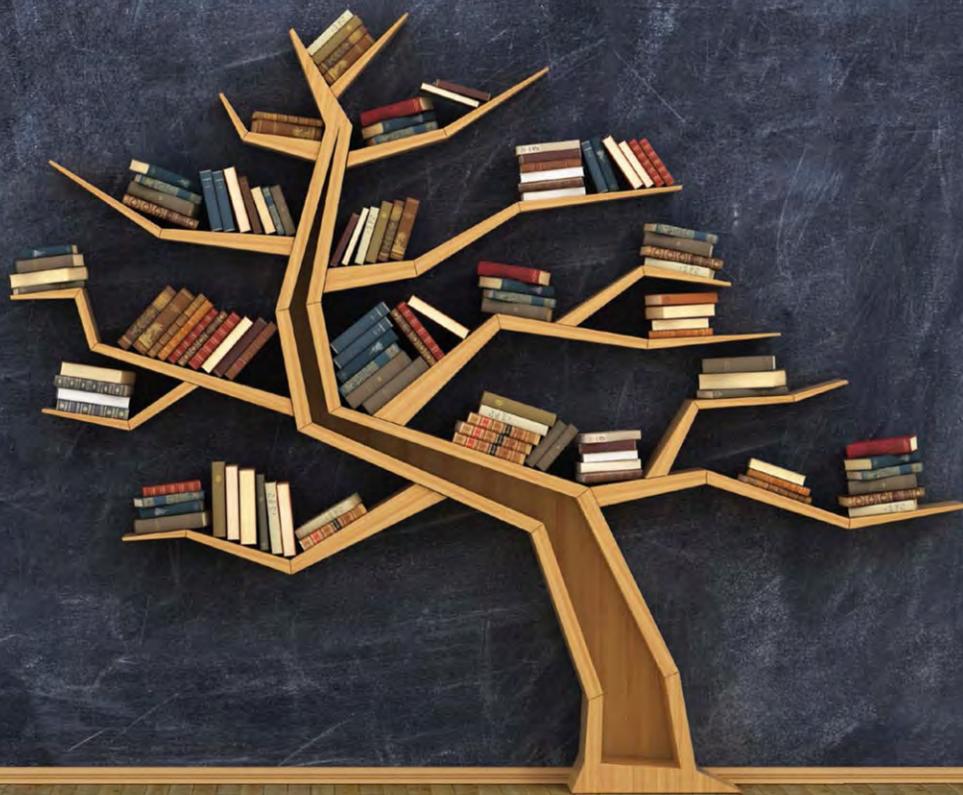


# Knowledge and Change in African Universities

## Volume 2 – Re-Imagining the Terrain

Michael Cross and Amasa Ndofirepi (Eds.)



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## **Knowledge and Change in African Universities**

## AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENTS AND PERSPECTIVES

Volume 2

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A diversity of higher education themes and issues related to African higher education at institutional, national, regional and international levels are addressed. These include, but are not limited to, new developments and perspectives related to knowledge production and dissemination; the teaching/learning process; all forms of academic mobility – student, scholar, staff, program, provider and policy; funding mechanisms; pan-Africa regionalization; alternate models of higher education provision; university leadership, governance and management; gender issues; use of new technologies; equitable access; student success; Africanization of the curriculum- to name only a few critical issues.

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# **Knowledge and Change in African Universities**

*Volume 2 – Re-Imagining the Terrain*

*Edited by*

**Michael Cross and Amasa Ndofirepi**

*University of Johannesburg, South Africa*



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FELIX MARINGE

## 1. TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN THE NEW AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

### INTRODUCTION

The notion of the ‘new’ African university resonates with imperatives for transformation in post-colonial states across the African continent (Mamdani, 1996). The term ‘new’ signifies a momentum gathering within post-colonial universities to embark on transformational journeys which seek to interrogate inherited and embedded epistemes while developing new ways of conceptualising and developing new knowledge and knowledge production systems. At the centre of this debate is the need to transform the knowledge systems and processes which define the primary purposes of our universities. Most countries on the African continent, with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia, have a colonial past which created colonial knowledge systems designed to serve the needs of the colonisers more than they addressed the needs of the local communities and their indigenous economies and cultural identities. As the first wave of decolonisation took effect in the late twentieth century through to the early part of the 21st century, what has largely changed in Africa are the political and legal frameworks for new governance. Meanwhile, knowledge systems have continued to maintain the global neoliberal agenda, with the result that the power and economic relations which have marginalised the African continent, persist.

Marini (1965) argues that because of this dynamic, Africa has been transformed into a sub-imperialist continent, serving to extend and accompany the imperialist agenda of the former colonisers. If this is true, then it can be equally argued that the knowledge systems in African universities have not been adequately decolonised, as they continue to serve the needs of the colonisers more than those of local populations. In his book, *Decolonizing the mind*, Ngugi (1986) reminds us that the process of decolonisation is largely incomplete until the knowledge systems which shape people’s identities, linguistic capabilities and intellectual capital, including their socio-economic progress, have been decolonised.

In this chapter, I ask three critical questions about knowledge transformation in the African university. The first is: What are the imperatives behind knowledge production transformation in post-colonial universities in Africa? Secondly: In what ways have key knowledge production systems in research, curriculum design, teaching and learning, and in the training of doctoral students, remained unchanged? The third question is: How might these knowledge production systems

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be transformed to better serve the needs of universities in the era of decolonisation? I begin with a brief, but critical discussion of the key concepts of transformation; the new African university; decolonisation; and knowledge production.

#### TRANSFORMATION

Although the term ‘transformation’ is often used interchangeably with ‘change’ and even ‘reform’, I see and use these terms in fundamentally different ways. Change does not necessarily result in transformation. Indeed, much of the change we see in education is cosmetic, often targeted at replacing people (e.g. replacing whites with blacks) in senior leadership positions; however, because of their previous training and experience or inexperience, they often replicate the old ways, which in turn, promotes institutional stagnation rather than transformation. I therefore argue that change in itself is a necessary but not sufficient guarantee for transformation. In a similar way, I see ‘reform’ in the context of its origins in church history. The churches that broke away from Roman Catholicism continue to worship the same God and place Christ at the centre of their faith, even if their rituals and practices may be different. In education, much reform has taken place especially in the curriculum, for example, new courses with new titles; new names and forms of assessment, amongst other things. However, the central purposes of these new curricula and forms of assessment have remained the same, i.e. to select students and confer degrees.

Therefore reforming an education system, as with changing it, does not necessarily result in fundamental transformation. In this chapter, I use the term ‘transformation’ to imply a complete and radical change, in which the original idea or process becomes unrecognisable, and the new creation serves new purposes. I argue that our universities in post-colonial Africa have thus far tinkered with change and reform at the edges, and have not quite been able to transform their knowledge production systems; thus they continue to perpetuate the hegemonies and dominance of western, colonial forms of education. I argue further that our universities have been remarkably complicit in continuing to accept the sub-imperialist and extractive interests of the erstwhile colonisers.

#### THE NEW AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

Most of our universities in Africa were developed according to templates of institutions in the colonising countries. For example, the University of Zimbabwe was developed as a college of the University of London, offering first and foremost degree curricula developed in London, for London students. Graduates were thus expected to meet the requirements of the colonising country in order to facilitate the extraction of talent and resources to serve the needs of the rapidly industrialising nations of the North (Moyo, 2011). It can be argued that even the universities established after the attainment of political independence in Africa, have continued to chart their developmental trajectories on similar western models. It is thus important

## TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

to note that so far, universities in Africa have been judged on criteria befitting the quality of their western counterparts. I am therefore suggesting that we do not as yet have any ‘good African universities’. In line with other African scholars such as Zeleza (2002), Nyerere (1967), Desai (2004) and Freire (1970), I shall posit that the new African universities we envisage would have to meet the following criteria:

- Be developed, not as elite institutions serving the needs of a privileged few, but as mass-based institutions to equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to service the new needs of transforming societies
- Serve new purposes reflecting the realities of their economies and labour markets which require graduates with job creation, entrepreneurial and work orientation skills, rather than focusing on preparation for employment and employability. In many African countries, unemployment has become a norm for many graduates, and the continued focus on employability is somewhat misplaced for an increasing majority of them
- Develop and teach curricula in indigenous languages, so as to facilitate conceptual understanding in the local context
- Develop local epistemologies which prioritise an intimate understanding of the local environment and its challenges first and foremost, before turning to global imperatives
- Develop appropriate methodological approaches which prioritise collaborative rather than individualised learning and assessment, including methodologies suited to large class teaching
- Incorporate and develop indigenous knowledge systems and methodologies as authentic, priority knowledge generation systems
- Develop appropriate and socially just pedagogies, which seek to liberate rather than displace learners from their cultural and social realities
- Seek to espouse, expand and showcase African value systems, both symbolically and especially in leadership, management and policy dimensions of the university
- Prioritise the establishment of Afro-based knowledge generating partnerships and promote Afro-based communities of scholarship.

The above is not merely a shopping list for delivering the new African university. The purpose is to provide a framework which can be used to explore and critique current efforts towards indigenising, Africanising and decolonising the post-colonial university in Africa. I turn now to a discussion of these ideas.

## INDIGENISATION, DECOLONISATION AND AFRICANISATION

Scholars who write on these themes tend to use the concepts interchangeably, and justifiably so. While there is much common terrain between them, I try in this section to tease out some distinctions.

Firstly, all three concepts represent a discourse of struggle against several injustices occasioned by western educational and imperial tendencies. The concepts thus

share a common enemy, which we now analyse. Four specific injustices of colonial education are usually cited in the literature (Biko, 1987). The first is the *injustice of alienation*. Colonial education presents a totally new way of understanding the world, which is alien to the indigenous people. Their own language, culture, beliefs, norms and values are cast aside as uncivilised, barbaric and inhuman, and replaced with new forms which they struggle to internalise and understand. As learners, students from the indigenous populations are faced with several learning hurdles, for example that of unlearning what they already know, thus increasing their vulnerability and competence to learn new things; the possibilities of cultural dissonance which creates obstacles in the learning process and constrains understanding; and the struggle with sense making in an unfamiliar learning environment.

The second injustice is the *non-liberating nature* of the education. Both in form, purpose and method, colonial education was designed to cultivate in the minds of the indigenous people, a sense of servitude towards a superior master through the creation of receptive and unquestioning learners. The learners were taught through what Freire (1970) terms a ‘banking philosophy’, structured around activities such as memorisation, tedious repetition, reciting sets of facts, and stories about ‘Benny and Betty’ (as depicted in the reading books used in the early years of schooling in the former British colonies). Any stories about ‘Chineke’ and ‘Sarudzai’ (local Nigerian and Zimbabwean names respectively), which could have represented the realities of the African child, were systematically deleted from their experience. According to Freire (1970), far from being liberating, colonial education systems were thus enslaving.

The third injustice of colonial education was the *disempowerment dimension*. It did not foster critical thinking skills which would allow learners to appraise, evaluate and imagine new ways of understanding and doing things. It simply created accomplices of the imperialist project, who were disengaged from the local struggles of development. They were minimally engaged with the more menial and routine tasks of servanthood, hence freeing the colonisers to focus more intently on their grand schemes of occupation, exploitation and extraction.

The fourth injustice directed at indigenous populations through colonial education was that of *creating dependent rather than independent learners*. Such learners are those who are not creative and cannot think ‘outside the box’. Three main occupations dominated the minds of learners in post-colonial times—teaching, nursing and police work. I remember after I completed my A levels in Zimbabwe, I was persuaded against making a career in the hotel industry, because as my parents insisted, and evidenced by the low occupational status occupied by the majority of indigenous people in the hotel industry, the only respectable job open to me was in the field of teaching. Our aspirations were thus channelled in limited directions, and working in the jobs mentioned became the only horizon of opportunity for local people. Learners were thus educated for dependent thinking through being denied the tools and skills for independent thinking and imagination; they were constrained by what was available, appropriate and possible for the black person. To work for

the 'white man' was valued more than thinking about creating work for oneself. The lives of black people thus became tied to, and dependent on what was considered relevant for them by others.

Although the concepts of indigenisation, decolonisation and Africanisation are used interchangeably to confront these common injustices, I use Makgoba's (1997) idea of 'Africanisation' as being centrally concerned with culture and identity—a process which he says seeks to affirm a people's culture and identity in the world community. Ramose (1998) agrees with this position, noting that Africanisation is a conscious and deliberate assertion of nothing more than the right to be African.

Following the scramble for Africa in the late nineteenth century (Packenham, 1991) European countries, chiefly Britain and France but including Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Belgium, occupied most of the continent, expropriating minerals and other natural resources using cheap slave labour, causing economic devastation, destroying the continent's cultural capital, and imposing political subjugation on indigenous people. All this was justified on the theory of the 'white man's burden' which represented 'his' moral obligation to civilise the so-called 'dark continent'. During this period of plunder and expropriation, colonial powers carefully cultivated local intelligentsias educated in western universities to help them maintain the status quo through championing reforms that did not significantly disrupt the imperialist project. However, with time, protest wars for self-determination in different countries on the continent saw Africa systematically gaining political independence, starting with Libya in 1951 and finishing with South Africa in 1994. This marked the first wave of the decolonisation of the African continent. However, irreparable damage had been exerted on the entire continent, especially on economic and cultural fronts.

As indicated earlier, universities (as microcosms of societies) were designed to further the interests of the colonial powers, hence the need to decolonise them and turn them into new African universities, as described earlier. The decolonisation of universities implies transforming our institutions in multiple ways, to champion new purposes directed at serving Africa's needs. We need to teach new content; to apply more appropriate pedagogical and assessment approaches; and to grow different critical epistemologies through which an indigenous professoriate can be developed to provide the required academic leadership for the desired transformation.

Finally, although the term can be applied more broadly to a variety of institutional dimensions, such as curriculum and knowledge, I see 'indigenisation' as being more concerned with the people element which involves and implies changing the personnel, particularly replacing whites with blacks in senior management positions and most functional areas. However, the mere change of personnel does not constitute complete indigenisation. Unless the new black staff members undergo a complete knowledge reorientation, and unless they start to use appropriate thinking tools, they very frequently end up being distorted images of their predecessors who knowingly (though more frequently unknowingly) reproduce the status quo rather than transform it. This brings us to the central question of knowledge production.

## KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

As indicated earlier, the knowledge production function is perhaps the most important mandate of any university. This does not neglect other significant university roles in society, which include: human capacity development; the ideological role, such as the cultivation of critical thinking skills to cement and develop new national identities; and the development of technical, technological, digital and information skills required for industrialisation and new labour markets. Universities need to become hubs for new community engagement in the quest for transformation and development.

In this section, I examine the meaning of this idea of knowledge production, from a range of perspectives, including the rationale for knowledge production; the process of knowledge production; the management of knowledge production in universities; the challenges African universities face in their role as knowledge producers; and finally the people who ordinarily assume the role of knowledge producers in universities. This is summarised into a framework of knowledge production as a contribution to the critique, analysis and reinvention activities that are required in reimagining knowledge production in the African university.

### KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION: MEANING AND RATIONALES

Knowledge production is the *raison d'être* of our universities—the major reason for their very existence. It is a multifaceted concept, with several important dimensions including its rationales and related processes; its management at national and institutional levels of the academy; amongst others. The construct of knowledge production includes the generation, utilisation and dissemination of knowledge. Essentially, knowledge production invites us to ask several important questions:

- What knowledge is of most worth in our current circumstances?
- What methodologies, approaches and management should we prioritise for its efficient production?
- What resources need to be marshalled to ensure a successful production process?
- What difficulties and contradictions might we anticipate in the transformation of knowledge production systems?

While wealth remains a powerful tool for development, it has now been overtaken by knowledge, especially in the context of what Castells (2010) refers to as the 'knowledge economy'. Knowledge-based economies, which have superseded industrial wealth creation and wealth-based economies, depend largely on knowledge production and technological innovation as the most important productive forces. In order to be able to participate in global knowledge-based economies which are characterised by both competition and competitiveness, countries need to set up, resource and fund generously what Cloete (2012) calls 'national research systems'—these comprise universities, private and public centres of research excellence,

## TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

and national laboratories, among other facilities. In a world that is fast changing, structures and systems which serve our needs today quickly become redundant under new circumstances. The necessary knowledge and skills to adapt thus become more important than the knowledge of yesteryear, despite its contribution to the corpus of indigenous knowledge.

Universities are expected to play a key role in this adaptation process, and to link new knowledge with technological innovation in ways that address new and ever-changing circumstances. For example, many diligent students will today come to classes with a diverse understanding of the topics we plan to teach. They can access such knowledge via the Internet and could perhaps even come with better content understanding than the teacher. Content dependent pedagogies thus require reforming in the current context of knowledge explosion and increasing access. Hence knowledge production can be visualised in terms of the imperatives of a fast-changing world, rapid technological advances, and the realities of climate change, global terrorism, among others. To this, I add the need to reinvent and rediscover lost national identities, which became the subject of systematic displacement throughout the years of colonialism. I argue that the narrative of change thus far tends to ignore this dimension. Unless we bring this narrative of redress to the fore, in the same way that we speak of technology change and the Internet as forces of transformation and how these influence what we teach, research and how we do so, we will not create the required momentum for championing the process of decolonising our knowledge production systems. But this begs the question first of what is worthwhile knowledge in the context of the African context of university.

## WORTHWHILE KNOWLEDGE IN THE AFRICANISING UNIVERSITY

In a seminal essay, Herbert Spencer (1909) questioned the relevance of what was taught in the school curriculum in England, despite the industrial revolution which required people with new knowledge, skills and attitudes compared to those designed for the pre-industrial world. The question of what knowledge is of most worth thus became a key curriculum question. Dennis Lawton (1975), most well-known for his definition of curriculum as a 'selection from culture' would later address this question by suggesting that those who decide about the curriculum need to use a selective process to identify the knowledge that is of most worth. Yet the question remains as to whose or which culture forms the reservoir from which to make the selection of worthwhile knowledge. Above all, what criteria should the selection be based on, and whose interests would the selection serve most accurately? These questions remain important today, especially so in African universities which are trying to rediscover worthwhile knowledge for the task of transformation from colonialism and coloniality, to post-colonial and decolonised institutions.

Most universities around the world tend to organise their knowledge fields in four areas: the natural sciences; social sciences; mathematics and humanities. These fields ask different types of questions and utilise different and often competing theoretical

frameworks and methodological approaches in pursuing their fundamental questions. Within these fields, knowledge tends to be valued and validated across four key dimensions: the logical or analytical dimension, which values knowledge that is systematically connected and can be classified or grouped into logically derived units; the empirical dimension, which places emphasis on valid and reliable ways of pursuing truth; the moral dimension, which deals with questions of right and wrong; and the aesthetic dimension which deals with questions of beauty, desirable and undesirable human pursuits (Bellack, 1965). What seems to be universal across all these fields or disciplines of study and the ways in which they validate knowledge, is that their theoretical frameworks tend to have their origin in western cultures and values. Even if their relevance in transforming higher education systems in Africa should not necessarily be dismissed, it needs to be questioned. In doing so, alternative frameworks need to be developed and adopted, as competing if not dominant frameworks for addressing new questions that arise in the knowledge decolonisation process. I therefore argue that worthwhile knowledge in an African context is one which will help speed up the knowledge decolonising process. While such knowledge does not negate the importance of colonial knowledge systems, it questions and critiques their relevance, both routinely and persistently seeking only to preserve what remains relevant to our new circumstances, while actively pursuing their replacement with alternative and more relevant perspectives. Education or in this case, 'knowledge for critical consciousness' (Freire, 2005:6), thus becomes a key component of worthwhile knowledge in the Africanising university.

A second important element of worthwhile knowledge in the Africanising university, I argue, is that which captures African cultural heritages especially in the pre-colonial era. The approach to this endeavour would be to examine several dimensions of the cultural capital of African people on the continent: their religion and morality; their economic activities; their sense of self preservation and approaches to health; their beliefs and values; their education, literacy and numeracy systems; and other aspects of their cultures. A parallel study programme focusing largely on the decimation of African cultures and identities through the colonial project of western countries would be an important element of the worthwhile knowledge required in the Africanising university.

In my view, I would suggest that all students in our universities need to have some exposure to the study of African culture and identity. Just as foreign students are now flocking to universities in the Arab and Asian worlds to learn about aspects of those cultures (Arab News, 2016), I argue that the flow of international students to Africa would increase substantially in order to access African knowledge (Lim, 2011). But more importantly, as others would argue, Africa needs to rediscover itself and assert its identity on the world stage (see for example Mamdani, 1997). Assertive universities will contribute in quite significant ways to the broad decolonisation process, and more specifically to the decolonisation of knowledge.

A third dimension of worthwhile knowledge in the process of decolonising our universities would be the technologisation of African educational practices. This is

necessary to facilitate their development and integration with socially just pedagogies which will be at the centre of education for the critical consciousness project. It is also important for correcting what Adebisi (2014) calls the ‘technological apartheid’ created by the imperialist project, which sought to maintain a sustained dependency of Africa on the more advanced nations in the west.

I see the technologisation of African education as important for a number of reasons. First, technology has not only expanded the horizons of possibilities across all areas of human endeavour, it has become a major means by which educational processes are implemented and enacted in our schools and universities. While we hesitate to invest in the creation of large educational projects of the magnitude of MOOCs for African traditional education, there will always be a risk that this aspect will be sidelined on the fringes of obscurity. Secondly, young people today are drawn towards learning that is technology driven, particularly using mobile devices that are becoming ubiquitous. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, technology facilitates not only the accumulation of valuable knowledge for utilisation in university studies, it also speeds up the processes of knowledge implementation in ways that will facilitate its prominence as a core curriculum area.

A key argument many lay against the idea of introducing African traditional culture and education into mainstream university courses is that the available material is far too dispersed and inaccessible for any meaningful utilisation thereof (Tiberondwa, 1978). It has also been argued that African traditional education was largely based on gendered roles, was too informal, was limited to specific requirements of isolated communities and societies (thus hampering its transferability and application in different contexts), and was based on methods that depended on the inculcation of fear, punishment and memorisation. Consequently, as argued by Adeyemi and Adenyika (2002), the system produced unquestioning, uncritical learners who are unsuited to the educational requirements of 21st century learners. Despite its shortcomings, African traditional education had numerous strengths which would serve today’s ailing and dismembered societies well. Its success in building and contributing to the economic, social and cultural stability and cohesion of societal structures is well documented (Adeyemi & Adenyika, 2002). It taught learners a work rather than an employment ethic, and as such, learners were seldom unemployed (Kaunda, 1966). African traditional education is also widely credited with inculcating the values of communalism rather than individualism and competition. As Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002) suggest:

Through traditional education, young people acquired a communal rather than an individualistic outlook. Education was instrumental in helping people to subordinate their personal interests to those of the wider community and to appreciate the values, norms and beliefs of their society. Thus, indigenous education prepared children to play their roles in the family, clan and the tribe as a whole. (p. 236)

I therefore submit that while African traditional education had its faults and weaknesses, just as with any other system, its complete obliteration from the

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contemporary knowledge production mechanisms in our schools and universities is not only unjustified, it also further entrenches the hegemony of knowledge imperialism (Adebisi, 2014).

#### KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

By ‘knowledge production systems’ I mean the methodologies, processes and approaches used to produce knowledge in the academy. In this section I explore critically three major knowledge production approaches in our universities: staff research; teaching and pedagogy; and research training for doctoral students. I also indicate ways in which they remain divorced from the ideals of the new African university.

##### *Decolonising Staff Research as a Knowledge Production System in the New African University*

Research is arguably the most important knowledge production mechanism in the university. Seen as a systematic and persistent quest for truth, research appears to most people as a neutral and unbiased way of knowledge generation (Hammersley, 2007). There are two main arguments against this. The first is that western knowledge forms have largely grown out of positivist and empiricist assumptions that privilege certain types of knowledge, and in particular, create hierarchies of knowledge which position quantitative methods, hypotheses testing, randomised trials and experiments as the most valid and reliable means of knowledge generation (Hammersley, 2007). I argue that this type of research, despite its significant contribution to knowledge universally, has promoted what I think is a world comfortable with ‘half understanding’ what happens around it.

For example, we know how the HIV virus causes havoc with the human immune system, but we shun any research which attempts to discover how people with HIV actually feel and experience the reality of suffering from immune deficiency. Such research is routinely described by many (see for example Arowolo, 2010) as mere hearsay or gossip, lacking in rigour and therefore unfit to influence policy and decisions about real problems which affect mankind. We look down upon the quality of evidence which is based on any other ways of knowing besides those driven by positivist and empiricist assumptions. It is therefore no coincidence that the fields of medicine and pharmaceuticals have managed only to produce medicines which manage diseases but not treat them. There is no cure for HIV; for high blood pressure; for diabetes; for cancer; and not even for flu. The list is endless.

Producing cures for these ailments would compromise the profits of the companies that manufacture the medicines; and that is not good business. Allied to this state of affairs is neglect of African traditional medicines and practices which are routinely described as ‘dark practices’ of self-serving ‘sangomas’, and frequently associated with witchcraft and so seen as deserving little investment in research

(Arowolo, 2010). But as we know only too well, diabetes, high blood pressure, HIV and a whole range of other human ailments, are modern-day diseases whose emergence curiously coincides with westernisation and the destruction of African traditional culture and practices. On the one hand, we therefore need research which promotes a better understanding of indigenous knowledge systems. On the other, we need to question the wisdom of prioritising research which leads to the discovery of half-truths, and which promotes the perpetuation of disease rather than its absolute treatment. In short, we need to promote research which complements the discoveries from positivist methods, so as to save humankind, rather than that which promotes and supports the accumulation of capital by those who wield power in this world.

Such arguments have been used elsewhere (Ubani, 2011) to promote significant investment in research on indigenous knowledge systems in New Zealand, Canada, and China. To date, we know how Chinese medicines have become household brands in many parts of the world, including in Africa. Similar attempts have been tried in Uganda. For example, Dr Sekagya Hills, a trained dentist and African traditional healer has straddled the worlds of modern medical practice and traditional medical practice in Uganda for many decades. To date, he has worked with thousands of traditional healers, training them in methods which help make their practices safer and more hygienic. Over a three-year period, Sekagya Hills (cited in Ubani, 2011) has worked with 62 HIV patients using a combination of African herbal treatments. He has demonstrated an 85% success rate, and filed for patents of these herbs and treatment regimes. Clearly, more research is required to promote discoveries in the field of traditional medical practices. In many cases, traditional medicines are cheaper (and therefore affordable), and would contribute towards reducing the spread of this devastating disease amongst the poor people of this continent. Traditional healers are also generally more accessible than western trained medical practitioners (Ubani, 2011). Further local research is required to promote the preservation of herbs and reduce deforestation and illegal farming practices; such a focus would go a long way towards securing a place for African traditional practices in the mainstream processes of contemporary human endeavour.

Following Mamdani (2011) who argues that the current intellectual and research paradigm in universities should be challenged, I posit the following as significant strategies for the decolonisation of research in African universities:

- Redefining the purposes and nature of research that would contribute more meaningfully towards the decolonisation process. This should not be expected to happen effortlessly; it needs to be a key strategic and appropriately funded aspect of the transformation of universities in the age of decolonisation. Government involvement will be crucial, especially in terms of making funding available.
- Strategically positioning African traditional ideology and philosophy as competing gazes and overarching backdrops for the re-conceptualisation of research in universities

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- Positioning indigenous knowledge systems as a central theme in research training, and as a key curriculum growth area for research and teaching in the university
- Leadership training for the research decolonisation process
- Creating key strategic research and development partnerships with similar institutions and organisations on the African continent. This does not imply a negation of engagement with non-African partners, but signals the significance of prioritising Africa in defining, conceptualising and planning locally relevant research.
- Promoting collaborative, cross disciplinary and cross institutional research in order to increase the potential of elevating local research to global status.

*Decolonising Teaching and Pedagogy as a Knowledge Production System  
in the New African University*

For the purposes of this chapter, a broad view of teaching and pedagogy is used, representing three interlocking elements, namely the *content* of teaching, the *resources* and the *instructional approaches* used in the academy. As part of a knowledge production system, and despite the imperatives for transformation, these three elements of many university courses have not changed significantly since independence (see for example Geddis, 2006). Some changes have occurred in subject disciplines such as history and language courses, with the introduction of African histories and the teaching of more indigenous languages. However, other than changes in content and facts, the approaches to teaching history have remained rather static. In terms of the teaching of indigenous languages, numerous reports suggest that even these have generally been taught through the medium of English or French. For example, Shona courses in schools and at the University of Zimbabwe are taught through the medium of English due to the lack of resources, expertise and materials such as dictionaries etc. (see for example Thondhlana, 2002; Chivhanga & Chimhenga, 2013). Yet, the teaching of indigenous languages is not just a human rights and social justice issue—it provides a range of academic benefits to learners, including meta linguistic awareness; increased mental flexibility; improvement in national achievement scores; and improvement of learner well-being (see for example Demmert, 2001).

In terms of pedagogy, the most prevalent methodological approach for teaching in universities has remained the large group lecture. This has become even more pertinent in the context of the ever-increasing massification of higher education, itself a result of globalisation and widening of access—an important pillar of post-colonial education transformation. While there are multiple reasons causing this stagnation of teaching methods, I argue that forms of assessment in universities have been the major obstacle. Based on the values of competition, individualism and elitism, assessment strategies in our universities continue to reflect normative intentions designed to measure learning, rather than to promote it; designed to endorse and cement privilege rather than to broaden participation and engagement,

especially of previously disadvantaged young people; designed to endorse and support individual ambition and problem solving, rather than to democratise and promote collective problem solving. Methods and pedagogies are unlikely to change as long as we continue using unreformed assessment regimes in our courses.

Therefore despite the rhetoric of change and reform, teaching and pedagogy in many African universities have remained largely untransformed. I posit the following as potential strategies for decolonising teaching and pedagogies in the African university:

- Reviewing the content of many existing university programmes in order to create space for the integration of locally relevant content
- Developing pedagogies which speak to the realities of large class teaching, collaborative learning and cross disciplinary knowledge imperatives
- Transforming current elitist and individualistic assessment methods
- Developing the requirements for teaching indigenous languages and using them as the medium of instruction across different phases of schooling
- Developing opportunities for collaborative teaching and learning across universities on the continent.

*Decolonising Doctoral Research Training as a Knowledge Production System in the New African University*

Doctoral training in our universities remains the single most important strategy for knowledge production. The essence of a PhD degree is to produce graduates who operate at the boundaries of knowledge in various fields of human endeavour, and who always seek to extend those knowledge boundaries. Developed countries of the world almost always have large numbers of doctoral graduates conducting research in universities and other institutes and organisations. Therefore both as a broad policy issue, and as a key strategic matter, doctoral training should be high on the list of priorities in our universities.

The problem, however, is that many doctoral programmes in many African universities continue to be based on western models of doctoral training. Dominant amongst these is the apprenticeship model, through which students are trained under the supervision of particular supervisors. Despite its strengths, the apprenticeship model is ill suited to a democratised and expanded system of higher education, where more and more students now qualify to undertake a doctoral programme. Expanded access and participation would require dramatic increase and training of supervisors which universities cannot cope with in current circumstances. In addition, it fails to recognise the intricate interconnectedness of knowledge systems across disciplines, and that social and human problems cannot be adequately addressed by the expertise that grows out of single disciplines. Further, the apprenticeship model tends to reproduce expertise akin to itself. Given that many of the experts in our universities received western doctoral training, there is a sense in which current

training approaches will serve to entrench the hegemonies of the western tradition, thus shutting out any meaningful possibilities for transformation.

The following are strategies that could be useful in transforming research training in our universities:

- Creating space to integrate Afro-political theory and critique into the frameworks for conceptualising empirical research, especially in the social sciences and humanities
- Rethinking the apprenticeship model in order to embed collaborative learning and supervision, both within and outside disciplinary and institutional boundaries
- Encouraging rethinking of government policy. Because of its value to society in terms of knowledge production, doctoral training in African universities should be fully supported and encouraged by governments, employers and the business environment, in a non-discriminatory way which benefits both home and international students. Overseas students who complete their doctoral training at African universities should be required to work for a number of years in their study nation following completion of their degrees.

Such transformation will inevitably confront formidable challenges, five of which are briefly discussed below:

- *Inertia against transforming funding priorities.* The truth is that since many universities in Africa are poorly funded, they survive on externally acquired funding and donor funds, which applies to nearly 80% of the support they receive for research. Priorities of funding organisations do not necessarily match the imperatives of transformation in the African university.
- *Mismatch between global and local determinants of good research.* Positivism has been the dominant research paradigm in academia, and the type of research it promotes is generally highly valued. On the other hand, interpretivism, collaboration, and the application of critical, colonial and post-colonial theory have the potential to provide a stronger basis for deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the African university and the societies it serves.
- *Unevenness in the competitive field of higher education.* Research output is the most significant determinant of the position of a university on global ranking systems. Most top universities in the world tend to have increasingly large numbers of postgraduate, rather than undergraduate students. However, for many universities in the developing world, particularly in Africa, the focus is largely on teaching large cohorts of undergraduate classes; this does not necessarily match the research potential and opportunities available at universities in the developed world.
- *Some scepticism about the meaning and value of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and Afro-centrism.* While there has been a groundswell of academic scholarship making a case for IKS and Afro-centrism in African universities, there remains a sizeable proportion of those who view these ideas rather dimly.

## TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

For example, Horsthemke (2004) argues that IKS involves at best an incomplete, partial, or at worst, a questionable understanding or conceptualisation of knowledge and further suggests that as a concept, it has questionable relevance to the debates around real issues of transformation. I disagree completely with these sentiments, as, in my view, they represent overtures by ‘white doubters’—those who are scared of ceding control of the academy and seek to cement the hegemony of the west as the only legitimate players in shaping transformational discourses in the African university.

- *Inertia towards transformation.* My research at the University of the Witwatersrand in which I sought to determine the ‘appetite’ of different groups of people for transformation, clearly shows that almost 100% of students considered it to be urgent and necessary. However, only 78% staff felt that it was both urgent and necessary. A sizeable proportion of staff seemed to prefer a gradualist approach to transformation, despite acknowledging its necessity. Among senior professors and university management teams, only 65% felt that it was both urgent and necessary. There are concerns around the introduction of transformation for a wide variety of reasons, including the lack of resources; time needed to decolonise people’s minds; and time needed to wean the academy from the influence of global imperatives, especially funding agencies.

## CHARTING A WAY FORWARD

In the light of the objectives of this chapter and the theoretical arguments raised here, I end by highlighting five fundamental points to consider regarding the decolonisation of knowledge production systems in African universities.

1. Encouraging commitment to the goal of decolonising our institutions
2. Creating continental momentum for knowledge decolonisation
3. Rethinking models for doctoral training
4. Committing to developing new content and pedagogies that will underpin the knowledge decolonisation process
5. Investing time and resources in resolving the language issue in our universities

### *A Call for Total Commitment to the Decolonising Agenda*

While it is often argued that universities are a microcosm of the societies in which they exist (Douglas, n.d), my view is that because of their privileged position as knowledge generators, universities in Africa need to assume leadership in the transformation endeavour. Much as this will be uncomfortable for a great number of staff in the sector, we owe it to both current and future generations of students, and to our countries and the continent, to spearhead this final process of decolonisation.

The biggest obstacle will be the global capital project. Decolonised universities will essentially be inward looking, while adopting a gaze on global developments.

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They will not sit on the frontiers of globalisation like the academies in London, New York and Chicago. Their place will be at the nexus of the local and the global, interacting and mitigating poverty, and championing the cause for equality and equity. As such, they will recruit differently, teach differently, research differently and they will strive to be known for their Africaness, rather than any western orientation. They will strive to be great African universities rather than just great universities in Africa. Nothing short of total commitment to these lofty goals will adequately support the transformation initiatives required from the government, the public and private sectors, and internally within individual institutions.

*A Continental Approach rather than Individual Institutional Efforts*

Africanisation of knowledge production systems will be unsuccessful if the commitment comes only from individual institutions. The African Union, regional organisations such as Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), and funding organisations on the continent, amongst other bodies, need to embrace this goal and use it a precondition for supporting future research and knowledge development processes in the sector.

*Rethinking Models of Doctoral Training*

New doctoral training models will need to be developed and encouraged for the new African university, emphasising the use of communities of scholarship rather than traditional apprenticeship models. The new programmes will need to place collaboration rather than individual endeavour at the centre; and locate Afro political theory as an authentic lens through which to view social science and humanities problems in particular.

*Committing to Developing New Content and Pedagogies*

Extensive curriculum revision will be required in many university courses. Appropriate local content should be taught alongside the global content inherited from the past. New large class pedagogies which commit to liberating the mind and cultivating social justice will need to be developed, placing a clear focus on empowering previously disadvantaged learners.

*Investing in Addressing the Language Conundrum*

We need an African policy on the use and teaching of local indigenous languages in schools and universities. No country in the world has become fully developed without using its own language as both a medium of instruction and as a major part

of the curriculum. The problems and challenges associated with this transformation need to be confronted vigorously.

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the continent has become, in the words of Marini (1965), a sub-imperialist space whose purpose is the furtherance of the imperialist project. Despite political independence, the next phase of liberation on the continent needs to be through the knowledge decolonisation process, which will have to be spearheaded by our universities. African universities need to turn themselves around and seize the moment occasioned by the pervasive contemporary discourse of transformation. We have to ask new questions about the relevance of dominant western forms of knowing which continue to be championed in the African university. In truth, African universities should not seek to close their eyes to these forms of knowing; but they should be concerned if western models exclude local and indigenous forms of knowledge.

This chapter has attempted not only to provide a compelling critique of the status of knowledge production in contemporary universities in Africa; it has also made some fairly concrete suggestions about ways to promote the decolonisation of research, teaching and research training in the academy. That process will contribute to the transformation of good universities in Africa into good African universities.

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## 2. AFRICANISING INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

*What Is Possible and Plausible*

### INTRODUCTION

One central facet of the ideal of transformation in South African higher education institutions (HEIs), at least for many self-described adherents to it, is Africanisation. Africanisation, in part, involves admitting African and other black students into academic programmes and hiring black staff as academics and managers. However, I do not investigate such practices here since they have received more critical analysis, and are by and large less contested, than the other major aspects of Africanisation that I explore in this chapter. I am concerned here, not with which students and staff are included in HEIs, but with which norms are accepted. In this chapter, I expound and evaluate arguments for the view that HEIs have been, and still are, under a moral obligation to Africanise their institutional culture.

There is as yet no comprehensive discussion in the literature about whether, or how, to Africanise norms in higher education, and why this should be done. There is no thorough account of the different forms it could take, their competing rationales, and their strengths and weaknesses. Such a critical and philosophical analysis, with reference to a wide array of written works, is what I aim to provide in this chapter. I distinguish stronger and weaker versions of Africanisation with regard to institutional culture, and maintain that there are good reasons why a moderate version should have been adopted by South African HEIs, and should still be adopted.

I begin by describing what those who explicitly advocate Africanisation with regard to academic norms have meant by that term, focusing principally on writings by scholars based in South Africa, including Catherine Odora Hoppers, Malegapuru William Makgoba, Gessler Muxe Nkondo, Mogobe B. Ramose, Siphon Seepe and Lesiba Joseph Teffo. Next, I analytically distinguish and critically evaluate five fundamental rationales that these and other thinkers have proffered for such Africanisation. In catchwords, these defences of Africanisation appeal to: relativism, democracy, redress, civilisation and identity. I point out that, depending on which of the above rationales is accepted, the sort of Africanisation that might be appropriate for South Africa differs radically. For example, according to relativism, anything Western, or more generally non-local, is out of place in South Africa, whereas according to the logic of compensatory justice, Africanisation should proceed only

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until such time as reparation is effected, after which point it would no longer be justified.

I also provide a philosophical discussion of the five major rationales, critically investigating which ones are most plausible, and concluding that some arguments for a moderate sort of Africanisation merit serious consideration and, probably, acceptance. Specifically, considerations of redress, civilisation and identity, in combination, make a strong philosophical case for much more Africanisation of institutional culture than there has been in South Africa up to now, and they probably also have applications for related epistemological and pedagogical struggles elsewhere in the world, particularly in the Global South.<sup>1</sup> I conclude by summarising the findings and raising some of the practical implications of the most promising rationales for making academic norms substantially African, noting that the issue of how best to deal with *prima facie* impediments to Africanisation, such as academic freedom, merit more thorough discussion in another forum.

