultures.

14 The inequality of this exclusion is driven home by the film's focus on the vast disparity between different students' financial inheritances. In one of the film's interviews, Professor Noor Nieftagodien states that poor students "sit in the same class with [those] who, in their first year when they pass matric[ulation], their parents buy them a Mercedes Benz or BMW so they can drive to university" (qtd. in Desai).

15 Modiri notes the wide-ranging opposition to Fallism, even by anticolonial public intellectuals such as "Achille Mbembe (who has been the most visceral in his chastisement of the student movement), Richard Pithouse, Christi van der Westhuizen, and Nomboniso Gasa." As Modiri observes, these figures "have issued public criticisms . . . suggesting that the students patently misread particular thinkers such as Frantz Fanon and concepts such as intersectionality; that they misconstrue salient features of the liberation struggle in South African history, and that they rely excessively and inappropriately on African-American feminisms and anti-racisms." Such critiques notwithstanding, I contend that the multiplicity of protestors prevents any simple framing of the movement (which might be more accurately articulated as a set of interlocking struggles). Like many Fallist protestors, I draw on Black thought produced in America, but I also stress the global interlocking forms of antiblackness that, while not identical across contexts, might inform one another. Rothberg's emphasis on multidirectional memory offers a paradigm for thinking through intersecting inheritances that might reinforce this project; he foregrounds memory "as subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive

and not privative" (3). There are numerous critiques to be made of the Fallist movement. For example, Desai's film shows only marginal attention to male protestors' occlusion of women, trans people, and non-binary protestors who were influential in advancing the movement. Moreover, Kasambeli provides detailed criticism of how South Africa's long history of xenophobia permeated the movement, preventing the inclusion of African foreign nationals.

16 For a discussion of the movement's intersectionality, and the role of womxn's work against masculinist master narratives, see Dlakavu, Ndelu, and Matandela, as well as Poltera.

17 Many media narratives have departed from exclusively celebratory narratives of Mandela, offering more complex analyses that highlight his implication in the mounting inequalities of South Africa and explore how the rhetoric of nonracialism obscured ongoing racisms in the post-apartheid period. See, for example, Burke and Sitas.

18 Numerous firsthand accounts by Fallist protestors resist the notion of decolonization as destruction. See, for example, those accounts in the student-organized edited collection *Rioting and Writing: Diaries of the Wits Fallists*.

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