TEXT 1

Racism is behind outlandish theories about Africa's ancient architecture

Published: 17 September 2017 by Julien Benoit (postdoc[1] in Vertebrate Palaeontology[2], University of the Witwatersrand).

1 Some of the most impressive buildings and cities ever made by humans are found in Africa. These include the ruined city of Great Zimbabwe, South Africa's Mapungubwe, Kenya's Gedi Ruins, and Sudan's Meroe. Perhaps the most amazing of these is the last of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World: the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt.

2 This should come as no surprise. Africa has a vast historical record which goes as far back as 3.3 million years when the first-ever stone tool was made in what is today Kenya. The continent's cultural complexity is well known. It is home to the world's oldest-known pieces of art. It is the birthplace of modern humans' ancient ancestors, *Homo sapiens*.

3 This is all real evidence. But some people still refuse to believe that anyone from Africa (or anywhere in what is today considered the developing world) could possibly have built these ancient masterpieces. Instead, they credit ancient astronauts, aliens, or time travellers as the real builders.

4 Well, you may ask, so what? Who cares if relatively few people don't believe that the ancient Egyptians built the pyramids? What's the harm?

5 Actually, there *is* great harm. These people try to prove their theories by travelling the world and vandalising ancient artefacts. They promote and perpetuate the racist notion that only Europeans – white people – could ever be capable of such architectural achievements.

6 In 2017 the World Congress on Mummy Studies in South America published a statement on their Facebook page. They did this to draw attention to a group of pseudo-scientists who call themselves the Alien Project. The Alien Project 'scientists' raided graves and other historical sites in Peru. They insisted that aliens (not ancient Peruvians) constructed the famous Nazca Lines earth-sculptures. They do this in spite of all the scientific evidence that proves them wrong.

7 A series of stone circles in South Africa's Mpumalanga province provides an excellent example of the other problem with pseudo-archaeologists. Some people genuinely believe that these structures were designed by aliens. They scoff at scientific research that proves the stone circles were made by the Koni people using ropes, sticks, and wood. They will not even entertain the notion that ancient African tribes could be responsible.

8 However, these same people have no problem believing that medieval Europeans built the continent's magnificent cathedrals using only ropes, sticks, and wood. They dismiss scientific research that overwhelmingly proves ancient Africans' skill and ability, but insist the documents which contain evidence of Europeans' construction processes are beyond reproach.

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9 Why is it so hard for some to acknowledge that ancient, non-European civilisations like the Egyptians from Northern Africa, the Shona and Bokoni from Southern Africa, the Aztecs, or people from Easter Island in Southeast Asia could create complex and beautiful structures? The answer is sadly as simple as it seems. It comes down to profound racism and a false feeling of white superiority that emanates from the rotting corpse of colonialism. Colonial powers saw the people of Africa, South America, and Southeast Asia as exotic. They found them fascinating – but ultimately primitive.

10 As we have increased our knowledge and understanding of the historical record, we have disproved these views. But for some people, even today, it seems unthinkable that ancient non-European societies have been resourceful and creative enough to build such monuments. They think that modern science must be missing or hiding something. Instead, they hold on to theories about ancient astronauts or aliens.

11 The internet and social media have become the perfect platform for these modern conspiracy junkies to share their theories. They try to make others believe that scientists are hiding 'the truth' about ancient monuments. Sometimes they even succeed.

12 There is a risk that they will drown out true and tested knowledge and science with their colourful, outlandish theories. Their ridiculous theories can prevent the development of our awareness and understanding of Africa's rich heritage. Africans are the heirs of the real builders, but they may never learn about their ancestors' remarkable achievements.

13 Scientists have a vital role to play in stopping such harmful theories. Those of us who are doing ongoing research have a clear duty. We should share our findings in a way that reaches and engages ordinary people.

14 We must show them just how awe-inspiring structures like Mapungubwe, the Gedi ruins, Meroe and the Giza Pyramids are – not because they were created by some alien race, but because they are living proof of ancient societies' imagination and skill.

[Adapted from: <https://qz.com/africa/1080076/racism-is-behind-outlandish-theories-about-africas-ancient-architecture>]

GLOSSARY:

[1] **postdoc:** an informal name for a person engaged in postdoctoral research

[2] **Vertebrate Palaeontology:** the study of ancient animals with a vertebral column

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TEXT 2A

Student Ambassadors: What They Do And Why You Need Them

When students and their families begin looking for good schools, they often focus on a wide range of criteria. Of course, people want a school that offers a high-quality education. But they also want a positive and encouraging environment filled with opportunities to explore interests, make new friends, and feel accepted. Students and their parents want an excellent school AND an excellent community. While you manage your school website, try to increase inquiries, applications and ultimately enrolment. Sharing the thoughts and experiences of current students is just as essential. Student ambassadors can be a powerful asset to your school, and crucial in helping you increase student enrolment. This is because they can represent your school to prospective students and their families.

[Adapted from: <https://www.finalsite.com/blog/p/~board/b/post/student-ambassadors-what-they-do-why-you-need-them>]

TEXT 2B

Good brand ambassadors can offer many benefits. Most importantly, they can give your brand a boost on social media, spread positive messages and influence sales. The most effective brand ambassadors are those who provide customer service and act as spokespeople for your brand.

Brand ambassadors protect your reputation. In cases of some bad press, brand ambassadors are able to rise to the occasion and defend your brand or company against any negative news or opinions. The voices of brand ambassadors serve the best interest of your organisation because they are able to provide positive word of mouth. This goes a long way towards developing a positive public image for your brand.

They also humanise your brand. Many successful companies have a strong ambassador programme because people prefer to buy from people rather than from a faceless company. People usually listen to other people about the quality of a product or service before they are convinced. Companies are limited by the number of people they can reach on their social channels. However, outside of the brand's traditional social media channels, the brand ambassadors can use their influence and make more personal connections.