#### WHAT AFRICANISATION IS, OR RATHER COULD HAVE BEEN

In this section, I explain in some detail what I mean by ‘Africanisation’, as, much like its companion term ‘transformation’, it has been used in a variety of ways in South Africa. One major reason for exploring the sense of the word thoroughly is to obtain clarity about what precisely is at stake in debates about Africanising institutional culture. In the process I also dispatch objections to Africanisation that are based on an implausible understanding of what it involves.

##### *Two Misconstruals of the Term ‘Africanisation’*

There are many people who would immediately reject Africanisation of institutional culture as an ideal, not on grounds of liberalism, the usual justification given, but rather because it supposedly implies essentialism. For some, the use of such labels as ‘African’ and ‘sub-Saharan’ implies a fixed and distinct nature (see, for example, Parker, 2003; Horsthemke & Enslin, 2005). According to this perspective, when one calls something ‘African’, one is presuming that it is unique to, and exhaustive of, that part of the world, whereas not only will it invariably not be found everywhere in Africa, it will frequently also be found outside Africa. And beyond the descriptive limitations, proponents of this line of thinking usually have a normative concern, that in calling something ‘African’, one is cramping the ability of those who live in Africa to choose their own ways of life.

I have routinely encountered these concerns from social scientists in southern Africa, but I submit that my colleagues are the ones who are misusing language, not those who describe things as African. When English-speakers use geographical terms to characterise something, they usually do not mean to posit it as fixed and distinct. The combination of markets, science and constitutionalism is, throughout the world, routinely called ‘Western’, although one will find them in Japan and Australasia, and

will not find them in the Amazon jungle. Baseball is typically ‘American’, though also widely played in Cuba, and many Americans prefer to play and watch football, basketball or even ice hockey. Maple trees and syrup are ‘Canadian’, but you will find plenty in Vermont, and none, I presume, in the northernmost parts of Canada near the Arctic.

These and a myriad other examples suggest that geographical terms apply most aptly when they pick out a feature that is *salient* in the given region, that is common there in a way it tends not to be elsewhere. Hence to call something ‘African’ or ‘sub-Saharan’ implies neither that it is to be found only south of the Sahara desert, nor that it is everywhere present in that locale. These terms signify merely that something is particularly frequent or noticeable there, not necessarily that it is single or static (cf. Suttner, 2010, pp. 523–528). At least, this is the way I elect to use these terms in this essay.

Defending Africanisation does not commit me to looking for features that make such a transformation utterly distinct from Western, Chinese or any other cultural processes. Instead, it means pointing out features characteristic of indigenous black peoples living in Africa south of the Sahara, and of contemporary ways of life that are, or could be, informed by their worldviews and practices. Africanisation might not be appropriate or justified for a number of reasons, but not, I maintain, because it is essentially essentialist, even if a few of the self-described Africanisation adherents (such as Teffo, 2000) appear to be.

Another reason for rejecting Africanisation that can be dismissed for being grounded on a misconstrual of what it involves is the standpoint that Africanisation would require taking on *all* salient facets of sub-Saharan education, or culture more generally, which would undercut any plausible understanding of a university’s mission in a constitutional democracy. For example, much traditional African education was gendered, meaning that the content of what one could learn was determined by one’s sex (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2002, p. 19; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003, p. 432). Since a sexist approach to education has no place in contemporary South African society, Africanisation is to be rejected outright, so this sort of objection goes.<sup>2</sup> However, virtually no self-described proponents of Africanisation believe that it would require patently unjust or otherwise undesirable features of sub-Saharan ways of life to be taken on board. Instead, implicit in the discussion is, usually, the presumption that only the (particularly) attractive features of African norms should be adopted.

There are of course some Africanists who have romantic understandings of what pre-colonial life was like and who contend that anything undesirable is an importation from other cultures and so is not really African. The bad breath of ideology wafts from such people’s mouths. However, one need not buy into the ‘myth of merrie Africa’ in order to make *prima facie* sense of Africanisation. One may grant that there are both good and bad salient features of indigenous African ways of life, and maintain that what is meant by the term ‘Africanisation’ is a process of transforming universities so that more of the good features are exhibited.

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### *Africanising People v Africanising Place*

I noted above that when considering Africanisation here I am not fundamentally concerned with the racial and ethnic composition of students and staff at HEIs. As is well known, Africanisation and transformation more broadly have, over the past 20 years in South Africa, been largely reduced in practice to the admission, hiring and promotion of black people. One plausible explanation of why this reduction has occurred is government's drive for public accountability and the interest of university councils and managers in demonstrating their performance (Lange, 2013). It is easy to measure the percentage of Africans in a classroom or workplace, and hence to demand that quotas are filled, or to demonstrate that they have been. It is much more difficult to quantify, and hence publicise in sound bites, or tick off in a brief performance-review meeting, the Africanisation of institutional culture that I explore in this chapter. By Africanisation I mean only the latter consideration, regarding the way things could be done in an HEI, and not who does them.<sup>3</sup>

In spelling out what it would mean to Africanise a university's institutional culture, I distinguish in what follows between content, extent and implementation. I first indicate different functionings in a university that could be Africanised, then discuss the degree to which they could be Africanised, and finally the manner in which they could be. After distinguishing these three facets of Africanisation, I round out the section by noting stronger and weaker versions.

### *Content*

With respect to content, there are five central dimensions by which a university, which I take to be a representative HEI, could Africanise its functionings: curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance. To refer to all five elements at once, I use the phrase 'institutional culture'.<sup>4</sup>

With respect to the first central dimension—curriculum—are students being taught characteristically African perspectives and approaches as well as being exposed to texts written by Africans? Is a music department teaching indigenous forms of music? Is a philosophy department teaching the work of sub-Saharan thinkers? Is a sociology department studying African societies? Is a history department exploring unknowns about the past south of the Sahara?

One might suspect that such questions are appropriate only for the humanities and social sciences, but it is worth considering what Africanisation could realistically mean in the contexts of the hard sciences and mathematics (on this, see Seepe, 2000). One way of demonstrating an African approach to mathematics, for example, might be not to study it purely in the abstract and in an isolated classroom, but also in the context of, say, designing something that would benefit a village or township.<sup>5</sup>

Local readers will know that such pedagogical approaches have not been frequent in South Africa in the past 20 years. The well-known 'racism report',

commissioned by then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, and compiled by Crain Soudien and several other leading figures in higher education policy, briefly addresses the Africanisation of curricula and reveals that the progress made on this score has been bleak (Soudien et al., 2008, pp. 91–94, 117). In an overview of the report disseminated to the public, Soudien and his colleagues remark that “the transformation of what is taught and learnt in institutions constitutes one of the most difficult challenges this sector is facing” (Soudien et al., 2009). The report’s authors found, as did many other black scholars writing ten years earlier (see, for example, Jansen, 1998, pp. 109–111), that much instruction is decontextualised and not directly engaged with African perspectives.

Anecdotally, while it is clear to me that academic departments such as history, sociology and development studies routinely focus on sub-Saharan concerns, I doubt that many other disciplines do so in a systematic way. Certainly, in my field of philosophy, African philosophy continues to be largely eclipsed by the presentation of Anglo-American and European perspectives in most university departments. And, for all I can tell, this discipline is not unique in that respect. To what extent do lecturers in psychology seriously explore relational conceptions of the self, and holist apprehensions of the world, more prominent in Africa than in the West? How often do lecturers in political theory engage with sub-Saharan conceptions of democracy (see more about this, below)? What percentage of class time do lecturers in journalism devote to addressing the obligations that an *ubuntu* ethic might entail for reporters or a publishing organisation? Having been a part of South African academe for more than ten years, I submit that rough answers to such questions are clear, even if there are some clear exceptions.<sup>6</sup> Note that Africanisation need not imply that the African perspectives are presented as ‘correct’, or that they should be the only ones discussed—the main point is simply to engage with them instead of ignoring them.

Turning to the second dimension—research—the issue is, of course, to what extent African issues are being addressed and African theoretical perspectives are being studied, used and advanced. Questions paralleling those about the curriculum can be posed about research. One may reasonably surmise that, with respect to Africanisation in HEIs, scholarship has fared worse than teaching; after all, if instructors are generally not extending themselves to learn about and teach African approaches and issues, then they are surely doing even less when it comes to what they publish.

Over the past 20 years in South Africa, there have been many conferences devoted to issues of race, identity, justice and the like, as well as many centres and chairs established to address them, which Soudien overviews (2011, pp. 23–27). However, based on his familiarity with the research landscape in South African universities, he suggests that “South African contributions . . . are dominated by ideas of modernism and modernity. They have difficulty in working with knowledge forms and knowledge claims which fall outside the particular modernist imagination” (Soudien, 2011, p. 17; see also Suttner, 2010, pp. 525–526).

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I submit that even modernist approaches could have been much more systematically applied to African contexts in revealing ways. For instance, one finds no thorough attempt to ascertain empirically what kernels of truth there might be in traditional medicine. Scientists in South Africa have a terrific opportunity to sift through indigenous peoples' knowledge of herbs and plants in search of those that are demonstrably efficacious (a point made by Vilakazi, 1998, p. 73). Of course, some work is being done in this area by one or two universities, but not across the board in a rigorous way. Consider too what economists might learn from the fact that traditional healers do not typically charge patients unless the latter are happy with the service provided (Leonard, 2009).

The third possible dimension of Africanisation in an HEI such as a university is language—the languages that are spoken, written and used in its mediums of communication. The more students learn in an indigenous sub-Saharan language, and the more university affairs are conducted in such a language, the more African the university's institutional culture will be in one major respect. It is well known that the overwhelming majority of instruction at universities in South Africa is conducted in English, and to a lesser extent, Afrikaans. The Council on Higher Education reported that:

[o]f the 21 universities, 16 use English as the language of tuition. In the other five institutions, English-medium tuition is steadily and often rapidly increasing alongside, and perhaps at the expense of, Afrikaans-medium tuition ... Of the universities that returned the questionnaire on which the survey was based, hardly any can be said to be promoting the use of any African language as a Language of Tuition. (2001, p. 4)<sup>7</sup>

Since 2001, the use of English has increased even more, especially at the University of Johannesburg (formerly the Rand Afrikaans University). For some time the Universities of Pretoria and Stellenbosch 'held out' and continued to use much Afrikaans, but English looks set to spread its tentacles farther on those campuses in light of the 2015/2016 student protests about Afrikaans being exclusionary. And nothing notable has happened with regard to the use of African languages, save for the University of KwaZulu-Natal's newly-adopted policy requiring all undergraduates to have learned some Zulu by the time they graduate, and some very sporadic efforts at Rhodes University and the University of Limpopo (on which see Beukes, 2014).

The fourth important dimension of Africanising institutional culture concerns aesthetics, by which I mean, roughly, those issues designed to touch the senses in ways that are expected to please, to prompt reflection or to facilitate self-expression (and often all three). What kinds of music are played at university events? Which cultures inform the symbols the university displays in its advertising or the design of its academic gowns? Where have the rituals at a graduation ceremony come from? What kinds of food are served? What kinds of clothes are expected to be worn? What sort of entertainment is available in a university residence? In a notorious

newspaper op-ed, the vice-chancellor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal at the time, Malegapuru William Makgoba, discussed these facets in blunt terms:

It should ... become common sense that the white male soon learns to speak, write and spell in an African language; that he, like Johnny Clegg, learns to dance and sing like Ladysmith Black Mambazo. He should learn kwaito, dance like Lebo, dress like Madiba, enjoy eating 'smiley and walkies' and attend 'lekgotla' and socialise at our taverns. (2005)

If non-Africans participated in these ways of life in a university setting—or indeed if Africans themselves more often did—there would be greater Africanisation of institutional culture of a sort.

While one occasionally encounters African colours and shapes in a university's symbols, as well as indigenous songs or at least rhythms performed by university choirs, that is about all that readily comes to mind. The manner of dress at both formal and informal events, the types of food and drink largely sold in student centres and offered at events, the kinds of background music played at graduations and award ceremonies, and the architecture in which one is housed on campus, are little different from what I encountered at a variety of academic institutions in the United States.

The fifth facet of academic life that admits Africanisation is governance, or the way that decisions are made and enforced. Who decides how a given department, faculty or university as a whole is run? How are decisions made, and how are refusals to carry them out dealt with? Are there salient decision-making processes in the sub-Saharan tradition that are attractive and should inform university practice? What sort of boundaries does a university have with respect to its neighbourhood, and how are they secured?

Consider, for example, that African political philosophers have argued that pre-colonial sub-Saharan societies tended to make decisions consequent to some kind of consensus, either among all affected adults or among popularly appointed (male) elders, and that the search for unanimity is worth undertaking in contemporary, political settings (Wiredu, 1996, pp. 172–190; Ramose, 1999, pp. 135–152; Teffo, 2004). More familiar, because of the influence of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, is a characteristically sub-Saharan approach to conflict resolution, in which the aim is to reconcile offenders and victims (and their families), and not, in the first instance, to deter prospective offenders from misbehaving or to seek retribution in the form of an 'eye for an eye'.

Might an Africanised management be one that consults widely or at least with a group of elected senior academics or university representatives more generally, rather than decides unilaterally? Perhaps the idea of an Institutional Forum started out with such an aim, but the evidence is that it has not been realised (see Soudien et al., 2008, pp. 108–109). Could an Africanised Senate be one that seeks unanimous agreement, or at least some kind of supermajority on key issues? Should a university's approach to student infraction typically involve a kind of sub-Saharan restorative

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justice, as opposed to penalties such as deregistration or expulsion? Unlike other facets of Africanising institutional culture, I am not aware of the extent to which any university in South Africa has tried out these approaches or any others grounded on salient African norms.

As is often remarked, the phrase ‘institutional culture’ is vague. I submit that, in light of the above discussion, it can be well understood as picking out the five elements of curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance. A university’s institutional culture becomes more Africanised, the more these five elements are imbued with features salient in sub-Saharan traditions.

#### *Extent*

So far I have spelled out Africanising institutional culture as it concerns the content of what is or could be done at a university. Another issue is how much Africanisation should take place. According to some radical views, South Africa’s universities (or perhaps a demographically representative cohort of them) ought to be fully Africanised. Very few friends of Africanisation, even the most vocal of them, favour that sort of approach.<sup>8</sup> Usually the suggestion is that Africanisation should proceed along with other cultural approaches in a dialogue of mutual enrichment. However, there remains the issue of whether African norms should be the dominant ones, and, if so, to what extent they should dominate.

#### *Implementation*

More controversial is the issue of how the Africanisation of institutional culture ought to be promoted. One can distinguish between, on the one hand, the normative force that university leaders and members generally ascribe to Africanisation, and, on the other, the coercive force that might back it up.

In terms of normative force, managers, staff and students might think of Africanisation as: *permissible*—something that *may* morally be done but that need not be; *praiseworthy*—something that *should* morally be done and that, while not wrong not to do, would be ideal to do; or *required*—something that *must* morally be done and that would be wrong not to do. Most self-described adherents of Africanisation favour the spread of the last two approaches. Indeed, more than a few favour the view that Africanisation is an ethical necessity and would be delighted to see universities adopt the same view.

Now, just because something is a moral requirement (or is believed to be), it does not necessarily mean it should be an enforceable requirement. That is, even if one supposes, for the sake of argument at this point, that academics and administrative staff have an ethical obligation to Africanise institutional culture, further argument would be needed to demonstrate that they should be forced to live up to that obligation. It might be, after all, that academics and other staff have a ‘right to do wrong’, as it is known in Anglo-American political philosophy. Even if staff, for instance, would

be wrong not to Africanise voluntarily, it could be that senior managers would *also* be wrong, and perhaps even wrong to a greater degree, to *make* them Africanise by withdrawing privileges, issuing threats and imposing penalties in response to failure to Africanise.

Hence, a separate issue with regard to the implementation of Africanisation is identifying which mechanisms should be used to foster it. It is useful to distinguish between policies that would merely *permit* Africanisation, that is, would not interfere with its realisation by members of a university; those that would *encourage* it, say, by seeking to come to an agreement about its promotion or by offering incentives; and those that would *require* it on pain of some kind of sanction. Addressing this issue raises tricky questions about institutional autonomy and academic freedom, which I discuss briefly in the conclusion of this chapter.

#### *Strong, Moderate and Weak Versions of Africanisation*

To bring the threads of this section together, it is useful to think of the Africanisation of institutional culture along a spectrum of possible manifestations. At one extreme would be a strong or robust form according to which academic norms at South African HEIs should be *only* African and in *all* the dimensions of curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance, they should be considered morally required, and ministers and managers should back them up with force. The prospect of this sort of Africanisation tends to terrify white folks (especially ‘liberals’).

At the other extreme would be a weak form of Africanisation according to which it would be permitted, but not specifically encouraged, by the powers that be. Africanisation with regard to curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance would be left to the haphazard and voluntary inclinations of particular individuals, managers and institutions. This largely describes South African practice up until the recent student protests, and it has gravely disappointed many black folks (and even liberals!).

In between these two poles would be a moderate form of Africanisation. Here, academic and administrative staff would deem it morally ideal or required to Africanise on their own initiative, with line managers facilitating negotiations about, and providing praise, incentives and inspiration for, innovative and promising realisations of Africanisation on their part. Universities would reflect carefully and systematically on how they might Africanise along all the dimensions of curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance, while minimising damage to other important values, including the need to pay attention to cultural norms springing from, say, Europe and Asia.

This moderate form has some intuitive appeal to me and I presume to most readers. However, my major aim in this chapter is to critically explore what *good arguments* there are for Africanising institutional culture and for what sort of Africanisation to implement. I conclude that the most promising rationales are those that support

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a moderate form of Africanisation, one that would nonetheless mean substantial change for a large majority of South African HEIs.

#### EXPLORING THE RATIONALES FOR AFRICANISATION

Based on my familiarity with (largely) South African discussions of Africanisation in higher education, I distinguish five logically distinct reasons that have been proposed for it and that are relevant to a discussion of institutional culture. Recall from the introduction that I capture them under the following headings: relativism, democracy, redress, civilisation and identity. My aim in this section is to specify these different rationales, bring out their implications, and explore their plausibility or lack thereof. The discussion of the five rationales progresses in a developmental order, from what I consider to be the least promising to the most promising.

##### *Relativism*

Those who defend Africanisation on the grounds that it is a source of ‘valid knowledges’, or use similar phrasings, often veer into relativist conceptions of truth and justification according to which a proposition is true or a policy is justified if and only if it is socially accepted. Relativism, at the core, is the view that an approach is valid if it is believed to be by a given society, and since beliefs and practices differ from society to society, there is nothing, at least not that is interesting or controversial, that is universally valid. Instead, knowledge, and culture generally, are appropriate relative to the context in which they originate and continue to be accepted, making African claims true in African societies, so the argument goes. Such a position is suggested by the various authors quoted below:

People need to accept that there is no one unique truth which is fixed and found, but rather a diversity of valid, and even conflicting, versions of a world in the making. (Venter, 1997, p. 62)

Africanisation ... holds that different foundations exist for the construction of pyramids of knowledge. It holds further that communication is possible between the various pyramids. It disclaims the view that any pyramid of knowledge is by its very nature eminently superior to all the others. (Ramose, 1998, p. vi)

(T)he assumptions which constructed Western thought, literature and traditions are not universal but are derived from special and discreet Western experiences prescribed by special historical levels of economic and industrial development. Implicit in this perspective is that standards are not universal but contextual. (Lebakeng et al., 2006, p. 74)

In addition, the widely used phrase ‘indigenous *knowledge systems*’ (my emphasis) seems to imply that what is local is always already true and justified, as does being

suspicious about “hierarchies of knowledge” (e.g. Odora Hoppers, 2001, p. 81) and positing “equally legitimate locations of human imagination” (Odora Hoppers, 2000, p. 9).<sup>9</sup>

Firstly, as is widely appreciated by epistemologists and other philosophers but not yet sufficiently recognised by others, most of those who advance relativist conceptions of knowledge contradict themselves in doing so. The authors quoted above advance controversial views that they know their readers might not already accept. They are therefore supposing that their thesis that there are equally valid competing perspectives is not *itself* merely *relatively* true, and is instead a claim that is universally or objectively true, regardless of whether a particular interlocutor or community recognises it or not.<sup>10</sup> In stating that there is a “diversity of valid, and even conflicting, versions of a world in the making” as if this were itself a “fixed and found truth”, are the authors not undermining their own position? Is it not to argue from an “eminently superior” standpoint when disclaiming “the view that any pyramid of knowledge is by its very nature eminently superior to all the others”? Is it not to appeal to a universal standard when making the claim that “standards are not universal but contextual”? If the answers to these questions are ‘yes’, as they implicitly are, then the content of the doctrine of relativism (or whatever doctrine is being expressed) is implied to be false in the very process of advancing it. For most epistemologists, this sort of contradiction or self-refutation is the kiss of death.<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, even if one were willing to bite the bullet and maintain that relativist claims about knowledge can be justified merely relativistically, there would be the additional serious problem of specifying the relevant community’s beliefs relative to which propositions are true. As Africanists themselves repeatedly point out, a large majority in the academic community in South Africa does not hold Africanist perspectives. The logic of relativism therefore entails that any proposition in favour of Africanisation is false in relation to that community!

Finally, suppose for the sake of argument that Afro-relativists were able to find a way to show that the academic community is not the relevant one that determines which beliefs are true, and that it is instead the broader society that counts. Even so, such a relativist approach to knowledge would give majorities a ‘dictatorship’ about what counts as legitimate knowledge or appropriate culture more generally. Relativism logically implies that *minorities are necessarily incorrect* in a given context. So, even if from a global point of view there were no way to choose between Western and African epistemologies and cultures, when in an African context, the Western or otherwise non-local would have to be considered false or something to be excluded from a university’s institutional culture. This direct implication of relativism is not often appreciated by those who advance it, and does not easily square with routine judgements—by most Africanists themselves—that both Western and African perspectives should be taught in South African institutions. If one believes that it is possible for majorities to be mistaken, that is, if one welcomes fallibilism about knowledge claims, then one must reject relativism to avoid incoherence.

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These three objections lead me to conclude that some other basis for Africanising institutional culture should be sought. Below I argue that there *are* some epistemic considerations that provide good reasons to Africanise a typical South African university. However, those factors involve neither the claim that contextuality determines validity, nor that one can always already know that propositions and practices arising out of a sub-Saharan context are true, justified or valid to a degree equal to those of any other context, nor that non-African perspectives should be left to non-Africans alone.

### *Democracy*

Whereas a relativist approach to culture is roughly the view that what a majority believes about it makes it true and hence determines what is to be promoted, a democratic approach is, in contrast, the view that the culture to be promoted is what a majority prefers. Even if majorities do not construct validity as the relativist maintains, they could still be entitled to determine which objective and universal truths about what exists and how to act are to be transmitted and sought out. Along these lines, one finds the following suggestion:

The largest experience in South Africa is the African experience, i.e., the experience of the African people, who form the overwhelming majority of the population of the society. Therefore, it is right and proper that this African experience should be the source of ideas and concepts. (Vilakazi, 1998, p. 79)<sup>12</sup>

The appeal to democratic values in support of Africanising South African universities has not been systematically spelled out, so far as I can tell from the literature. On the one hand, advocates of this rationale could have certain formal, representative procedures in mind. Perhaps they would say that since a majority of the population has voted for the African National Congress in presidential elections, and since the president has chosen a minister of higher education who prefers Africanisation, Africanisation is justified. On the other hand, they might have a more informal, direct sense of how the majority should determine university norms. Maybe what a majority of South Africans want (or would say they want if asked) with respect to academic institutions is what should determine their nature, whatever the views of those whom they have elected. Either way, collective self-governance arguably demands infusing South African universities with African norms.

Upon reflection, this argument is a poor justification for Africanisation, in the sense of failing to give enough support to what Africanists themselves typically want when it comes to institutional culture.<sup>13</sup> Consider that an appeal to democratic will support Africanisation only so long as the majority's preferences (or those of whom they have elected) favour Africanisation. Majorities, however, can change their minds. It is not obvious that most of those in South Africa do in fact favour

Africanisation, or would if they had to choose between it, on the one hand, and socio-economic development and jobs for their children, on the other. From what I can tell, the poor and African majority sees tertiary education above all as a ticket to freedom from poverty, and would be delighted if their children learned English well enough to participate in the global economy and ‘bring home the bacon’.

Of course, many proponents of Africanisation maintain that development can only truly take place in conjunction with mining sub-Saharan perspectives. They often point to the fact that what has made, say, Anglo-American universities strong is that they have drawn on the cultures in their territories. Perhaps something similar is true of South African universities—maybe they will foster socio-economic improvement only when their institutional cultures are informed by African cultures.

But maybe not. It might be that the sort of knowledge produced by Western universities is a function of a certain individualist culture exhibiting a distinct kind of rationalism, viz., one that is competitive, unconventional and literate, and that prizes instrumental efficiency and analytic experimentation, which have not been nearly as present in sub-Saharan settings.<sup>14</sup>

In any event, the deep point is that an appeal to democratic will holds Africanisation hostage to the contingencies of what majorities want or choose. Suppose that a majority of South Africans do not prefer Africanisation. Imagine, say, that colonisation has cut so deep that all they want is Anglo-Americanisation *en route* to economic growth. Surely, Africanists would be inclined to think that the majority *should change their minds*. That judgement implicitly shows (again, as it did in the context of relativism, above) that Africanists are ultimately committed to there being an objective reason in favour of Africanisation, one that majorities should come to appreciate, even if they do not already.

The next three rationales for Africanisation that I explore below are more objective in this respect. Instead of appealing to what majorities believe or prefer in trying to ground Africanisation, the following arguments invoke considerations that majorities ought to take into account, if they do not as yet.

### *Redress*

One influential argument for Africanisation appeals to ideals of liberation, emancipation, independence and freedom. The idea is that Africanisation is a proper response, not so much to contemporary South African society’s beliefs or preferences, but rather to its history of apartheid, colonialism and related forms of oppression of Africans and black peoples generally. Such oppression was effected not only materially, in terms of, say, the dispossession of land, and politically, with respect to lack of opportunities to vote, hold office and otherwise participate in governance, but also culturally. “The colonial and apartheid orders were not simply political and military conquests and systems of governance, but knowledge projects” (Suttner, 2010, pp. 515–516). That is, characteristic African worldviews and ways of life were denigrated and excluded from consideration in many South African universities as

part of a process of “spiritual genocide” (Vilakazi, 1998, p. 76), “cultural violence” (Odora Hoppers, 2000, p. 5), “symbolic castration” (Odora Hoppers, 2001, p. 74) and “epistemicide” (Ramose, 2004, p. 156; Lebakeng et al., 2006, p. 70).<sup>15</sup>

The redress rationale for Africanisation is that promoting it in the context of a university’s institutional culture is necessary to counteract such epistemic injustice. Africanisation could serve this function in two distinct ways. First, Africanisation might compensate for harm that has already been done. It could serve as a reparative measure, correcting for epistemological and related oppression done in the twentieth century. Second, it might serve as a defensive measure, analogous to the way an innocent person would fight back against an aggressor. Supposing that teachers and researchers in South African HEIs are continuing explicitly to bad mouth African cultures, or, more often, conversationally imply that African cultures are inherently inferior, Africanisation would be a way of protecting Africans from racism, arrogance and related harms.

It is worth considering whether Africanisation in South African universities would truly serve the function of paying back those wronged during, or prior to, the apartheid era. On the face of it, only descendants of those wronged would receive the recognition of African perspectives. In addition, it would be a relatively small handful of descendants receiving something, specifically those lucky few able to attend an Africanised university. Some other form of epistemic compensation, effected outside of the academy and its expensive books and journals, and directed toward the African public much more generally, appears more appropriate when it comes to compensating those who were directly wronged by, say, not having been allowed to attend a decent university during apartheid.

Suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that the university is at least one apt setting in which to adopt and explore sub-Saharan ways of life for the purposes of compensation for historical epistemic injustice. Or suppose that a concern to prevent racism in the present, as opposed to compensate those wrongfully harmed in the past, is the relevant basis for Africanisation in South African HEIs. Even so, the logic of the redress argument cannot support the kind of Africanisation of institutional culture that most Africanists believe is appropriate.

Conceiving of Africanisation strictly in defensive and restitutive terms means that it would no longer be justified if and when there were no longer such needs. Suppose that Africanisation proceeded for two or three decades, or however long it would take to effect compensation, and imagine that after that time there were also no longer any systematic attacks of the sort requiring a prophylactic. Then, by the rationale under discussion here, Africanisation would stop being justified. However, most adherents to Africanisation believe that it should be continued indefinitely, or at least for a much longer time than would likely be needed to end imperial dispositions relating to South African academics and to make up for damage done. Hence, an additional rationale for Africanisation that would support longer-term approaches is needed, and is what the last two arguments under discussion promise to provide.

*Civilisation*

A fourth major argument for Africanising the institutional cultures of South African universities appeals to what is often associated with talk of an ‘African renaissance’. The basic idea is that sub-Saharan ways of life should be mined with the aim of revitalising African civilisation, thereby making a contribution to humanity’s progress.

What do indigenous peoples know about the uses of certain plants and other aspects of the environment? What understandings about the workings of nature do they have that are true and justified? How do they characteristically perceive reality, and how might such perceptions inform more theoretical pursuits? What useful skills do they have to build upon and share? What kinds of local painting, sculpture, dance, music, literature and the like would those in other parts of the world appreciate, and what new styles and genres might grow from sub-Saharan soil? What values have traditional Africans tended to live by or extol that, upon reflection, are insufficiently acknowledged elsewhere? What myths, stories and proverbs might be revealing of the human condition or exhibit wisdom and so merit spreading on this continent and others? In short, “Africanisation seeks to provide a basis for originality and uniqueness that can contribute meaningfully to global knowledge and civilisation” (Makgoba, 1998, p. 48).<sup>16</sup>

Unlike a relativist approach to culture, this argument for Africanisation does not *a priori* suppose that Africans have equal amounts of knowledge to share when it comes to any given domain such as, say, mathematics or the workings of nature at a small-scale level. Instead, the current rationale urges those in universities to work to establish empirically what, if anything, sub-Saharan cultures have in the domains of the good (values), the true (enquiry) and the beautiful (the arts) that would be of interest to those currently living south of the Sahara and to those living beyond it. In principle, such a search *could* come up empty handed in one or more particular areas.

That might sound pessimistic, but it is a direct implication of the claim commonly made by Africanists themselves that those in the South African academic community, including the Africans among them, lack knowledge about African perspectives! After all, if we are ignorant of them, then we are in no position to pronounce on their merit or lack thereof. That is something to investigate over time.

However, since it is reasonable to suppose that any long-standing and widespread tradition has a substantial amount of insight and interesting expression, it is well worth an academic’s time and other resources to explore the various African traditions. That is the compelling argument for multiculturalism, and academics in South Africa have strong reason to mine sub-Saharan intellectual traditions in particular, since they have the most ease of access to them, and since, in comparison to many other civilisations, they are grossly under-explored.

Note how the logic of this argument differs from that of the argument from redress. Even if academics were no longer actively suppressing African perspectives, and even

if compensation for past suppression had been completely effected, the civilisation rationale could continue to justify Africanisation as a way to enrich local culture and to develop Africa's opportunity to contribute to the civilising process of the human species. To use philosophical jargon, whereas the redress argument is 'non-ideal', contending that Africanisation is justified merely in response to wrongdoing, the civilisation rationale is 'ideal', maintaining that even in the (hypothetical) absence of any wrongdoing, Africanisation would still be justified as a way to promote something of value. In the latter context, one often encounters mention of Africa having a gift that it has yet to present to the world, a view expressed by Steve Biko (1971, p. 51).

The civilisation argument is strong, and, in my view, does provide some good reasons to Africanise. However, it also has limitations with regard to scope, by which I mean that it fails, on its own, to justify the range of Africanisation that is typically sought. Specifically, the argument provides strong reasons for academics to conduct research into sub-Saharan perspectives, to disseminate their findings and to teach them in the classroom. It naturally explains why curricula content and research agendas should be substantially Africanised. However, it is weak when it comes to the remaining three potential dimensions of Africanising institutional culture, that is, language, governance and aesthetics.

First, in terms of language, while it is of course true that coming to grips with a particular African culture would be best facilitated by an intimate knowledge of its language, it does not follow that this language would need to be spoken on campus from day to day. I accept that teaching in an African language might well help to convey subtleties and more generally enrich the subject matter, but that presumes that South African students themselves have an intimate understanding of African languages, which is often not the case. Furthermore, to best understand Africa, it is not necessarily true that any one African language would include all of the most useful mental tools. It could be that routinely appealing to the words, and the concepts associated with them, that are found in English could (sometimes? usually?) be an ideal way to come to grips with a given sub-Saharan object. Consider, for example, scientific analysis of a plant's medicinal properties that have long been appreciated by herbal healers, or an analytic treatment of a moral principle associated with an indigenous proverb.<sup>17</sup> Even if using an African language were ideal, on its own, for teaching and research, there would still, on grounds of civilisation, apparently be little reason, say, to greet people in the vernacular or to strive for the point at which one could realistically conduct a committee meeting in an indigenous language.

Second, when it comes to governance, the present considerations do not appear to recommend Africanisation. Insofar as characteristically sub-Saharan modes of decision-making and responding to infraction could be approached by academics *on grounds of enhancing and disseminating African civilisation*, they would merely be objects of intellectual engagement, not ones of immediate practice. One might suggest that a university could be an experimental site where African approaches are

tested. Perhaps. But they could just as well be tested in other environments, where academics might be able to study the results much more objectively.

Third, with respect to aesthetics, there appears to be little reason for a university to take on African artistic themes if the “principle to be adopted is this: the unique African pattern of development into modernity should base itself, first and foremost, on the utilization of the resources provided by her civilization” (Vilakazi, 1998, p. 71). Would it not be puffery to suggest that when a university adopts, say, a coat of arms inspired by local indigenous themes (abjuring any Latin phrases) it is thereby “developing into modernity” or showing that Africa can “make a meaningful contribution to universal human progress” (Ramose, 1998, p. iv)? Some readers would be willing to say that it in fact would be doing so, even if in a small way. However, below I provide what I think is a more compelling reason for a South African university to feature African food, music, symbols, art and the like, one that is not so grand as helping to develop and spread African civilisation.

### *Identity*

The last of the five major rationales for Africanisation that one finds in the literature, identity, can be summed up by saying that Africanisation is necessary in order to fulfil “the right to be an African”, in Mogobe Ramose’s pithy phrase (1998, p. vii).<sup>18</sup> This might seem to imply essentialism about what counts as ‘African’, but it need not. As per above, what is meant by ‘African’ and cognate terms is reasonably understood in terms of properties that are recurrently (not exhaustively, not exclusively) encountered south of the Sahara desert.

The ability to take on and express an African identity includes three central elements. First, it involves self-understanding on the part of those reared in sub-Saharan cultures and environments. This means not merely correcting incorrect beliefs about Africa, but also imparting true judgments that are not yet held because of a lack of information. Understanding one’s self means obtaining a firm grasp of one’s society, which has shaped, and will continue to shape, the individual. One must therefore become familiar with the values, norms, cultures and institutions of the community in which one lives. In addition, understanding one’s society means knowing how it arose, because knowing who one is means knowing how one arrived at the present and what possibilities there are for the future.

These considerations, in themselves, provide good reasons to Africanise the curriculum, and to do so in light of up to date and accurate research. In one of the first major books to appear on Africanising the university, Joseph Ki-Zerbo remarks that “Africanization of the curriculum is no more than conformity with the injunction, ‘know thyself’” (1973, p. 26). This consideration would apply not merely to those students fortunate enough to attend classes, but also, ideally, to people more generally, supposing academics took the time to disseminate their findings in ways accessible to the public.

There is some overlap here with the previous, civilisational argument, but there are also important differences. The emphasis on cultivating identity is inward, directed toward Africans themselves, whereas a key part of the argument from civilisation involves an outward orientation of contributing to the world's order of higher achievements. In addition, a prescription for higher education institutions to enable people to become Africans does not involve merely the discovery and transmission of knowledge. Ki-Zerbo points out that Africanisation of the curriculum would serve a function beyond the cognitive one, namely, it would assist with the emotional side of developing an African identity. He states that it is "the first pre-requisite for overcoming complexes and attaining self-development" (1973, p. 26). I presume that by 'complexes' Ki-Zerbo means negative emotions such as shame and self-hatred for being an African, as well as an absence of positive emotions such as pride and self-esteem with respect to that identity. To truly exhibit an African identity requires feeling good, at least about what is good about oneself, and hence about one's society, history and future, as well as feeling confident to move forward to achieve one's goals.

There is probably a third core element of displaying an African identity in addition to the cognitive and the emotive elements, namely, the active. To be an African means not just exhibiting certain states of mind, but also making certain decisions consequent to them. In this context, one sometimes finds the word 'authentic' invoked (for example, by Teffo, 2000), with the suggestion that for Africans to truly be themselves they need to make choices based on characteristically sub-Saharan values and norms, and with an accurate awareness of local history and society. In the absence of such choices, the personality lacks integrity or wholeness, and is instead incoherent and fragmented. Values and norms must be acted upon in order for one to become a real (African) person.

If South African universities had a duty to enable staff and students to choose an African identity, then a much larger scope of Africanisation could be defended relative to what the previous two arguments were able to underwrite. Recall that the redress argument entails that no further Africanisation would be called for after the end of racism and the achievement of compensation. However, it is plausible to suggest that public institutions such as universities in South Africa would continue to have strong reasons to enable people to identify as African, so long as they continue to be set in an African environment. In addition, remember that the civilisation argument cannot easily justify the Africanisation of language, aesthetics and governance at a university. However, considerations of identity easily do so; the more characteristically African ways of life a university adopts, the more opportunity there will be for students and staff to exhibit an African identity.

Notice that the present argument is 'ideal' in the sense that it does not involve the claim that Africanisation is apt merely in response to wrongdoing. Instead, the heart of the claim is that, given a largely African context, public institutions have a substantial obligation to enable people to identify as African.

However, there are of course a variety of elements that are not African in the South African context. It is not only Africans who have a claim on South African universities to help them realise themselves; those from other cultural backgrounds living here do too (cf. Suttner, 2010, p. 518). And so while it would make sense for South African institutions to Africanise, the logic of the argument in this essay does not prescribe that they should do only that. They should also assist people to become Afrikaners, people of Indian descent, or people of mixed heritage, supposing they should enable people to develop an African identity.

#### CONCLUSION: HOW TO AFRICANISE

In this section I sum up what has been established and make some brief suggestions about how to move forward. In the expository section above, I distinguished five dimensions through which Africanisation of institutional culture could take place, namely, curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance. I also pointed out that a South African HEI such as a public university could Africanise exclusively or do so alongside other enculturation policies. And I further noted that the moral force ascribed to Africanisation could range from permissible to praiseworthy or required, and that, with respect to the use of coercion, managers could permit, encourage or mandate it. What has the evaluative section shown with regard to these different possible forms of Africanisation?

Recall that I found the arguments based on relativism and democracy to be weak; majorities do not have deep epistemic or moral authority, at least when it comes to the knowledge that a university ought to seek out and the culture more generally that it ought to adopt. I contended that the arguments appealing to redress, civilisation and identity are much more convincing. It is plausible that the proper functions of a publicly-funded university include: preventing racism and helping to make up for 'epistemicide', mining (South) African cultural heritage with an eye to revitalising African civilisation, and providing the conditions that would enable people living in South Africa to adopt an African identity. Even if one doubts that these are ends that would justify the creation of a university in the first place, they are at least 'attendant' final ends that a university should adopt upon having been created for other good reasons (cf. Metz, 2009b, p. 181).

Supposing these are indeed proper aims for a South African HEI, it follows that there is strong reason for Africanisation to proceed along all five dimensions of institutional culture: curriculum, research, language, aesthetics and governance. Of course, to say that there is strong reason to Africanise does not imply that it is the only reason, or even that it is the strongest reason; further argument would be needed to establish something like that. However, at this stage, it is reasonable to conclude that a university in South Africa ought to seek to Africanise as much as it can, while paying due regard to other important and competing values such as, say, an understanding of the physical world and human nature.

With regard to the extent to which enculturation ought to be African, the answer is clearly that it should not be only African. The arguments in favour of Africanisation do not justify such a strong form of it, at least in light of the current diversity of South African society. The redress and civilisation arguments, however, do demand that, at least for a number of decades, Africanisation should receive the lion's share of attention.

