

Chinese foibles less threat than our violent crime

CHINA seems to be increasingly concerned about how the public behaves ahead of — and during — the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Officials are anxious about the behaviour of their citizens, claiming that it could put potential visitors off, and embarrass the nation terribly.

2010 COLUMN



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Further spitting, cursing, swearing and more appropriate queuing (or lining-up) etiquette seen to top the agenda. Visitors to Beijing would have noticed that apart from 9-million bicycles, that cause havoc in the city, bicycles, from the street trader to the communist apparition, are prone to frequently spit on the street, in full view of fellow citizens, tourists and other passers-by.

Public cursing and ranting and raving is another form of public behaviour that has officials concerned, as is cutting ahead in queues through showing the habit of simply materialising any form of waste material onto the pavement. It is also a worry as to the population of screeching, grating, screeching and unfriendly bloopers.

City-wide campaigns to improve manners have begun in earnest, with Beijing now commemorating "queuing day" on the 11th of each month, and lines looked for those caught spitting in public (\$6.58 a violation). Similar fines are meted out for the use of foul language and violations of smoking laws which, while fairly robust in the city, are simply and definitely ignored.

As Wang Fan, a self-proclaimed, exceedingly public civil servant who has become a local celebrity for his effort to curb public spitting, recently commented in the New York Times, "the Olympics are coming, and everyone wants to show their best. Public behaviour of manners must be improved."

Japan had similar concerns ahead of the 2002 Fim World Cup, although the scale, magnitude and intensity paled in comparison with the Chinese experience. Japanese officials were very concerned about the loud "singing" noises, excesses made in public, not quite the unprintable behaviour, but approximating, rude and unbecoming behaviour. The national welcome yells that greeted you as you entered a retail establishment in Japan, as well meaning as this may have been,

York, for example, ahead of the 1994 Fim World Cup.

Which brings me to the South African public and what our officials may be concerned about during the 2010 soccer showcase. My son claims it's last things, "their behaviour and hooding", as he puts it.

Our queuing practices also require attention, as do our (almost non-existent) levels of customer service, that we watch our public spitting, mostly smokes in designated areas, and a polite and friendly bunch, and curse with some level of restraint. So we have — all in all — a decent set of public practices and etiquette.

But the conundrum is, despite our biggest public challenge is to sort an unbecoming visitor, enjoying an aspect of their trip in 2010, from being confronted by a gang of gang-wielding thugs, in broad daylight, and being robbed, mugged and violated. This is the worst kind of public behaviour and it must stop, for it impact all on 2010 ambitions.

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Só kan nasie in SA omskryf word

Dié intellektuele begrippe debat se verwys-raanwerk



Adam Habib

The bank was intellektuele dapper te perk tot die akademiese en politieke wereld. Vir 'n masie wat wil gedy, groei en ontwikkel, is innovasie en diverse openbare diskoens juis nodig, met geronde bydraes daar die masie se akademiese instellings.

Daarom dat die Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing (RGN) se program vir demokratisering voorsien gevind aan die rubriek gaan deelneem met die oogmerk om die RGN se navorsing en die debatte wat daartoe lei in die openbare arena bekend te stel.

Kom ons begin met die tema "We is ons as 'n nasie?" in aanleiding van my kollega voor Gulp-kin se boek *Do South Africans exist?* Vir die dokumentering twee wêreld gelede het in paneeledepreking tot ewentige debat gelai.

My uitgangspunt is dat as ons oor die vraag "Wie is ons as 'n nasie?" besin, daar drie intellektuele tradisies, Internasionaal en plaaslik, is wat daarmee verband hou.

Die eerste, die assimileringsstrategie, daal hier die nasie vooraf en eis dat jy jou daaraan onderwerp om lid te kan wese.

Dié is 'n dominante stelling in die huidige regele Amerikaanse politieke administrasie en ook van sommige van ons eie politieke elites, veral die voorstanders van 'n oer-Afrikanerlees peyspekulief.

Vir diegene is 'n Afrikaan 'n mens wat 'n sekere verplegning het, 'n Afrikaan taal praat en sekere kollektiewe kulturele waardes aanvaar. Enigermant wat tot die nasie behoort moet die eienskappe weerspieël en verduidelik aanvaar, of uitgesluit word.

Die tweede intellektuele tradisie, multikulturellisme, sien die

nasie as 'n kultuurele, etniese, en rassegevoel van verskillende groottes onvat en wil gespreke en verhoudingsaansake onder hulle bevorder. Dié is 'n perspektief wat algemeen in Brittanje, Nederland, en ons eie Vryheidsminders wêreldkant vind en daarbale van ons politieke en kulturele elites gesels is.

Elke debat in ons samelewing is deursnyk met "Elk is 'n Afrikaan/Afrikaner/Arum mens/Indie" so asort die homogene begrippe is. Hoop word die belang van kulturele, ekonomiese en politieke elites binne die groepe geprotoniseer. So word die Afrikaanse gedeelte deur 'n Van Schalkwyk, 'n Gilmour en 'n Rupert, en 'n Afrikaan deur 'n Mbeki, Zuma of Ramaphosa. In dié visie word die etniese se belang verloor.

Albei perspektiewe is gevaarlik vir ons nasie en dui in teen sy historiese ontwikkeling en die funksionele erfenis van die grondwet. Dié is omdat alhoewel die verandering van identiteit in die 1980's ignoreer, naamlik dat alle identiteite nites is — nites wat onvorm en herposistruur kan word om alternatiewe oorgang te dien.

Dié bring ons by die derde intellektuele tradisie, die kosmopolitiese perspektief. Dié gaan uit van die veronderstelling dat die mensdom se geskiedenis een is van vermenigvuldig en intergrasie, van kulturele evolusie en herstelling.

Dié beteken dat ons hierop die sutfund van Afrika is as 'n produk van die geskiedenis, 'n geskiedenis van verowering en uitbuiting, styd en verhef, migrasie en assimilering. Die Grodwer aanvaar dat ons almal Suid-Afrikaners is, ongeveer van wie en waar ons as 'n stam.

Belangrik Die Grodwer dat hierdie ons nasie nie, maar hierdie wêreld die demokratiese waardes daarin ingesluit word.

Dié visie van kosmopolitiese nasionalisme gaan gepaard met verskeie uitdagings. Dit moet 'n gevoel van solidariesheid en verantwoordelike by die voorsiening van alle kleure om in betrekking van die genaturaliseerde. Dit is ook nie toelaat dat jou burgerkap en identiteit deur 'n ander bepal word nie, ongesig of die politieke, 'n stamspesifieke of 'n ander hoogspeksiale is.

Ek word dikwels deur jong vol Suid-Afrikaners gevra waarom hulle kan hopen skuldig voel oor die dade van die vorige generasie. My antwoord is altyd: Wanneer jy ophou om jouself as wil te sien en begin om jouself as kosmopolities Suid-Afrikaner te sien, Wanneer jy die toelaat dat ander jou stam, mark nie, maar jou burgerkap eis op.

Dr Adam Habib is 'n stigter van die Grodwer aanvaar dat ons almal Suid-Afrikaners is, ongesig of die politieke, 'n stamspesifieke of 'n ander hoogspeksiale is.

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