

1. GLOBAL PERVASIVENESS OF RACISM AND SEGREGATION IN THE 1920s AND 1930s

What is racism?

Racism is the belief that people can be divided into different racial groups and that some races are superior or inferior to others.

Racism can lead to:

- Discrimination
- Segregation
- Unequal access to education
- Unequal employment opportunities
- Restrictions on where people may live
- Political exclusion
- Violence against particular racial groups

What is segregation?

Segregation means separating people according to race, ethnicity or other characteristics.

During the 1920s and 1930s, racial discrimination was widespread in different parts of the world.

Examples of racism and segregation

United States of America

The USA had **Jim Crow laws**, particularly in the southern states.

These laws enforced racial separation between Black and white people.

Examples included:

- Separate schools
- Separate public facilities
- Separate transport facilities
- Restrictions on voting
- Racial discrimination in employment
- Restrictions on where people could live

The policy was based on the idea of “**separate but equal**”, although facilities provided to Black Americans were generally inferior.

Nazi Germany

When Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in 1933, racism became an official government policy.

The Nazis promoted the idea of **Aryan racial superiority** and persecuted Jews and other groups.

The **Nuremberg Laws of 1935** deprived German Jews of important rights and citizenship.

This eventually developed into increasingly severe persecution and the Holocaust during the Second World War.

Colonial Africa

European colonial powers also implemented systems that placed Europeans above African populations.

Africans were often:

- Denied political rights
- Forced to live in designated areas
- Paid lower wages
- Restricted from owning land
- Subjected to discriminatory laws

Important point

Apartheid was therefore **not created in isolation**.

Racial discrimination and segregation existed in many parts of the world. However, South Africa developed a particularly systematic and legally enforced form of racial segregation after 1948.

2. SEGREGATION AFTER THE FORMATION OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Formation of the Union of South Africa – 1910

The **Union of South Africa** was established on **31 May 1910**.

The four colonies were united:

- Cape Colony
- Natal
- Transvaal
- Orange River Colony

The Union was largely controlled by white political leaders.

Although white South Africans were divided politically, there was broad agreement among many white politicians about maintaining white political and economic power.

The problem of land

One of the most important pieces of legislation was the:

Natives Land Act of 1913

The Act restricted African land ownership to approximately **7% of South Africa's land**.

This had serious consequences:

- Africans lost access to land.
- Many African families were forced to move.
- African farmers struggled economically.
- Many Africans became dependent on wage labour.
- Migrant labour increased.
- African communities became overcrowded in reserves.

The amount of land allocated to Africans was later increased to about **13%** through the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936, but racial land division remained.

3. OTHER SEGREGATIONIST POLICIES

Segregation was not only about land.

Pass laws

African people were required to carry documents that controlled their movement and employment.

These laws restricted where Africans could travel and work.

Urban segregation

African people were increasingly restricted to designated residential areas.

This contributed to the development of **townships**.

Labour discrimination

White workers were generally given greater access to skilled jobs.

African workers were often restricted to lower-paid occupations.

Political discrimination

Black South Africans had extremely limited political rights.

The political system protected white political control.

Native Urban Areas Act – 1923

This legislation strengthened residential segregation in towns and cities.

It established the principle that African people should live in designated areas and were mainly regarded as temporary workers in urban areas.

4. HOW DID SEGREGATION LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR APARTHEID?

Apartheid did not suddenly appear in 1948.

Segregation before 1948 created many of the structures that apartheid later expanded and strengthened.

Before 1948

South Africa already had:

- Racial land division
- Pass laws
- Residential segregation
- Labour discrimination
- Political inequality
- Racially unequal education
- Restrictions on African movement

After 1948

The National Party introduced a much more comprehensive system of racial classification and control.

The key difference

Segregation before 1948:

Racial discrimination existed through individual laws and policies.

Apartheid after 1948:

The government developed a systematic and comprehensive legal system designed to control almost every aspect of people's lives according to race.

Key concept

Apartheid built upon existing segregation and transformed it into a more systematic system of racial control.

5. CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY INDIANS

Indian South Africans faced racial discrimination from the colonial period and into the Union period.