Finally, with regard to implementation, one could reasonably conclude that Africanisation of institutional culture is a moral requirement, at least given the redress argument and probably the identity argument as well. I find it more difficult to state that universities are *morally required* to develop African civilisation, although I naturally believe that it would be desirable for them to do so.

Now, if Africanisation is indeed a moral requirement, may deans, vice-chancellors and government ministers require it of those below them? That difficult question is left unanswered by the analysis in this chapter. To conclude, as I have, that academics and administrators ought to Africanise does not settle the issue of whether they should be forced to do so, if they do not do so of their own accord. Africanists often suggest that the reasons non-Africans will not Africanise is that they are racist and arrogant, but that is not the most common reason in my experience of white colleagues in South Africa. Insecurity and fear are more salient. In any event, the difficult question about the extent to which academic freedom and institutional autonomy are consistent with Africanisation,<sup>19</sup> and about how to make trade-offs where they are not,<sup>20</sup> must wait for another occasion.<sup>21</sup>

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For a discussion of how higher education should avoid, and respond to, oppression of aboriginal peoples in New Zealand and the Americas, see, for example, Andreotti, Ahenakew & Cooper (2011) and de Oliveira Andreotti (2012). In this chapter, I focus strictly on issues of Africanisation, paying close attention to what self-described 'Africanists' say about it. This approach is required in order to give the concept of Africanisation its due, particularly given how large the literature on it is and how distinct the experiences and perspectives of sub-Saharaners are likely to be.
- <sup>2</sup> For similar objections, but different sorts of responses to them, see Makgoba (1998, p. 51) and Seepe (1998, pp. 63–64).
- <sup>3</sup> Hence, by the term 'Africanisation' I mean precisely the opposite of what Prah (2004) means. Of course, I recognise that if some kind of Africanisation of norms were appropriate, then promoting it would probably require the substantial presence of African people. However, it also (almost) goes without saying that merely hiring African people would be unlikely to ensure Africanisation with regard to norms. Both points are by now banalities in Africanist analyses of higher education.
- <sup>4</sup> For a thoughtful sociological analysis of the way the phrase 'institutional culture' is used in South Africa, see Higgins (2007).
- <sup>5</sup> I lack the space to defend the 'Africanness' of such an approach and refer the reader to Adeyinka & Ndwapi (2002) and Adeyemi & Adeyinka (2003), who discuss the salient communal and utilitarian dimensions of traditional sub-Saharan education.
- <sup>6</sup> Which is not to say that systematic empirical enquiry into what is being taught, and how it is being taught, would not be worthwhile.
- <sup>7</sup> See also Ministry of Education (2002, p. 7).
- <sup>8</sup> See Lebakeng et al. (2006, p. 77) who *do* advocate jettisoning Western perspectives, and Murove & Mazibuko who compare Eurocentric standpoints to HIV, a virus that must be eradicated (2008,

- pp. 104–105), and to a ghost that must be exorcised (2008, p. 108). Cf. van Wyk & Higgs (2004, p. 201).
- <sup>9</sup> For additional apparent flirtations with relativism, see Higgs (2006); Nabudere (2006, p. 20) and Murove & Mazibuko (2008, p. 110).
- <sup>10</sup> In the South African context, this inconsistency has been noted by Horsthemke (2004, p. 584) and Horsthemke & Enslin (2008, pp. 214–215).
- <sup>11</sup> For a thoughtful intellectual from South Africa willing to tolerate this sort of contradiction, see Cilliers (2005). Note, by the way, that if the answers to the above questions are ‘no’, then there is no point in having published these works and no reason for someone who does not already accept their views to do so, for they are, *ex hypothesi*, true merely relative to a given, local context. Hence, another sort of contradiction would be involved in having published them.
- <sup>12</sup> For closely related views, see Makgoba (1998, pp. 46, 51; 2005); Seepe (1998, pp. 64, 65, 68); Dowling & Seepe (2003, pp. 44–45); Makgoba & Seepe (2004, pp. 30, 41); and Prah (2004, p. 103).
- <sup>13</sup> For additional criticisms of an appeal to majority will to ground knowledge production, see Metz (2009a, pp. 523, 528, 529–533).
- <sup>14</sup> See sociological discussion of ‘rationalisation’ in the influential work of Max Weber and the ‘uncoupling of the system from the lifeworld’ in that of Jürgen Habermas.
- <sup>15</sup> See also Makgoba (1998, pp. 46–47, 51–52, 58); Nkondo (1998, pp. 33–34); Seepe (1998, p. 64); Vilakazi (1998, p. 76); Goduka (2000, p. 80); Odora Hoppers (2000); Teffo (2000, p. 106); and Lebakeng (2004).
- <sup>16</sup> See also Ramose (1998, p. iv); Vilakazi (1998, pp. 69–80); Goduka (2000, p. 80); Odora Hoppers (2000, pp. 6–7); and Teffo (2000).
- <sup>17</sup> To be a bit cheeky, I note that Africanists have invariably published in English. Is that partly because they have found English to be particularly useful when discussing the case for Africanisation?
- <sup>18</sup> For similar considerations, see Makgoba (1998, pp. 49, 52); Vilakazi (1998, pp. 85–87); Goduka (2000, p. 80); Odora Hoppers (2000, p. 7); Seepe (2000, p. 134); Teffo (2000); and Makgoba & Seepe (2004, pp. 23–27).
- <sup>19</sup> See Metz (2011, pp. 50–55) for some prima facie reasons to be hopeful about their compatibility.
- <sup>20</sup> For those who clearly favour substantially sacrificing other, ‘liberal’ values for the sake of Africanisation, see Murove & Mazibuko (2008).
- <sup>21</sup> An earlier version of this chapter appeared in S. Matthews & P. Tabensky (Eds.). 2015. *Being at home: Race, institutional culture and transformation at South African higher education institutions* (pp. 242–272). Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press. It is reprinted here with the kind permission of UKZN Press.

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### 3. PAN-AFRICAN CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

*A Reflection*

#### INTRODUCTION

How might we explore the possibility of incorporating the concept and politics of *Pax Africana* into the curriculum of African higher education systems? How can African political institutions and people connect coherently among themselves, and between them and the African diaspora, within the framework of a realist pan-African epistemology? What can we learn from pan-Africanism in efforts towards redefining knowledge and new education systems in Africa? These questions provide an intellectual guide for us to focus on the complex topic of a pan-African curriculum in higher education.

My interrelated objectives in this chapter are: (1) to discuss briefly the typologies of higher education in Africa within the framework of a world system; (2) to identify and define pan-Africanist objectives through their historical, cultural and political interpretations; (3) to discuss the values of pan-Africanism applied to a university system; and finally (4) to make specific recommendations about how to go about establishing the required dialogue between pan-Africanist institutions and the university system, in order to produce and promote a genuine notion of *Pax Africana* at the continental level as the foundation of African development.

Over the past 30 to 40 years, Afro-pessimism has shaped the ways many scholars perceive and analyse African conditions, policies and changes. Africa herself has been viewed as ontologically weak or morally bankrupt by some, despite economic growth in selected countries in the past 10 years. Such opinions imply that it will take massive efforts and heavy international interventions for any positive things to occur. That is not the intellectual position of this author.

This chapter about the pan-African project is essentially reflective and interpretative. However, our arguments are based on historical, cultural and political foundations. We argue that for higher education in Africa, especially the university system, to sustain its legitimacy (trust, support, and acceptance) and its curriculum, and continue to promote its transformative mission within the existing world system, it must be socially and economically relevant; politically progressive; philosophically

open, creative and inclusive; and culturally unifying. The relevance of these claims is demonstrated conceptually and theoretically throughout this essay.

Within the core values of the university, the processes of knowledge production and knowledge distribution, despite their perceived specific intrinsic values, do not function in a *tabula rasa* framework (emptiness). People and their social interests, organisations, and attitudes shape and produce the curriculum. The outcomes of these processes are not ideologically neutral, despite claims of scientific objectivity related to the learning process. Those who control these processes determine and control what is being learnt.

Pan-Africanism should pave the way towards building genuine political dialogue which is needed to advance and establish *Pax Africana*. I claim that the philosophy of pan-Africanism should produce wisdom with which to build sustainable social, political and economic institutions; and it can also be used as a resource (in terms of culture, ideology and history) with which to create political institutions.

We cannot adequately examine the question of *curriculum* in African higher education from a pan-African perspective without relating it to the nature of the African nation-state. The structures of the African nation-state, such as its rigid sovereignty principle, the international political economy's structures with existing divisions of labour, weak nationalistic consciousness, and opportunistic power struggles among local and national African elites, all contribute to weakening the discourse on pan-Africanism. However, the movement is slowly re-gaining momentum, with the rise of the demands of multi-polarity (the co-existence of various power bases with equally respectful value systems), and social and political movements centred on the quest for democracy, social justice and gender equality. Nevertheless, there remains uncertainty about the size of its constituency within continental Africa and the African diaspora.

Although this reflection focuses on African higher education systems, the specific illustrations and main concerns centre on the university system and its equivalences. It is clear that knowledge matters in any society. Pan-African knowledge matters more because of the centrality of the arguments about positivism associated with unified Africa. I claim that in the contemporary world, no country has systematically and successfully progressed without framing socio-political change within its own historical and national perspectives and guidelines. History provides the compass to guide us in terms of timing and direction for future endeavours.

All the countries in the global North that have progressed economically have produced strong national identities. Nationalism is an important factor in developing a formula or equation for power relations in the world. Political Africa is, despite the rhetoric about its national sovereignty politics, a continent or geo-political region of the world that is less nationalistic. Lumumba-Kasongo (1991) claims that African nation-states and their political elites have weaker collective solidarity compared to other regions of the world, regarding reactions and responses to the imperatives from international and regional institutions and the dynamics of the international political economy. The absence of relevant nationalism implies that Africa demonstrates a

high degree of dependency on external investments, technology and developmental paradigm making.

For instance, compared to Asian countries that collectively resisted the adoption of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s structural adjustment programs (SAPs) between the 1980s and 1990s, almost all the African nation-states adopted them, without any rigorous regional discussions. These austerity programmes led to severe economic and social degradation, as they also weakened African political sovereignty.

Thus, we examine and explore a pan-African curriculum from the perspective of searching for a national foundation for African development. A pan-African curriculum should be the engine of *Pax Africana*, and a foundation of the African Renaissance. University systems are arenas of higher learning in which universal and universalistic ideas and critical thoughts are developed and transmitted. African university systems need to develop ontologies that are equivalent to the curriculum model based on the classic 'great books' of Western civilisation (known as the 'Great Books' model). Such equivalent works should be centred on the principles of unity of African cultures and politics, and the consolidation of a regional peace agenda. The dynamics of these two pillars should produce relevant and critical knowledge in African higher education systems.

Exploring a pan-African curriculum forms part of our continued efforts to seek new developmental paradigms in Africa and with regard to Africa's international relations. Hence the elements of this search's problematic are located in the dynamics of the international political economy and the place and role of Africa therein. Historical Africa has produced many paradigms to explain Africa, including many ideas and practical experiments about development. Although I am careful to avoid generalisation, many of these experiments have failed at the continental level. The need to continue to search for new paradigms is highlighted by the momentum in Africa to support the proposition that there are certain interlinkages between popular and social movements and demands for democracy.

Although many universities in Africa now offer some indigenous knowledge education in their study programmes, the pan-African agenda (which is related to indigenous programmes) remains a minority initiative in the overall organisation of African universities. The goals of the university include the advancement of research and production of knowledge; yet pan-African research is still not visible on their agendas.

Higher education, and university systems in particular, are facing a multitude of financial, curricula and philosophical challenges today, even more so than 40 years ago. The challenges are due to many factors: first, the implications of liberal globalisation and its imperatives, the impact of free trade and free market, deregulation, and in short, the Adam Smith invisible hand. Second, technological and scientific changes, the transformation of communication technology and the world of smart phones are creating a new and different world. Third, the intensity of interactions among nation-states, multinationals and individuals is being expanded.

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Lastly, the imperatives of the national and international political economy in higher education curricula cannot be overemphasised.

In addition, the privatisation of public higher education and the decline of the nation-state's participation even in public universities, are having a negative impact on how higher education functions. The market dictum is forcing a new dialogue between consumers and producers of higher education: consumers are concerned about applying knowledge in the real world and the real market. There is a higher demand for pragmatism about higher education.

#### APPROACHES AND ASSUMPTIONS WITHIN EXISTING PERCEPTIONS AND REALITIES OF THE WORLD SYSTEM

Issues about African higher education, its value systems, the foundation of its epistemology, and the nature of its curricula are examined from the social sciences perspectives of historical structuralism and neo-constructivism (for further information about these approaches, see Lumumba-Kasongo, 2002). These approaches define and examine world capitalism and liberal globalisation as part of a liberal unipolarity approach within a historical framework. Humans embody the germ of the past and build the present upon the past. However, the past, present, and future have their own specific distinctive moments, spaces and times. The present should not sacrifice itself to the past and vice-versa. From this perspective, we perceive a socially progressive agenda as being teleologically and dialectically a synthesised, conscious effort.

The historical-structuralist approach (as developed through the works of dependency theorists in the social sciences such as Gunder Frank, Enzo Faletto, Dos Santos, Samir Amin, to mention only a few) and its philosophical assumptions stipulate that the way social classes, states and societies function is a result of local internal and external dynamics. These locations are not historically fixed or static. The world is a system and an organic whole, whose behaviours are conditioned by the actors' locations and how they came to be in the system.

This author consciously avoids historical determinism and conspiracy theory because they lack a good understanding of the forces of history. I interpret history as a changing phenomenon that is not predetermined by any circumstances or forces. I put more emphasis on political institutions and their relations to Immanuel Wallerstein's world system (1974, 1980, 1989). My interests in historical causation of social phenomena and the critical examination of their structures are shaped by social constructivists such as Adler (1997, 2002), and Fearon and Wendt (2002), who take the social world of agreed-upon collective social values more seriously, also in the non-material world.

The world system of Wallerstein cited above, together with dependency theory, shapes and influences the typologies used in this chapter. A system is not simply the sum of its elements, and it does not change randomly. In order to understand why a system behaves the way it does, we have to question the origins of its elements,

examine the nature of the relationship between those elements, and the nature of the interactions between the system itself and other phenomena within its larger environment.

From my perspective, we need to assess the way in which a theoretical explanation about Africa goes beyond cybernetics and the logic of functionalist scholarships. Specifically, the above typologies and their assumptions project progress beyond the simple logic of the modernisation school of thought which encompasses imitation, universalism and the ability to adopt the so-called pre-requisites of preordained conditions of development.

One of the most important manifesting characteristics of the world system at the end of the 20th century was the movement of states and people's struggles to redefine themselves. This redefinition took on different forms and shapes; some instances were tragic and others were more gradual and peaceful. The content of such redefinition, its substance and intellectual quality, depend on the dynamics of local political configurations; how a given people and state have become part of the world system; who the actors and their alliances are; their location in the international political economy; and what they bring to the global market.

This process of redefinition is facilitated and interrogated by the dynamics associated with the following attributes of globalisation: (1) the level of solidarity; (2) the search for new identities; (3) the nature of new information and communication technologies and the role of the media and Internet diplomacy; (4) the domination of liberal politics in the forms of liberal and illiberal elections; and finally (5) the nature, level, and quality of the world distribution of resources, which are characterised by new opportunities, unequal competition and social inequality.

The values associated with pan-Africanism include the search for cultural, political and ideological unity and the instrumentalisation of globalism to advance such unity. The intellectual justifications of the Pan-African project are based on the following principles:

1. No nation-state has developed out of humiliating, victimising or someone else's history, culture or metaphysics;
2. Development is first of all local, organic and collective, as summarised in *Small is Beautiful* (Schumaker, 1972);
3. No nation-state has developed or can develop outside of absolute separatism or autarkism (Amin, 1990b);
4. All industrialised nation-states have at one time or another stopped to think or rethink about themselves, their histories and their priorities; and finally
5. All developed nation-states have strong patriotic or nationalistic goals or cultures.

#### HIGHER EDUCATION TYPOLOGIES IN AFRICA

Regardless of the economic and financial problems associated with the creation of institutions of higher learning, especially a public university that is fully equipped

to fulfil its mission, the African state viewed the public university generally as a national symbol of honor and sovereignty in the quest for producing and using the highest level of knowledge and human resources as its active national treasure... An African university has been conceived by the African state as a national institution for social progress (Lumumba-Kasongo & Assie-Lumumba, 2011, p. 256).

Since many African countries gained their nominal political independence, there has been significant growth in higher education systems, with hundreds of universities following various missions and fields of specialisation. But the question of typologies of higher education is essentially an ideological and political one. I interrogate the higher education system based on the following questions: Higher education for whom? What kind is it? What should it do?

Within colonial state formations, higher education systems were created to transmit and maintain colonial systems and values, produce needed experts, and respond to administrative and technocratic imperatives. Some African countries had no autonomous higher education systems until they won their nominal political independence. In others, higher education systems were regionally grouped and linked with those in so-called 'metropolitan' countries. Thus, various curricula were produced, which we should not generalise. Despite the diversity of such systems, the intent of colonial higher education at large was not very distant from the deontology of colonisation itself and its general philosophy of domination. The development agenda was not a guiding force within such systems, and their knowledge systems were part of what we call the 'received knowledge syndrome'.

It should be noted that it was also philosophically difficult, if not impossible, even within the militaristic nature of colonialism, to control fully the dynamics of higher education systems when they were established. Their intellectual dimension was always universalistic, while the message or application of knowledge was more locally focused. From the time when universities started to expand in medieval Europe or medieval Africa (Diop, 1987), higher education systems have always challenged or resisted the status quo, regardless of the content of local curricula.

Obviously, African higher education systems did not start from a *tabula rasa*—they were associated with colonisation and decolonisation politics. Today there is no monolithic higher education system in Africa; rather such systems are highly culturally and historically diversified. In many ways, their various structures and curricula reflect the processes and values of the formation of nation-states. Even private or religious-based higher education systems in Africa responded first to the political aspirations of their elites. Higher education systems have been instrumentalised to support 'national agendas' or to sponsor a personal or individualised leadership agenda. During their later evolution, when nation-states became relatively more mature, social and political demands increased and the goals of higher education started to become more international or regional. However, higher education systems have remained the products of national politics in responding to the overall goals of such states.

## PAN-AFRICAN CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In the light of the rise of imperatives such as *ubuntu* and indigenous African philosophies (for instance), on the one hand, and the prevalence of liberal globalism within dominant social paradigms (DSPs) on the other hand, how should we rethink pan-Africanism in the search for a new political philosophy of higher education in Africa that is progressive, relevant and appropriate? The main issue is that the place of political pan-Africanism in higher education has generally been neglected.

Higher education, especially university systems, is intended to create a broad governmental agenda of 'national sovereignty' based on human capital theory. Since the 1960s, when the majority of African nation-states gained their nominal political independence, governments and political regimes have been making educational reforms at all levels in an attempt to produce education and knowledge systems that are socially and political relevant. These reforms, some of which originated from within, while others were adopted from external institutions, have been about adjustment and readjustment of both the organisation of university systems and their mission and knowledge systems, in order to respond to real local, national and international demands and needs.

Within higher education systems, there are public (state owned) universities and those such as the confessions or community-based institutions that are partially supported by the state. There are also totally private universities, which are set up to serve a profit-making motive. In many countries, over recent decades, the creation of private universities has expanded, with a corresponding weakening or dysfunctionality of public universities and the collapse of their infrastructures.

In addition to public versus private institutions, there are also universities with a strong focus on research and those with a greater emphasis on teaching. Although many university systems successfully combine both research and teaching, in many countries (with the exception of some universities such as those in South Africa), research is viewed as an irrelevant part of university systems and is thus rather neglected, and attracts less funding. This dimension is linked to the broad problems of the political economy of higher education in Africa.

Despite the fact that its policy formulation and implications have been generally ignored, the discourse of pan-Africanism is slowly re-emerging within academic and intellectual arenas. Imagining and rethinking the pan-African curriculum as a general philosophical guideline would help to re-direct and support what is being learned in higher education systems.

## PAN-AFRICANISM AND ITS VALUES

Pan-Africanism is one of the oldest African transnational ideologies; it was first produced in the African diaspora and then expanded, reinterpreted and re-guided by emerging leadership in 20th century Africa as a 'national project' for political decolonisation. It remains the most complex and enduring ideology among Africans and people of African descent across the world. Historically, pan-Africanism has taken on various forms and expressions throughout the world, linking people, their

cultures, and their histories to the African continent in its idealistic, realistic and pragmatic forms.

Local and regional groupings developed, and/or used selected aspects of pan-Africanism, which they thought were more relevant and meaningful, culturally, sociologically and politically, to the imperatives of their political environment. However, the common core feature embraced by all different forms and brands of pan-Africanism (global pan-Africanism or political pan-Africanism) has always been the search for, and maintenance of the meaning of African people's cultural and political unity.

While its application may have been culturally, economically and politically problematic, there is an intellectual consensus around its significance. The agreement of African heads of states in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001 to form the African Union (AU), and the subsequent creation of the AU in 2002, made a statement which can be perceived to indicate the actualisation of a higher political order that had been defeated at the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963.

Africa is a continent made up of 54 countries with different histories, cultures and people, and inherited varieties of western traditions and educational systems. These factors have produced different political regimes and various dynamics, which can present a methodological challenge in formulating a pan-African agenda and curriculum. However, the pan-African movement has produced criteria according to which their agendas can be measured. Various forms of nationalistic policies have been formulated and tried in Africa as the foundation of national governance. However, pan-Africanism, as a nationalist movement, has not yet succeeded in capturing national politics as a collective ideology. Its claims, which transcend localism and call for a broad power base of political elites and collective development schemes, have not yet penetrated African political conditions.

Pan-Africanists have mostly articulated in intellectual abstraction, ahistorical, and apolitical fashion, issues of unity across geo-political boundaries of the citizens of states with different political realities and identities, social class bases, and levels of economic development. Furthermore, definitions of pan-Africanism and their interpretations have produced various meanings, which, within the context of the world of the states, have been difficult to actualise as policy frameworks. Policy formulation requires a high level of political realism. Thus, some common characteristics of pan-Africanism need to be identified and their meanings explored.

In terms of its origins, pan-Africanism began as an international phenomenon embedded in multicultural, linguistic and various political expressions. Members of this pan-Africanism movement all are citizens, with or without rights, in various African states. They speak the languages that have been defined by the states. From writers such as George Padmore, W. E. B. Dubois, Kwame Nkrumah, Steve Biko, to Thomas Sankara, pan-Africanism has generally embodied some of the following aims: (1) to search for common cultural specificities and affinities among Africans; and (2) to actualise intellectual liaisons among them based on 'race', ethnicity, geography and history. These objectives aim to foster an understanding

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and appreciation of African cultures, which should be the foundation of progressive politics. Thus, pan-Africanism embodies an ethnic/racial, cultural, and/or continental unity of some kind.

The pan-Africanism movement needs to develop skills of international diplomacy and international political economy in order to establish unity within diversity perspectives. While political pan-Africanism in the 1960s, especially as perceived by Kwame Nkrumah, Ahmed Sékou Touré and Gamal Abdel Nasser, called for establishing a federal African state, cultural pan-Africanism has focused on the search for common cultural symbolism and historical linkages.

Any possibility of transforming pan-Africanism as an ideological alternative to existing systems of governance should be discussed within the framework of the state's centrality. Its discourse should include inventing new theories and practices of diplomacy and international cooperation among the African people and their states, and the rest of the world. By and large, pan-Africanism is about the unity of the African people, their resources, their cultures and their purposes. It is about the centrality of Africa in the learning process, just as Eurocentrism has been for many centuries, for different purposes (Amin, 1987). To discuss the pan-African curriculum and philosophy in higher education is to make pan-Africanism a university knowledge base, and elevate its value methodologically, theoretically and in terms of its research agenda.

#### PAN-AFRICANISM AGENCIES

Our claim in this chapter is to make the African university one of the major pillars of pan-Africanism through its curriculum. Given the centrality and societal expectations of the African university in terms of teaching, research, and the production and distribution of knowledge, it is likely to have a quicker and stronger impact in African politics if it becomes the agency of pan-Africanism. However, this agency should be linked to and supported by other instrumental agencies. The university should not be isolated from other educational systems in terms of its purpose—pan-African education should start gradually at elementary or primary school systems.

The issue about the place and importance of pan-Africanism in higher education has been present in the agendas and programmes of many pan-African research centres which play important roles in higher education as facilitators of national development and regional integration. These organisations include, amongst others, the Association of African Universities (AAU), CODESRIA (the Council for the Development of Social Science in Africa), the African Academy of Sciences, ADEA (the Association for the Development of Education in Africa), the Inter-University Council of Eastern Africa, the Southern African Universities Association, the Arab Association of Universities, and CAMES (*Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur*). Historically, the main political agencies have been the OAU until 2002, and the AU since then. Their role has been vital since they function (or functioned) as continental organisations representing all 54 African countries.

The question is: Did they, or do they represent realist or pragmatic political pan-Africanism?

What can we learn from the above-mentioned institutions in relation to the world politics agenda and pan-Africanism itself? Much has been written and published about the OAU, AU and pan-Africanism. Only a brief comment is needed here to clarify further my position and support my perspectives.

The pan-African movement was developed and translated into realist politics in Africa during the time of bipolarity. Both communism and capitalism influenced its philosophy, the functioning of its agencies and its outcome in Africa and among the African diaspora. On May 25, 1963, with the participation of all independent African countries, the OAU was formed in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was created as an ideological and institutional compromise among various ideological tendencies that developed during the 1950s and early 1960s.

While the OAU was developed during a time of bipolar world politics, it ended when the world had become unipolar, and the AU eventually took its place. I restate the point that, with the creation of the OAU, Kwame Nkrumah's ambition to form a continental union government as a political reality and a monumental dream was defeated by the other African heads of state. The OAU became, instead, a symbol of unity and a basis for articulating functional economic cooperation. Until the early 1990s, the OAU functioned as a symbolic institution of unity, and its function was shaped mainly by this political symbolism. All the ideological conflicts in international power alliances during the Cold War were also influential in OAU summits and political discourse. The organisation functioned as a microcosm of the international power struggle.

Following discussions, meetings, and consultations, three political blocs emerged (prior to the creation of the OAU), as African elites tried to deal with the mechanisms of decolonisation. These blocs reflected various reactions to and positions taken on the proposition to form a United States of Africa. The viewpoints of the countries were also affected by their relations to the former colonial powers. The blocs were: the Monrovia bloc, the Brazzaville bloc, and the Casablanca bloc. In general, four elements characterised the political situation and viewpoints within these blocs:

- a. the tendency towards power struggles and personality conflicts among the leaders;
- b. the ideological determinism of each bloc;
- c. the impact of the metropolitan powers on the political choices of the new states;
- d. differing time perspectives on the evolution of African politics.

It was against this political background, as reflected by the above characteristics, that the question of unity was debated, until the political leaders of the independent states finally voted against it in 1963. Bloc politics weakened the OAU from within and also its policies; as a result, member states could not clearly see the degree of seriousness of the economic, political, and social dependency which Africa has been facing.

Concerning its behaviour in international fora, the OAU attempted, sometimes successfully and other times not so, to formulate common positions. On the positive

side, the position of the OAU against apartheid was firm and consistent. It fully supported the freedom fighters in Southern Africa militarily, financially, politically, and morally, through a special committee of frontline states. Coordinated by the OAU, the decision of the African states to halt their relations with the state of Israel after the 1977 six-day Israel-Egyptian war, was commonly implemented, even if many states continued to enjoy special relations with Israel in several sectors such as agriculture, military and national intelligence arrangements.

In 1981, the Lagos Plan of Action was created as a genuine progressive programme for regional development based on the principle of self-reliance. However, it was never implemented. Instead, it was replaced by the SAPs of the World Bank and stability programmes of the IMF.

One of the most important decisions was made at the OAU summit in Abuja, Nigeria from 3 to 5 June 1991, by thirty-four African political leaders, namely the signature of the treaty for the establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC). This initiative was the most important ideal ever to have been initiated by the OAU and the UN ECA. It came as a result of the failure of most national economic policies to deal with conditions of underdevelopment. This initiative was an effort to approach African social and economic problems collectively from an African perspective.

Between May 1993, when the OAU organised a Pan-African Conference on Reparations together with the Nigerian Government in Abuja, Nigeria, and the July 2001 summit in Lusaka, Zambia, where the African leaders agreed to form the AU, the Pan-African project took on a different perspective and form. The AU was created in 2002 amongst high expectations and much enthusiasm. However, by 2015, the AU has not been able to consolidate itself in most countries because, for obvious reasons, it has not reached, at policy and political levels, the majority of the ordinary African masses. African states and their political leaders seem to have become more suspicious and less trustful of each other. Some continue to perceive and/or accuse others as potential or real threats to the stability of their countries or their sub-region, as much as they did during the Cold War era.

Current circumstances such as domestic and international laws against international terrorism, job scarcity, and domestic political violence, mean that African geographic boundaries are becoming tighter today than they were even 40 years ago. The less African economies are productive, the less optimistic people might become about any possibility of sustaining pan-Africanism. It is argued that despite the inception of the AU and later the African Parliament in 2004, any functional and productive pan-Africanism as an ideology of social transformation will be unachievable due to African economies of conflict, the African psychology of survival, and African structures of state, amongst other factors already stated. As Lumumba-Kasongo (2003) states:

Despite the existing fragile economic organizations, which have been responding more to the imperative of globalization than any African national

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economies, and the creation, by imitation, of a European Union, the Pan-African agenda has become weaker than ever before. One cannot talk about Pan-Africanism when our land, water, and air have been almost totally sold to the foreign investors and multinational companies within the context of the structural adjustment programmes or neo-global liberal globalization. In my view, the African Union is founded on the flawed historical principle of 'one size fits all,' the so-called Adam Smith invisible hand; and the massive selling of African resources as the only roads to industrialization and development cannot structurally and philosophically advance the cause of Pan-Africanism. (p. 89)

The African Union (AU), which is structured after the European Union, was established on July 9, 2002, with 53 member states. It has incorporated most recognised international rights into its policy discourse and its programmes. People's rights include freedom from discrimination, oppression, and exploitation; the right to self-determination; national and international peace and security; and a satisfactory environment for economic and social development. The AU is based on the principles of strong cooperation among the African states, and advancement of the so-called common vision of development, self-help and collective security.

#### THE PAN-AFRICAN CURRICULUM AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL WITHIN POLITICAL REALISM (OR GEO-POLITICS PERSPECTIVE) AND ITS VALUES

It is necessary to locate the university system in the world before demonstrating how it can produce a pan-African curriculum. From its etymology, the word 'university' is derived from the word 'universal'. In Latin: *universitas magistrorum and scholarium* means a community of teachers and scholars.

The role and function of a university in Africa, and/or the 'African university', have been well documented by many scholars of higher education. The centrality of the university in dealing with issues related to development and social progress cannot be overstated, as articulated in many publications (Lumumba-Kasongo & Assie-Lumumba, 2011, p. 256). The arguments about the importance of the system can be summarised as follows:

Public African universities were created as part of the core ideas, thoughts, desires, and hopes of the African peoples as central instruments of social progress and policy discourse regardless of the advancement of nation-building, regardless of people's social classes, gender; ethnic, and religious affiliations, and the political agenda of the state. The consensus that emerged without any systematic public debates was generalized across all social categories and states. The universities were intended to quickly produce the necessary human capacities in teaching, producing new knowledge, providing new skills, conducting research, and managing and distributing knowledge.

The above view shows how the African university was expected to be a microcosm of the African nation-state. My view is that, while not rejecting the classical role of the university, the African university should project a critical, unifying voice from which to develop a common worldview.

The agenda of pan-Africanism remains relevant even though many countries in the West and within the UN system are now moving slowly away from the idea of the ‘Great Books’ curriculum model, which introduces classical Western thinking and knowledge as a general education requirement at college and university levels, even at comparative, scientific and historical levels. The West, the United States, and other industrial countries do not necessarily need the Great Books model or the Great World Civilisation model, because their ideas and systems are part of that dominant social paradigm (DSP). Although it is relatively diverse, a higher education curriculum based on, or derived from the dynamics of liberal globalisation remains predominantly Eurocentric, especially regarding its market, and scientific and technological dimensions.

Most, if not all pan-African organisations I have examined, whether they focus on research, political, cultural, or economic aspects, all have a geo-political agenda, locating Africa in the world system. They raise issues about African contributions to the world, and possible or real African influences in each domain in the world. All are part of political realism dominated by the nation-state’s policy. Political realism denotes the concept of *realpolitik*, which refers to the notion of nation-state.

Political realism obliges us to construct a bigger picture of Africa. Within this picture, it has been shown in economic and political terms, that at the continental level, Africans have the weakest solidarity among them. Africa is the continent with the weakest national affinities, regarding regional economic and political organisations. The causes of these weaknesses are diverse, but they include the structures and nature of African nation-states, the dynamics and organisation of the international political economy, and the political economy of education.

What should Africans construct collectively as the foundation upon which to build stronger university systems? Here, I project the notion of pragmatic political pan-Africanism, which I call ‘realist pan-Africanism’, that can deal with curriculum issues within nation-states and their existing legal and political objectives and constraints.

My claim is that political pan-Africanism should help Africa to produce either a unitary government model, or a common space for economic, cultural and political cooperation, with indivisible security, community and collective national agendas among Africans or blacks the world over. There are two options for this kind of pan-Africanism: (1) re-visit possibilities for thinking about the creation of a united African government—a federal system that was proposed by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and his supporters; or (2) project the model of the realist pan-Africanist state within the global system.

The federal system was rejected even by enlightened African figures such as President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, who opted for the maintenance of former

colonial borders and local realities as defined by colonial political systems. He and his followers also opted for *gradualism* as a method of reaching some kind of unity. Within the classical definition of nation-state, to a large extent, “before the independence was considered to be equal to after-the independence”. However, we need to critically consider this equation and its assumptions, as they tend to ignore the historical impact and policy implications of major reforms that were adopted in the decolonisation process, and what political leaders such as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania or Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia accomplished under the ambits of African socialism and African humanism. Furthermore, although we do not know what kind of federal system it might have been (there are several varieties, such as those in the United States, India and Canada), we claim that a federal system would have led to quicker consolidation of African political agendas and positions in world politics (for further information on this topic, see Udogu, 2015). While Nkrumah proposed solid federalism with a strong military system to defend Africa, we ended up with a hybrid OAU, which was ideologically weak and politically insignificant on the world stage regarding the African position in a world dominated by global liberal unipolarity.

From W. E. B. Dubois, the father of pan-Africanism, to Kwame Nkrumah, pan-Africanism has generally embodied the search for common cultural specificities and affinities among African people, and for intellectual connections among them based on ‘race’, ethnicity and history. Within a pan-African curriculum, such objectives were intended to lead towards fostering an understanding and appreciation of African culture. Thus, in general terms, pan-Africanism embodies an ethnic/racial, cultural, or continental unity of some kind. These themes need to be incorporated into the curriculum agenda in higher education.

Culture is the most important ingredient of human experience and social progress. It is cognitive and neither biological nor absolute—it is constantly changing. An understanding of culture is central in understanding human life. According to Edward Tylor, quoted by Kelleher and Klein (2008): “culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man (sic) as a member of society. The strength and utility of this historical definition is that it highlights the fact that cultures are complex, patterned, and learned” (p. 28). Cultures are never closed or islands unto themselves—they are shared. They can also progress as well as retrogress.

I am advancing the point that African culture, whether expressed through African films, architecture, languages, media, theatre, etc., should be a liberating force—the foundation of African progress. A liberating force is not a natural phenomenon. It needs to be thought out, planned, and actualised with all the input factors that surround such a process. We should expect that the majority of Africans would benefit economically and politically from the act of cultural liberation, which should be undertaken by a strong state and with the support of enlightened members of the society. African cultures are not abstractions, nor are they inherently positive tools for advancing progressive changes. Thus, there is a

need to continue using critical methodologies to interrogate these cultures in their holistic forms.

I advance the proposition that cultures matter in African development, not just as resources, but also in providing codes of behaviours. Thus, cultures that matter are about the people. They are about the ways people think, act, organise themselves, manage their social and physical environment, and how they produce and reproduce themselves both socially and biologically. Culture is a whole or a totality.

We all are citizens with or without rights in certain states. These states name us, give us cultural identity, and define where we can operate. They define geo-political boundaries and the social environment in which citizens live and work. We speak the languages that are recognised by our nation-states. A realist pan-Africanism has strong international connections because of its linkage to the African diaspora. As such, it needs to be articulated as a transnational foreign policy ideology in order to reach countries where black people reside. Despite the marginalisation and segmentation of African states in the global arena, they are still major actors in international relations and the international political economy.

This concept of the nation-state has the power to embody the collective identity and create a new 'will of the people'. In international relations, nation-states pursue mainly their own national interests. This perspective also refers to questions regarding the capabilities of African nation-states, their potential in their social environments, the availability of resources, and their constraints, both nationally and internationally, in terms of formulating policies for change.

A realist pan-Africanism is also an intellectual effort to stimulate and encourage debates and dialogues between legalist and functionalist approaches to the question of Africa's independence and social and economic progress (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2003). A potential contribution of pan-Africanists could be to re-define and re-conceptualise the notion of states in terms of international relations.

In earlier times, pan-Africanism was instrumental in achieving nominal political independence, but so far economic independence has eluded Africans. This is partially because the alliance between African labour and African capital has not materialised, due to the fact that Africa controls very little of the world monopoly on capital. Hence, pan-Africanism requires an economic component in its ideology. Africans, who are presently and historically the most exploited groups in the capitalist system, need to construct a theory of economic emancipation rooted in both economics and the ethnic experiences of the black world. Openness among African states and people is a prerequisite for this new reshaping of African conditions and policies. This cannot be done randomly. Félix Houphouët-Boigny of the Côte d'Ivoire was not a leftist pan-Africanist compared to Kwame Nkrumah, but he argued for more dialogue due to conditions of war and exploitation. However, an economic argument alone, whether it is for a free market, trade, capital, or bank arrangements, is not sufficient to deal with the crises of the African state and African nationalism.

Existing African political and economic institutions are not conducive to the creation of structures in which real participation, both political and economic,

can occur, and through which relevant public policies can be formulated and implemented. This crisis is, first of all, structurally political. The extent to which Africa will be able to progress will depend much on the abilities of her people and their political organisations to restructure existing political systems, and establish policy priorities in the international political economy. Such efforts will need to be based on the dynamics of local needs, the energy of the local culture, and the active participation of the African community in the global economy.

This task requires a re-mapping of Africa (Lumumba-Kasongo, 1994). Democratic principles will continue to be hindered while Africa as a whole remains an economic and cultural unit that is extremely dependent on the dominant world economy, which is managed primarily by the former colonial powers, their local extensions, and multinational corporations. The questions of democracy and economic independence must be dealt with simultaneously. Without such an approach, even progressive nationalists will not be able to be democratic and free in a world dominated by power and national interests.

Pan-Africanism, as a political realist ideology, requires that one should become aware of who one is, where one stands on the international political stage, what one possesses, what one is capable of producing, how to consume cultural or material production, and where one plans to progress to from this point in time. International relations are strongly influenced by these factors, but to be able to participate productively and efficiently in these relationships, major decisions based on these factors must be made at local or national level within its imperatives.

Realist pan-Africanism is not a separatist ideology. Rather, it is a development ideology that should lead to creating alternative development and policy options. From the African viewpoint, the economic linkages between Africa and the industrial powers, as reflected in current conditions of underdevelopment, have failed to improve the living conditions of African people. These linkages have been consistent with slavery on a massive scale and with the colonial design of Africa.

Another element in the debate deals with the potential contribution of the African diaspora, which includes African people who live in, and are citizens of countries other than those in Africa. Throughout the African diaspora, capital mobilisation should be mobilised, but within a framework of the national agenda.

Pan-Africanist ideology articulates the need for a selective approach to development organisations. We can learn from the philosophy of realist pan-Africanism about the need for developing the pragmatic concept of unity in purpose, in culture and in politics. The epistemological foundation of pan-Africanism is that we should see things more clearly, collectively, globally and structurally.