[Adapted from: <https://www.sideqik.com/influencer-marketing/6-reasons-you-need-brand-ambassadors-business-2>]

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TEXT 2C



[Source: <https://www.business2community.com/branding/brand-ambassadors-can-grow-business-10x-faster-02019119>]

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TEXT 3A

Moving through the silent crowd

by Stephen Spender

Moving through the silent crowd
Who stand behind dull cigarettes
These men who idle in the road,
I have the sense of falling light.

They lounge at corners of the street
And greet friends with a shrug of shoulder
And turn their empty pockets out,
The cynical gestures of the poor.

Now, they've no work, like better men
Who sit at desks and take much pay
They sleep long nights and rise at ten
To watch the hours that drain away.

I'm jealous of the weeping hours
They stare through with such hungry eyes.
I'm haunted by these images,
I'm haunted by their emptiness.

[Source: Anthology *Clusters*, Gerald de Villiers]

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TEXT 3B

nobody loses all the time
by ee cummings

nobody loses all the time

i had an uncle named
Sol who was a born failure and
nearly everybody said he should have gone
into vaudeville perhaps because my Uncle Sol could
sing McCann He Was A Diver on Xmas Eve like Hell Itself which
may or may not account for the fact that my Uncle

Sol indulged in that possibly most inexcusable
of all to use a highfalootin phrase
luxuries that is or to
wit farming and be
it needlessly
added

my Uncle Sol's farm
failed because the chickens
ate the vegetables so
my Uncle Sol had a
chicken farm till the
skunks ate the chickens when

my Uncle Sol
had a skunk farm but
the skunks caught cold and
died and so
my Uncle Sol imitated the
skunks in a subtle manner

or by drowning himself in the watertank
but somebody who'd given my Uncle Sol a Victor
Victrola and records while he lived presented to
him upon the auspicious occasion of his decease a
scrumptious not to mention splendiferous funeral with
tall boys in black gloves and flowers and everything and
i remember we all cried like the Missouri
when my Uncle Sol's coffin lurched because
somebody pressed a button
(and down went
my Uncle
Sol

and started a worm farm)

[Source: Anthology *Clusters,* Gerald de Villiers]

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TEXT 4A

Red Songs

by Tawanda Mulalu

(for children)

I heard a big word once. 'Armamentarium'.
It's a word with old parents. It means things
like medicine and how doctors feel your chest
for beats that don't quite fit. It means red
and the things inside your body that need
hands to help you. My hands help by wandering.
I tap my hands on tables, I comb my hair,
I pick up flowers, I hold up faces
of people I love when I feel blue. But my favourite
is red, because it is inside me, beating.
I learned a big word once. It was my name. I said it and it sang.
…
When you hear words do not forget that someone
taught them to you. Maybe your mother
who read books about cats in hats to you
at airports. Maybe your father
and his stories of his childhood with feet
twisting through thin sand as roses dancing.
Where I am from we do not have soil
for those kinds of flowers. My father still grew
and my mother still grew me. Peel my skin
and you will find that sort of red beneath. If you ask me
where it came from I won't say. I will sing.

[Source: <https://hellopoetry.com/tawandamulalu/poems/>]

TEXT 4B

For Oom Piet
by Finuala Dowling

When I was least happy in life
my daughter led me across the road
to a neighbour whom I did not know
with the purpose of a toddler
who does not see gates and fences
but the ducks and puppies
on the other side.

You spoke to me in the same low murmuring tones
you used for lame horses and bilious dogs.
Crops, flowers and poultry were our theme:
you made me tea, and wiped the counter,
you said *'Foeitog'* and 'I don't hope so.'
You guessed.
You told me I was beautiful,
in the courtly way of an old man.

One day when it rained
you phoned from your side and said
'I'm sending some ducks for Beatrix'
—you always called her 'Beatrix'—
out the window we saw them,
waddling over,
in the way of ducks
when directed by Oom Piet.

You moved and I moved, but one thing stays:
the sense of a rescue, somehow being saved.

[Source: Anthology *Clusters*, Gerald de Villiers]

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TEXT 5A



[Source: <https://willandjordan.com/WAR-CHILD>]

The text in the above image reads as follows:

It's easy to convince children
that killing is a game.
Help stop the exploitation of child soldiers, text 'GUNS25 £2' to 70070.

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TEXT 5B



[Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dfid/3739383970>]

The text in the above image reads as follows:

She wants to be a dancer,
not a child soldier.

bring back
the child
stop child recruitment

Recruiting children is against Sri Lankan and International law. The government of Sri Lanka has a **zero tolerance** policy on the issue.

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TEXT 5C



[Source: <https://raisingkidswithpurpose.com/kids-playing-with-toys-guns/>]

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TEXT 6

1 Behavioural psychology offers a few antidotes to the cheating crises that affect us. Keep yourself fed and well rested – we're likelier to lapse when hungry or tired.

2 Reflect on how your actions look through other's eyes. There was a classic British experiment: A drawing of eyes mounted over a collection box at a corporate coffee bar helped to enforce the honour system.

3 One likes to see yourself in a positive light. In a Stanford study, when researchers used the verb *cheat* – please don't cheat – participants still cheated freely because they felt distanced from the act; when the noun *cheater* was used – don't be a cheater – hardly anyone did.

4 The novelist Wallace Stegner summed it up in his novel *All the Little Live Things:* "It is the beginning of wisdom when you recognise that the best you can do is choose which rules you want to live by" – to which he added: "It's persistent and aggravated stupidity to pretend you can live without any."

[Adapted from: <https://www.rdasia.com/true-stories-lifestyle/thought-provoking/Why-We-Bend-the-Rules>]

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