Many Indians had originally arrived in South Africa as:

- Indentured labourers
- Traders
- Merchants

They experienced discrimination in areas such as:

- Land ownership
- Residence
- Employment
- Movement
- Political rights
- Business opportunities

The Asiatic Registration Act – 1906

This legislation required Indians in the Transvaal to register and carry registration certificates.

It became a major source of resistance.

Mahatma Gandhi

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Mahatma Gandhi played an important role in developing **Satyagraha**, or non-violent resistance, during his time in South Africa.

He encouraged Indians to resist discriminatory laws through:

- Peaceful protests
- Refusal to obey discriminatory laws
- Mass mobilisation
- Civil disobedience

Passive Resistance Campaign – 1946

The **South African Indian Congress (SAIC)** organised resistance against the **Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act of 1946**, commonly known as the **Ghetto Act**.

The Act restricted Indian land ownership and residential rights.

Indian resistance demonstrated that racial discrimination was increasingly being challenged by organised political movements.

6. COLOURED RESISTANCE

The term “**Coloured**” was used by the South African government to classify people of mixed ancestry.

Coloured South Africans also experienced discrimination and political exclusion.

Challenges included:

- Restrictions on political participation
- Residential segregation
- Employment discrimination
- Land restrictions
- Removal from the common voters' roll in the Cape
- Social discrimination

Resistance

Coloured political organisations opposed discriminatory policies.

One important organisation was the:

African Political Organisation (APO)

It represented Coloured political interests and campaigned for political rights.

Later, organisations such as the **South African Coloured People's Organisation (SACPO)** became involved in resistance to apartheid policies.

Key point

Coloured people did not simply accept discrimination.

They used:

- Political organisations
- Petitions
- Protests
- Campaigns
- Public resistance

to challenge racial discrimination.

7. BLACK RESISTANCE

Black South Africans developed organised resistance against segregation long before 1948.

South African Native National Congress – 1912

The **South African Native National Congress (SANNC)** was established in **1912**.

It later became the:

African National Congress (ANC)

The organisation aimed to challenge racial discrimination and defend the rights of Black South Africans.

Reasons for Black resistance

Black South Africans resisted:

- Land dispossession
- Pass laws
- Political exclusion
- Labour discrimination
- Residential segregation
- Forced removals
- Racially unequal treatment

Forms of resistance

Resistance included:

- Petitions
- Delegations
- Boycotts
- Strikes
- Protests
- Civil disobedience
- Political organisation

Important resistance organisations

- ANC/SANNC
- Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU)
- Communist Party of South Africa
- All-African Convention

Important point

Resistance existed **before apartheid was officially introduced in 1948.**

This is important because it shows that apartheid was imposed on a society that already had a long history of racial conflict and resistance.

8. THE NATIONAL PARTY VICTORY – 1948

The **National Party (NP)** won the South African general election on **26 May 1948.**

Daniel François Malan became Prime Minister.

The National Party campaigned on the policy of:

Apartheid

The word apartheid means “**apartness**” or “**separateness.**”

The National Party wanted to establish a formal system in which people were separated according to race.

Why did the National Party win?

Several factors contributed:

1. White fear of Black majority rule

Many white voters feared losing political power.

2. Economic concerns

White workers and businesses were concerned about competition for jobs.

3. Afrikaner nationalism

The National Party promoted Afrikaner identity and interests.

4. Racial segregation

The NP promised to strengthen racial separation.

5. Electoral system

The National Party won despite receiving fewer votes nationally than the United Party because of the distribution of seats.

9. HOW UNIQUE WAS APARTHEID?

This is the major question of the topic.

Apartheid was NOT completely unique because:

Other societies had experienced:

- Racism
- Racial segregation
- Colonialism
- Discrimination
- Racial classification
- Political exclusion

Examples include:

USA: Jim Crow segregation

Nazi Germany: racial classification and persecution

European colonies: racial hierarchies and colonial discrimination

But apartheid was distinctive because:

South Africa developed an extensive legal system that controlled:

- Where people could live
- Who they could marry
- Where they could work
- Where they could study
- Where they could travel
- Which political rights they had
- Which racial group they belonged to

Conclusion

Apartheid was not unique in its use of racism and segregation, but the extent to which the South African government legally organised and enforced racial separation made the system particularly comprehensive and distinctive.