Finally, how might we relate global imperatives to the pan-African curriculum? The pan-African curriculum does not mean 'autarchism' or 'absolute exclusion' from the dynamics of global imperatives. It simply implies the positive inclusion of African priorities and visions into the world system, from the point of view of unified African purposes. It means politically challenging imperatives that are based on the control of the dominant social paradigm (science, technology and the free

market) in order to reverse its current unipolar philosophy and usage in favour of Africa. It is about advancing the principle of 'knowing the self', which is in fact a scientific concept that can serve as a foundation for inventing progress in Africa. The pan-African curriculum should put African in the driving seat of our *navire*.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the heart of pan-Africanism is the notion of Africanness that is defined in terms of unity, history, culture and ethnicity. Political realism emphasises the nationalist consciousness of pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism should foster the pragmatism of African citizenry and build African democracies in order to consolidate unity and peace across the continent.

In the search for a pan-African curriculum, it is necessary to develop strong international and regional cooperation among Africans and the African diaspora. International cooperation should be based on exchange programmes with a focus on the notion of complementarity and reinforcing the values of history and culture. The proposed new curriculum has the potential for job creation because it will contribute to developing more linkages between national resources and the African diaspora, and among continental African resources.

Pan-Africanism, as another form of nationalism which is rooted in social democracy traditions, but has not yet been fully understood or appreciated, should be responsible for re-writing the rules of the African political economy. To celebrate this kind of pan-Africanism, Africans must first appreciate the dynamism of their interpretive cultures and histories, and move away from intellectualism, symbolism, and romanticism.

Pan-Africanism, as a national project, needs to be built on a collective political purpose, based on a collective memory perspective, and strong social institutions. People who live on less than one dollar a day will not care for pan-Africanism. Democratising the pan-Africanism agenda, or creating a functional federalism, may create concrete opportunities to reach the poor people who constitute the majority of the African population (according to a recent IMF report (2015), 19 of the 23 poorest countries in the world are located in Africa).

To enable the African university system to function as a pan-African agency implies that the university system needs to play a more productive role in examining and understanding African cultures, African ways of thinking, and African efforts toward *Pax Africana*. Such engagement should be not only intellectual or scientific, but also ideological and political.

As already indicated, in the centre of the pan-African educational agenda is the key issue of unity of purpose. It is essential to introduce core courses or seminars on the pan-African philosophy of education in order to actualise what is being proposed in this chapter. This philosophy of education needs to be articulated with the objective of *Pax Africana*. The desired unity is not possible without a deep knowledge and understanding of Africa, her peoples, her histories, her resources, her geography,

her relationship with the rest of the world, and the involvement of people of African descent in all regions of the world. We should make *Pax Africana* a required course at the undergraduate level.

To actualise this unity and this purpose, the curriculum must be designed by Africans and owned by university constituencies based on their relationships with their nation-states. The pan-African curriculum needs to be shaped by major requirements in which comparative, transnational and regional African experiences prevail. It could be developed through systematic exchange programmes between African universities at all levels of learning, that go beyond the tokenism that is currently being practised. Such programmes ought to have the following prescribed features: they should be inclusive, diversified, multicultural, unifying, developmentalist, liberating and geo-political.

The language issue, for instance, could be addressed as a political decision issue through debates in civil society and national parliamentary institutions, taking into account the dynamics of sociology, history, economics and geo-politics. Consolidation of linguistic groups is already occurring culturally and economically across the five existing functional sub-regions: North Africa, East Africa, West Africa, Southern Africa and Central Africa.

For the pan-African curriculum to be developed and respected, it needs to be supported by the principle of academic freedom, which should transcend its state territoriality base in a pragmatic way. Academic freedom has to be part of the African Union charters and other international and regional institutions operating in Africa. The pan-African curriculum should emphasise multiculturalism and respect for unity in diversity, which can only be promoted through inter-cultural dialogue among various social groups. Democracy and consensus are important values of such an inter-cultural dialogue.

Finally, within the pan-African curriculum, the question of knowledge production and distribution is central. The nation-states alone would not be able to consolidate this unity, so the pan-African curriculum needs to be supported and protected by African publishing agencies. Therefore, I propose the development of partnerships between the African private sector and the public sector (or the state) to agree on the notion of the 'common or public good' regarding their respective interests in the publication business.

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## **4. EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND THE AFRICANISATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY**

### INTRODUCTION

Higher education is viewed as an engine to development. Knowledge production and dissemination, particularly at the tertiary level, have become key drivers of growth and development. Countries with higher skill levels are better equipped to face economic, social and political challenges in today's fast changing technological world (Bloom, Canning, & Chan, 2006). In addition, globalisation and the knowledge economy have impacted most nations in various ways. In the knowledge economy and globalised society, universities have become politically and economically critical institutions which produce and transfer knowledge; in this regard Africa particularly needs strong universities and competitive academic scholarship. What remains problematic and contested is the definition of knowledge itself which I attempt later in the chapter.

In Africa, qualified human capital remains scarce compared to the continent's development needs. This situation hinders growth and undermines the foundation for sustainable development. Because skills for the knowledge economy are built at the tertiary education level, it is important to initiate dialogue on the relationship between the policy framework and knowledge creation on the continent, in order to make the African university more relevant and responsive to the national goals and needs. Improving tertiary education systems is high on the agenda as illustrated in the African Union's (AU) Plan of Action for 2006 to 2015 (AU, 2006). The African university and policy makers have a responsibility to ensure that the workforce acquires the skills to compete, innovate, and respond to complex social, environmental, and economic situations within an increasingly globalised society.

Africa has the intellectuals and the capability for knowledge creation to solve the continent's problems. The underlying problem is essentially the political organisation and the power struggles which are embedded in ethnic divisions. These ethnic divisions were used by the settler regimes as a strategy to rule and have been a perpetual problem even after independence. There is need to create space in universities for de-colonising African higher education which largely remains Eurocentric, by incorporating critical aspects of indigenous philosophy

and indigenous knowledge approaches and content in curriculum planning and transforming the way research and teaching are conducted. Notwithstanding, Africa cannot ignore global influences and pressures in this process. Indigenous ways of knowing have been largely misunderstood, ridiculed and on many occasions ignored not only by other cultural groups but to some extent by Africans themselves.

In this chapter, I attempt to address how policies that are being created at the macro and micro levels promote or hinder knowledge creation in African higher education. I am cognizant of the diversity of Africa in history, culture and socio-economic development and therefore caution against generalisations that may surface in the analyses. I also raise the question, How should Indigenous Knowledges be defined and who should define them, as there is currently a lack of disciplinary coherence given the western approach which locates disciplines into categories such as science, humanities and social sciences? One of the purposes of this chapter is to articulate Indigenous Knowledges from an ontological perspective and underpinning the African worldview. It is important to come up with a functioning definition of Indigenous Knowledge. This requires some dialogue among stakeholders on how to arrive at an understanding of what this concept means. It is not necessarily a response to or a reaction to, other knowledge systems.

The chapter is divided into the following sections; introduction and context which locates the indigenous world view within the context of knowledge production historically; definition of the notion of knowledge and a conceptual framework for policy making; critical policy analysis; and postcolonial theory (as a framework for analysis); the discourses on African university; the challenges to knowledge production; prognosis and conclusions. Because of the diversity in Africa one needs to be cautious about generalisations when making claims and providing suggestions on the way forward.

## CONTEXT

The African university is an implant from different colonial powers. The universities on the continent can be classified as Anglophone (English), Francophone (French) or Lusophone (Portuguese). By virtue of this partitioning, the African university has a colonial identity in its, ethos, ideology and curricula. It also has a policy framework and administrative structure similar to that of the universities in the colonial metropolis. This is an important analysis which can inform ideas on transforming the institution into one which is rooted on African soil. Before independence most of the degrees awarded were given the seal of the universities in the colonising country. For example, the University of Zimbabwe awarded degrees with the University of London or Birmingham seal. Thus the institution was an anachronism because it was a university in Africa but not an African university. The challenge today is to make the institution relevant by introducing policies that can create a truly indigenous university. The question then is, “are we being contradictory when the idea of a university implies ‘universality’?” I believe that in universality are several

worldviews and one such is the African worldview which has not been given much prominence up to now

#### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A discussion on knowledge creation will invariably bring to the fore contested issues on the definition of knowledge. The process of knowledge creation is complex as we have to address the questions of “knowledge by who, for who and for what purpose?” It is therefore important to provide some conceptual framework for the discussion. There is no agreement as to what constitutes Indigenous Knowledges despite their popularity in the last decade, as a frame for knowledge creation within the African context and other contexts. What is clear is that it is a worldview that fits in with Africanism. Bell (1973) observes with reference to theoretical knowledge, that some form of knowledge has always been central to the functioning of any society. Indeed African societies have had their forms of knowledge before colonisation. Africans had knowledge on how to interpret weather, agriculture and construct infrastructure such as buildings. There are great monuments that remain as evidence of such knowledge. The Great Zimbabwe is an example and in Egypt the pyramids are another example. What colonisation did was to side-line such development and replaced it with a western culture.

Sillitoe, Bicher and Pottier (2002) state that Indigenous knowledge in development contexts may relate to any knowledge held more or less collectively by a population, informing understanding of the world. They also noted the relationship with the environment and the linkages to culture. However this perspective is Eurocentric. African universities should not engage the ‘rhetoric’ regarding an African worldview on Indigenous knowledge. What is needed is a pragmatic view that will usher in real change in knowledge creation leading to African development. More than a decade ago (Ellen & Harris, 2000) report that Indigenous knowledge in development contexts may relate to any knowledge held more or less collectively by a population, informing understanding of the world. It may pertain to any domain, particularly natural resource management in development currently. They claim that Indigenous Knowledge is community based, embedded in and conditioned by local tradition. They are culturally informed understanding inculcated into individuals from birth onwards, structuring how they interface with their environments.

Sillitoe et al. (2002) claim that Indigenous Knowledge is informed continually by outside intelligence. However their distribution is fragmentary. Although more widely shared locally on the whole than specialised scientific knowledge, no one person, authority or social group knows it all. The authors found that there could be a certain asymmetry with some clustering of certain knowledge within populations (e.g. by gender, age etc., or according to specialist status, perhaps reflecting political or ritual power). The authors refer to indigenous knowledge as one rather a multiples of knowledges. They concluded that Indigenous Knowledge exists nowhere as a totality; there is no grand repository, and hence no coherent overall theoretical model, although it may achieve some coherence in cosmologies, rituals and symbolic discourse.

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In the following section, I discuss some of the ‘ways of knowing’ and problematise what constitutes Indigenous Knowledge and its role in providing African epistemology.

### *Ontological and Epistemological Perspectives*

There are various notions of knowledge. One way of defining knowledge is by examining the ‘performativity’ of knowledge – that is its instrumental capacity to address everyday problems (Lyotard, 1984). It is important to interrogate the methods processes of knowledge production in African universities in the context of types of knowledge. This might lead to solutions on how African knowledge can address social, political and economic problems. Indigenous knowledge production can be viewed against transformative knowledge which assumes that knowledge is not neutral? While transformative knowledge reflects social hierarchies in a given society, Indigenous Knowledge systems are communally owned. Abdi and Shizha (2014) state that “Indigenous knowledge defines and is a response to the people live in a given socio-cultural context over a period of time. And it is via this experience that people construct the way they explain, control and manage their lives as well as how they relate to the attendant social and physical environments” (p. 1).

From a western perspective there are forms of knowledge identified as Modes I and II. According to Gibbons (1998), a new form of knowledge production began emerging in the mid-20th century that was context-driven, problem-focused and interdisciplinary. It involved multidisciplinary teams that worked together for short periods of time on specific problems in the real world. This became known as ‘mode 2’ knowledge production. It is distinguished from traditional research, referred to as ‘mode 1’. This form of is academic, investigator-initiated and discipline-based knowledge production. Are there possibilities for Africa domesticating these approaches through indigenous science? What Africa has been attempting is producing in part a counter hegemonic definition of knowledge that would usher in a new platform for the redefinition of knowledge. This has been propagated by some scholars under the growing importance of *ubuntu* which refers to the ‘Africanness of Africans’ (van Wyk & Higgs, 2007).

From a western perspective knowledge is factual, theoretical and technical (OECD, 1996). There is also a distinction between codified knowledge and tacit knowledge. How does Indigenous knowledge work? The role of local knowledge is vital in this form of knowledge (King & McGrath, 2000). What is considered valid knowledge is from a western perspective. This includes peer reviewed publications. Where then do Indigenous Knowledges lie? In general, local and African publishing and the development of independent, indigenous knowledge systems have suffered and will continue to suffer if these practices persist (Seepe, 2004). There should be ways of resisting continued academic colonisation. Africans are contributing to knowledge creation all over the world, North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. The question is how much Indigenous epistemological validity is taken on the continent itself?

*Modernity versus an African World View*

Knowledge production is not neutral. It is intricately connected with power and politics. The Eurocentric worldview or western paradigms emerged from the enlightenment period in Western Europe. The academic knowledges as we have them today in universities share their origins from enlightenment philosophies. An examination of university disciplines shows how they all fit in to propagate the knowledge creation from a colonialist perspective. Some of these disciplines indicate that they have derived their methods from and understandings from the colonised world (Smith, 2006).

Modernity as defined from a western perspective was seen as essential for development around the world. This phase in the development of western societies replaced the agrarian revolution. Western scientific knowledge, as was produced, “universalised” and exported to non-Western societies, was viewed as essential for development (Shizha, 2006). In re-thinking an African university it is important to use an African worldview. This concept is not counter hegemonic. It is a distinct paradigm and should be valued for its uniqueness. Some scholars would view it as counter hegemonic (Wright & Abdi, 2012; Shizha, 2006). There are new paradigms that are increasingly recognised for their contribution to knowledge creation under poststructural and sociological lenses. These include Indigenous Knowledges. A discussion of the African university cannot be complete without mentioning the struggle of the African state against imperialism. Nkurumah (1965) said “The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside” (p. ix).

*Postcolonial Theory*

I use postcolonial theory to frame my analysis in this chapter because this lens of critical theory addresses the issues of self-identity and the relevance or irrelevance of colonial education as Africa searches for a working model for its higher education. Said (1978) advances the idea that social scientists can disregard the views of those they actually study-preferring instead to rely on themselves and their peers. Most postcolonial scholars argue that the aim of post colonialism as a critique is to combat the residual effects of colonialism. However the problem faced by African Higher Education is that many of the assumptions and philosophical underpinnings have not changed materially from those left behind by colonialism.

In the wave of anti-colonial thought, Fanon (1961) says “the Third World ....faces Europe like a colossal mass whose aim should be to try and resolve the problems to which Europe has not been able to find answers.’ For Africa this been mere rhetoric as many of the countries still present a colonial approach to education and development despite much anticipation for deconstruction at independence. I believe that Africa still has to grapple with global influences even in the postcolonial

era. These influences appear under the guise of globalisation when in fact this is form of neo-colonialism.

Postcolonial theory focuses on de-constructing race, gender and other forms on which colonialism was based. The ultimate goal of postcolonial theory is combating the residual effects of colonialism on cultures (Nkurumah, 1965). On the other hand critical policy analysis focuses on exposing connections between policy context, process, and content (Walt & Gilson, 1994). Forester (1993) observes that critical policy analysis exposes the ideologies and values underlying policy issues and their proposed solutions, and the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the policy debate.

Universities all over the world have basically the same mandates. They are institutions where highly skilled manpower is produced. They provide teaching, research and service. They are engaged essentially in the production of knowledge and in other situations, technology transfer. How then does one conceptualise an African university or is it mere rhetoric? I believe it is possible to argue for an African university by introducing a philosophical perspective and the African “worldview” is a concept that needs developing if a truly African university is to emerge. Currently the universities in Africa use the western ways of knowing yet they need intellectual independence.

The Intellectual Dependency Theory (Peet & Hartwick, 1999) state that the economic hegemony of the West has been paralleled by academic dependency in which Third World intellectuals trained in Western knowledge, speak colonial language, and stress the history of the coloniser over that of the colonised. Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1987) advocates the ‘decolonisation of the mind’. The position of African intellectuals trained abroad has been regarded by nationalist movements as very problematic. They trust the intellectuals only when they are able to articulate and reclaim indigenous cultures. The intellectuals have a dilemma when it comes to this new leadership role because of their class interests. There are fears that these intellectuals may have been estranged from their own cultures (Smith, 2006).

We have observed that indigenous knowledges were sidelined as inferior. Therefore change must start with an indigenous way of gaining knowledge. In this respect local languages should play an important role. The new philosophy of education would focus on an education that is rooted in the indigenous culture and should be more relevant. For example in South Africa and Zimbabwe and the idea of *ubuntu/hunhu/chivanhu* (one’s Africanness) becoming a philosophy to underpin relevant South African and Zimbabwean education should be promoted. In trying to get the African worldview of higher education it is important to move more into indigenous methodologies of research. Some of the values to be highlighted would include respect, dignity, honesty and cooperation. In this approach education would try and restore the lost cultural values. This is perhaps one of the fundamental changes to education that would ensure its relevance to national development.

There are several African philosophers that we can draw from in re-thinking the African university. There is a lot to learn from Nyerere, the former president

of Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Nkrumah advocated for a true developmental African university rooted on African soil. He said the university once planted on African soil must take root amidst African traditions and culture. (Nkrumah cited in Chideya et al., 1982). Nyerere's idea of education and development was based on self-reliance. While his concept of 'villagisation' was less successful in Tanzania because of the demise of Socialism, it remains an educational philosophical foundation for Africa. Until African countries can stand on their feet and stop using the begging bowl they can never be truly independent. In defining the role of the university Nyerere said that in all its research and teaching the University of East Africa must be searching always for that elusive thing—truth. It is in this manner that the University will contribute to our development, because the fight against prejudice is vital for progress in

The African culture was rich in terms of values such as dignity, respect, honesty, and communality. Khurumah (1965) advocated the spirit of humanism as a basis for countering colonial and neo-colonial influences. With the coming of colonialism African were subjected to the idea of competition and individualism thereby destroying the very fabric of their society. One reads about Africa's problems which include economic decline in the majority of the countries. Tackling poverty through research and production of skilled manpower becomes one of the universities' urgent areas of attention. It is surely a matter of social justice. The UN report (2014) on the *Road to Dignity* which is the next phase in the development goals by the international body quotes Nelson Mandela who said,

Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity. It is an act of justice. Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. You can be that generation. Let your greatness bloom. (p. 13)

#### *Beyond Postcolonial Theory*

African intellectuals need to move into a new paradigm the "Post postcolonial theory" in this framework the essence is not to dwell on the past but move the present into the future. This lens will enable a fresh look at the African culture and its values as a basis for knowledge creation. What is the relationship between African leaders and their subjects? How is knowledge being created in that relationship? More specifically how are universities involved in this relationship?

Corruption was not part of African culture, yet today it is one of the most devastating problems on the continent. Khurumah advocated for the spirit of Humanism. Mandela highlighted the idea of Ubuntu and many other African leaders have pointed out the values that constituted Africanism such as respect, honesty, dignity rather than greed, individualism (focusing on the self as opposed to the communal or national needs). In this regard Ubuntu, as African epistemology has the potential to usher in development on the continent (van Wyk & Higgs, 2007;

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Swanson, 2012). It is clear that there is need to articulate an African worldview in knowledge construction. Kariwo (2012) observes that Indigenous Knowledges were side-lined for a long time since colonisation. “Change must start with an Indigenous way of gaining knowledge. In this respect, local languages should play an important role. The new philosophy of education would focus on a more relevant education rooted in indigenous culture” (p. 87).

### *Critical Policy Analysis*

In the discussion on knowledge production and policy, I use critical policy analysis because it focuses on exposing connections between policy context, process, and content (Walt & Gilson, 1994; Fischer, 2003). Forester (1993) observes that critical policy analysis exposes the ideologies and values underlying policy issues and their proposed solutions, and the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the policy debate. The critical – empirical approach to policy analysis is effective because it involves deconstructing claims, examining evidence in relation to those claims and reconstructing understanding (St. John, 2007). This approach is relevant for analyses that involve great diversity such as African higher education.

The distinction between traditional policy analyses and critical policy analysis is that the former entailed the deductive evaluation of the relative merit of various policy options while that latter focuses on how the interplay of the processes and contexts influence the definition of policy problems (content), agenda setting, and choice of policy instruments. Critical policy analysis therefore includes an analysis of how issues are understood and framed by the various policy communities – those groups of actors from government, private sector, pressure groups, advocacy groups, media or academia who seek to influence the course of public policy. There are issues of power and who controls it in policy making processes.

Some critical theorists aim at identifying and attending to power relations inherent in policy processes. wa Thiongo (1987) focusses on language and power. Language has been a fundamental site of struggle in postcolonial discourses because the colonial process itself begins in language (a) by displacing the native or indigenous languages. (b) By planting the language of the new empire at the center. In efforts to decolonise the mind, wa Thiong’o spoke about blindness to the indigenous voice of Africans which was a direct result of colonisation. He explains that during colonisation, missionaries and colonial administrators controlled publishing houses and the educational context of novels. This means that only texts with religious stories or carefully selected stories which would not tempt young Africans to question their own condition were propagated. Africans were controlled by forcing them to speak European languages. Other critical theorists include Fanon, Said, Gramsci and Foucault.

In Foucauldian analysis, (Foucault, 1971, 1983) history is used to diagnose the present and disturbing the issues that are taken for granted. Foucault does not see the present as arising from the past. He sees it as different and strange just as the past. Foucault’s analysis is useful in understanding how power in Africa has been

defined during and after colonialism. Another philosopher, Antonio Gramsci (1971) argued that the way ideology works is to make itself invisible, taken for granted, so that it becomes hegemonic. The idea of invisible power or what some scholars have called the “the third face of power” originates from Marxist thinking. Marx saw the pervasive nature of the power of ideology, values and beliefs in reproducing class relations. The whole capitalist system was driven by exploitation of man using the dominant ideas of the ruling class. In using critical discourse analysis one observes the power of the elites throughout the higher education policy making process in Africa.

#### POLICY FRAMEWORK

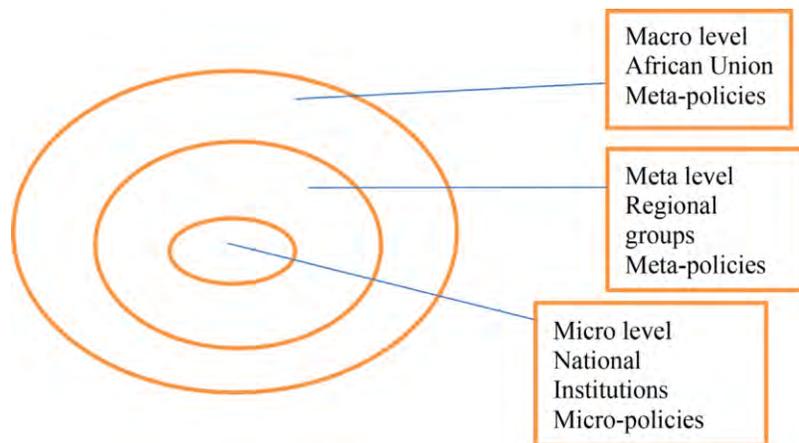
It is important from a policy perspective, to investigate the relationship between the university, government and productive sectors of the economy? How is the production of knowledge undertaken in this tripartite relationship in African countries? Higher education policies do not exist in a vacuum. The situation in many African countries demonstrates that there is a strong link between the level of the national economy and the funding of public universities. For most African the economic crisis is having a negative impact on higher education institutions and other sectors.

Forester (1993) observes that critical policy analysis exposes the ideologies and values underlying policy issues and their proposed solutions, and the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of the policy debate. The complexity of current policy issues on African higher education demonstrates the need for a broader knowledge base and collaboration between all those affected. In [Figure 1](#), a theoretical model is proposed. At the same time, we are urged to critically reflect on the roles, ambitions and scope of the research we do. How have African universities, governments, regional organisations and the African Union been responding to the need for spaces for indigenous knowledge creation? Critical policy analysis therefore includes an analysis of how issues are understood and framed by the various policy communities – those groups of actors from government, private sector, pressure groups, advocacy groups, media or academia who seek to influence the course of public policy.

Reframing higher education requires addressing philosophical issues, governance and funding which are the cornerstones to the development of a robust system. A decade ago the economies of many African countries were in a much stronger position than they are today which puts funding issues at the top of the agenda. Sherman (1990) contends that the African university is a modern invention that does not provide practical solutions to the needs and challenges of its traditional agrarian environment. Most people expect higher education to provide solutions to the problems of development especially in these so-called “underdeveloped countries.” Their expectations are not met as more investment in higher education fails to produce the desired results. Knowledge production at African universities will be dependent on four pillars

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- a. Indigenous knowledges
- b. Technological enhancement, the diaspora and virtual teaching and learning
- c. Alternative revenue generation mechanisms which prioritise higher education
- d. Policy and political buy-in by African states at local regional and continental levels.



*Figure 1. Policy framework for African indigenous knowledges*

#### *Macro-Level*

Policies at the macro level need accent from the micro level. However bottom up approach would be more effective in developing policies for Indigenous Knowledges in universities. Africa is huge and diverse. Effective knowledge creation requires the participation of many stakeholders. Critical policy analysis as a process involves dialoguing with stakeholders in the policy making process. These can be understood from the continental, regional, national and even institutional levels.

At the continental level, one of the main mandates of the African Union (AU) is to revitalise Africa's higher education and to make Africa a peaceful and integrated continent. As such, the AU has a focus on advancing the international dimension of education in Africa. A high premium has been placed on quality of higher education as the most important tool for developing the necessary knowledge and skills for socio-economic development. This is epitomised in the adoption of the Second Decade of Education for Africa by African Heads of State, who also identified higher education as a priority area. This is further embedded in the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology in Africa (AU, 2008).

The African Union Commission (AUC) views regional integration as a key and intermediate step towards integration of African countries into the global economy. This is also to bring convergence to Africa's higher education system which is

diversely structured along geographical, colonial, linguistic and structural lines. The realities of internationalisation are dawning on Africa and on its diversity, leading to new developments and responses. Recent decades have witnessed a changing landscape in African higher education. Major reforms have spawned drastic changes in student enrolment, revenue diversification, external quality assurance mechanisms and governance structures. At the regional level, the African Union (AU) has set out the goal of “complete revitalization of higher education in Africa” for the period 2006–2015 (AU, 2006). This is an opportunity at the macro level to create an environment for rethinking the African university. A critical examination of the role of the African university and interrogation of the AU’s goal of “complete revitalisation” is necessary to see if it has implications on re-positioning African universities so that they can play important roles in the promotion of African values including respect for democracy and social justice.

Higher education is given much more prominence in major national plans and objectives in many countries. At the international level and particularly for the African continent, the watershed was the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (1988). The conference called upon nations across the globe to adopt the broad mission and functions of higher education in the 21st century. The mission and goals included the production and dissemination of knowledge through research, the education of citizens for active participation in society, the promotion of cultural pluralism and diversity, and the enhancement and protection of societal values. What is lacking from these pronouncements/objectives is the role of Ubuntu/Indigenous worldview in the knowledge creation.

The Pan African University (PAU) reinforces the spirit of pan-Africanism in higher education. With limited fiscal and human resources in African countries, and the need to build synergies for solutions to the numerous developmental challenges facing Africa, PAU has developed centres of excellence in higher education through collaboration and cooperation between African countries. PAU’s educational structure focuses on integrative teaching and cutting edge research that also recognises Africa’s pluralistic contexts. In addition, it contributes towards the strengthening of Africa’s Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS). While PAU has a pan African mission its organisational structure still leaves it with a regional approach. It is noted that the African Union has been spearheading new initiatives to foster internationalisation and collaborations between African universities and attempts to harmonise academic programs but there is no deliberate effort to deal with policies on indigenous knowledge production. This is one platform at the continental level that could initiate change.

#### *Regional Organisations*

There are very strong regional organisations in Africa such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which can influence

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policy in tertiary education. They can also act as buffer zones or links between AU and nation states in the transformation of the African University. A review of the higher education policies at regional level reveals that there is a gap between the groupings as they operate more in silos. This situation does not auger well for a pan-African view. While it is important that regional groupings focus on local problems they should also have an overview of the continent's framework for development. There is merit in moving away from balkanisation.

SARUA (2012) highlights the need for increasing participation at the tertiary level as a way of building capacity and developing leadership in universities. Their focus was on exploring the requirements and policy implications for significantly scaling up higher education in the region by modelling a base, optimistic and normative scenario for enrolment growth in higher education in SADC. While noting that the region has consistently outperformed sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) as a whole, it still lags behind most other regions of the world in secondary and tertiary enrolment. There is no mention of how knowledge production would be achieved as part of the growth. This why it is important to infuse the discourse at regional levels as well as at individual institutions.

#### *Micro-level: National Policy*

In most African countries governments have centralised policy formulation processes and approaches to higher education because of funding issues and other reasons which include ideology and politics. There is the famous adage which says "He who holds the purse calls the tune". In Zimbabwe, Mugabe (1982) stated that universities are too important to be left to the professors while in Tanzania, Nyerere advocated for an indigenous university. Speaking as the first Chancellor of the University of East Africa, newly created from colleges in East Africa that had been incorporated in a colonial special relationship with the University of London, Nyerere (1963) warned against the elitist, isolationist stance of such an institution of higher learning,

For let us be quite clear; the University has not been established purely for prestige purposes. It has a very definite role to play in development in this area, and to do this effectively it must be in, and of, the community it has been established to serve. The University of East Africa has to draw upon experience and ideas from East Africa as well as from the rest of the world. And it must direct its energies particularly towards the needs of East Africa. (pp. 218–219)

Nkurumah advocated for a true developmental African university. He said that once planted on African soil it must take root amidst African traditions and culture. (Nkurumah cited in Chideya et al., 1982).

Policies crafted at the level of the institution are critical in providing an environment for indigenous knowledge creation. These policies need to be filtered through to the regional and continental level for coordination and integration to

improve the continental overarching framework. This is crucial to maintain diversity but also to achieve pan- Africanism.

#### *University Institutions*

Institutions continue to be governed using legal instruments that were adapted or simply borrowed from the colonial period with the exception of Ethiopia which was never colonised. Most universities in former British colonies still use the committee system with Senate and Council being the top bodies in the university governance. Does this model lend itself to an African way of knowledge creation? At the institutional level the organisational structures are pretty much the same as the colonial institutions or the universities in the coloniser's metropolis.

An examination of the governance shows the power distribution in committees from university councils down to department councils. The structures can become barriers to transformation and knowledge creation. For example, the head and professor of a department may exert influence on the other professors when it comes to introducing new ways of knowledge creation. They have the academic clout which younger professors do not have. Change can only come by first transforming these structures. The Senates at universities have the ultimate power on decisions that relate to academic issues. Embracing indigenous knowledges will vary by discipline and therefore strategies are required to engage with academics across disciplines. Some universities have introduced a structure which separates the administrative aspects of the chair from the academic ones. While this arrangement provides opportunities for the younger professors to gain experience it can create tensions between the senior academics and the new ones in the knowledge production process.

More recently the power in universities is becoming less distributed compared to the traditional collegial form of governance. The president or vice chancellor was 'first among equals'. With the establishment of the entrepreneurial university, the vice chancellor is the chief executive officer of the organisation. In this role the relationship with deans of faculties and departmental chairs has taken a new form. Emphasis is on performance and profitability. What are the implications for indigenous approaches to knowledge creation? Institutions continue to operate under western influences and do not have the space to reflect on their own home grown approaches. In re-thinking African universities there are two competing paradigms, on the one hand is an institution that is rooted in African culture and driven by African philosophy. On the other hand, there are global pressures and economic imperatives that force the universities to seek western models in financing education. This is where some of the challenges lie in attempting to reform the African University.

#### DISCOURSES ON INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES

One of the main weaknesses in African higher education has been its marginalisation. Abdi and Guo (2008) state that, "the weaknesses being witnessed in many

‘postcolonial’ countries may be related to the marginalisation of indigenous linguistic, cultural and overall learning worldview of these societies” (pp. 4–5). In higher education this calls for decolonisation of the ethos, values and purposes, methodological as well programming and policy frameworks. There is a need for identifying with an African worldview. It is noteworthy that some institutions have begun the deconstruction and established centres of indigenous knowledge.

Colonial knowledge that has been reified by colonial global forces lacks the existential authenticity that is required by indigenous people to engage in self-defining and self-sustainable development projects (Shizha, 2008). Modernity within the African context essentially means Western and Eurocentric worldviews. Local environmental knowledges were seen as a barrier to development. Under neocolonialism the same ideology persists. Western scientific knowledge was seen as a vehicle for social change and development. The African university has to demonstrate that this is myth. Western cultural forms and ideas were propagated as the standard to be adopted and emulated. The result has been the production of a historical cultural and political discontinuity amongst the African people.

The science curricula adopted by many African countries are transplants which were not suitable for African indigenous nations because not only were they irrelevant in terms of addressing critical issues such as poverty they carried with them the baggage of imperialism. Colonialism and its knowledge constructs was a cultural invasion that imposed cultural capital of the coloniser onto the colonised (Shizha, 2008).

“Is this an African I see before me?” There are misconceptions about Africa which can only be corrected by Africans themselves (Wright & Abdi, 2012). When the West refers to Africa as the ‘dark’ continent it is them in the dark (Smith, 2005). By engaging in Indigenous Knowledge production the African university can make a significant contribution to enlightening the world.

Dei (2014) sees some positives in African development. He stated that Africa is not all about success cases. The continent is also not about failures either. “ We cannot let Africa become synonymous with narratives of ‘crisis’, ‘chaos’, ‘collapse’, ‘destruction and human suffering’, ‘failure’ and ‘corruption’ (p. 16)

From foregoing discourses, the African university is challenged to start programs of mental decolonisation along with other forms of decolonisation such as revived policy frameworks at national, regional and continent-wide levels.

#### *Globalisation and Internationalisation of Higher Education*

The increasing impact of globalisation brings threats and advantages to African higher education. There are advantages for participating in the knowledge production but there are threats resulting from the flight from the continent by both students and faculty. The North tends to benefit from such migration compared with the South.

International students have become targets for income generation by universities in the North.

Another development is the knowledge and information explosion at the global level which can be harnessed to Africa's advantage and development. The challenge is accessing and owning this knowledge and information. Internet connectivity in Africa compared to the rest of the world shows that the continent needs to invest more in communications. The World Bank (2014) reports that

Mobile phones are one of several ways of accessing the Internet. And like telephone use, Internet use is strongly correlated with income. Since 2000 Internet users per 100 people in developing economies has grown 28 percent a year, but the low-income economies of South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa lag behind. (p. 9)

#### *Technology and the Role of the Diaspora*

A paradigm change is necessary in Africa's higher education and the role of the Diaspora's cannot be under-estimated particularly with the increasing use of the internet. The African intellectuals abroad can and should participate in, knowledge production, dissemination and application in the African university. Gutto (2007) observes that this participation and a new paradigm for Africa are essential and necessary preconditions for the African Renaissance. In reclaiming African identity, cultural and intellectual liberation are equally imperative and form essential and necessary resources for correcting distortions of the African reality. The possibilities of engaging the diaspora under a 'virtual' university is becoming more and more feasible. The African virtual university has been in existence for several years. However, the programs at AU are limited by cost and other resources. The AU should be innovative as well as indigenise its ethos. The World Bank which is one of the founding donors is known for its policies that were counter to African higher education development. Which policy frameworks can make the AU become the dominant stakeholder and thereby locate power within the continent?

#### *Funding*

One area needing attention to improve knowledge production is funding of the African university. There is evidence that universities are underfunded. This results in several effects, brain drain, inadequate resources (e.g. library books and journals), and limited research funds as well as inadequate funds for capital development and operational expenses. Universities in Kenya have had some success in income generation. The institutions have introduced 'parallel programmes' for full tuition fee paying students. Income from these sources has been used to top up salaries for academics. Makerere University is an example of a success story. The university has managed to hire and retain highly qualified professors with PhDs.

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SARUA research in 2007 through 2009, revealed the daunting nature of the challenges faced by many public universities in the South African Development Committee (SADC) region to simply survive and to maintain existing standards (Kotecha, 2010). Other challenges were related to massively increasing student access and the volume and quality of research outputs.” Perhaps, top of the challenges that such universities in ‘survival mode’ face are the very real problems of brain drain; inadequate infrastructure; the rapid ageing and decay of many existing facilities and, in some cases, the lack of access to some of even the most basic tools needed to conduct high-level teaching and learning in this; the age of the ‘Knowledge Society’.”

Some studies (Olsson & Cooke, 2013) indicate that there are funding mechanisms in developing countries that support research. These include block grants for faculty. This can be used for capacity building while institutions try to attract and retain faculty. Competitive funding is essential for increasing competition. In addition this opens the door for external research grants. They also cite the globalisation effect where centers of excellence are gaining popularity with funders. An example is the South African Research chair scheme. There are adequate funds for universities in Africa, if only we got our priorities right. Examples of economies that have the potential are South Africa, Nigeria, Libya, and Egypt and yet these nations continue to look for international assistance. There is need for a paradigm shift. Nyerere advocated the concept of ‘self-reliance’. He was indeed right in such a philosophy. The begging bowl syndrome needs to end.

#### *Academic Leadership*

As a result of the brain drain, most universities lack senior academics with years of experience in teaching and research. This means that there is little capacity for graduate training and research. At independence in some universities the professor and head of department was replaced by an administrative chair. While this was an important change to allow young and promising African scholars it also meant that the senior professors no longer had the authority and power that was vested in them.

In highlighting the need for intellectual capacity, Sawyerr (2007) observes that

Africa’s drive for self-development, self-management and international competitiveness cannot succeed without a good measure of self-belief. The continuing crisis must therefore be seen as involving a combination of material deprivation and the loss of a vision for self-development, each reinforcing the other in a downward spiral. (p. 156)

In terms of strengthening research output, (Cloete & Bunting, 2015) found that there is a pipeline problem between master and doctorate. The doctorate output, is very low in the majority of the universities they investigated. Their conclusion is that this will affect the ability of the institutions to publish in international journals. These African universities did not seem to have enough senior staff at the professoriate level to provide

research leadership. There is evidence that there are very few postgraduate studies at PG level in several universities due lack of academics to supervise students. In many disciplines the instructor or professor has a Master's degree. One of the priorities in the realisation of an African university is the enhancement of academic leadership. There is need for a critical mass of senior academic leaders in these institutions.

#### *Research Quality and Output*

Schemm (2013) reports that one of the most positive signs for Africa has been the recent increase in scientific research being conducted by local African scientists. It is noted that from 1996 to 2012, the number of research papers published in scientific journals with at least one African author more than quadrupled (from about 12,500 to over 52,000). During the same time the share of the world's articles with African authors almost doubled from 1.2% to around 2.3%. Notwithstanding the continent is still placed far at the bottom of the global research scale. One of the problems in such comparisons is what counts as research is evaluated using western lenses. Indigenous scholars have to get recognised in their research efforts through western standards. Yet there is so much research relevant to the continent which is being conducted. This demonstrates the power relationship in academia with the west being held as the standard in reference in knowledge creation. Africa's research has to be validated in western peer reviewed journals

The above author attributes the increase in research output to increased funding, significant policy changes within countries, improved research infrastructure, both human and physical, ICT resources, open, free and low cost access to peer reviewed literature, and research capacity building training. An important finding is that access and wide internet bandwidth are not in themselves enough to improve research but skills in online searching should be developed in tandem.

#### CONCLUSION

In charting the way forward, it is important to bear in mind that universities are very conservative in nature. Change will be viewed with suspicion if not met with resistance. A theoretical model has been suggested for dealing with change starting at the micro level. A truly African university should not only encompass an indigenous worldview but to be a resource for providing solutions to the many socio-economic and political problems on the continent.

The notion of an African renaissance articulated by Mbeki (1998) gave much hope for Africa but has not gained the necessary momentum to bring change. African universities must build capacity locally for the development of an indigenous knowledge-based curriculum at both pre- and postsecondary levels. The curriculum should focus on developmental issues such as increasing food, eradicating disease, improving infrastructure (electricity, water, roads and housing), strengthening economies and elimination of corruption, developing future responsible and capable

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future leaders. In science topics include such matters as integrating medicines into public health systems, integrating science with indigenous knowledge. Overall there should be a focus on investigating indigenous knowledge for sustainable development. There are several African platforms for publishing research an example is the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

The process of change involves unpacking hegemonic worldviews and knowledge systems that have been presented as the dominant and only methods for development. They are taken for granted as neutral, universal or singular. We need to provide students with tools to analyse where African knowledge is incompatible with other knowledge systems but to be cognizant that knowledge creation should be free of external influences but still allow critique and analysis of global issues.

It is evident that the importation of the knowledge economy into Africa through such organisations as the World Bank has not produced the desired results. The assumption was based on the success story of Asian countries. This leaves the option of an Indigenous knowledge base as the way forward. Because of academic colonisation the starting point is that of decolonising the mind. African universities must be used as spaces to reclaim African identity. Where there are plans to set up new universities these should be utilised as sites for creating an African university.

