

# ***Reaching across the divide: Considering the challenges for intercultural therapeutic dyads embedded in previously oppressive social contexts<sup>1</sup>***

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## ***Abstract***

*Working inter-culturally as a psychoanalytically informed psychotherapist in contemporary South Africa can be a challenging endeavor. The country still carries within it the livid psychological wounds of its Apartheid and colonial past. This pernicious legacy is often powerfully felt in inter-cultural therapeutic dyads. Therapist and patient come together with productive psychotherapeutic work as the aim; however the spectre of the country's history often presents as 'haunting' third – a socio-cultural 'ghost in the nursery' (Fraiberg, Adelson & Shapiro, 1975), or an anti-analytic third subtly contaminating the transference-countertransference (Straker, 2006). Through its engagement with the case presented, this paper hopes to assist clinicians doing inter-cultural work in the S.A. context. This material comes from my work with a female Zulu patient who had suffered both developmental and later traumas of her own and, in*

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