Finally, a new paradigm shift requires effective communication between existing structures such as the AU, regional organisations, governments and universities. Critical policy analysis emphasises the consultation and participation of all stakeholders. There is ample research done on the African university in terms of ideology, capacity and current performance in knowledge production. What is lacking is the political will to transform the institution.

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## 5. CRITICAL SCHOLARSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Considerations of Epistemology, Theory and Method*

### INTRODUCTION

When researching Otherness against the colonial or apartheid legacy (be it with respect to women, white or black people, or rural communities, for example), the relation between the subject and the object of research develops against the background of the social relations that have been objectively structured in the past, and are currently reproduced. This is particularly important where these relations have been structured, historically, around deeply entrenched categories of social difference such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status. In the context of African scholarship, these largely remain epistemological blind spots. In such situations, research practice in social sciences and education cannot be separated from the relations of domination and subordination inherited from colonial and apartheid social engineering. In South Africa, in particular, disregarding these relations and the marginalising discourses underpinning them, has always been a danger. These discourses are frequently either swept away or just overlooked in intellectual circles and the field of knowledge production (Cross, 2015; Seepe, 2004). Many years after the demise of colonialism and apartheid, few fundamental changes seem to have occurred in these domains.

In this chapter, we revisit the debate about researching the Other in South Africa. We locate and expand it within two key intersecting domains of the intellectual and political field of knowledge production, namely, the knowledge foundational domain (discursive or epistemological), and the social domain (social action and social relations). We explore how these domains interface with the individual agency of social science researchers in the research processes, in relation to perceived forms of social difference. We do so by tracking the main scholarly traditions in recent years, their explicit or assumed epistemological foundations, and their implications for knowledge produced.

The chapter argues that, given the colonial/apartheid legacy, relationships between subjects and objects of study in a social science research context are intentionally or unintentionally conditioned by the imaginary boundaries of race, class and gender, and other forms of social difference. These have profound implications for knowledge conception, formulation and validation.

Many researchers, already privileged through their position in the dominant social structures—constituted as hierarchies and communities of difference (Tierney, 1993; Rowe, 2003)—or through the embodiment of dominant intellectual discourses, very often tend to overlook these epistemological and methodological issues, even when confronted by indisputable evidence. Our argument builds on three basic premises: (i) the importance of awareness or understanding of the social experiences of the researched connected to those specific divisions; (ii) scholarship as an exercise of power and interest subtly articulated in knowledge representation (hence the role of critical agency); and (iii) the implications of the researcher's positioning in the intellectual field or, following Bourdieu (2003), the researcher's 'habitus' (individual dispositions and pre-dispositions that may influence research practice).

#### ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The goal of scientific enquiry or research in social sciences is the search for 'truth' or 'truthful' knowledge, that is, to obtain results that are as close to the 'truth' as possible, or that provide the most valid explanation possible (Mouton, 2009). Taking this into consideration, we draw our conceptual and analytical framework largely from a number of Bourdieu's theoretical constructs. First, Bourdieu's (2003) notion of *original complicity*, and second, the concept of *epistemological break*. Bourdieu (2003, p. 13) uses the notion of original complicity or original crime to refer to a researcher's historico-cultural embeddedness with respect to class, race, gender, and the other forms of social difference that may separate the researcher from the researched. This embeddedness is considered to be the foundation of complicity, and thus indelible culpability, in the field of intellectual research.

Despite the claim of scientific objectivity, researchers can never separate themselves completely from their social condition because of their particular social location. As a result, they may not see beyond their own subjectivities and dispositions and may project these onto the object of enquiry rather than seeing more 'truthful' attributes, and may thus fail to fulfil the epistemic imperative of 'truthful knowledge'. Such distortions are more likely in societies that have undergone profound colonisation and racial segregation, as is the case with many African societies where coloniality of the social is inseparable from coloniality of knowledge and research at large.

Structured along racial, gender and ethnic differences, the dynamics of interest and power play out in the research process in numerous ways. This is not to deny that knowledge construction can assume different degrees of approximation, since social science research is always shaped by its selectivity. For example, one may choose to investigate specific topics/issues due to normative concerns/interests, so that there can be objectivity without researchers being totally disinterested. In scrutinising the responses to this challenge, we look at the epistemological place and significance of the construct of original complicity within South African scholarship.

In South Africa, under colonialism and apartheid, racial, ethnic and gender relations were constituted as relations of power and domination, that is, social groups

were not only constructed as different from other groups, but were also assigned a specific position in the social, economic and political hierarchy. According to the notion of original complicity, knowledge should be refracted through such forms of difference. This would mean that only researchers originating from the same social category, embedded in the same sociocultural experience, and embodying a similar world outlook as a research group, could arrive at truthful knowledge about that research group. This is a somewhat anti-intellectual perspective in our view. However, such an assumption raises important and pertinent epistemological questions: Why should original complicity receive ethical and epistemological privilege? (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 13). Smith (1990) questions whether it is “possible at all to write as ‘Other’ or to write the ‘Other’” (p. 170), and Fawcett and Hearn (2004) ask:

Is it possible to research ‘others’? If so, how is this to be done? And how does this aspiration and this activity relate to more general questions in social science methodology? ... [c]an men research women, white people, people of colour, or visa [sic] versa? (p. 201)

After *original complicity*, we address the concept of *epistemological break*. While earlier philosophers and social theorists (for example, Gaston Bachelard, Karl Marx and Louis Althusser) use the concept of epistemological break to refer to the critical moments when new theoretical consciousness emerges, Bourdieu narrows this concept down to refer to the degrees of vigilance required for achieving a more nuanced epistemic gaze, that is, a “dialectical advance towards adequate knowledge” (Bourdieu, 2003, p. 13). Bourdieu’s epistemic breaks enable researchers to be reflexive about their own epistemic position. He refers to three distinct types of epistemic breaks, relating to ‘three degrees of vigilance’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 20):

- *The epistemic break from common sense or everyday life understandings*. This entails breaking from the practical knowledge, based on everyday experience, that guides individuals to orientate their actions in certain ways and to uncover the underlying generating principles of such actions (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 20). However, Bandura (1977) illustrates in his theory of learning by trial and error, and the efficacy of positive responses in the process, that these forms of knowledge cannot be neglected.
- *The epistemic break from the objectivist and subjectivist reductionism*. For Bourdieu (in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104–107), subjectivity is neither determined by, nor free from, objective conditions. The outcome of this second type of break is the possibility of a “science of dialectical relations between objective structures ... and the subjective dispositions within which these structures are actualised and which tend to reproduce them” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 3). Bourdieu (in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104–107) insists that researchers need to recognise their personal biases—their values, experiences and constructions—and acknowledge that these, together with the historical and ideological moment in which they live, influence the direction of their research. We maintain that this

reflexive positioning should also take into account that even the very conceptions of subjective and objective conditions, and the dichotomy that they propose, must be subjected to conceptual interrogation. Utilising Bourdieu's theoretical perspective to inform data analysis, then, requires researchers to look at the dynamic interaction between individuals and their surroundings, and situate their accounts within a larger historical, political, economic and symbolic context.

- *The epistemic break from 'theoretical knowledge'*. The third type of break requires researchers to break from theoretical knowledge, whether subjectivist or objectivist. This refers to the need to pay attention to the practices of social agents in the field and represent them as truthfully as possible (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 21). This is because:

... separated from the realities of the economic and social world by their existence and above all by their intellectual formation, which is most frequently purely abstract, bookish, and theoretical, [researchers] are particularly inclined to confuse the things of logic with the logic of things. (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2)

It is important, then, for critical sociologists to cast a professional eye over the world of their origin, and to understand and deconstruct their own position in both the research and the academic fields. In doing this, research becomes a process of self-analysis in which researchers attempt to grasp, at a conscious level, their own dispositions, in order to make sense of those with, or upon, whom they conduct their research.

With reference to the analytical framework described above, we scrutinise recent South African scholarship and identify key insights that point to alternative epistemological and methodological pathways and their implications for future research. We focus on four areas: (i) the critique of essentialism and theoretical reductionism in South African radical theories of the 1970s; (ii) epistemological promises arising from the advent postmodernism in later post-structuralist debates; (iii) political and emancipatory epistemologies underpinning anti-apartheid and transformative intellectual discourses of the 1980s; and (iv) the potential that these have for a sound intellectual gaze across difference.

A common feature of the four areas of scholarship listed above is that, although they have attempted epistemological breaks, they are still far from accounting for the complexities of social difference, experience and meaning, effectively. We argue that this is due to an inability to effect the fundamental paradigm shifts and epistemic breaks required to move African scholarship from its position as an extension of Western scholarship to a position of partnership in the global discursive context. In each case, the analytical strategies adopted remain within the parameters of the same theoretical frameworks they challenge or criticise.

In this analysis we take cognisance of the centrality of alternative epistemologies in reasserting the transformative potential of knowledge. We argue however that, to be effective, such epistemologies cannot be thought about outside the racialised and

gendered structure of social relations within the South African social and intellectual fields. We concede, however, that while not innocent, social markers of difference and privilege are not innate but are the result of socially constructed boundaries between individuals or social groups (Cross & Naidoo, 2012, p. 229). As Bernstein (2000) states, the boundaries between different social groups and categories of knowledge are a function of power relations: “power relations create boundaries, legitimise boundaries, reproduce boundaries between different categories of groups, gender, class, race, different categories of discourse, different categories of agents” (p. 5). This is where we locate our anti-colonial social justice project of research and knowledge decolonisation.

#### ESSENTIALISM, UNIVERSALISM AND THEORETICAL REDUCTIONISM

While neo-Marxism emerged in the 1970s as an alternative to the poverty of theory that characterised both Afrikaner nationalist and liberal scholarship in South Africa under apartheid, it displayed problems of its own. The over privileging of certain subjects as points of departure and change agents in social analysis soon revealed its limitations. Worth mentioning in this regard are two theoretical strands within the South African radical theory that dominated southern African debates in the 1970s: neo-Marxist and Black Consciousness scholarship. Each strand had its ‘privileged subjects’ that were the only driving force with all explanatory power for social change. For neo-Marxists, only the working class could carry out a truly revolutionary mission, regardless of its social and ideological differences (Wolpe, 1972; Johnstone, 1970, 1976; Trapido, 1970; Legassick, 1974). It was also through its actions and experiences that social change could be explained and understood. For Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) scholars, such a historical and intellectual mission lay in the hands of the black working class only, given its unique experiences under colonialism and apartheid (Biko, 1979; Alexander, 1986; Motlhabi, 1984).

Epistemologically, two important aspects divided the two intellectual traditions, neo-Marxism and Black Consciousness scholarship. The first aspect was whether the differential categories of race or class were appropriate analytical categories to understand the complexity of South African society. The second was whether a preoccupation with the working class, or the black working class, specifically, as privileged subjects was a sound starting point, analytically. The analytical excitement around these issues did not last long, however, and important insights soon emerged. It became clear that the problematic of privileged subjects had serious analytical limitations, particularly when students superseded the working class in the struggle for political emancipation (Cross, Carpentier, & Ait-Mehdi, 2008, pp. 15–16). It was evident that the focus on privileged subjects, in both ontological and epistemological senses, had to be replaced. As Laclau and Mouffe (1985, p. 70) correctly indicate, no social movement or social category can be taken, a priori, as having a revolutionary mission by virtue of its class nature, and certainly also its race or age affiliation.

The theoreticism that dominated these traditions curtailed sensitivity to the human dimension, more specifically, to the real life experiences of people as articulated by social theory. Analysts—particularly revisionists—came to the realisation that the universalising, totalising or essentialising mode that characterised their social analyses precluded the narrative of human experience, which was the more appropriate foundation for theoretical explanation. Essentialism is a form of theoretical reductionism that emerges when researchers fail to see the established order as problematic (Bourdieu, 1988) and when justifications for the prevailing social order are masked by theory (Bourdieu, 1990), offering explanations of social life that are removed from rigorous engagement with social practices. In developing his own concept of theoretical knowledge, Bourdieu sought to overcome the opposition between “theoretical knowledge of the social world as constructed by outside observers and the knowledge used by those who possess a practical mastery of their world” (Postone LiPuma & Calhoun, 1993, p. 3). He accorded validity to ‘native’ conceptions, without simply taking those conceptions at face value. He encouraged researchers to break away from theoretical knowledge—whether subjectivist or objectivist—because of its tendency to abstract reality, and “to confuse the things of logic with the logic of things” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 2), as mentioned earlier. Revisionist critics in South Africa called for an epistemic break from such tendencies, which they termed ‘history without passion’ or, in this case, ‘theory without passion’ (Cross et al., 2008, p. 6). The alternative meant paying attention to the practices of social agents in the field and representing them as truthfully as possible (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 21).

The opposite of theory without passion is an epistemological approach that challenges research that neglects the dialectic between the theoretical (made up of pre-determined and fixed ideas) and the empirical (real life experiences of people in their diversity). It is important for theorising ‘what is really going on’. Revisionists charged prevailing radical scholarship epistemologies of de-emphasising dimensions of experience by privileging imagined or pre-conceived categories, devoid of historical rootedness. Human experience in all its diversity and complexity can sometimes be absorbed and diluted into fixed concepts such as productive forces, relations of production, and capital and class struggles, which, under oppressive apartheid structures, failed to account for the daily experiences of the working class as a group and as individuals. In highlighting the need to account for social experience in social theory, the revisionist critique supported an epistemology with the potential to “denaturalise and to defatalize the social world to destroy the myths that cloak the exercise of power and the perpetuation of domination” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 49–50).

Essentialism makes it difficult, if not impossible, to account for the nature of the intersections of race, class, gender, and other forms of difference, including their manifestations in lived experience. These intersections assume different forms depending on the context (in some cases, race takes precedence over class but in others gender or ethnicity may be dominant, and so forth). The effectiveness of a particular

epistemological or methodological practice depends on how this complexity is conceptualised and understood. Revisionist contestations of essentialism opened space for two important discursive developments, namely postmodernism and popular emancipatory discourses.

#### EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROMISES OF POSTMODERNISM

Epistemologically, postmodernism is significant in the South African context for two reasons. First, by drawing attention to the notion of social plurality as a more dynamic analytical concept (Ranuga, 1982), it legitimised the call to supersede the privileging of the working class (in neo-Marxist analyses) and the black working class (in Black Consciousness perspectives), as the sole agents of a radical social transformation in South Africa. Second, it drew attention to notions of different knowledges, plurality of knowledges, and multiple locations of knowledge, and hence multiple epistemologies. This recognised and legitimised subjugated knowledges and previously silenced voices. It brought to the forefront the idea that “all groups have a right to speak for themselves, in their own voice, and have that voice accepted as authentic and legitimate” (Harvey, 1989, p. 48), and drew attention to, in Spivak’s words, ‘other worlds’ and ‘other voices’, as legitimate sources of knowledge (Gale, 1997, p. 104; Spivak, 2001).

With postmodernist perspectives, the boundaries of knowledge were widened to include informal processes of knowledge production by ordinary people or non-professional agents, that is, practices of knowledge production formerly outside the academy or discarded by it as unscholarly. This held a particular emotional appeal in Africa, where, in a society plagued by high levels of illiteracy, scholarly work that privileges the written word is problematic. Cross (1998, p. 3) argues that a radical review of the existing methods and processes of knowledge production recognised by the academy was warranted. Just as the Marxist tradition had in South Africa, postmodernism took itself very seriously, almost going so far as to claim for itself the status of ‘meta-narrative’, with the potentially constraining implications that held.

#### EMANCIPATORY EPISTEMOLOGIES FROM POPULAR DISCOURSES

What has been neglected in recent literature, is the impact of the people’s education movement on South African scholarship. The 1976–1980 school crisis led to a call for ‘people’s education for people’s power’ in 1986 as a counter to apartheid education and a vision for an alternative education system. The mass democratic movement foregrounded the centrality of ‘people’s education’ or ‘people’s power’ in the ideals of social justice and emancipation (Sisulu, 1986). This was a shift from an emphasis on struggles of resistance to struggles of transformation. The people’s education movement placed control of power at the centre of the struggle against apartheid and called on members of academia to participate in the struggle for power. This stimulated discourses of ‘power’, ‘empowerment’, ‘conscientisation’

and ‘emancipation’ among scholars. These discourses encompassed the idea that critical social researchers should, as knowledge practitioners, be committed not just to knowing, but also to transforming, changing the world, and combating discrimination and oppression (Figueroa, 2000). The epistemological implication was that engaged scholars had to know, from the outset, that their task was also a political one, involving not simply telling the truth about the world, but also actively engaging in its transformation and dealing with the problematic of epistemological and cognitive justice in their work. They were to be not only critics, but reconstructors as well.

The increasing appropriation of ideas of power, empowerment, conscientisation and emancipation from the mass democratic movement precipitated theories from below, or bottom-up theories, exemplified by the ascendance of more vibrant and diverse social analysis regimes, in the 1980s, over the reductionist economism of the 1970s. Tripp (1998) indicates that, by asking “whose interests are being served and how” (p. 37) in social arrangements, socially critical researchers inaugurated a particular form of engaged scholarship that sought to “work towards a more just social order” (Lenzo, 1995, p. 17), “in which the subordinated are invited to take control of their lives and change the conditions which have caused their oppression” (Beder, 1991, p. 4). The impact on the intellectual field was felt through an emphasis on participatory research methodologies and stakeholder consultation, and, at the level of knowledge production, through a focus on the lives of ordinary people and their cultural, ideological and political identities and loyalties.

In South Africa, the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) first translated the discourse stimulated by the people’s education movement into a research project in the late 1980s. In this initiative, a partnership between researchers and political activists, drawn from the mass democratic movement, developed policy options for a post-apartheid South Africa. The assumption was that truthful and legitimate knowledge for policy development could only be generated with the active participation of both ordinary and politically-informed members of society. This participation could be through involvement in relevant research projects or relevant consultative forums where researchers and activists negotiated the purposes of education policy, associated political and conceptual frameworks, as well as methodological and process issues.

A number of reports and publications were generated under the people’s education umbrella, and various initiatives and activities were undertaken by teachers and students to redirect the South African knowledge and curriculum systems. We argue that, beyond these initiatives, what emerged from the people’s education movement was a *political epistemology* grounded in the principles of human rights, democracy and social justice, which took the value of stakeholder participation and consultation in knowledge production for policy seriously. It marked a major paradigm shift in social research and the educational policy domain in South African. Initial government policy initiatives, and the research practices that informed them, were founded on these principles. Their increasing neglect under the dominance of a

neo-liberal regime, in and outside government, is a worrying phenomenon and a major threat to progressive scholarship.

REVISITING CRITICAL SCHOLARSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA: KEY  
EPISTEMOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

In the previous sections, we discussed how important epistemological and theoretical challenges, with profound implications for social research in post-apartheid South Africa, emerged in critical scholarship. The first challenge was the need to work through, and with, categories of difference warranted by neo-Marxist analyses. The second was the centrality of lived experience to social theory. The third concerned marginalisation and symbolic violence in knowledge representation, which was at the centre of epistemologies rooted in the people's education movement. This related to the researcher's habitus and positionality.

*Deconstructing Apartheid Classifications: Categories of Difference, and  
Conceptual Ambiguity and Elusiveness*

As already illustrated, categories of difference, particularly race, are highly contested in social analysis and critical scholarship. The questions are whether, or how, social researchers can work with, work through, or work without, the existing differential categories that are deeply entrenched in South African social life, and what epistemologies are deemed suitable for such a challenge. May (2010) discusses the creation of categories as follows:

Creating categories is what we humans do both consciously and unconsciously in order to understand the complex world around us ... Through language (words, concepts, theories) we order, make sense of, and provide labels for things, people and experiences, and we tend to take these everyday understandings of the world for granted ... These categories do not however correspond directly to a reality 'out there' but are rather the product of human embodied reason. (p. 431)

Under apartheid, South Africans were officially classified in their identity documents as African, Coloured (of mixed race), Indian or White. This classification remains as a monitoring mechanism in many sectors. Many scholars also tend to take these categories as their point of departure for analysis (Kallaway, 1984). However, the persistence of apartheid classification in official documents is an object of such fierce contestation that a national conference on apartheid categorisation was held at the University of the Witwatersrand in 2010 to explore the implications of such practice in the context of the post-apartheid non-racial project. Regrettably, the debate was highly political and ideological, and paid little attention to the epistemological dimensions of these categories. In the following section, we briefly reflect on particular epistemological implications.

Brubaker and Cooper's (2000, p. 4) interesting distinction between the *categories of social and political practice* and the *categories of social and political analysis* used by social scientists, is of importance to our analysis of apartheid categorisation. In this regard, scholars in South Africa are divided into two camps. There are those who work in terms of *categories of practice*, that is, categories of "everyday social experience, developed and deployed by ordinary political actors, as distinguished from the experience-distant categories used by social analysts" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 4). Whether used only as monitoring mechanisms in equity redress or affirmative action strategies, or in daily social life, apartheid classification categories inevitably enact social practices that reproduce apartheid social relations. Because, as Audre Lorde's (1984, pp. 110–114) words capture so well:

... the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change... Racism and homophobia are real conditions of all our lives in this place and time.

Other scholars advocate the use of categories of difference as *categories of analysis* central to capturing patterns and trends in the transformation or change processes. For them, without these categories, it is not possible to determine whether transformation strategies produce desired results. An emancipatory dimension is thus attached. The possibility of both categories of analysis and categories of practice appropriating new meanings is incontestable, as categories are never fixed but undergo constant changes as a result of dialogue, dispute, and power struggles within the intellectual field (Cross & Naidoo, 2012, p. 229). For example, highly contested under apartheid, the concept of culture in cultural diversity has become a source of social and cultural enrichment, to be recognised, respected, acknowledged, enabled, celebrated, protected and promoted, through proactive diversity strategies.

We argue, however, that, epistemologically, claims about the emancipatory potential of categories of difference may be misguided, unless certain theoretical premises are taken into account. There is a strong connection between the effects of the practical and analytical uses of categories that can hardly be ignored. The act of categorisation in social analysis is never neutral (May 2010, p. 431); it has real consequences in the lives of individuals. Categorisation tends "to homogenise groups and create a discursive illusion that members of a category share more in common than they in fact do, which hides the variety of interests, social positions, and identities ascribed to the group by the category" (Cross & Naidoo, 2012, p. 231). For example, it is not a given that all white people enact racist behaviour or that only white people are capable of racist behaviour. These important aspects of categorisation have profound epistemological implications in social research. We thus argue that no specific social category can be, a priori, awarded political and analytical privilege in a democratic order by virtue of social difference. However, as we will show in the following section, the lived experience shaped by social categorisation remains a

central epistemological, methodological and ethical consideration. Further, we argue that the act of categorisation as affirmation of power and interest entails subtle forms of violence, symbolic domination or symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 183), aspects which we expand on later in this chapter.

*Acknowledging the Epistemological Centrality of Experience* The importance of shared experience relating to race received considerable attention from the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) (Biko, 1979). The attitude and positioning of black people in the liberation struggle was characterised by their distinctive experience as the colonised and oppressed under colonialism. For Biko (1979) for example, blacks needed to decolonise their minds and throw off the inferiority complexes inculcated by colonialism in order to liberate themselves. The unique black experience was given specific attention in BCM sociological approaches. A more nuanced approach to experience came from BCM Marxists who assigned a privileged political role to the black working class by virtue of its common experience under oppressive colonial and apartheid regimes. While these theoretical traditions paid attention to the role of experience in the search for privileged subjects capable of fulfilling a revolutionary mission, it was only with the increasing influence of feminist perspectives that the epistemological centrality of experience came to be recognised (Harding, 1987, 1991, 1998; Eichler, 1988; Fawcett, 2000; Maynard, 1994; Narayan & Harding, 2000; Stanley & Wise 1993; Williams 1996).

Acknowledging that feminist theories place relations between political and social power and knowledge at centre-stage, Fredericks (2009, p. 1) identifies three main claims made by feminist theorists: (i) knowledge is socially situated; (ii) marginalised groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of certain things and ask questions about them than it is for the non-marginalised; and (iii) research based on power relations, in particular, should begin with the lives of the marginalised.

Experience is a vehicle through which the presence of the marginalised can be acknowledged, their discourses, voices and meanings can be articulated, and their involvement in intellectual production, through self-representation or, ultimately authorship, can be safeguarded in social theory. There have been ongoing discussions, forums, workshops and conference sessions to critique the colonising, marginalising and disempowering practices of prevailing research methodologies. The American feminist philosopher Sandra Harding, who shared her ideas at such gatherings with South African scholars, has been influential in this context. Harding (1998) calls for the use of epistemologies rooted in the experiences of the marginalised because:

[s]tarting thought from the lives of those people upon whose exploitation the legitimacy of the dominant system depends can bring into focus questions and issues that were not visible, 'important,' or legitimate within the dominant institutions, their conceptual frameworks, cultures, and practices. (p. 17)

Unfortunately, these debates have not provided much beyond critiques of Western research paradigms. The realisation of methodologies that are accountable to the marginalised remains a challenge.

We argue that, epistemologically, experience plays a critical role in the research process under social plurality in at least two main respects. First, it is through experience that Others (objects of study) are able to understand and attach meaning to their own lives. As Jarvis (1987) notes, “there is no meaning in a given situation until we relate our own experiences to it” (p. 164). Second, it is through a lived experience of doing things and being with others that a researcher’s habitus and personal, possibly stereotypical, perceptions of others can be confronted and transformed. We prioritise the role of lived experience, rather than categories of difference, in researching the ‘truth about reality’ or the ‘truth about Others’ (Maton, 2009, p. 60). In this regard, rather than difference per se, we consider ‘experience of difference’, that is, how both subjects and objects of social research experience and respond to the discourses of difference in their lives, voices and ‘silences’—to the researcher’s own selection of facts and meaning—as a key epistemological construct. In addition, one’s own habitus is itself structured through embodied and situated experiences of our world. We refer to this as ‘silent pedagogy’.

Given the researcher’s closeness and intimacy with his or her own experience, a degree of vigilance, indeed an epistemological break, is always required: the patch one is standing on is the most difficult to see. Excessive proximity constitutes as much of an obstacle to scientific knowledge as excessive remoteness (Bourdieu, 1988). Given that we are generally indifferent or more blind to the constructs in which we ourselves are involved, it is necessary for a researcher to “exoticize the domestic, through a break with his [or her] initial relation of intimacy with modes of life and thought which remain opaque to him [or her] because they are too familiar” (Bourdieu, 1988, p. xi).

*Accounting for Marginalisation and Symbolic Violence in Knowledge Representation* As argued elsewhere, where multiple knowledges exist, the presence of some is very often concealed or discarded, either by an over reliance on universalising or essentialising theories, or under the logic of the dominant discourses of power and interest (Cross, 2015, p. 1). According to Livingston (1992), the dominant discourses of power and interest operate “to restrict argumentation and to bias the possibilities of persuasion” (p. 223). Under such intellectual circumstances, researchers tend to reify what they are used to seeing in their own social and intellectual experiences as ‘truthful’ knowledge, replicable in all contexts, hence the danger of misrepresentation in other contexts. Indeed, while perceived difference may mystify or blur the research object or social phenomena, the silences it triggers in intellectual representation is more damaging. Audre Lorde (1984) emphasises this aspect when she says “it is not difference that immobilises us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken” (p. 44). Silences are directly connected to one’s own social and intellectual experience, which most often appears to be harmless.

As a researcher selects, interprets and represents data, the participants' intended meanings inevitably become distorted and reshaped (Burke, 2002), very often without the researcher acknowledging that his or her interpretation is partial, limited, and possibly, biased (Walker, 1983). The self-criticism of practice that characterised radical scholarship throughout the 1980s and in the early 1990s has given way to what Torres (2011, pp. 184–185) refers to as the new-liberal 'common sense', where existing paradigms, theories and methodologies are unquestioned and taken for granted, amounting to a positive normalisation of abnormality. This is aggravated by an increasing scepticism about the prospects of critical scholarship. One could speculate that the excessive amount of 'navel-gazing' at both individual and national levels was behind the decline of critical scholarship during the political 'honeymoon' in the years that followed the establishment of democratic rule in South Africa. We refer here to excessive contemplation or reflection on one's own world and experiences (very often mythologised as unique) at the expense of a wider view (the community, country, region, continental and global worlds) where similar experiences might have occurred.

#### THE RESEARCHER'S HABITUS AND AGENCY

We use Bourdieu's concept of habitus in this chapter to refer to the dispositions and predispositions acquired by researchers through training or socialisation in the dominant circles of the intellectual field, which set unproblematically, and do not question, the canon in scholarly practice. We also consider the entrenched forms of knowing and understanding of the world that Jansen (2009) refers to as *Knowledge in the blood*. Some scholars refer to knowledge derived primarily from the experience of everyday practice as embodied knowledge. Plato (1987, pp. 317–325) compares it to "shadows cast on the wall" that prevent one from knowing the truth about others. Applying Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* to knowledge that one carries in the blood, individual researchers, as 'knowers', could be considered immobilised prisoners (chained by knowledge in the blood) in a dark cave. In this constrained state, they take the knowledge in the blood (shadows) as objective representations of reality. Hence the need to confront one's own habitus so that the 'truth' about others can be revealed.

Contrary to what proponents of Fundamental Pedagogics advocate, it is not possible, as a social researcher, "to step outside [one's] own humanness by disregarding one's own values [and] experiences" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 67). Depending on our social position and positionality in the intellectual field, we tend to read social experience, habitually, through the lens of our own theoretical types, stereotypes, symbols, and beliefs—the knowledge acquired through social and/or academic experience. As Figueroa (2000) declares, "if research cannot be value neutral ... if it is to be ethical, it must be value critical" (p. 88). Admittedly, because we participate in various fields at the same time, the logics of these different fields may be in conflict. It is a researcher's responsibility to 'come clean' about personal

predispositions and feelings, to declare his or her values and be fully aware of the taken-for-grantedness of such values, and to interrogate personal research habitus. The researcher's habitus must be unearthed, clarified and questioned, because of the significance of both individual and collective agency in social research.

#### CONCLUSION

Researching the Other requires awareness of the dynamics and processes of marginalisation of people through social categorisation, and the implications of knowledge representation for the research subjects. Such awareness poses political, ethical, theoretical and methodological challenges for researchers, which necessitate appropriate epistemological breaks and vigilance. There is a need for scholars to backtrack on occasion, and radically re-evaluate their worldviews and constructs about social life in a society as diverse and rapidly changing as South Africa. The emerging picture of South African critical scholarship is varied and somewhat intriguing. Intriguing because, although located on the African continent, by virtue of training and intellectual socialisation, South African critical scholars occupy an intellectual space dominated largely by western epistemological and theoretical discourses. Consequently, their intellectual projects have focused primarily on searching for epistemological and theoretical appropriateness through *adaptation*, with very little effort being expended on searching for epistemological *alternatives*. Emerging Africanist, Africanisation and knowledge decolonisation discourses, recently appropriated by South African student movements, are commendable for their efforts to deconstruct and re-contextualise. This is the reality in which researchers' epistemological breaks and forms of vigilance should be understood.

'Privilege' in social location, analytical emphasis, and in critical scholarship in the intellectual field, has been a major constraining factor limiting the possibilities of alternative epistemological projects. Given the apartheid legacy in South Africa, critical scholars occupy a largely privileged position within what remains a racially and gender-skewed hierarchy of knowledge, where globally prominent discourses dominate intellectual activity, and reflect in the privileging of certain discourses—neo-Marxism, post-postmodernism and feminism. This chapter considers these particular locations, and the structures of social relations that reproduce them, as fundamental considerations in seeking meaningful epistemological redirection.

The emphasis has been on the search for privileged subjects capable of carrying out the revolutionary mission, geared towards the interests of the oppressed masses, against the colonial and apartheid legacies. For neo-Marxists (also known as Charterists), it is the working class. For Africanist/BCM neo-Marxists and protagonists of colonialism of a special type, it is the black working class. For feminists, it is women. For political activists, it includes new historical subjects such as students, gays and lesbians in emerging post-modernist and emancipatory discourses. Overall, the question still remains whether a privileged location in the intellectual field (and consequent intellectual positioning), privileged discourses and

theories, and the search for privileged subjects, constitute sound points of departure for meaningful epistemological breaks.

A general implication of the argument presented in this chapter is that researching the Other is essentially a contextual matter. Consequently, the space we reserve for critical agency has profound implications for the way we prepare researchers, because critical agency operates within established boundaries of political, ethical and social responsibility, and requires awareness of the cultural values that underpin social life in society.

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## 6. AFRICANISATION OF THE STUDY OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

### INTRODUCTION

Some scholars argue that the developmental challenges faced by African countries are due mostly to the fact that the education systems they inherited from their colonial rulers were not culturally relevant (Prah, 1995). Amongst the flaws in African education systems is the fact that the language of instruction has remained a colonial language such as English, French or Portuguese, which is unfamiliar to the majority of African children when they start formal school. Some African countries still use one of the colonial languages as a language of instruction from the first grade. In other African countries the language of instruction is a familiar local language during the formative phase of education. This period varies between the first three grades in Zimbabwe (Khumalo, 2003), the first four grades in Zambia (Zambia Ministry of Education, 2013) and the first five grades in Namibia (Namibia Ministry of Education, 2014).

The use of colonial languages is not a challenge to the primary school child alone, but also to those in secondary school and tertiary institutions. For example, Zondi (2014) found a correlation between student performance and the medium of instruction in an undergraduate research module that she taught at the University of Zululand, South Africa, from 2012 to 2014. Her students' performance improved when both English and isiZulu were used as the languages of learning and teaching and in the research manual.

The state of affairs in which indigenous African languages are not used in teaching and learning can be attributed to a lack of appropriate status and corpus planning, as well as to the non-existence of proper implementation policies and monitoring thereof. Most African states have simply perpetuated the language policies they inherited from their colonial masters. In some instances, they have even become more committed to promoting the colonial language than their colonial masters did (Prah, 2009).

The main aim of this chapter is to suggest ways in which the study of African languages and linguistics in African universities may be made more Afrocentric and relevant to the socio-economic needs of African people. Specific objectives include the following:

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- To explain the origin of language-in-education policies in selected southern African countries;
- To show how the scientific description and the study of African languages in schools and tertiary institutions were influenced by Christian missionaries from Europe;
- To critically review both the content of African languages and linguistics courses offered in African universities, and the language of instruction used;
- To highlight the role of African languages in upholding human rights and promoting peace and development in African countries;
- To suggest ways in which African languages can be intellectualised.

A historical background is provided in order to understand what has led African states to ignore the study and use of their indigenous languages.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Indigenous African languages have been side-lined, not only with respect to their use in education, but also with regard to other official roles, such as in the administration of justice, the legislature, government administration and the media. This bias against the use of African languages in preference for colonial languages may be ascribed to each country's particular colonial experience. It is therefore crucial to consider the language policies of the colonial powers in selected southern African countries, in order to appreciate the extent to which they have influenced current language policies of these now-independent states.

##### *Colonial Language Policies*

Great Britain, Portugal and Belgium were colonial powers that ruled southern African countries and introduced their native languages of English, Portuguese and French respectively. Governments of the now-independent African states have maintained these colonial languages to date as their major official language. For example, English is the official language in former British colonies now Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe whilst Portuguese is the official language of Angola and Mozambique. French is the official language of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), a former Belgian colony. Their language policies can thus be attributed to their colonial history. However, the degree of colonial influence varies, depending on the colonial power in question. For example, in some colonies, the British encouraged the study of selected African languages and their use as languages of instruction in the first four years of primary school, whereas the French and the Portuguese preferred a policy of European assimilation for their subjects. British colonial policies were followed in Northern Rhodesia – now Zambia – (Ohannessian, 1978), Southern Rhodesia – now Zimbabwe – (Mumpande, 2006; Magwa, 2010), Nyasaland – now Malawi – (Kamwendo, 2009) and

Bechuanaland – now Botswana – (Mathangwane, 2002). In Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Bechuanaland, the British policy was to teach in selected African languages for the first four grades only. In Southern Rhodesia, the language of instruction was English almost from the first year of schooling. As Magwa (2010) puts it, "... while the language of a child's home could be used in the early stages of instruction, it was supposed to be given up after a period of six months" (p. 117).

Surprisingly, upon attaining independence, these countries either reduced the number of African languages taught and used as languages of instruction, or legislated English as the only language of instruction from the first grade. The former was the case in Malawi and Botswana, whilst the latter was the case in Zambia which in 1966 made English the sole language of instruction right from the first grade. When Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, Shona and Ndebele ceased to be examinable subjects at Grade 7 level, a move which effectively downgraded their status (Magwa, 2010). However, the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987 made Shona and Ndebele languages of instruction in lower primary schools, along with English (Khumalo, 2003; Magwa, 2010). The situation in Malawi changed for the worse in 2013 with the passing of the 2012 Education Bill which stipulated that the medium of instruction in schools and colleges would be English (Kishindo, 2015; Malawi Government, 2012). Prior to this Act, from 1968, Chichewa had been the language of instruction during the first three standards (grades). In contrast, Zambia reverted to the use of seven Zambian languages as languages of learning and teaching from 2014 (Zambia Ministry of Education, 2013).

The British colonial authorities were consistent in their language policies on the continent. For instance, as in southern Africa, their language policy in West Africa was one that encouraged the use of African languages and *lingua francas*. Similarly, German policy in East Africa supported the promotion and use of African languages (Abdul-Aziz, 2003). In Tanganyika – now Tanzania - both the German colonial administration and the subsequent British rule introduced education through an indigenous language, namely Kiswahili (King'ei, 2009). Unlike other countries, however, even after independence, the Government of Tanzania did not only continue with the policy of using Kiswahili as the language of instruction in lower primary school, but extended its use to the entire primary school system (White, 1980). However, this enthusiasm has not been maintained by successive governments. Following the legalisation of private schools in 1995, English became the language of instruction in the majority of private primary schools, whilst Kiswahili remained the language of instruction in government primary schools (Swilla, 2009). Thus both English and Kiswahili became languages of instruction in Tanzanian primary schools.

Unlike the British, the French and the Portuguese preferred a policy of European assimilation for their subjects. The Portuguese Government in Mozambique followed the assimilationist model of colonisation whose goal included the suppression of the culture of the colonised (Matsinhe, 2005). They ensured that their African subjects acquired near-native competence in the Portuguese language (Abdul-Aziz, 2003).

As a result, at independence, the black government of Mozambique continued with a policy which accorded higher official status to Portuguese than to African languages (Matsinhe, 2005). The same situation persisted in Angola, the other Lusophone country in southern Africa. Vilela (2002) points out that former Portuguese colonies have since started taking steps to ensure the promotion of indigenous languages.

The French discouraged research that would lead to the development of African languages (Abdul-Aziz, 2003). Their policy was that French was to be the sole official language of administration, education and culture. This applied to the former Belgian Congo, now DRC, which was colonised by French-speaking Belgium, and thus became subject to the French influence. Despite the existence of four widely spoken local languages, namely Tshiluba, Kikongo, Lingala and Kiswahili, French has become a major language for many children in the DRC. Although it was decided that learning and teaching should be conducted in local languages up to Grade 3 and that French should be introduced from Grade 4, in practice, French is used as the language of instruction from pre-school to tertiary level (University of Lubumbashi, 2012).

In the Republic of South Africa language has been a hotly contested issue for a long time. From 1652 the original European settlers in South Africa spoke Dutch, which developed into Afrikaans. When the British colonised the country in 1822 they proclaimed English as the language of the courts, of government, of Parliament, of the schools and of newspapers. Afrikaans was to be a language of the home (Alexander, 2013). In education, the British policy tolerated the use of indigenous languages for lower primary schooling and promoted English medium for higher levels. This policy began to change when the Afrikaner National Party came to power in 1948. The apartheid language policy substituted English with Afrikaans as the dominant language wherever possible. Where this would not work, Afrikaans was promoted to be equal to English. Their policy regarding the indigenous languages was linked to their resolve to fragment and subjugate the black people.

The apartheid government gave the impression that through its policy of separate development, it was doing Africans a favour by affording them the right to live amongst their own people and to use their mother tongues in their day-to-day communication. They encouraged mother-tongue instruction in primary and secondary schools. Whilst this might sound a noble thing to do, it was eventually to work to the disadvantage of Africans, whilst it benefitted Afrikaans and English speaking people. The apartheid government passed the South African Bantu Education Act of 1953 mainly to strengthen the position of Afrikaans as the country's official language (Abdul-Aziz, 2003). To ensure that Afrikaans acquired a high status in the country, the apartheid government made human and financial resources available in order to develop their language into a sophisticated modern language of literature, commerce, technology and administration. In contrast, no similar steps were taken to ensure that African languages reached the same level of sophistication. Learning materials for indigenous languages were inadequate and of inferior quality, and teachers were not well trained.

In some African countries, schools depended on materials that had been produced by early European missionaries. As shown in the following section, some of this literature was not designed for use by mother-tongue speakers of African languages.

*The Role of Christian Missionaries in the Development of African Languages*

The manner in which African languages and literature have been taught in schools and universities has been influenced not only by colonial masters, but also by various Christian missionaries from Europe who pioneered the description of African languages and developed their written forms (Alexander, 2013). The orthographies and grammatical descriptions of African languages they designed were based on the structure of European languages that they were familiar with. In essence, the works were targeted at European learners of African languages as foreign languages.

Another challenge for the missionaries who described African languages was that they were not trained linguists. Thus, some of them made negative and scientifically inaccurate statements. For example, William Boyce, a Wesleyan missionary, is quoted as having referred to the Khoe and San languages as “uncouth and inharmonious dialects” and that the “dialects abound in those peculiar and barbarous sounds called clicks” (Doke & Cole, 1969, p. 59). In certain instances, the grammatical analyses of the languages were incorrect. In spite of such flaws, the grammars that the missionaries produced were used, not only by European learners of the languages, but also by Africans who were mother-tongue speakers. Examples of such works include *Elements of Southern Sotho* by Paroz (1959), *An Introduction to Chinyanja* by Sanderson and Bithrey (1953) and *Elements of Cinyanja for English-Speaking Students* by Price (1941).

The grammatical descriptions of African languages by missionaries and other European writers were produced in English, French, Portuguese or other colonial languages. This confirms that such works were not meant for African users. Furthermore, it was not only grammars that were written in European languages, but also bilingual or trilingual dictionaries of African languages, such as a bilingual *Kongo-Spanish Dictionary* by Father Antoine de Terveli in 1652; a trilingual *Spanish-Latin-Kongo Dictionary* by Father Georges de Gheel in 1652; an *English-Vernacular Dictionary of the Bantu-Botatwe Dialects of Northern Rhodesia* by Father J. Torrend in 1891 (Doke, 1969).

The challenge with grammatical descriptions of African languages written in a non-African language is two-fold. Firstly, since the terminology used in the grammars is technical, most such grammars are best understood only by linguists. Secondly, the descriptions are totally inaccessible to a speaker of the respective African language who has no knowledge of the European language in which the grammar is written. Thus whilst the grammars do serve a purpose, they cannot contribute to the development of Africans who have not learnt any European language. With regard to bilingual dictionaries which provide word lists in an African language with

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their equivalents in a European language, the challenge is that such dictionaries are helpful only to persons who can read both the European language and the African language. It is inaccessible to a person who cannot read the European language no matter how literate s/he might be in her/his African language.

The production of grammars and dictionaries of African languages written in European languages has continued into the 21st century. Although the grammars have become more scientific and relatively accurate, they are helpful only to linguists whilst the bilingual dictionaries continue to be inaccessible to an African who cannot read English or any other European language. Bilingual or multilingual dictionaries would benefit Africans who do not know any European language if they included only African languages such as Shona-Zulu-Sotho-Nyanja-Venda dictionary. In some countries, this Eurocentric description of African languages has influenced the manner in which they are taught in schools and in universities. For example, at the University of Zambia, the University of Zimbabwe, the University of Swaziland and the University of Botswana, the language of instruction in the Departments of African languages is English (see for example, Nkolola-Wakumelo, 2011). Furthermore, at all levels of the education system, African languages have been taught in isolation, with little or no link to other disciplines. Nor have they been used as languages of instruction. As shown in the following sections, this has had a negative effect on the production and acquisition of knowledge and change in the African university.

#### KNOWLEDGE, LANGUAGE AND CHANGE IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

As alluded to in the foregoing sections, the study of African languages and linguistics in African universities has not been relevant to the needs of African people in their respective countries. To start with, courses in African languages and linguistics in some African universities are taught through the medium of English, French or Portuguese. Since even departments of African languages do not use African languages as the medium of learning and teaching, it is not surprising that all other disciplines shy away from doing so. The Africanisation of the study of African languages and linguistics should start with changing the medium of instruction from an unfamiliar language to the African language being offered. In addition to the language of instruction, it is equally important that the content of courses or modules in African languages and linguistics should include topics that are relevant to the socio-economic agenda of Africa. Furthermore, such courses should be inter-disciplinary and not designed for students of African languages and linguistics alone. In this way, universities in Africa will be on the path towards becoming truly African in character. They will be able to contribute to the development of African states by producing graduates equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills to tackle the social, economic and political challenges that the continent faces.

*Language Barriers in Knowledge Acquisition and Production*

The use of non-indigenous languages as languages of learning and teaching in African universities acts as a barrier to knowledge acquisition for the majority of African students. With the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994, some universities that had been Afrikaans medium, such as the University of Pretoria, Stellenbosch University and the University of Johannesburg (formerly Rand Afrikaans University—RAU) became dual-medium institutions by introducing English medium courses in addition to Afrikaans ones. However, this did not help African students for whom neither English nor Afrikaans is a home language. It is not surprising that students are still discontented with the use of Afrikaans in lectures. During 2015 and 2016, language issues continued to cause tension at some South African universities (Mail & Guardian, 28 August 2015; BusinessDay Live, 5 April 2016; News24, 16 June 2016).

A compromise strategy would be to use one or more African languages together with colonial languages. For example, Sibomani (2015) argues that in the case of Rwanda, a multilingual model should be used in which “all the three official languages (Kinyarwanda, English and French) ... be taught, learned and used together in schools so as to enhance learners’ access to curriculum and to enable proficiency and literacy knowledge and skills to develop in these languages” (p. 143). Even with such a compromise situation, there will still be a challenge with regard to the language of assessment. Moreover, as Brock-Utne (2009) argues, “the concept of bilingual teaching in the African context which seems to be reserved for a situation where one of the languages is an ex-colonial language” (p. 19) does not contribute to the African child’s proper acquisition of knowledge. There is a need for a paradigm shift in the use of African languages of instruction, which should take into account the fact that learners come to school or tertiary institutions as polyglots in at least three African languages (Prah & Brock-Utne, 2009). Other models of multilingual education have been proposed, such as trans-linguaging and trans-literacy (Makalela, 2015).

It is not only the teaching language that creates impediments to the acquisition of knowledge, but also the fact that textbooks and all other study materials are in colonial languages. Even in those universities where lectures on African languages and linguistics are conducted in a familiar African language, most texts used are not in an African language, but in English. This is a challenge not only for students, but also for the lecturers because the linguistic terminology found in these books was not developed for African languages. It is thus imperative that the process of Africanising the study of African languages and linguistics in African universities should include the intellectualisation of African languages. This topic has been discussed by a number of scholars, including Finlayson and Madiba (2002), Alexander (2005), Maseko (2011), and Kaschula and Maseko (2014). As Kaschula and Maseko (2014) point out, African languages, like all other languages, “are underpinned

by sophisticated, rule-governed and elaborate grammatical and sociolinguistic systems” (pp. 10–11); however, since they have not in the past received any attention with regard to both status and corpus planning, these languages have to be consciously and deliberately developed for them to serve adequately as languages of learning and teaching at tertiary level. Whilst there are currently some challenges in making African languages the media of study for all university disciplines, they should be used at least in the study of African languages, linguistics and literature.

The neglect of the development of African languages was not confined to apartheid South Africa. For instance, in Zambia, although the University of Zambia opened in 1966, the study of indigenous Zambian languages started only in 1978.<sup>1</sup> Courses in African languages and linguistics are till today taught through the medium of English. With regard to research, the University of Zambia does not have a separate language research centre or institute, but had a unit within the Centre for African Studies (now the Institute of Economic and Social Research) that undertakes research in Zambian languages. In contrast, the universities of Malawi and Zimbabwe have research centres or institutes dedicated to doing research on African languages - the Centre for Language Studies (CLS), and the African Languages Research Institute (ALRI) respectively.

The need for research on the intellectualisation of African languages is thus crucial in all southern African countries. Ironically, despite the fact that South Africa became a democratic state three decades after other countries in the region had attained independence, it is South Africa that is leading the formulation and enactment of language policies that favour the development and use of indigenous African languages. Some South African universities such as Rhodes University, the University of Cape Town and the University of KwaZulu-Natal are taking steps to intellectualise African languages. For example, Rhodes University is engaged in research on the *Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education*, and *Concept Formation in African Languages* (Kaschula & Maseko, 2014, pp. 20–28). The University was designing “vocation-specific courses in isiXhosa in pharmacy, law, education, journalism and media studies, which aim to provide students with skills that they can use immediately in their practical training and as practitioners in their specific areas upon graduation” (Kaschula & Maseko, 2014, p. 25). The University of Cape Town offers a Xhosa communication skills course for medical students to enable them to communicate with their patients on topics related to their vocation (Kaschula & Maseko, 2014). The University of KwaZulu-Natal has gone a step further by making isiZulu “an essential option for a non-isiZulu speaking student who enters the University of KwaZulu-Natal” (University of KwaZulu-Natal, n.d.). Furthermore, the university was implementing a long-term bilingual language policy, and isiZulu would become one of the languages of teaching and learning at the university.

For all courses in African languages to be meaningful, the intellectualisation of African languages should include the production of relevant knowledge and learning materials through the medium of African languages. It is thus necessary to undertake the following activities:

- developing terminology in African languages for various professions;
- producing monolingual dictionaries in African languages;
- translating crucial documents into major African languages, including national constitutions and those of political parties;
- developing African languages for technology;
- carrying out academic research in various disciplines and publishing research findings in African languages.

Some of these activities have already started in some institutions. The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) based in Cape Town is producing monolingual dictionaries in African languages. Of significant relevance to the intellectualisation of African languages is the research being conducted at selected South African universities, such as the programmes already mentioned at Rhodes University (Kaschula & Maseko, 2014), which include the following:

- designing techniques, methods and approaches for language policy planning and implementation, as well as teaching in multilingual higher education contexts;
- translation, terminology development and lexicography in African languages;
- development of African languages in the field of information and communication technologies (ICTs);
- development of new approaches in theoretical linguistics specific to the description of African languages;
- research in African language literary studies.

The intellectualisation of African languages will facilitate and enrich knowledge production in African universities mainly because most aspects of African indigenous knowledge are best described and documented in African languages. The translation project being undertaken at Rhodes University in South Africa deserves special discussion, for this activity has not been fully exploited in the development of African languages.

#### *The Role of Translation in the Development of African Languages*

It is important for books and other documents that currently record vital scientific knowledge in economically powerful languages such as English, to be translated into major African languages. In this way, African languages will be empowered and so will those African people who do not know English but speak, read and understand African languages. Similarly, African indigenous knowledge which exists mainly in oral forms needs to be recorded, transcribed and published, in order to disseminate and share such knowledge in multiple forms. It should then be translated into multiple African languages and other non-African languages to enable Africans from different cultural groups to share their indigenous knowledge with others. As Israel (2011) suggests, in this way “the value of indigenous languages and that of English is recognized” (p. 107). For this desirable state to materialise, proper training of

translators is required, so that they are competent in English and indigenous African languages.

Various studies on translation have been done. They include Bassnet (2014), Munday (2015), Toury (2012), Tymoczko (2005) and Alexander (2005). Alexander discusses the potential role of translation in the intellectualisation of African languages. Translation will contribute to the intellectualisation of African languages by making available in these languages some scientific and technological knowledge currently documented only in English and other non-African languages. Likewise, African indigenous knowledge should be available to speakers of African and non-African languages.

Besides contributions by individual scholars, a number of institutions have highlighted the importance of translation in the intellectualisation of African languages. The African Academy of Language (ACALAN) based in Bamako, Mali, has made translation and interpretation one of its major projects (African Academy of Language, (n.d.). As stated on their website, the main goal of the project is to make African languages true working languages in a multilingual context. The project has eleven global objectives, three of which have direct relevance to the intellectualisation of African languages and Africanisation of the study of African languages:

- To encourage the culture of reading by making available in the major African languages key texts from all over the world;
- To facilitate the creation and production of bilingual texts;
- To harmonise (to some extent) varieties of some languages for learning/teaching purposes.

A culture of reading in African languages needs to be encouraged, both for those who have mastered non-African languages and for those who have not. The lack of interest in reading in African languages, even by educated people, has led to the demise of newspapers that publish in African languages. As Nkolola-Wakumelo (2010) states, “it may also be the case that some people who are able to read an African language may find it more prestigious to read in English” (p. 254). Due to lack of readership, among other reasons, newspapers published in African languages do not survive. For instance, in Swaziland four different siSwati newspapers started and collapsed between 1934 and 2006. These were: *Izwi La maSwazi* (1934), *Umbiki* (1970), *Tikhatsi* (1990–2006) and *Umgijimi* (2000) (Mkhonza, 2009, p. 435). In Botswana, *Mokgosi* used to publish news in seTswana, but closed down in 2005 (Naledi Kgolo, personal communication, 2 December 2015).<sup>2</sup> The causes of its demise were similar to those that terminated the siSwati newspapers in Swaziland. In Zambia, all the major daily newspapers are in English, as are all the electronic ones. Occasionally the *Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS)* publishes what are meant to be monthly newspapers in eight Zambian languages. However, these papers are irregular (Nkolola-Wakumelo, 2007).

*Institutional Collaboration in Advocating and Developing African Languages*

It will benefit the cause of the intellectualisation of African languages if organisations and institutions collaborated in a way to properly complement each other's efforts. For instance, advocacy for the development and use of African languages is of interest to rights-based international organisations such as the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). It is also an activity that would sit well at ACALAN which has relatively easy access to member states of the African Union (AU). ACALAN has already identified cross-border languages that need to be developed for use in education and other official domains. In southern Africa, ACALAN has selected seTswana and ciCewa as cross-border languages to be given initial priority.

Corpus development, on the other hand, is an activity that academic institutions and research centres can handle well. For example, since 1997, the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) has been involved in the harmonisation of the orthographies of indigenous African languages across borders on the continent (see CASAS website). Appraisals of the philosophy and methodology of CASAS can be found in Brock-Utne and Mercer (2014) and Banda (2008, 2015). Another southern African research centre concerned with the development of African languages is the Centre for the Promotion of Literacy in sub-Saharan Africa (CAPOLSA), based in the Department of Psychology at the University of Zambia in Lusaka. This centre was established in May 2011 in cooperation with the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Their main aim is to promote literacy among early learners in the local languages of Zambia (Maumbi & Serpell, 2012). CAPOLSA's objectives include developing guidelines for the harmonisation of orthographies across Bantu languages as used in various sub-Saharan countries, and promoting support among parents, families, and pre-school teachers for children's acquisition of literacy in Zambian languages (Serpell, 2014).

In addition to newspapers, creative writing in African languages has a huge role to play in the Africanisation of the study of African languages. Until now, African literature has been studied mainly as the writing of African authors on typically African themes, but written in English, French or Portuguese. For literature in African languages to contribute meaningfully to the Africanisation of the study of African languages and to socio-economic development, literary texts studied need to be those written in African languages. Furthermore, academic works of literary criticism should be written and published in African languages. For this to be realised, we need creative writers who are committed to producing works in various genres. Furthermore, there need to be enough people interested in buying and reading these works. However, studies need to be done to determine potential demand for such literature. Above all, publishers must begin to publish books in African languages and booksellers must be willing to stock and sell such works.

To assist advocates for publishing in African languages, scientific investigations into reasons why publishers are not keen to publish works in African languages are required. Nkolola-Wakumelo (2010), for example, highlighted some challenges

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to scholarly publishing in African languages. With regard to readers, one of the challenges to be addressed is the lack of a reading culture in general, and a lack of interest in reading works in African languages in particular. Alexander (2003) makes this point clearly and strongly, as reproduced below:

The intellectualisation of languages has to do in the first instance with their written or printed forms. No amount of investment in making languages more visible through the printed word will help unless a culture of reading takes root in these languages. This means that a heavy responsibility devolves on to pre- and primary-school as well as adult educators in both using the indigenous languages as languages of tuition and in encouraging their learners to read and write their home languages. (p. 31)

Besides encouraging and facilitating the production of written literature in African languages, the Africanisation of the study of African languages will benefit greatly from the translation of novels and other literary genres published in European and other non-African languages that have a longer literary history. Moreover, such translations should include novels on African themes which were published in English by renowned African writers such as Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Wole Soyinka. It is gratifying that some works by these writers have already been translated into African languages, such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* which has been translated into Chichewa (or ciNyanja as the language is called in Zambia and Mozambique) by Malunga (2004).

Africanising the study of African languages, linguistics and literature in African universities is worthwhile, not only for academic purposes, but also for the socio-economic development of Africa in general. The use of African languages can have a positive influence on human rights, democracy and peace, both intra-nationally and internationally, as explained in the following section.

#### AFRICAN LANGUAGES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the pedagogical and moral merits of Africanising the study of African languages and linguistics in African universities, there are socio-economic benefits, since language has the power to include some people and exclude others from participating fully in the social, political and economic development of their countries (Miti, 2008a). In this instance, language is a human rights issue— although the word 'language' is directly mentioned in only one article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, i.e. Article 2 (United Nations, 1949, p. 2), language rights can be inferred in other articles. Let us consider, for example, the rights to education, health, fair trial, freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to participate in political affairs and economic discourses, as discussed by Miti (2008b).

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, because education is a right, it ought to be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. However, even if it is made free and compulsory, where learning

and teaching are carried out in an unfamiliar language, it is not possible to achieve universal primary education, let alone Education for All (EFA) goals. The right to health is contained in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To ensure that their citizens enjoy good health, governments must not only provide hospitals, medicines and health personnel, but should also ensure that their citizens are given crucial information that will help them prevent ill health. Such information must be made available in languages that the majority of the people understand and prefer. This should include information on HIV/AIDS, cholera, Ebola, TB, malaria, diabetes, cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

In the justice system, a person's fair trial cannot be guaranteed if it is conducted wholly in a language with which s/he is unfamiliar. It is thus imperative that where an accused person does not speak or understand the language used in court, competent interpreters should be provided. Courts should not rely merely on untrained, bilingual people who have a flair for interpretation; properly trained court interpreters are necessary. In universities, departments of African languages should offer interpretation courses at certificate, diploma and degree levels. They can do so in collaboration with relevant departments in their Law schools.

Another article in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in which the role of language can be inferred is Article 19. This article states that "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (United Nations, 1949, p. 4). It goes without saying that for anyone to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas", one inevitably needs to use a language. The language, which may be spoken, written or signed, should be one that is familiar to those imparting information and those receiving it. The current situation is exacerbated by the fact that people who do not know the official colonial language are denied the right to participate fully in the political affairs of their own country. In some African countries, national constitutions and those of their political parties are published solely in the official colonial language. Furthermore, parliamentary debates are conducted in colonial languages which are unfamiliar to the majority of the electorate. The same citizens are excluded from participating in economic discourses or debates, because crucial information on their country's economic situation exists mainly in languages that they do not comprehend.

The foregoing situation leads to citizens being generally discriminated against in their own countries, which is a violation of Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 7 states that: "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination" (United Nations, 1949, p. 3). With regard to intra- and international integration and peace, respect for multilingualism in Africa has an important role to play. The use of cross-border or regional languages, for example, can be a useful bridge between people who speak the same language, or related languages in two or more countries. Thus multilingualism is extremely important for democracy,

peace and development, both intra- and internationally. For this reason, in addition to all the research regarding the intellectualisation of African languages, consideration should be given to designing inter-disciplinary courses in universities to empower graduates to contribute to the strengthening of democracy, peace and development from a human rights point of view. What form, then, should such inter-disciplinary courses take?

#### SUGGESTED INTER-DISCIPLINARY COURSES

In order to equip university graduates with knowledge and skills to contribute to the socio-economic development of their countries, universities should offer inter-disciplinary courses such as the following:

- African Languages in Development: for students of African languages and linguistics, development studies, political science, economics;
- Vocation-specific Communication skills in an African language: for students in social work, nursing, medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, public health, law, international relations;
- African Languages in the Media: for students of African languages and linguistics, journalism and media studies, public relations;
- African Languages in Education: should include subject-specific teaching methodologies such as teaching science and mathematics in an African language;
- Translation and Interpretation Studies: for students of African languages and linguistics, those studying other languages such as English, Afrikaans, French and Portuguese, as well as for students of international relations and diplomacy;
- African Languages and Power: for students of gender studies, political and administrative studies;
- African Languages and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Development: for students of education, sociology and anthropology and development studies.

The suggestions listed above are possible topics, and not necessarily module titles. Some of them could be combined into a single module. We acknowledge that some of these themes are already being offered, particularly in some South African universities. Other universities on the continent and in southern Africa in particular may consider designing courses along these lines.

It is worth mentioning that the introduction of such courses is not intended to eliminate theoretical linguistics courses that are currently being offered in universities across Africa. However, as the study of theoretical linguistics continues, departments of African languages and linguistics need to review their linguistic approaches in order to apply the discipline of linguistic science to the African situation. This is not the first time that the Eurocentric approach to linguistic science and the description of African languages has been questioned. Katupha (1991) asked fellow linguists in southern Africa to reflect on this matter and offered the following invitation:

This paper questions the fact that the linguists of the 'South' are greatly dependent on what is done in the 'North' on the one hand, and that the South

is being used as a pool for experiments of the linguistic theories produced in the North. In this contest languages turn into a battlefield in which linguists, armed with theories they espouse, contend, often with aims that have nothing or little to do with the promotion and effective use of the languages being used, to illustrate the epistemological and heuristic values of the contesting theories. This state of affairs justifies this paper, the aim of which is to spark a reflection on how we, the linguists of the 'South', rather than Linguistics itself, are doing our job in compromising or contributing towards the promotion and effective use of our national languages. (pp. 7–8)

Perhaps katupha's provocation of thought cited above should make linguists and other language practitioners ask themselves to what extent knowledge of various linguistic theoretical models alone can help empower linguistic minorities in Africa and consequently save lives.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter set out to explore ways in which the study of African languages and linguistics in African universities may be reviewed to make them more relevant to the socio-economic situation of the continent. We have shown that the scientific description of African languages is based on ways in which the languages were initially described and recorded by European Christian missionaries and other European writers. Such descriptions were not only written in Indo-European languages, but the linguistic analyses and orthographies were also based on the language structures that the writers were familiar with.

This tradition has continued into the 21st century even by modern African linguists who, as Katupha (1991) claims, strive to learn and apply linguistic theories developed in the West to international levels of sophistication. We noted that despite having achieved democracy and freedom later than other southern African countries, South Africa is spearheading research that aims at intellectualising African languages and advancing multilingualism in education. The chapter has suggested some topics for inter-disciplinary courses aimed at empowering university graduates to contribute to solving the continent's socio-economic ills. It is also hoped that Africanising the study of African languages and linguistics may contribute to the transformation of African universities through the introduction of inter-disciplinary courses in which African languages will play a significant role.

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The present writer was the first lecturer recruited to teach African languages and linguistics within the Department of Literature and Languages which comprised English language and literature, French language and literature, and Zambian languages and literature.
- <sup>2</sup> Dr Naledi Kgolo is a lecturer in the Department of English, University of Botswana, and formerly coordinator of the Tomela ya Puo Foundation.

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## **7. KNOWLEDGE AND CHANGE IN THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY**

*Some Prospects and Opportunities for Internationalisation*

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, several transformations have taken place in higher education globally (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2010), which have also impacted on Africa's higher education sector. One of the main transformations has been the move from the industrial society to what some scholars have referred to as the 'post-industrial' or 'information' society (Masuda, 1980), in which knowledge has become paramount as the main driver of economies. This has led to what is now commonly referred to as the 'knowledge society' (Carnoy & Castells, 2001). The new knowledge society puts knowledge at the centre of most activities, thus making knowledge creation a priority for many nations, including new ways of knowledge production and utilisation. The capacity of a country to produce, adopt, adapt, disseminate, and commercialise knowledge has become increasingly critical for economic competitiveness, sustained economic growth, and improved welfare of society (OECD, 1996b; World Bank, 2002). Research evidence indicates that knowledge has been the single-most important engine of growth and the driving force behind economic performance in OECD countries over recent decades (OECD/UNESCO, 2003). Those countries which have an expanded system of higher education, with higher levels of investment in research and development (R&D) activities, have higher potential to grow faster in a globalised knowledge economy (Varghese, 2013). As a result of these new developments, the university has become a key engine for growth, development and the transformation of societies.

While Africa is an important region of the world, it has remained at the periphery of the knowledge society. This has led to what Castell (2011) once referred to as 'knowledge apartheid', in which some nations or parts of the world are excluded from what he refers to as the 'networked society'. The debates about Africa's knowledge assets and their place and even relevance in the global knowledge society have been perennial (Zezeza, 2005). These include arguments that the rest of the world doesn't give due appreciation or consideration to knowledge contributions from Africa, and that western knowledge epistemologies are more highly regarded. The approaches and infrastructure for knowledge production and even dissemination have also been seen to be largely controlled by the global metropolises, leaving minimum entry

points to the knowledge economy from other parts of the world such as Africa (Jowi & Obamba, 2012).

This chapter discusses the position of the African university in the global knowledge society, and the role that internationalisation of universities could play in enhancing the development of new frontiers for knowledge production and utilisation in Africa. We argue that African universities should take advantage of opportunities presented by internationalisation and take their rightful place as engines of knowledge production and development in Africa. We suggest that one way of doing this is through the Africanisation of internationalisation in African universities. In developing this argument the following issues will be explored: (i) the rise of the knowledge society and the position of Africa; (ii) partnerships and capacity building in Africa's higher education; (iii) internationalisation and knowledge generation in Africa; (iv) Africanisation of internationalisation in African universities and (v) internationalisation and knowledge production prospects in Africa.

#### THE RISE OF THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY AND THE POSITION OF AFRICA

In the light of the expansion of the knowledge economy, the knowledge produced by higher education systems and the skills possessed by graduates are becoming deciding factors in promoting economic progress and social welfare (Kinser & Green, 2009). One of the new developments is the growing impact of globalisation on education, which has consequently propelled internationalisation to a central position in the higher education sector. Some governments pursue the internationalisation of higher education through international partnerships, collaborations and exchange programmes based on varied rationales. Institutions develop their own strategies to internationalise their research and possible co-teaching arrangements, which is further evidence of the importance of internationalisation of higher education (Jeptoo & Razia, 2012). Zolfaghari, Sabran and Zolfagari (2009) categorises reasons for internationalisation into four groups: political, economic, academic, and socio-cultural. The political reasons are often considered to be more important at the national level, compared to the institutional level. According to Kreber (2007), the political rationale is related principally to issues of national security, stability and peace, as well as ideological influences ensuing from internationalisation efforts. Examples of such efforts are the outward bound mobility of students from the United States (US) through study abroad programmes, and the opening of the borders of that country (and others) for international students to study there. Study abroad programmes that are accompanied by the study of foreign languages are part of a strategy to understand developments around the world, which in turn, will assist in formulating foreign policy. The recruitment of international students is related to winning the hearts and minds of these young people from different parts of the world. This strategy dates back to the Cold War period, when developing countries becoming the battle ground for winning allegiance of those citizens to either the US or the then Soviet Union.

Economic drivers of the knowledge society are of increasing importance and relevance in developed countries around the world (Kreber, 2007). An effective way to improve and maintain a competitive edge is to develop a highly skilled and knowledgeable work force and to invest in applied research. Countries like Australia even export higher education services with a view to generating revenue. According to Harman (2005), Australia's development as a higher education exporter has been prompted by important shifts in Commonwealth Government policy since the mid-1980s with regard to foreign students, the funding of higher education, and economic reform. Particularly important were decisions to actively recruit foreign students on a commercial basis, to encourage higher education institutions to raise more of their own revenue, and to restructure the economy to broaden the formerly narrow export base to include specialised services (Harman, 2005).

The academic reasons for the rise of the knowledge society are linked directly to enhancing the teaching and learning process, and achieving excellence in research and scholarly activities. This finds expression through linking internationalisation to knowledge transfer, notably the transmission of knowledge through media (books, electronic media and similar means), physical mobility (conferences, study abroad, academic staff exchange, etc.), joint curricula and research projects, as well as transnational education (Teichler, 2003). Europe pursues this strategy through the Bologna and Erasmus Mundus processes that encourage the mobility of students and scholars within the European Community. The main rationale for African universities to engage in internationalisation is academic, and aimed at institutional strengthening, enhancement of research capacities and knowledge production (Jowi, 2010).

Internationalisation has, at the same time, grown in complexity, thus leading to different opportunities and consequences for higher education sectors in different regions of the world (Knight, 2008). This has had far-reaching impacts on higher education worldwide (Teferra & Greijn, 2010) and led to even more interdependence, interconnectedness, and mobility across global communities, enabling global challenges and achievements to transcend national boundaries (Koehn & Rosenau, 2010). While these developments abound with challenges, they also present unprecedented opportunities for the generation and utilisation of knowledge, especially by developing countries, to address emerging global development problems. In this evolving context and as shown later in this chapter, partnerships across national and disciplinary boundaries are rapidly emerging as the dominant model for organising international research and development (King, 2008).

The greatest challenge confronting African universities in the 21st century is how to become relevant to local needs and social realities, while simultaneously responding adequately to the opportunities and risks of globalisation. New patterns of transnational cooperation have emerged and played a significant role in strengthening African higher education, particularly through academic and support staff development, and student and staff mobility (Jowi, 2012). Considering the

knowledge challenges facing Africa and Africa's disadvantaged position in the global knowledge space, what possibilities could emerge from internationalisation and global partnerships in education? Would these developments in international education provide positive transformations or further embed already existing imbalances? These pertinent issues are explored in the next sections of this chapter.

#### AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES AND THE GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Internationalisation is one of the major forces shaping Africa's higher education sector in the 21st century (Jowi, 2010); it offers several opportunities for African universities and societies, but there are also some potential risks. For some time, African universities have been seen as key instruments of development, leading to the idea of 'development universities' (Cloete, Bailey, & Maassen, 2011). Universities were central to the development strategy of newly independent countries in Africa (Varghese, 2013), particularly since higher education institutions are supported largely by public resources. In the early years of independence, they also symbolised national pride (Coleman & Court, 1993), and thus served both political and economic aspirations of governments; hence the willingness of new governments to invest in universities (Cloete et al., 2011; Sawyerr, 2004).

In recent years, the emerging global realities in higher education and the need to engage in knowledge production have compelled Africa to take deliberate steps to address the realities and demands of the knowledge society. A number of initiatives are developing in Africa at continental, regional and national levels (Jowi, 2012). Supportive frameworks are being formulated to strengthen Africa's capacities to deal with its own circumstances and develop a viable platform for international engagement. As Jowi (2012) suggests, these efforts could prompt a transition from Africa being a bystander, to becoming a real player in the global knowledge society. The continental efforts spearheaded by the African Union (AU) aimed at creating and strengthening Africa's Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS) have focused on revitalisation of the higher education sector (AUC, 2011), epitomised in the *Second Decade of Education in Africa* (AU, 2008) and Agenda 2063 of the African Union (Hartzenberg, 2011). The African Union Commission (AUC) views regional integration as a key and intermediate step towards integration of African countries into the global economy. Bringing convergence to the continent's higher education system (which is diversely structured along geographical, colonial, linguistic and structural lines) is therefore important. These developments have led to the revival of the Arusha Convention which was drawn up in the 1980s, and aimed to harmonise academic programmes in Africa for enhanced collaboration, quality assurance, structural convergence, compatibility, recognition, and transferability of degrees across borders (Hartzenberg, 2011).

The African Union has emphasised that Africa's development "will require partnerships not only with local and regional actors and stakeholders, but also with the universities, businesses and governments of the developed world" (NEPAD,

2005, p. 21). The AU therefore calls for the development of dialogue, networks, co-operation, and partnerships between African higher education and public, civil society, and corporate sectors (NEPAD, 2005, p. 9). These developments have led to the establishment of the Pan African University (PAU), with centres spread across Africa, as one of the ways of enhancing collaboration and co-operation between African countries in targeted areas within specialised regional centres. The main focus is on research and postgraduate training (AU, 2008) in fundamental and development-oriented areas. The promulgation of the Accra Declaration and its quest for increased opportunities for academic cooperation in Africa (AAU, 2004) led to the establishment of the Mwalimu Nyerere Student Mobility Programme in 2007 to promote internal student mobility within different regions and countries in Africa.

The proposed strategies of collaboration between universities, businesses and regional actors, and the promotion of intra-Africa mobility among students and staff, constitute important ingredients and content for the internationalisation of higher education in Africa. In other words, African institutions and scholars should find ways of exploiting opportunities presented by cross-border activities within the continent to advance the course of development for both their own institutions and the continent. Such collaborative activities could include teaching, research and knowledge exchange.

The growing interest in intra-African higher education co-operation is also reflected in the agendas of regional university organisations, which now foster intra-regional academic exchanges and partnerships, as is evident within the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) regions (Mulumba, Obaje, Kobedi, & Kishun, 2008; Kishun, 2006). Developments such as the Mwalimu Nyerere Student Mobility Programme, show that regional hubs are emerging for international student mobility and research networks, thus providing a basis for Africa to explore new ways of enhancing internationalisation in the continent. Research should be conducted on those features within African universities that make them attractive to international students; for example, regional networks can be used to capture developments and progress on the international dimension of higher education in Africa. A strong basis for promoting the Africanisation of internationalisation could include evidence from the Mwalimu Nyerere Student Mobility Programme in terms of the number of students that have been supported, their country of origin, where they studied, and factors that contributed to their success or failure.

#### PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY BUILDING IN AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

This section examines and characterises the diverse patterns of transnational partnerships prevailing in the contemporary African higher education landscape, in order to demonstrate how the discourses of knowledge and sustainable development are constructed and reproduced. The idea of South-South cooperation in the general

domains of political and economic affairs might have its roots in the Bandung Conference of 1955, when some 79 developing countries agreed to strengthen their voice in world politics and economic affairs through strategic multilateral collaboration. In recent decades, South-South cooperation has acquired multiple dimensions and attracted growing significance in the arenas of global development policy and politics. South-South cooperation has a similarly long tradition within African higher education (Jowi & Obamba, 2013).

In the early 1960s, UNESCO convened the historic Tananarive Conference in Madagascar, which discussed strategies for promoting multilateral partnerships to support higher education in Africa, subsequently culminating in the establishment of the Association of African Universities (AAU). The launch of the AAU in 1967 and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in 1973 represent Africa's earliest efforts at nurturing pan-African academic cooperation. In recent decades, the scope and complexity of academic cooperation within Africa has been expanding at a more rapid pace (Obamba & Mwema, 2009; Samoff & Bidemi, 2004).

The Africa Regional Networks Database estimates that in 2006 the continent hosted more than 120 regional networks focusing on a broad spectrum of disciplines ([www.foundation-partnership.org](http://www.foundation-partnership.org)). This phenomenal expansion trajectory reflects the findings of the 2009 International Association of Universities (IAU) third global survey (IAU, 2010), which reported that intra-regional patterns of cooperation were prominently prioritised in most world regions, including Africa. Another significant development in the domain of pan-African collaboration in higher education and development was the establishment of the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) in 1989. In particular, its Working Group on Higher Education promotes networking, policy advocacy and capacity building (NEPAD, 2005, p. 20). In 2005, the Association of African Universities (AAU) partnered with the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) to launch the 10-year renewal of the African University Programme. Currently, the AAU and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) are implementing a major three-year partnership initiative known as Strengthening Higher Education Stakeholder Relations in Africa (SHESRA), which was signed in 2009 (Jowi, Obamba, & Sehoole, 2013). The SHESRA partnership consists of three components: strengthening strategic planning for African university outreach; stimulating effective university–industry linkages; and strengthening the capacity of the AAU and its member universities to build more effective stakeholder partnerships for capacity building and development (Mohamedbhai, 2012).

In retrospect, the partnerships outlined above share some vital characteristics: a clear focus on enhancing inter-university cooperation and networking within Africa; building local capacity for governance and quality assurance; and intensifying the connectedness and relevance of Africa's universities to Africa's development challenges. It is also noteworthy that all these collaborative initiatives are externally funded—a pattern that suggests the chronic weakness or absence of funding capacity

within Africa, and the emergence of dependency relations (Samoff & Bidemi, 2004). African universities and other actors in the higher education sector should find ways to turn external funding into a resource that can be used as a basis for building local capacities and resources that lead to self-sustainability. Means should also be devised to ensure that in such initiatives, agenda setting is driven by the goal to advance local interests.

A new form of Africa-wide collaborative initiative has emerged around the challenge of promoting harmonisation and standardisation of higher education. The African Union's (2007) strategy for the Harmonization of Higher Education Programmes represents an unprecedented collaborative effort in this respect. From a broader perspective, standardisation could contribute to increased pan-African academic cooperation through promoting intra-regional academic mobility and collaborative knowledge production across research networks.

Quality assurance, or the lack thereof, has become a critical concern in Africa (Oyewole, 2009) and has attracted increasing regional collaborative efforts in recent years. The most significant initiative in terms of strategic scope and structural organisation is the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN), launched in 2009 by the Association of African Universities (AAU, 2009). Similarly, the current momentum to remedy the digital isolation of the African continent is becoming another formidable force behind a new wave of national, regional and transnational partnership initiatives. Several projects are focusing on strengthening Africa's Internet connectivity infrastructure and lowering the costs of Internet connectivity within Africa and between Africa and the world. The best known examples of African ICT-oriented infrastructure cooperation ventures include the African Virtual University and the National Research and Education Networks. One audacious initiative is the UbuntuNet Alliance, a consortium that deploys submarine optic fibre technology and other terrestrial infrastructure to provide a backbone for trans-Africa Internet connectivity to promote regional and international research networking (Tusubira, Ndiwalana, Dindi, & Obbo, 2012).

#### INTERNATIONALISATION AND KNOWLEDGE GENERATION IN AFRICA

Internationalisation has contributed immensely to knowledge development globally (Knight & Schoole, 2013), and will continue to do so in the coming years. Internationalisation has provided avenues through which knowledge development activities have been undertaken, targeting western hegemonies and academic traditions as the centre and main driver of Africa's knowledge efforts (Teferra, 2010). In Africa, internationalisation has played an important role since the advent of higher education on the continent, as pioneer African universities were offshoots of mainly European universities (Zezeza, 2012). Since then, the international dimension has relentlessly influenced almost all aspects of the higher education sector in Africa. Much of this has been in the knowledge domain. While there have been several negative consequences, some of which will be discussed in later

sections of this chapter, internationalisation has made some important contributions to the knowledge enterprise in Africa.

While other regions have made internationalisation an explicit, coordinated and strategically focused activity, Africa still engages with internationalisation as an ad hoc and marginalised activity, with little strategic direction and limited support, leading to varied consequences. In recent years however, transnational cooperation has contributed to the development and revitalisation of Africa's higher education sector (Jowi, 2009; Shabani, 2010). This is particularly notable, since most African countries have substantially reduced public spending on university education due to decades of widespread macroeconomic and fiscal instability (Aina, 2010).

As Jowi (2012) argues, despite the recent proliferation of north-south partnerships and networks, African institutions are increasingly recognising that internationalisation and transnational partnership building is not without its own significant challenges and constraints. Most African universities lack the baseline scientific and research capacities and infrastructure required to collaborate on a more equitable footing with their partners in developed countries. Africa is still lagging far behind in terms of public expenditure on research and development, as well as with regard to knowledge production capacities.

These realities demonstrate that African universities face monumental challenges in their efforts to embrace internationalisation, build effective and mutually rewarding partnerships, and integrate themselves into the competitive global knowledge economy. The permanent movement of African professionals and scholars to the developed countries, which further weakens Africa's battered knowledge-base, is also a result of these global inequalities and imbalances (Jowi, 2012).

Research has become a major driver of internationalisation, especially in Africa where academic research activity remains weak due to quality challenges, weak institutional capacity for research, and inadequate funding, among other factors. Research outputs and knowledge production are vital for Africa's sustainable socio-economic development and to address development challenges. International cooperation has an impact on research quality (King, 2008) and can lead to the production of new and innovative knowledge to contribute to the knowledge economy. It provides opportunities for researchers to participate in international research networks which in turn can improve the quality of the research environment, funding, research infrastructure and incentives (Sehoole, 2008).

African governments spend a very marginal part of their gross national product on research. The UNESCO Science Report (UNESCO, 2015) shows that in sub-Saharan Africa, only Malawi—one of the world's poorest countries—spends more than 1% of gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development (R&D), and then only 1.06%. South Africa, which has one of the most developed higher education systems and produces most of the research in the region, spends only 0.73% of its GDP on R&D, a drop from a previous high of 0.89%. Consequently, Africa has the lowest ratio of researchers per million inhabitants in the world. The

same report (UNESCO, 2015) shows that in 2007 there were about 157 researchers per million inhabitants in Africa, and by 2013 the figure had risen marginally to 168 researchers, while the global average rose from 959 to 1,083 researchers per million inhabitants. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of researchers per million people in the population rose from 77 in 2007 to 91 in 2013. Africa's world share of research publications (1,270,425) was 2.6% compared to a 34% contribution by Europe and 25% by the US. These figures highlight the fact that there is a need for a substantial increase in spending on research and development in Africa, as well as further investment in the production of researchers. An African university is a key in the realisation of these goals.

The information and communication technologies (ICT) revolution that is quickly transforming knowledge production in the world, including Africa, presents several opportunities for Africa's knowledge economy (Juma, 2011). It provides access to huge volumes of information for academics and students to access via different means, and heralds a shift to online dissemination and access to knowledge and other publications, thus providing more avenues for research on and from Africa. The advent of the knowledge economy means that ICTs have become indispensable in the organisation of economic and knowledge production systems worldwide. The capacity and quality of access to ICT infrastructure increasingly defines the level of economic competitiveness and prosperity of countries, organisations, and individuals in the knowledge-based economy. In higher education, the increasing emphasis on internationalisation, transnational research collaboration, and global competitiveness has meant that universities in different parts of the world are under growing pressure to strengthen ICT infrastructure as a critical tool for promoting the quality and impact of their teaching, research, development outreach, and institutional governance. However, African universities still face significant barriers in their efforts to exploit ICTs for learning and research.

Despite the steep and significant challenges facing African institutions, some recent trends and initiatives across Africa represent substantial opportunity and potential for reducing the digital divide and strengthening the position of African universities in the development and management of ICT infrastructure and connectivity. Africa needs to use opportunities presented by ICTs in terms of access to information, ease of communication and networking opportunities without having to travel to far-distant countries to advance the cause of the Africanisation of internationalisation. For example, the African Network for Internationalisation of Education (ANIE) has since its inception, run successful research projects that involve researchers drawn from different parts of the continent. Many of the projects were conceptualised by African scholars, who also conducted research on their own terms and delivered the results. The success of these projects has been partially the result of support and reliance on technology and communication tools such as the Internet and Skype. These tools drastically reduce the costs of communication and travel, while facilitating access to each other's expertise, networking opportunities and project delivery. Although there are still deep inequalities in access and usage

between Africa and other parts of the world (Ayoo, 2009), ICTs have provided new avenues for academic engagement.

In addition to the above, responsible internationalisation can bring about improvement on several perspectives, including the organisation of knowledge production in Africa, especially with respect to how the West relates to and treats Africa and its knowledge systems. The belief in the global North that Africa and its higher education systems are problems waiting to be solved, even by applying less than desirable methods, needs to change. That is not a responsible way to approach the tenets of internationalisation. Not all engagements on internationalisation entrench or impose such behaviours or actions, but the point is that all actors need to denounce detrimental attitudes and promote internationalisation that is fair to all.

#### AFRICANISATION OF INTERNATIONALISATION: A RESPONSE TO PERIPHERALISATION OF AFRICA'S ROLE IN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Internationalisation has the potential to assist African universities in addressing resource challenges that inhibit research, innovation and enhanced global competitiveness. This section suggests how this potential could be realised.

This chapter has described opportunities presented by international partnerships and initiatives undertaken by the African Union (amongst others) to build and strengthen research capacity and knowledge exchange. We argue that African universities should use available external resources to leverage local resources from business and civil society organisations, with a view to developing sustainable international partnerships. International partnerships could take on a regional dimension by fostering regional and intra-Africa partnerships.

The perceived low quality of academic programmes at African universities, weak regulatory frameworks, and low research productivity (standing at a meagre 1.5% of the world's total) could all be improved by international collaboration (Jowi, 2009). Using international collaborations to strengthen research and innovation could promote scientific and economic development in Africa, and also enable the continent to address the myriad challenges it faces. Internationalisation also presents a viable way to respond to the human resource capacity challenges in African universities, through capacity building, specialised training and mentorship programmes. Internationalisation has already contributed enormously to capacity building in several African universities, and also enriched research capacities, curricula and teaching methods (Ogachi, 2009). Most collaborations between African universities and those in developed countries have been for graduate training in specialised fields (Shabani, 2010), an area in which African institutions face considerable challenges.

At a more fundamental level, North-South partnerships have been critiqued as being reproductions of traditional patterns of economic and geopolitical dependency (Samoff & Bidemi, 2004; Aina, 2010). Some observers have raised concerns regarding the invisibility and peripheralisation of African voices in the global

conceptualisation and praxis of internationalisation and partnership (Oyewole, 2009). This calls for the Africanisation of internationalisation as a new trajectory that seeks to empower African universities to reconceptualise internationalisation in their own terms, and to formulate a distinctively African internationalisation and development agenda. This Africanised internationalisation agenda will be directly connected to the analysis and understanding of real African development challenges and specific priorities (AU, 2008) as articulated in the *African Union Second Decade of Education Framework* (AU, 2006).

Drawing from this approach, some voices, especially in developing contexts, have tended to view internationalisation as westernisation, or a new form of colonialism, especially of the African mind (Teferra, 2008). These traditional and emergent realities sometimes put Africa in an awkward position especially due to Africa's weak position in the global arena. While this situation of imbalance and at times manipulation may yet be tenable, Africa is beginning to make attempts to draw itself to the centre of internationalisation processes and debates; however, such efforts remain minimal and may be insufficient to respond to the inherent inequities.

African universities face several risks associated with internationalisation such as brain drain, commercialisation, quality issues and imbalances in partnerships amongst others which hamper their capacity to generate knowledge and be part of the global knowledge space. These gaps need to be responded to, so that Africa becomes an integrated component. It is also important for African countries and institutions to develop young scholars in different fields, in order to sustain research and knowledge requirements. The demand for talent to maintain competitiveness and replenish the continental intellectual pool is growing, leading to what Wildavsky (2009) refers to as the 'brains race'. This race is escalated by unprecedented interconnectedness of social and economic systems, the information revolution, and new possibilities for international travel. In recent years, the training of talented young researchers, especially at doctoral level, has become crucial for the development of institutional and national research capacities, particularly at a time when most of Africa's leading scholars reside outside of the continent and the pioneer generation is aging and leaving the higher education scene. African universities have the daunting task of developing and retaining their best talent at a time when mobility of talent is poised to grow (Schoole, 2011), and graduate training and retention is not keeping pace with demands (Mihyo, 2008).

Another crucial risk has been the negative outcomes of academic mobility epitomised mainly by the persistent brain drain from Africa, such as African intellectuals and experts being retained in the developed economies where they went to pursue their studies (Tettey, 2009; Teferra, 2008). Brain drain beset many African countries in the latter half of the 20th century, when they struggled to keep their brightest and best minds at home. This exodus eroded the capacities of African universities to generate knowledge (Ogachi, 2009) and to ensure self-renewal. There have been calls for African governments and universities to convert the brain drain phenomenon into 'brain gain' by creating and strengthening networks within the African diaspora.

In recent years Africa has enjoyed a sharp rate of economic growth and an increased demand for skilled workers, which will be needed to ensure that the continent reaches its potential. As Bairu (2014) suggests, efforts by governments can help formulate policies that encourage expatriates to return, and communicate to them that they are wanted and needed back home. Several initiatives are underway in various sectors to try and capture this positive momentum. One example is the Digital Diaspora Network Africa, which is an online resource and network for Africans abroad interested in and committed to contributing to Africa's development (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2015/04/14/in-africa-moving-from-a-brain-drain-to-a-brain-gain/>).

Other initiatives cater for specific African nations, such as the South African non-profit organisation, the Homecoming Revolution, that aims to facilitate the return of South African professionals living abroad. International organisations such as the World Bank have also launched their own programmes aimed at utilising the skills of African professionals abroad (World Bank, 2009). Nigeria has set aside \$5 million (ZAR 44m) for diaspora activities and prescribed a stipend of \$2 500 to be paid to any member of its massive number of experts based abroad who decides to return home, in a bid to turn the "brain drain into a brain gain" (<http://homecomingrevolution.com/blog/2013/07/05/africa-undergoes-brain-gain-as-prospects-improve/>).

Part of the solution lies with Africa's businesses to create opportunities that retain the talent we already have and bring home people with desired skills. Such opportunities will offer the returnees the chance to put their talents to use, advance in their careers, and make a difference in the lives of others, as well as to the future of the continent. The Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program, through which scholars in the diaspora are being supported to return to Africa for academic collaborations initiated by African institutions, is another good example of turning brain drain into brain gain (Hayward, 2010). Utilising the African diaspora, who might have been trained locally or overseas, provides another dimension to the ideas of the Africanisation of internationalisation.

Staff development and the production of a future academic workforce for Africa's higher education sector are beginning to receive increasing attention in both academic and policy circles (Teferra, 2010). This new trajectory is driven by efforts to strengthen research capacity and create a sustainable pool of academics who can secure Africa's future needs for higher education and development. Sustained staff development programmes and policy frameworks are critical, not only as a response to the aging of the current African academic workforce, but also as a remedy to the perennial threat of the brain drain. Those in the African diaspora can play a key role by partnering with local academics in building the next generation of academics. The ever-present threat of aging faculty members and the chronic shortage of academic staff with PhD training have made it difficult for African universities to replace staff losses, or to expand the capacity and quality of teaching and research.

The development of the next generation of African academics through increased opportunities for quality doctoral training has therefore been identified as crucial

(IAU, 2010; Hayward, 2010) to scaling up Africa's intellectual capacity (Schoole, 2011) and reversing the brain drain. Due to several constraints, the number of outstanding postgraduate programmes in Africa is still quite low, but there are indications that this is beginning to change (Mohamedbhai, 2008).

#### INTERNATIONALISATION AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION PROSPECTS IN AFRICA

There is no doubt that change is a constant phenomenon in the world of higher education, leading to unprecedented transformation and complexities, especially in developing contexts such as Africa. These transformations and their implications lend credence to some hypothetical scenarios for the future of higher education, internationalisation and knowledge generation in Africa. The first, which is already evident, is that despite current realities and challenges, higher education in Africa is poised to grow exponentially in the coming years. Already the sector is expanding at a rate never experienced before, leading to many other dynamics for the sector and the role of higher education. Ethiopia created 20 new universities in 2013 and Kenya created 20 universities in the span of three years (Mamo, 2015). Private universities account for most of the current expansion of higher education in Africa. Related to this growth is the fact that Africa is becoming a new frontier for international education, although this phenomenon is still on a comparatively small scale.

Developments such as ICTs, global responsibility through internationalisation, and new forms of partnerships and interconnectedness also show the way to future progress and expansion. Further expected benefits include sustained economic growth, democratic governance, achievements in education and health, and attainments in education in Africa (Aina, 2010). Although Africa's position in the global world may not alter much in the short term, these developments could have a significant impact on the future role of Africa in global affairs, including higher education. While changing global demographics present Africa with a burgeoning youthful population, African governments should recognise this as a rare but timely opportunity to expose its young population to versatile and innovative knowledge and skills, with the potential to transform Africa's development and global knowledge relations.

Internationalisation will continue to grow, especially in the form of mobility programmes and institutional partnerships, and will present increasing possibilities for knowledge generation in Africa. However serious risks and imbalances may also grow if ethics and responsibility do not take a central role in these activities. Establishing policies, strategies and realistic frameworks to respond to these new developments will therefore be of the utmost importance in responding to both the opportunities and risks presented by internationalisation.

Related to this imperative is the fact that internationalisation is increasingly taking a regional dimension, both globally and within Africa. According to the IAU (2010), African universities prefer to collaborate amongst themselves, as is the case

in other world regions. There is evidence of growing inter-university activity with supportive policies and frameworks within various regions in Africa. While this may mean that relations between African universities will be strengthened, it could also mean that Africa's dismal role in the global knowledge landscape may persist as a result of further isolation. This trend could be counteracted by ensuring that inter-university activities have targeted programmes aimed at knowledge production that can be shared with the rest of the world. Even though Africa has suffered a 'brain drain' (Mohamedbhai, 2008), many academics and a new generation of masters and PhD graduates have emerged from African universities and contributed to knowledge production and dissemination. African academics need to wrestle the responsibility of knowledge production from dependence on collaboration with external collaborators by taking ownership of it themselves, either individually or collectively.

While governments are ultimately responsible for developing policies to mitigate against outward bound emigration and brain drain, universities should consider institutional strategies to limit such loss of intellectual talent. The mobility of international students to Africa is another possibility that has not been fully explored, but which deserves more attention. In the meantime, Africa should maximise internationalisation frameworks on the continent to foster intra-Africa mobility. Internationalisation can help to address global inequalities and lopsided knowledge and innovation systems by promoting joint research and innovation, sharing research outcomes, and making research by African scholars visible globally (Oyewole, 2008). There are also possibilities for influencing institutional management and governance reforms, and utilising university partnerships to address key societal challenges (Mohamedbhai, 2008). Ogachi (2009) underscores the positive outcomes of university partnerships in fostering community developments in Kenya.

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the current landscape of higher education partnerships as one significant and growing dimension of internationalisation in the African higher education sector. The unfolding debates and range of initiatives in Africa around the emerging role of knowledge and research in development policy within the context of the knowledge-based economy have been identified and interrogated. The analysis suggests that transnational higher education partnerships have become a major priority, both at institutional and governmental levels across the region. There is a growing body of policy instruments and programmes that focus on strengthening and expanding research networks and other forms of boundary-spanning collaborations among African universities, as well as between African institutions and their counterparts in industrialised countries. Knowledge and research production are becoming increasingly embedded into the emerging discourse of sustainable development at national and regional levels; however it

remains debatable whether African universities have the capacity and infrastructure to make a robust contribution to the emerging knowledge-based economic landscape.

The internationalisation landscape remains fragile and narrowly defined. This is particularly because, in the absence of any recognisable in-bound student mobility into Africa or cross-border provision of African education, transnational partnership remains the only meaningful form of internationalisation available to most African universities. While several challenges and risks have been recognised, many opportunities that internationalisation presents to Africa have also been identified. African universities and governments are urged to develop supportive policies, frameworks and support systems for institutions to take advantage of these opportunities and mitigate the risks and challenges. The chapter finally argues that, if strategically responded to, internationalisation could present several benefits to research and knowledge generation in Africa.

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## 8. MANAGERIALISM AS ANTI-SOCIAL

### *Some Implications of Ubuntu for Knowledge Production*

#### INTRODUCTION

Criticising managerialism (or equivalently performativity, audit culture, neo-liberalism, corporatisation) is a favourite pastime of contemporary academics, not only in the hallways of academe but also in the literature. Many of us have an intuitive sense of what is objectionable about managerialism, but is there a plausible theoretical account of it? According to what basic perspective would objections to the various managerialist practices make sense? Is there one thing that makes all the forms of managerialism problematic?

Of course, there might not be just one thing that makes the myriad instances of managerialism undesirable.<sup>1</sup> However, it would be fascinating, at least from a philosophical standpoint, if there were, and I conduct a search for what that might be in the discussion that follows.

In this chapter, which is a work of applied ethical philosophy, I present a unified account of what makes managerialism problematic, at least with respect to knowledge production in South African higher education institutions, and I suggest respects in which this account can plausibly be extended to managerialism more generally. In particular, I advance a novel, sub-Saharan theory of why managerialism is wrong, drawing on a certain ideal of relating communally that is commonly associated with *ubuntu*, the southern African Nguni word for human virtue. In a nutshell, I argue that what is fundamentally wrong with managerialism is that it flouts the value of communal relationship. I also provide concrete guidance for how university research ought to be conducted in South Africa and elsewhere so as to honour that relationship.<sup>2</sup>

Although communalism is particularly salient in sub-Saharan traditions of ethical thought, I do not mean to suggest that the critique of managerialism is only ‘for Africans’. People from a wide array of cultural and theoretical backgrounds could find something plausible in the suggestion that managerialism is objectionable, roughly speaking, in that it keeps people apart. Note that I do not intend to provide evidence that this is the *best* explanation of why managerialism is unwelcome. Instead, my goal is the more limited one of providing a new, powerful explanation that has an African pedigree and that could be weighed against theoretical competitors in the future, particularly those grounded on characteristically Western ideals.<sup>3</sup>

I begin by spelling out what managerialism is, and provide several examples that relate specifically to research in the contemporary South African higher education arena. Note that I do not address the causes of managerialism, such as changes to government policy or what occasioned them—I leave that to my colleagues in the social sciences. Then, I provide a philosophical interpretation of *ubuntu*, that, instead of reproducing it in its entirety as a religious worldview or traditional way of life, sets out its morally attractive dimensions that can be understood and appreciated by people from a wide array of backgrounds.

According to my favoured reading of the concept, an *ubuntu* ethic prescribes becoming a ‘real’ person, which one can do insofar as one prizes communal relationships with others, i.e., by sharing a way of life with other persons and caring for their quality of life. After having clarified this principle and differentiated it from an ideal of collegiality, I apply it to managerialism. The basic problem with managerialism in light of this understanding of *ubuntu* is that it tends to impair the ability to relate communally. Undertaking research could be a way for academics to commune with other academics, managers, students and the broader society; however, managerialism makes such relationships much more difficult to achieve. Following that discussion, I suggest ways in which university procedures could be imbued with more *ubuntu* while retaining enough efficiency, accountability and the other values that tend to motivate administrators to adopt managerialism. I conclude the chapter by noting the need, which is unaddressed here, to weigh this *ubuntu*-based critique of managerialism against other, particularly Western, theoretical perspectives.

#### MANAGERIALISM, PARTICULARLY REGARDING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

In this section I provide what is intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the nature of managerialism in higher education institutions, with key illustrations from a South African research context. I aim to go beyond merely providing apparent synonyms of the phenomenon such as ‘performativity’, noting one-sided aspects of it such as ‘commodification’ or ‘top-down’ approaches, or pointing out a variety of examples of managerialism. Instead, I proffer here an account of managerialism that is meant to capture its essence.

Follow the suggestions of Penny Enslin, Shirley Pendlebury and Mary Tjiattas (2003) as well as Felicity Coughlan and several others (2007), I submit that managerialism is well understood as a condition in which the central activities of an organisation are largely determined by rationalised, viz. quantified, standardised and hierarchical, procedures that are typical of modern economies and states. Higher education institutions become more managerialist the more that teaching, research and governance are steered by the instrumental logic typified by markets (money) and bureaucracies (power).

This proposed analysis borrows much from the sociological traditions of Max Weber (1904, 1922) and Georg Lukács (1923), particularly as they have been

interpreted by Jürgen Habermas (1981a, 1981b). All three social theorists view modernity as being characterised, to a large extent, by the development of institutions focused on efficient goal attainment or means–ends rationality. In the private economy, maximising outputs and minimising inputs has often meant that a business owner or manager breaks down the labour process into discrete processes that can be easily measured and repeated. The assembly line is the quintessential example, but the above thinkers suggest that much of everyday life in contemporary capitalism, and not merely most of the work, has a similar structure. When it comes to modern public institutions, for example, a bureaucratic chain of command involves high-ranking officials issuing directives to subordinates to engage with clients on the basis of fairly inflexible form-filling and box-ticking.

There is real debate to be had about whether these rationalised processes are undesirable, all things considered, or even avoidable, in a mass society. Habermas's (1981b) view that the development of these systems is in fact a kind of social progress, but that they must be prevented from becoming too extensive, merits serious consideration. My point is that one compelling way to understand managerialism in higher education institutions is in terms of the extension of an instrumental logic, characteristic of modern economies and states, into a realm where it did not exist in the past.

Consider how this account of the nature of managerialism makes sense of a wide array of practices that are intuitively managerialist in twenty-first century South African higher education institutions. Think about the practice of monitoring and evaluating lecturers primarily with respect to their classes' pass rates, with any result under 82% being considered to be putting a course or lecturer 'at risk'. Consider judging a unit's equity or transformation profile merely by the percentage of black South African staff it has, with deans being tasked with reaching something on the order of 36% in a given year. Imagine a university whose senior management has mobilised substantial resources so that instead of remaining in the top 4% in global rankings, the university moves into the top 3%. Suppose that, in order to reduce the amount of fraud occurring, line managers had to examine all the receipts handed in, write the word 'cancelled' on them, sign them and date them, on pain of the academics in their departments not being reimbursed for their expenses. And then reflect on the practice whereby those largely affected by a financial decision are not allowed to have a meaningful say in it, for example, where there is no overview by, let alone consultation with, academics in regard to a university's budget.

Some of the above real-life examples are more bureaucratic, and others are more market-oriented, but all are plausibly called 'managerialist'. I suggest that the label is apt because they all, to a varying extent, involve steering subordinates in ways that call for the production of uniform outputs according to measurable criteria. There is no explicit connection to knowledge production in these cases, though one might pause to consider how it might be indirectly affected.

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Now, I indicate some forms of managerialism that have a more direct bearing on the way research is undertaken. Think about senior management designing a development programme for associate professors without first consulting them about what they might find useful for their research and for their careers more generally. Consider that when this programme is implemented, prospective participants are not able to engage directly with senior management about their concerns, but must rather channel them through a coordinator, who relays them to a director, who passes them on to a still more senior manager, who must then approve any changes.

Imagine that academic staff, in general, are incentivised with the prospect of a monetary bonus at the end of the year that is determined by a numerical rating of their performance, which, with regard to research, is based almost exclusively on quantified outputs such as the number of publications in forums that are expected to accrue government subsidy for the university. Suppose that when it comes to promotion, a staff member's research contribution is expected to meet a certain quantified threshold, where a journal article counts as one full unit and a chapter in an edited book counts as half a unit. Finally, reflect on the practice of awarding research-related funds to academics according to whether or not they publish in a journal on a particular list that helps the university climb the global rankings.

There are a number of reasons why academics might reasonably find the above practices unwelcome. In what follows, I seek a principle that makes sense of all of them as various manifestations of one basic problem: they inhibit academics from communing with each other, managers, their students, and the society in which they live.

#### UBUNTU AS A MORAL THEORY<sup>4</sup>

A well-known maxim that indigenous southern Africans often invoke to sum up salient ethical perspectives is 'a person is a person through other persons' (e.g. Khoza, 1994, p. 3; Dandala, 2009, p. 160; Mandela, 2013, p. 227).<sup>5</sup> Although those familiar with traditional African cultures tend to associate certain ideas with this phrase, as it stands, it is virtually meaningless to someone outside the fold (after all, who would ever think that a person is not a person?). Since this chapter is directed towards an English-speaking audience that includes those who are not familiar with African traditions, and since transparency and clarity are essential for the purposes of public morality, in this section I articulate an ethic based on this maxim that can be readily grasped, and even appreciated, by those from a variety of backgrounds. Note that I am not seeking to *reflect* accurately the way that particular indigenous sub-Saharan people understand morality or the above maxim about it. Instead, I draw on some of the ways that a variety of (southern) African societies and thinkers understand it, in order to *construct* a plausible moral theory, having an African pedigree, that can be

used to judge contemporary social controversies, including managerialism in higher education institutions.

What, then, does it mean when one says that a person is a person through other persons? Or, more specifically, which interpretation of this phrase is both continuous with sub-Saharan ethical traditions, particularly those in southern Africa, and *prima facie* attractive as a basic moral principle?

Take the first clause. When sub-Saharans say that ‘a person is a person’ they are not expressing a tautology. Instead, what they mean usually includes the idea that someone who is a person, in the biological sense of a deliberative agent such as a human being, ought to strive to become a *real* or *genuine* person, that is, someone who exhibits moral virtue (Ramose, 1999, pp. 52–53). Someone who has such virtue has *ubuntu*, literally, humanness in the Nguni languages of southern Africa. A true or complete person is someone who lives a genuinely human way of life, who displays ethical traits that human beings are in a position to exhibit in a way nothing else in the animal, vegetable or mineral kingdoms is able to.

Just as one might say that a jalopy is not a “not a *real* car” (Gaie, 2007, p. 33), so (southern) Africans often say that someone who lacks *ubuntu* ‘is not a person’ (Gaie, 2007, p. 32; Dandala, 2009, pp. 260–261) or is even an ‘animal’ (Pearce, 1990, p. 147; Bhengu, 1996, p. 27; Letseka, 2000, p. 186). That does not mean that the wicked are literally not human beings, viz., no longer entitled to human rights, but instead connotes the metaphorical point that these individuals utterly fail to exhibit human excellence and have instead actualised their lower, base nature (Ramose, 1999, p. 53).<sup>6</sup>

The second part of the phrase tells people how to become a real person or to exhibit *ubuntu*, that is, ‘through other persons’. Typically this means by entering into a *communal relationship* with others, or seeking to live *harmoniously* with them. It is well known that indigenous African ethical views are characteristically communitarian, but this concept is often understood vaguely or is construed in a crude manner, as ‘the group’ taking precedence over ‘the individual’. As should become clear below, a sub-Saharan moral principle can really be put to work, and be attractive for giving due weight to individual interests, once one is clear about what it means to commune or to live harmoniously. To demonstrate what this plausibly involves, I present below representative comments from some southern African intellectuals.

Former South African Constitutional Court Justice Yvonne Mokgoro says of an *ubuntu* ethic that “[h]armony is achieved through close and sympathetic social relations within the group” (1998, p. 17). Gessler Muxe Nkondo, who has held positions of leadership on South Africa’s National Heritage Council, avers that “[i]f you asked *ubuntu* advocates and philosophers: What principles inform and organise your life? What do you live for? ... the answers would express commitment to the good of the community in which their identities were formed, and a need to experience

their lives as bound up in that of their community” (2007, p. 91). Nhlanhla Mkhize, an academic psychologist at the University of KwaZulu-Natal who has applied *ubuntu* to conceptions of the self, remarks that “personhood is defined in relation to the community ... A sense of community exists if people are mutually responsive to one another’s needs ... [O]ne attains the complements associated with full or mature selfhood through participation in a community of similarly constituted selves ... To be is to belong and to participate” (2008, pp. 39, 40). In the final example, Mluleki Mnyaka and Mokgethi Motlhabi, two theologians based in South Africa, say this of *ubuntu*: “Individuals consider themselves integral parts of the whole community. A person is socialised to think of himself, or herself, as inextricably bound to others ... *Ubuntu* ethics can be termed anti-egoistic as [they discourage] people from seeking their own good without regard for, or to the detriment of, others and the community” (2009, pp. 69, 71, 72).

These and other construals from many different parts of Africa<sup>7</sup> about what it is to commune or to live harmoniously with others suggest two recurrent themes. On the one hand, there is what I call ‘identity’, a matter of being close, experiencing life as being bound up with others, belonging and participating, and considering oneself a part of the whole. On the other hand, one finds reference to being sympathetic, being committed to others, responding to the needs of others, and acting for the good of others, which I label ‘solidarity’.

It is revealing to understand identifying with others (or being close, belonging, etc.) as the combination of exhibiting certain psychological attitudes of ‘we-ness’ and cooperative behaviour. The psychological attitudes include a tendency to think of oneself as a member of a relationship or group, perhaps by referring to oneself as ‘we’ rather than ‘I’, to have a disposition to feel pride or shame in what others do, and at a higher level of intensity, to experience an emotional appreciation of the nature and value of others. The cooperative behaviours include being transparent about the terms of interaction, allowing others to make voluntary choices, acting on the basis of trust, adopting common goals, and, at the extreme end, making choices for the reason that ‘this is who we are’.

Exhibiting solidarity with other parties (or acting for the good of others, etc.) is similarly aptly construed as the combination of exhibiting certain psychological attitudes and engaging in helpful behaviour. Here, the attitudes adopted are positively oriented toward the good of others, and include an empathetic awareness of their condition and a sympathetic emotional reaction to this awareness. Further, the actions taken are not merely those likely to be beneficial, that is, to improve the state of others, but also those taken consequent to certain motives, say, for the sake of making the other better off, or even a better person.

The above specifications of what it is to commune or harmonise with others, which enable one to specify a fairly rich, attractive and useable ethic with an African pedigree, are displayed in [Figure 1](#).

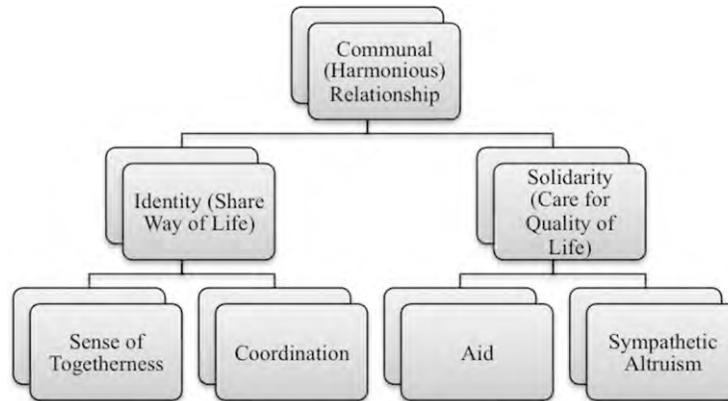


Figure 1. Schematic characterisation of communion

Bringing the above definitions together, some concrete, principled interpretations of the maxim ‘a person is a person through other persons’ are:

- One should become a real person, which is a matter of prizing identity and solidarity with others.
- An agent ought to live a genuinely human way of life, which she can do if and only if she honours relationships of sharing a way of life with others and caring for their quality of life.
- Morally right practices and policies are those that treat people as special in virtue of their capacity to enjoy a sense of togetherness, to participate in cooperative projects, to engage in mutual aid, and to do so as a consequence of sympathy and for the sake of others.

One way to begin to appreciate the explanatory power of these principles is to consider their implications for the nature of wrongdoing. Since the relationship of identifying with other people, or sharing a way of life, in combination with that of exhibiting solidarity with others, or caring for them, is basically what English-speakers mean by ‘friendliness’ or a broad sense of ‘love’, this philosophical interpretation of typical sub-Saharan values implies that wrong actions are, roughly speaking, those that are not friendly (or, to be more specific, that fail to prize people by virtue of their capacity for friendliness). What makes acts such as killing, raping, deceiving, exploiting, breaking promises and the like typically impermissible is that they are (extremely) unfriendly. They are instances of division and ill-will, the discordant opposites of identity and solidarity.

Such analysis fleshes out the following comments by Desmond Tutu, renowned former chair of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, when he says of indigenous Africans:

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We say ‘a person is a person through other people’. It is not ‘I think therefore I am’. It says rather ‘I am human because I belong.’ I participate, I share ... Harmony, friendliness, community are great goods. Social harmony is for us the *summum bonum*—the greatest good. Anything that subverts or undermines this sought-after good is to be avoided like the plague. (1999, p. 35)

What is *prima facie* compelling about *ubuntu*, interpreted as an ethical–philosophical principle, is that it implies that immorality is behaviour that fails to prize friendliness (and is often itself unfriendly), which is different from the dominant philosophical views in the English-speaking world that immorality is what causes harm in the long run, degrades people’s autonomy, or violates rules that everyone would reasonably accept.

Before applying this ethic of communal relationship to managerialism, I pause to indicate how it differs from an ideal of collegiality, which has at times been invoked to criticise managerialism, and in a South African context specifically (e.g. Johnson, 2006; Stewart, 2007; Weinberg & Graham-Smith, 2012). Collegiality, once typified by the University of Oxford (Tapper & Palfreyman, 2000, 2010), is more or less a relationship among academic peers in which decisions about core university activities are largely determined by academic judgment made consequent to respectful deliberation.

There are of course communal elements in this relationship, and collegiality probably captures what the interpretation of *ubuntu* in this chapter prescribes when it comes to the ways academics ought to treat each other. However, collegiality is not a comprehensive ethic, and so cannot provide an explanation of those respects in which managerialism is problematic with regard to relationships between academics and non-academics, such as laypeople in the broader society. *Ubuntu* could be considered as the genus, and collegiality as a species, where the former has the power to explain philosophically what is so appealing about the latter.

#### MANAGERIALISM AS UNDERMINING OF COMMUNION

The basic problem with managerialism, from the perspective of *ubuntu* as a moral theory, is that it tends to *degrade communal relationships*. When a core university function such as knowledge production is, roughly speaking, steered by money and power, it fails to honour friendliness in that it makes it harder both to share a way of life and to care for one another’s quality of life. To make this case, I return to each of the examples of managerialism mentioned above to show that *ubuntu* captures theoretically what is intuitively objectionable about these practices.

Consider again the case of senior managers deciding to implement a programme, meant to improve the research of associate professors, without consulting them about their needs. Probably the most glaring problem with this approach is the flouting of identity, that is, the extent to which it impedes not only a sense of togetherness, but also cooperation, between managers and academics. Even if the academics were not

required to participate in the programme, and so would not be subordinated outright, the lack of even-handed dialogue about how such a programme would be designed means that management is not prizing the communal value of sharing a way of life. When those with substantial education and experience, such as associate professors, are not allowed to participate publicly and collectively in decisions that will affect them in significant ways, then ‘we-ness’ is hardly forthcoming. Instead, feelings of disrespect and resultant demoralisation (or, to use the jargon, a lack of ‘buy in’) are to be expected.

In addition, with this non-consultative approach, management is undermining the value of caring for the quality of life of others. To exhibit solidarity with others, it is not enough merely to have good intentions. If one tries to save someone from drowning by waving what one thinks is a magic wand, one means well but is not acting rightly or virtuously. Genuinely helpful behaviour would be to dive in to rescue the person, to throw her a life preserver, or to call a lifeguard. Similarly, for managers to act in genuinely beneficent ways with regard to staff would mean asking them for their perceptions of their research-related needs, since quite often (perhaps not *always*) those perceptions would be revealing of what their needs are and of how to meet them.

Similar remarks with regard to identity and solidarity apply to implementing a programme in ways that fail to devolve responsibility. If alterations to the programme stemming from participant feedback have to gain approval from three managerial layers, all the way up to a deputy vice-chancellor, each layer lacking direct contact with participants, it is bureaucratic control, and not communal relationship, that is prioritised. Such practices determined by a chain of command, instead of by collegial dialogue, lack the nimbleness needed to implement a programme in a way that would most assist academics.<sup>8</sup>

Turn now to the example of the policy of rewarding staff with a year-end bonus according to the extent to which they have met numerical publication targets, particularly those expected to bring money into the university. If these targets are unilaterally formulated from above, there is a lack of sharing a way of life. Carrots are naturally more welcome than sticks, but, even so, this situation would not consist of interaction between management and staff that attempts to reach mutual understanding and agreement.

In addition, the focus on the number of outputs and the prospect of income threatens to reduce the influence of academic judgment on what and where to publish. Ideally, of course, an academic should try to publish material she thinks is of genuine importance in a forum that is suitable and influential *and* that would satisfy management’s interests in terms of income, rankings, etc. However, in cases where the academic’s choice of forum pulls in a direction away from satisfying management’s interests, there is the risk that the purely academic interests will be undermined.

One might point out that, in these cases, academics would be assisting their universities by bringing in funds. However, chances are that they would be failing

to do their utmost to assist their colleagues' search for knowledge, or their students and the broader society to the extent that they have an interest in what is published. Furthermore, since a university presumably ought to be using funds precisely for promoting the academic search for, and public appreciation of, knowledge, it is not clear that bringing in funds at the expense of academic interests even counts as a relevant form of 'help' to the university! Insofar as academics ought to exhibit solidarity by aiding one another, their students and the public through their research, and insofar as managers ought to exhibit solidarity with academics by aiding them to do precisely that, the kind of reward scheme under discussion is, on the face of it, counterproductive.

The same kind of comments apply to the other two forms of managerialism with respect to research as sketched above. Basing a researcher's promotion on the number of peer-reviewed units produced, with more weight given to journal articles than book chapters, substantially reduces the influence of academic judgment, not only on what research is produced and where it appears, but also on which researchers obtain resources in the academy and become more influential. The role of dialogue among experts about the merits of a researcher's contribution is reduced in favour of a counting exercise. And a researcher seeking promotion is then not encouraged to think about what would most benefit her field or her society, but rather what would satisfy a quantified benchmark. This point also applies to the practice of awarding funding to researchers according to whether they publish in a journal on a certain list that is expected to help the university climb the global rankings.

Recall that I initially listed additional forms of managerialism not directly bearing on research. I submit that similar kinds of objections apply to them—they, too, flout the communal values of sharing a way of life and caring for the quality of life of others. That is, they also create a sense of 'us versus them' (or at least a failure to foster 'we-ness'). They fail to base interaction on cooperative input (even tending towards outright subordination). They further prevent academics from doing the most to help one another, their students and the broader public. And they are not based on a motive of wanting to help others for their sake, but rather on more self-serving interests such as obtaining funding and acquiring prestige.

As an example of these additional forms of managerialism, judging a unit's transformation profile merely by the percentage of black staff it has neglects, and fails to encourage, focusing on additional respects in which public institutions that previously flouted communal values should be seeking reconciliation or otherwise aiding a disadvantaged society. Such could be done via engaging in community service, providing role models, increasing the number of black postgraduates, offering bursaries, funding students to attend international conferences, and teaching them how to publish and how to construct a CV, for example. And for teachers to be monitored and evaluated primarily with respect to the pass rates of their classes neglects, and discourages focusing on, other facets of lecturing that would be good for students and society, such as being an inspiration, fostering empathy, imparting

cognitive skills that include critical thought and imagination, showing how to debate respectfully and constructively, broadening horizons, making students aware of excellence, conveying life lessons, and ensuring the curriculum is relevant and up to date.

These kinds of energy-intensive and commendable actions might indirectly lead to increased numbers of black staff or improved course pass rates, but they are likely to be insufficiently acknowledged, prized and rewarded in a numbers-based reporting system. The greater the reliance on quantified outcomes, the more other legitimate academic tasks, at least from the *ubuntu* perspective of genuinely aiding other people, are under-reported or not undertaken at all.

#### NON-MANAGERIALIST APPROACHES TO KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

In the previous section, I argued that the salient respects in which managerialism in recent South African higher education institutions is objectionable, particularly with respect to knowledge production, are well captured by the idea that it impairs the ability to relate communally, an ideal in the southern African ethical tradition of *ubuntu*. The communal relationship, here, is a combination of identifying with others and exhibiting solidarity with them, and it is these values that managerialism arguably fails to honour appropriately. In this final section of the chapter, I turn from critique to construction, again drawing on the Afro-communitarian values of identity and solidarity but now to propose some different and presumably more attractive ways of proceeding with regard to research at a university.

Let us revisit a final time the idea of a development programme for associate professors, one that is meant to advance their research careers. In order for managers to identify with academics, they would ideally meet with the academics to discuss the proposals and solicit input. Of course not everything that academics want would necessarily be on offer—not everyone would be able to travel to Bellagio or to stop lecturing for long periods. However, management would inform staff about the kinds and extent of resources available, and discussion would take place within those (let us presume reasonable) constraints. If this could not be done in person, it could be done by email. Doing these things before the programme were adopted would cultivate a sense of togetherness between management and academics, and probably among academics themselves. It would promote cooperative participation by the parties most affected, be most likely to produce a programme that would truly benefit academics, and express to academics that management cares about them.

Ideally, the group of associate professors would be given forums at which they could speak directly to senior management about their perceptions of the programme, or would elect, or at least confirm, a coordinator who would liaise with senior management on their behalf. Senior management would give a coordinator leeway to make decisions within certain boundaries, while expecting routine reports on progress and notifications of any unexpectedly large changes. In this way, collegial dialogue between the coordinator and the academics would be the

primary determinant of the programme's unfolding, realising a shared way of life and readily adjusting in response to new information that would invariably arise, thereby ensuring the academics' interests were cared for.

Considering, now, academic staff more generally, the communal values of sharing and caring would prescribe an evaluation of their performance that is focused on discussion, in the light of academic judgment. A line manager and an academic staff member would each make appraisals of the importance of the research produced by the academic in a given year and the impact (theoretical or practical) it had or is likely to have. Based on that evaluation, they would determine what went well, what could have gone better, and how things could be done better the following year. A more radical suggestion would be to abjure individual performance management altogether in favour of evaluating the way that a group has functioned. Such an approach would be particularly likely to encourage a sense of togetherness as well as to foster a cooperative division of labour that would be beneficial for all.<sup>9</sup>

Although these kinds of appraisals could still be awkward—a matter of a superior appraising subordinates—surely a communal relationship would be more likely to emanate from them than from a superior giving subordinates a numerical score for their performance tied to a certain monetary award based on the number of subsidy-accruing units of output.<sup>10</sup> And where some quantitative steering may be appropriate, say, with regard to the desirable number of research outputs, it would be better to enable those who are subject to the steering to have a substantial input on the nature of the targets.

When it comes to promotion and the allocation of research-related resources, a similar procedure would be apt. Ascertaining whether promotion is justified with regard to knowledge production should be undertaken holistically, in the light of the proper aims of research.<sup>11</sup> Some research should be undertaken for other researchers, such as scholars striving to discover what is true or at least epistemically justified, and some of it should be for students and the public, who may also have an interest<sup>12</sup> (but are often more urgently concerned with physical, social and economic well-being). Instead of primarily considering numbers of articles and chapters, with the former being weighted more heavily, for whatever reason, than the latter, academic research should be evaluated in terms of the sort of contribution it has made. What have we learned from this research? How have others benefited from its publication? From the perspective of *ubuntu*, knowledge production is aptly viewed as a kind of service, i.e., a way of exhibiting solidarity with others, sometimes practically, in terms of the society's flourishing, and other times theoretically, in terms of people gaining greater understanding of themselves and their place in the world. In addition to the consideration of promotion on the basis of an academic's research, grants and other financial support should be distributed based on the considerations discussed above, and not as much on publication in a journal on a certain list that is expected to help the university improve its global ranking.

I submit that these measures would be consistent with reasonable interests on the part of management in ensuring that academics are productive and that councils,

government departments and other stakeholders are kept informed about how tax revenues are being spent. It is of course much easier to count the number of publications produced in a given year than to indicate, say, what kinds of discoveries researchers have made. The former task calls for a scorecard, the latter for a narrative, and a narrative takes time and creativity to construct.

Think about what it would mean for senior management to report properly on a university's activities. If a university ought to be identifying with and exhibiting solidarity towards the society in which it is located, then such narrative considerations are, in fact, the only relevant sort of information to provide. Solidarity with regard to research would mean indicating what has been discovered and how it is to the good, either practical or theoretical, of others. Knowing that greater numbers of publications have been produced compared to the previous year is simply not relevant, and a senior management team that focused on such measures when reporting externally would be failing to be accountable to stakeholders (cf. Metz, 2011b, esp. pp. 47–50).

#### CONCLUSION

I close this chapter by reminding the reader of its intended scope and of what has yet to be done. I sought to develop an *ubuntu*-based critique of what is wrong with managerialism in general, and as it is applied to research in particular. More specifically, I pointed out that certain communal values are often associated with indigenous southern African worldviews and have advanced a principled way of understanding their moral import. According to this ethic, one ought to live a genuinely human way of life by prizing relationships of identifying and exhibiting solidarity with others. I argued that, by this principle, managerialism is inherently anti-social; it tends to inhibit people's ability to enjoy a sense of togetherness, to participate cooperatively, to do what is likely to aid one another, and to do so consequent to sympathy and for the sake of the other. I also suggested some non-managerialist ways of engaging in knowledge production that would not flout, but would rather accord with, these values.

I have not sought to argue that my *ubuntu*-inspired critique of managerialism is the only comprehensive one available, let alone the best one. There are, in particular, more Western approaches with which it should be compared. For example, some argue that the value of democracy is what managerialism fundamentally forsakes by virtue of its procedures (Enslin et al., 2003; Coughlan et al., 2007), or that these procedures directly impede a certain kind of individual autonomy or self-formation (Shore, 2008; Clarke & Knights, 2015). Others working more closely with Habermas's (1981b) overarching framework might maintain that, while there is nothing objectionable about managerialist procedures as such, they become problematic when they produce "pathologies" such as "legitimation crises", "anomie" and lack of "ego strength".

A rigorous comparison of my account, which has an African pedigree, with these others will have to be undertaken elsewhere in order to determine, say,

whether only one of these accounts is sufficient or whether a combination of them is needed. However, I conclude by noting that one *prima facie* advantage of my explanation is that, whereas the claim of lack of democracy or autonomy focuses solely on managerialism as a process, and the claim of pathologies focuses solely on consequences thereof, an *ubuntu*-based approach includes both dimensions of criticism: managerialist procedures in themselves are incompatible with a shared way of life and they often undermine the ability to do what is likely to improve people's quality of life.<sup>13</sup>

#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> There might be an irreducible plurality to the many different kinds of problems with managerialism, of the sort one finds in Lynch (2006). However, one can know that no unity amidst the diversity is forthcoming only if one seeks it out.
- <sup>2</sup> Other applications of *ubuntu* to an educational context have recently appeared, for example, *ubuntu* was the theme of the 2015 Annual Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society and is the focus of a special issue of the *International Review of Education*.
- <sup>3</sup> See, for instance, appeals to the ethics of 'deliberative democracy' in the work of Jürgen Habermas (Enslin et al., 2003; Coughlan et al., 2007), of 'encounter' in Emmanuel Levinas (Standish, 2005) and of 'techniques of the self' in Michel Foucault (Shore, 2008; Clarke & Knights, 2015).
- <sup>4</sup> Much of this section borrows from Metz (2011a, 2014, 2015a, 2015b).
- <sup>5</sup> For a discussion of this in the context of several other sub-Saharan peoples, see Menkiti (2004) and Nkulu-N'Sengha (2009).
- <sup>6</sup> For discussion beyond southern Africa, see Gyekye (2010).
- <sup>7</sup> For example, the Ghanaian Kwame Gyekye notes, "[t]he fundamental meaning of community is the sharing of an overall way of life, inspired by the notion of the common good" (2004, p. 16), while the Nigerian Segun Gbadegesin says of a representative African moral perspective that "[e]very member is expected to consider him/herself an integral part of the whole and to play an appropriate role towards achieving the good of all" (1991, p. 65).
- <sup>8</sup> Also worth mentioning is the fact that the more burdened senior managers are with the nitty-gritty, the less occasion they have to reflect strategically on how to advance the interests of the institution.
- <sup>9</sup> This approach was used for a couple of years by one of my own departments, until disallowed by senior management.
- <sup>10</sup> One might suggest a combination of evaluation processes—the one I have suggested, focusing on the nature and influence of an academic's research, in addition to the managerial one, focusing on quantity and monetary incentives. Might that not be what would most encourage a typical academic to do the best possible work? The recent evidence, in fact, suggests not—'external' or 'instrumental' incentives tend to reduce creative work, even in the presence of more 'internal' or 'intrinsic' ones such as wanting to excel (see, for example, Wrzesniewski & Schwartz, 2014).
- <sup>11</sup> Another interesting suggestion that I do not explore here is that, within an *ubuntu* perspective, the means by which knowledge production is undertaken, and not merely its end, should also be informed by communal considerations. Perhaps research for a given project should be participatory, that is, should not be conducted by an individual, even where that is possible, but rather in collaboration with members of the public. For this sort of interpretation of *ubuntu* as it applies to journalists, see Blankenberg (1999).
- <sup>12</sup> It is not easy to find a place for knowledge for its own sake within a basically communitarian ethical framework (see Metz, 2009). I presume it can be done in terms of people having an objective interest in understanding themselves and how they relate to the world.
- <sup>13</sup> This chapter has benefited from written comments by Bernadette Johnson of the Vaal University of Technology and Peter Woelert of the University of Melbourne as well as from oral comments

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## 9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN THE AFRICAN UNIVERSITY AS PANOPTICISM

*Embedding Prison-Like Conditions*

### INTRODUCTION

As an academic, I have felt the brunt of the control of performance management, being privy to performance contracts that have become more stringent and subject to more scrutiny. On this basis, I am inclined to conclude that performance management is a subtle, coercive power tactic. I agree with Ball (2015) that with performance management's reliance on quantitative measurement, "we are reduced by it to a category or quotient—our worth, our humanity and our complexity are abridged" (p. 5). At the risk of being condemned for repeating the critique of managerialism in higher education, I am persuaded by ascendant calls for knowledge production from the African perspective, and argue that performance management strategies are counter to change in an African university. The premise of my argument is that an African university ought to contribute to the production of knowledge under the imperative of attaining what Metz (2009) considers to be the final ends of publicly funded higher education, i.e. fostering development, redressing injustices, supporting culture, facilitating cooperation and facilitating equality. Managerialism is a neoliberal ideology steeped in Western hegemony; history demonstrates its influence on the oppressive project in Africa, and its import as a mode of governance in South African higher education institutions (HEIs), which is problematic (Claire & Sivil, 2014). This is evidenced by HEIs attempts to control academic subjectivities that are bound to be compromised in seeking liberating or alternative perspectives in knowledge production. The embracement of neo-liberalism in HEIs through performance management systems has been criticised for failing to enhance academics' performance, and instead, it has had negative consequences for their job satisfaction (Seyama, 2013). The fact that academics appear to be readily embracing the neoliberal rationale for leading and managing HEIs, causes some concern.

There is an implicit assumption at the heart of leadership and management in higher education, which bestows on managerialism the power and the responsibility for solving education problems (Lynch, 2010). I claim that amidst the growing criticism of managerialism and performance management (Amaral, 2009; Lorenz, 2012), HEIs are inclined to further endorse the system. I believe that this trend is

founded on the misconception that performance management systems adequately drive efficiency by means of surveillance and control of staff performance.

I argue in this chapter that performativity discourse and practices are at the heart of panopticism in higher education, thus perpetuating asymmetrical power relations that favour top management and leadership. Panopticism is a metaphor derived from the notion of the *panopticon*, a surveillance mechanism used in prisons, in the sense that it puts academics under the radar (Schmelzer, 1993). In its fundamental exploit, the contemporary tactic of panopticism enables the state or institutions to effect social control at a distance, by means of a constant gaze that individuals internalise and then modify their behaviour in order to conform to societal or organisational conventions (Gane, 2012).

While neoliberalism and managerialism impact HEIs globally, they are of particular importance in South Africa due to the transformation and development of HEIs and attempts to meet national socio-economic needs. Bearing in mind that HEIs ought to pursue their goals primarily from the moral perspective and the Kantian principle of care and respect, performance management becomes particularly problematic in the African context. The relevance of performance management, as it currently exists, defies the claim that it is an inherently necessary and a worthy organisational management tool. Evidence points to it producing more insidious effects than the apparent discontent of academics in having to achieve targets that increases workloads (Morrissey, 2013). Claire and Sivil (2014) reason that it "... undermine[s] academic motivators, such as curiosity, success and recognition by peers rather than money (p. 63). Shore and Roberts (1995) concede that "the result has been a *de facto* centralization of power and authority" (p. 1).

Given the above background, in this chapter I seek to contribute to the debate on the 'darker side' of performance management, i.e. its constraining nature and the subjection of academics. I analyse how the implementation of performance management in a university reduces interactions between academics and managers to the pursuit of institutional 'efficiency'. In particular, the practice translates into a surveillance mechanism that resonates with Foucault's (1977) notion of the government tactic of panopticism. Considering that knowledge production is a means of expressing intellectual autonomy through creativity and innovation, I question the practice of performance management in the university environment, and its appropriateness for interrogating the African perspective as an alternative paradigm. My analysis offers one of the many reasons why current performance management strategies are objectionable for the African transformation project. I situate the debate on performance management within the context of the African university and examine how it is failing to inspire and hindering the requisite knowledge production processes in the transforming university.

To build my argument, I present an interwoven interrogation of four points. First, I offer a critique of neoliberalism—how it embeds managerialism in a university, and specifically how it legitimises controlling tactics and risks suppressing academic agency. Second, I present an overview of panopticism as the relevant framework

for analysis of performance management in HEIs. Third, I provide strong evidence of the resultant performance management panoptic practices, as observed and experienced by academics, and use these to understand how theory in the literature can be explained in the context of university managerial practices. Lastly, I offer a consideration of critical performativity as a possible alternative to encourage amenable and emancipatory performance management practices.

#### NEOLIBERALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Neoliberal ideology, in pursuing a free market system, has led to a pseudo-privatised public service, in which the argument for monetary efficiency and self-financing of public institutions has extended, by default, to profit generation (Lorenz, 2012). For the past three decades, HEIs have been managed within the new public management (NPM) paradigm, bringing with it financial and people control as an attempt to strengthen accountability to stakeholders and offer quality services (Broad & Goddard, 2010). Within this control context, students as consumers of education, are expected to pay for the service, while at the same time expecting value for money (Buller, 2014). While academics offer their services as employees of HEIs, these are measured against institutional key performance indicators and targets. In pursuing and achieving targets, academics are rationalising their employment in HEIs (Besley & Peters, 2006). Academic value has thus been shifting away from intellectual capital as a good in itself, to an economic value. Given that intellectual capital is still crucial for institutional integrity, pressure has been mounting for academics to redefine their identities and roles, so as to also become economic agents (Decramer, Smolders, & Vanderstraeten, 2013). Consequently, the traditional focus of academics' purpose, i.e. social advancement of students and society at large, is being skewed towards the entrepreneurial self. In this case the entrepreneurial academic pursues education for personal career advancement purpose. Observations show that this move promotes individual competition, which is a catalyst for academic capitalists (Metz, 2011). Webb, Briscoe and Mussman (2009) argue that competition enhances performance in the short term; however, it is not sustainable, and "this particular economic value is oppressive and dehumanising when the game is rigged" (p. 4).

Webb et al. (2009) assert that neoliberalism is a political-economic theory that drives the ideology of non-regulatory government economic policy, which in turn allows for the invisible hand of the free market system to operate according to business rules. Neoliberalism is based on the assumption that free market systems have a higher potential to stimulate economic growth and provide the resources that governments need to fulfil their social roles, i.e. enhancing human capital, and therefore economic growth. In enabling a free market system, the state puts measures in place that allow capitalism to flourish unhindered; individuals and the state are entrepreneurs and independently pursue economic interests for their own benefit (Peters, 2001). With this approach, the state abandons its responsibility to safeguard citizens' rights, and to partly or fully provision services such as "the right

to education, welfare, security, health”, etc. (Lorenz, 2012, p. 602). Evidence has shown that those with the power to drive the economy do so at the expense of the poor majority, generating excessive profits for the rich minority (Lorenz, 2012). Thus public institutions are corporatised at the expense of serving the public good, a situation which represents a social injustice.

As Buller (2014) observes, neoliberalism has resulted in the emergence of strongly diverging cultures in academia. Firstly, there is the culture of social purpose, which is “to produce an informed electorate, train the leaders of tomorrow in critical thinking, engage students in serious reflection on ethical and social issues. Secondly, there is the culture of economic purpose, which is to “prepare their graduates for meaningful lives of service, work, and leisure” (p. 3). Prior to the predominance of neoliberal thinking in higher education, the two purposes were integral to what academics perceived to be their role in education. Currently, however, the focus on skills training and developing graduates to achieve employment competencies dominates higher education discourse and practice.

The two diverging cultures of economic versus social purpose demonstrate the sharp contrast between what university management views as the justification for performance management, and how academics view it as being detrimental to socially driven quality outputs. Observations and empirical evidence in some South African HEIs point to continuing tensions, as management takes a more autocratic and bureaucratic stance. Examples include increasing accountability demands, whereby every aspect of academic life has to be formally reported through memoranda, more descriptive and inflexible performance contracts, setting higher targets for publications and student throughput, harsh penalties such as the loss of annual bonus and promotion, and threats of job losses (Claire & Sivil, 2014). Metz (2011) reasons that the more education institutions demand quantitative data for outputs in relation to students’, teachers’ and researchers’ performance, the more blinded they are to quality attainment and achievement of the basic aims of education.

Performance management is largely perceived by academics to be diverging from its intended purpose of enhancing performance, to becoming a power tool that cuts at the heart of academic autonomy (Ball, 2015). The ‘numbers game’ is seemingly accorded higher priority than quality. A culture of accountability that is so narrowly defined as to privilege the economic agenda at the expense of the public good, unrelentingly encroaches on the identity, daily roles and purpose of academic life (Lorenz, 2012). Battaglia (2014) contends that:

Academic freedom was designed to protect faculty—conceived of by many in professional and legal organizations as the vanguards of democracy—to be critical of public policy and opinion. (p. 3)

I am cognisant of the fact that in some quarters, particularly among administrators and those who know no other way besides performing to achieve the set targets, people are conveniently dismissive of the defence of academic autonomy. Academics are reminded that academic freedom is a privilege and not a right, and

that management has the power to dispose of it as it deems fit. Such a threatening tone implies that they risk sanctions if they challenge it. It is intriguing how the value of academic autonomy can be so easily relegated, with the expedient purpose of justifying controlling tactics. Yet, the financial crisis, brought about by the neoliberal agenda, is hardly mentioned when budgets are cut and people are ‘encouraged’ to push the boundaries and achieve excellence. Tellingly, academics cannot claim an infringement should their academic freedom be ‘disturbed’. Buller (2014) warns that:

Silencing even a single voice simply because it says something that others may not want to hear infringes, not merely on the rights of that professor but also on the right of society to be exposed to valid, though unpopular points of view. (p. 5)

The dismissal of academic freedom is troubling, because at some level it implies the “academic-as-problem” (Thomson & Cook, 2014, p. 701), and holds a hidden accusation that academics have historically been recalcitrant in the execution of their roles. As a result, performance management, in the guise of accountability, becomes a so-called reliable mechanism to enforce high performance levels, which shows that “accountability is enfolded within the logic of the academic-as-problem” (Thomson & Cook, 2014, p. 701). Trow (1996, cited in Amaral, 2009) points out that the basis for the NPM critique of the competence of public institutions is indicative of a loss of trust in these institutions. To keep them on a tight leash to conform to achieving the set targets, accountability has become an alternative to trust.

This state of affairs raises questions about academics being able to nurture an empowered active citizenship by teaching students to be critically conscious, when they themselves are scrutinised relentlessly. The implication is that the freedom of academics is curtailed when they cannot think freely and express themselves. Therefore, we need to examine the nature and impact of this surveillance culture on the lives of individual academics. Such an examination necessitates interrogating how institutionalised control is developed, sustained or challenged by individual staff members in a university.

#### THE NOTION OF PANOPTICISM

Foucault conceived the notion of panopticism from Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon observation tower (designed in 1785), which was a surveillance mechanism used in prisons (1977). The panopticon is commonly referred to as a watchtower; it was positioned centrally within the prison’s courtyard, with 360-degree views of the prison and its surroundings. Its views extend beyond the external to the internal environment, facilitated by the cells surrounding it having windows through which the watchman is privileged to observe every activity of the inmates (Foucault, 1977, p. 230). Thus, the panopticon offered Foucault an appropriate metaphor to interrogate

and explicate modern technologies of power that are operationalised by the state and public institutions. Schmelzer (1993) illuminates the metaphor as follows:

Panopticism enables meticulous control over the network of power relations that produce and sustain truth claims of an institution by means of an economical surveillance. It multiplies and mystifies the visible and centered gaze of the machine into the countless instances of observation of a mechanism. (p. 128)

It is important to note that the structure of the panopticon, as an all-seeing entity, does not allow inmates to see inside the tower; therefore they could be under the impression that they are under the gaze, while they are not (Foucault, 1977). As a symbol of power, the panopticon stamps its presence physically, while being able to psychologically effect its force from afar among those under its gaze, who may be oblivious to the watchman's presence (Shore & Roberts, 1995). In this manner, the panopticon gains traction in terms of its sphere of power. As a monitoring apparatus in prison, the panopticon enables a small number of supervisors to control large numbers of prisoners by foregrounding hierarchy through its imposing visibility. It also facilitates a system of control that requires minimal effort, is not costly, and offers high returns. Foucault (1977) stresses that as a metaphor of control,

...the panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction ... it is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use. (p. 205)

Since the panopticon is enduring and intangible yet its effect is felt, it becomes ingrained in individuals' minds, thus manifesting fear (Schmelzer, 1993). Fearful that they are always under observation, inmates change or control their behaviour of their own accord to conform and avoid punishment. To ensure compliance and avoid punishment, inmates tend to believe in continuous observation. In this way, the system naturalises fearful obedience, and hence self-discipline (Soderstrom, 2011, p. 17). As Brown (n. d.) argues, "privacy harm occurs whenever one is under the gaze of the panopticon" (p. 2). In this way, a surveillance mechanism induces discomfort and uncertainty about how an individual can utilise his/her innate thoughts and predispositions in order to function. It renders the observed powerless and creates a sense of inadequacy within individuals—a vulnerability that gives others power over them (Shore & Roberts, 1995). Under such conditions, conformity buys one 'freedom', however illusionary that may be.

Foucault (1977) presents panoptic surveillance as a "widely applicable mechanism in a multitude of settings, whenever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behavior must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used" (p. 293). Thus, the panopticon as a metaphor for surveillance provides a pragmatic lens through which the impact of performance management in higher education can be analysed. The prison analogy reflects systems put in place for academics to account for their performance through contracts that encompass

key performance areas, indicators and targets. Their apprehension about the demand for explicit accountability lies in the extent to which they perceive the system to be prescriptive, and hence controlling (Ball, 2015). Performance contracts then serve as a panopticon, since academics commit to achieving certain targets, and undertaking performance behaviours that are oriented towards the expected outputs spelled out in the contract. Any behaviours outside the set norm risk incurring penalties (reprimand, loss of performance bonus, limited promotion opportunities, etc.). From this perspective, Foucault's use of the panopticon as a metaphor conveys the image of a perfect totalitarian system, in which power underpins relations between institutions and humans (Foucault, 1977), while clearly emphasising the institution's power over individuals.

The accountability system becomes an evidence and knowledge gathering strategy, through which institutions have knowledge of, and are privy to academics' every move. As Soderstrom (2011) observes that those who have knowledge of the prisoners through surveillance hold power over them; this is precisely how institutions hold power over academics, by means of detailed reporting of academic activities. The notion of panopticism implies, then, that the agency of human beings is manipulated to ensure agreeable individuals and encourage desired behaviour. Accordingly, academics are expected to modify their desired behaviour. Accordingly, academics have to be intentional in their behaviour for the public's consumption. However, that which is public needs to be cautiously deliberated upon and measured in its display. Consequently, academics could be concealing their private performance with implications for the fragmentation of the self.

Panopticism in HEIs is characterised by the extent and effect of the invasion of performance management into the private and public intellectual spaces of academics. It illuminates the subtle ways that power operates in education and raises issues of trust, particularly where it appears that the authorities in HEIs are distrustful of academics. In this context, how can performance management be perceived as a tool intended to enhance performance? Furthermore, Foucault (1977) warns of the individualising effect of the panopticon, as inmates are not in any position to canvas support for resistance:

... if the inmates are convicts, there is no danger of a plot, an attempt at collective escape, the planning of new crimes for the future, bad reciprocal influences; if they are patients, there is no danger of contagion ... if they are workers, there are no disorders, no theft, no coalitions, none of those distractions that slow down the rate of work, make it less perfect, or cause accidents. (p. 230)

Butler (1997), in her interpretation of Foucault's position on power, clarifies that power "not only unilaterally acts on a given individual as a form of domination, but also activates or forms the subject" (p. 84). The panopticon, in keeping an eye on delinquents that need reform, becomes a power that conquers the individual in totality, effecting intellectual and emotional imprisonment. It is devious in hiding its intent of creating conditions of permanent fear, and thus compliance. However,

conditions of fear are oppressive, and are considered by Flemming and Spicer (2008) to breed conditions of resistance that could be enacted implicitly or explicitly.

Similarly, we acknowledge that performance in HEIs is driven by fear, i.e. fear of losing rewards, promotion opportunities, and research grants. Fear then transcends any performance for self-actualisation that may be self-sustaining and propelled by passion. Given that fear is a heightened emotion that translates into physiological responses that prepare the body for fight and flight, it cannot be sustained for extended periods without detriment to the mind and body, i.e. exhaustion and burnout occur, leading in turn to low productivity (Schmelzer, 1993).

#### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AS PANOPTIC ENCOUNTERS

The primary disquiet with current performance management practices in HEIs, from the perspective of panopticism, is that they are underpinned by stringent surveillance. This creates oppressive conditions that could directly and indirectly impede the requisite knowledge production in the African university.

To substantiate my argument, I now discuss in more detail the several themes (representing observations and critical experiences within a South African university):

1. Accountability as a panopticon;
2. Colonisation of academic performance;
3. Academic subjection—blurred boundaries between institutional and self-regulation;
4. Individualisation—divide and rule

##### *Accountability as a Panopticon*

To embed accountability, the university has resorted to target-setting performance contracts for academics. These are detailed contracts, including almost everything that academics are involved in, based on quantitative measures against which performance is evaluated. Where such targets are exceeded, a monetary performance bonus is awarded. As an academic, you need to make the commitment and gain recognition for your scholarly work. In addition, reporting systems require academics to report on attending conferences, writing retreats, workshops, etc. and related activities, notwithstanding the fact that these underpin outputs stated in performance contracts.

There are two problems with the demanded explicitness of performance within the higher education sector. Firstly, it specifies academic performance as a measureable quantity, and if it is considered inadequate, then pressure is applied to extend it. For this reason it works within the means-ends rationality. If we consider the success of teaching purely in terms of student pass rates, we exclude the qualitative inputs that foster insightful engagement, such as nurturing, caring (Lynch, 2010), mentoring,

love, friendship, compassion, and critical citizenship conscientisation. Thus the system fails to consider “the basic duties of a university [that] are a function of final ends such as fostering socio-economic development, supporting democratic norms, advancing social justice, interpreting culture and promoting the self-realization or critical thinking of students” (Metz, 2011, p. 44). We know that measurable outcomes are driven by the institutional vision to attain higher international university rankings. However, it is questionable whether performance management systems recognise the university’s role in shifting teaching, learning and research towards the African paradigm. Hallinger’s (2014) argues that if all universities are aiming to be ranked amongst the top hundred in the world, are probably chasing an unachievable goal. He further warns, “the pressure to perform on the world university rankings is carrying universities towards goals that may threaten [their] long-term capacity development and societal contribution” (p. 13).

Secondly, performance management system’s contracts appear to be an effective mechanism to secure academics in its intent to use accountability to keep academics under surveillance, and gather evidence and knowledge about them in order to effectively control them. Such contracts provide a way of targeting academics individually as objects to be analysed, compared and managed, to provide the system with what it wants (Dillon, 2007). Performance management operates as a ‘technology of power’ that instils discipline through its gaze, and rewards or penalises specific behaviour (Foucault, 1977). The way it emerges in practice, is that performance is coerced by means of the promise of either rewards or punishment. The paradox is that the accountability focus has turned into a disciplinary focus, with the aim of solving the academic-as-problem, in pursuit of quality education (Thompson & Cook, 2014). It clearly neglects the necessary development and support of academics to exploit the opportunities presented by re-examining knowledge production in the African university.

Fundamentally, contracts are about communicating detailed commitments. As such, they discredit the idea of the power inherent in professionalism, which assumes intellectual independence and integrity. Individuals categorised as *professionals* should be accorded the responsibility to work, manage and lead without undue interference on their activities (Besley & Peters, 2006).

#### *Colonisation of Academic Performance*

Performance management is intended to lead to better performance and be more interactive, where it is a dialogue between the manager and the people being managed. As it currently exists in higher education, it is not a dialogue; it is one way (top-down) due to prescriptive performance contracts, even though academics are led to believe this is not the case. Empirical evidence is replete with academics’ concerns that performance management is autocratic and compromises academic autonomy in its demand for higher numbers of research outputs (Claire & Sivil, 2014). Saltmarsh, Sutherland-Smith and Randell-Moon (2011) argue that the strong emphasis on the

number of outputs, in particular research outputs, unsettles academics and in fact, manifests in reduced outputs. Referring back to the case of target-setting contracts, I am inclined to argue that prescriptive performance management demarcates the frameworks within which knowledge production can be pursued; and this in turn, could have the unintended effect of colonising the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of performance.

Considered simplistically, clarifying one’s academic activities does not appear to be problematic. However, we should not be blindsided by the enterprise project of managerialism, i.e. the ‘what you do as an academic and how you do it’, which is confined to the quantifiable economic value of performance. Consequently, academic agency is enterprised and academic freedom is reconstituted to be entrepreneurial freedom, i.e. “to be creative in seeking new ways to generate revenue” (Bridgman, 2007, p. 480). What then, are the implications for academics as they are compelled to reconstitute themselves to align with the enterprise project? Their propensity to extend their activities beyond economic ones is then reduced, and opportunities for academics to uncover and locate novel approaches to produce knowledge in an African university are impeded.

*Academic Subjection: Blurred Boundaries between Institutional and Self-Regulation*

In a university where academic performance is rated to judge whether outcomes are achieved, and excellent performance is rewarded, academics are bound to respond in ways they regard as being favourable to their career paths. As Foucault (1977) points out, individuals are continually reconstituting themselves as directed by their conditions; accordingly, performance ‘under the gaze’ initiates self-regulation through the threat of punishment. It persuades individuals to abide by the normalising institutional regulations, which could be attractive with the promise of monetary rewards and/or promotion. Hence, there is a progression from surveillance as a technology of power to governmentality as a technology of the self (Clarke & Knights, 2015); this undermines freedom and leads eventually to academic subjection. As Saltmarsh et al. (2011) clarify, using the metaphor of institutions dangling carrots and wielding the whip:

We’ve got carrots and we’ve also got a whip, and the whip can be quite substantial when it comes to the back pocket. And so, if you don’t produce work of value to the university, well in particular to the faculty, the faculty requires for it to meet its own key performance indicators ... then there is a monetary penalty involved. (p. 299)

With the emergent ‘truths’ about performance, academics’ self-regulation is brought about by anxiety that is induced by threats of what could happen if they fail to perform, or do not conform (Webb et al., 2009). From this perspective, performance contracts translate into legitimised surveillance at two levels, i.e. institutional regulation and self-regulation. The key performance areas, indicators and targets are

set at the institutional level, so the performance framework is already established. The irony is that academics are required to develop their performance contracts, essentially granting them the ‘freedom’ to determine their performance objectives and targets. However, such supposed freedom is deceptive, because academics have to align their performance with institutional strategic goals and thrusts, and most importantly, work to attain the set targets. Consequently, it appears that the institution is innocent in coercing academics, as “ultimately it is the individual lecturer who is expected to discipline himself/herself” (Shore & Roberts, 1995, p. 7). This is the type of self-regulation that Foucault conceives of as ‘governmentality’, i.e. the governing of mentalities to control how people think about themselves and what the state and institutions expect of them. Academics reconstitute themselves into enterprising capitalists; thus discipline as a catalyst of the technology of the self fulfils its intent to “make individuals ‘want’ what the system needs in order to perform” (Thornborrow & Brown, 2009, p. 370). Saltmarsh et al. (2011) observe that “these systems of reward and punishment are designed to increase internal competition and instil a sense of individuals and teams striving for more ‘carrots’ and thereby avoiding the whips” (p. 300); this implies that there are blurred boundaries of regulation, manifesting in governmentality. Consequently, in the university, performance management as a panoptic practice establishes individuals’ accountability towards the institution as a matter of compulsion. In so doing, it fails to facilitate cooperation, which should be one of the conditions for knowledge production towards the Africanisation of higher education.

#### *Individualisation: Divide and Rule*

One of the distinctive means of the neoliberal governance of organisations is shaping individuals who understand that they are responsible for themselves at the exclusion of others. The structure of the current performance management system identifies things people should be doing on an individual basis, rather than on a group basis. It is performative in the sense that it is individualistic and does not consider the community of practice. In this way, it endorses the discourse of individual greatness. Davies’s (2006) neoliberal notion of “responsibilisation” (p. 436) clarifies what promotes individualisation and competition; it calls for the individual to agree to take responsibility for themselves while discarding responsibility for others in order to attain the requisite performance targets. However, such responsibility is not necessarily to the individual, but to the economic market. Lemke (2001) clarifies how individualisation is operationalised in neoliberal framework:

The key feature of the neo-liberal rationality is the congruence it endeavours to achieve between a responsible and moral individual and an economic-rational actor. It aspires to construct prudent subjects whose moral quality is based on the fact that they rationally assess the costs and benefits of a certain act as opposed to other alternative acts. (p. 201)

Confronted by the panopticon, academics are prone to secure the self by appealing to instrumental performativity. They are then caught up in the paradox of exploiting individual potential to achieve excellence, and perpetuating individual greatness. Consequently, performance contract discussions with staff become tougher because they are looking to serve their own interests from the perspective of contracting to things that they can achieve. This outcome highlights the darker side of individualism. It suggests that the focus on meeting or exceeding the performance expectation could detract from individual academics perceiving their performance in the light of benefiting their departments. Furthermore, when academics are at opposite ends or pitted against each other, Schmelzer (1993) opines that panopticism gains traction on individual academics to conform. The system accordingly applies the ‘divide and rule’ principle that keeps academics in their silos, reducing the strength of a mobilised force and rendering resistance negligible, if any resistance is possible at all (Shore & Roberts, 1995).

Here we see an example of Foucault’s (1977) concept of governmentality in his analysis of neoliberalism that “as the choice of options for action is, or so the neoliberal notion of rationality would have it, the expression of free will on the basis of a self-determined decision, the consequences of the action are borne by the subject alone, who is also solely responsible for them” (Lemke, 2001, p. 201). This is where we see objectification of an academic as an economically rational individual, which from a neoliberal perspective is quite acceptable. As Costea, Amiridis and Crump (2012) consider, that the modern ego-centric world is underpinned by individual responsibility precepts that demand continuous exploitation of one’s talents in quest of an unachievable ultimate outcome.

Closely intertwined with individualism is the competition for resources and the pursuit of the status of ‘greatness’ as individuals. Individualism is characteristic of capitalism as it prioritises a person above everyone else. I problematise competition because it is a divisive practice that places colleagues at opposite ends, presenting opportunities for conflict while they are supposedly pursuing the same goals. Amidst claims of pursuing the communal goals, the university’s managerialist approaches engineer individual strategies. The university is being deceptive by rewarding outputs achieved through competitive tactics, and claiming that staff work together to achieve the institutional vision and strategic goals. A significant characteristic of individualism, as perpetuated by performance management, is that it goes against the solidarity element of the African ethic, i.e. acting for the sake of others and caring for the wellbeing of others (Metz, 2009). It detracts from meaningful, equitable and cooperative engagement. Thus performance management fails to create appropriate conditions for knowledge production in an African university.

#### TOWARDS CRITICAL PERFORMATIVITY

The essence of the argument in this chapter is that performance management as a performativity project is failing. While its intent on some level is to transform higher

education, its effects do not reflect the ambitions and objectives of the Africanisation of knowledge production in the African university. Thus a reconsideration of performativity is necessary in higher education, given that it detracts from the African ethic.

On this basis, the temptation for me is to appeal to an anti-performativity stance, as espoused by critical management scholars. An anti-performativity approach desists from blindly believing and pursuing organisational efficiency and effectiveness strategies, which translate into achieving endlessly high and excellent performance levels, while human and financial resources are continually being diminished (Fournier & Grey, 2000). Notwithstanding the view that anti-performativity is seen as fitting in pursuing an emancipatory agenda, in recent years, critical management studies have been condemned for offering nothing beyond the critique. The radical stance of anti-performativity fails to capture opportunities within managerial approaches that could be manipulated to work towards emancipatory practices (Fleming & Banerjee, 2016; Wickert & Schaefer, 2015). Spicer, Alvesson and Kärreman (2009), in their attempt to reposition the radical approach of critical management studies, propose *critical performativity* as a pragmatic alternative to performativity—a more subtle approach that offers micro-emancipations. Micro-emancipations are small incremental resistance practices that oppose performativity dictates (Spicer et al., 2009).

Critical management studies insist on what Foucault calls ‘defamiliarisation of the normal’, for which “deconstructing the ‘reality’ of organisational life or ‘truthfulness’ of organisational knowledge by exposing its ‘un-naturalness’ or irrationality” is cogent (Benson, 1977, p. 18). Critical management studies suggest that we should refrain from performativity talk and seek instead an inherent positive outcome that all should aspire to (Wickert & Schaefer, 2015). That should then become core to organisational existence, i.e. normal sense making, which recognises and exposes the objectionable face of management (Benson, 1977).

As I wish to offer more than a critique, I interrogate panoptic practices and ask how critical performativity might attempt to engage management to work towards emancipatory practice. For critical performativity to offer progressive forms of performance management, we need to interrogate the possibility of a re-conceptualisation of performativity. To do this, it is necessary to expose performativity’s potentialities that could circumvent the problematisations posed in critical management studies as well as the panoptic practices highlighted above. Spicer et al. (2009) offer the following five elements of a performative approach to critical performativity:

... an affirmative stance (getting close to the object of critique to reveal points of revision), an ethic of care (providing space for management’s view point and collaboration with them to achieve emancipatory ends), a pragmatic orientation (being realistic about what can be achieved given structural constraints), attending to potentialities (leveraging points of possibility for changing

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managerial practices in an incremental rather than radical revolutionary manner), and a normative orientation (ideals for good organizational practice). (p. 545)

An analysis of academics' discomfort and objections to performance management reveals the dichotomy of managerialism (Morrissey, 2013). Tellingly, it attempts to operate a system that is contradictory, as presented by prevailing controlling and waning collegial practices. Drawing on Spicer et al.'s (2009) ideas of pragmatism, engaging potentialities, and asserting a normative orientation, I appeal to two economic theories that reflect the current practice of performance management in a university, i.e. agency and stewardship theory. In underpinning performance management, agency theory effects explicit accountability to monitor and enhance performance (Seyama, 2015), while stewardship theory supports implicit accountability that is preferable in academic contexts. Agency theory is founded on autocracy and the use of monetary rewards to control the agent who has economic interests. It is thus at the opposite end to stewardship theory, which recognises the steward's autonomy and self-actualisation interests. Thus I support the need to retain and promote approaches that are underpinned by stewardship theory.

Contractual forms of accountability embody agency theory, which is based on the assumption that employers and managers and staff are self-serving economic beings who pursue individual utility maximisation (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Agency theory presupposes a contractual relationship between principals (owners) and agents (managers and staff) where the latter is obligated through corporate rules to fulfil their mandate to pursue the principal's interest (Eisenhardt, 1989). The aims of offering incentives to the agent are therefore to motivate performance, achieve control from focusing on personal interests to the detriment of those of the principal (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997).

I suggest that these goals should be complemented by stewardship theory propositions that appeal to academics' self-driven disposition for excellent performance, while aligning their performance with institutional goals. Thus, we could integrate elements of agency and stewardship theories to enable explicit accountability while retaining academic autonomy and professionalism, which underpin intrinsic motivation and therefore accountability. From this perspective, performance management within a framework of critical performativity refers to academics aligning their performance with institutional goals and being explicit about them, without undue limitations on their academic freedom. This would mean balancing the controlling nature of agency theory and the collaborative/collegial nature of stewardship theory.

The rationale of this proposition is that by balancing the controlling and collaborative/collegial elements, tensions can be reduced or alleviated. [Figure 1](#) shows contrasting aspects of agency and stewardship theories, and the possibility of working within their continuum.

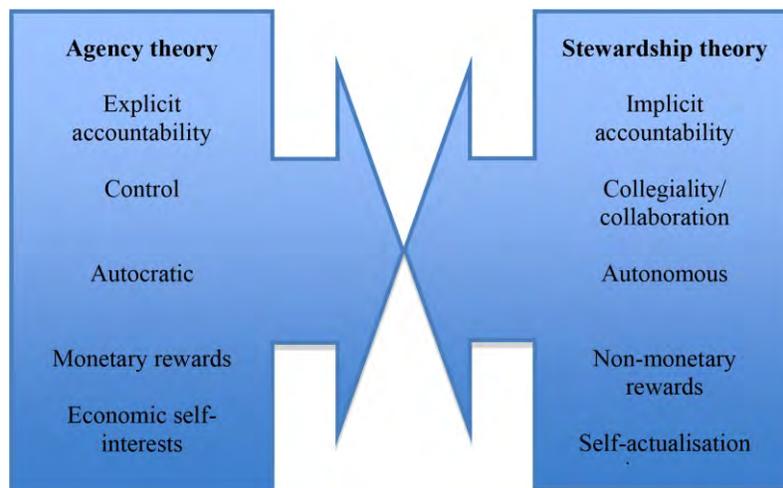


Figure 1. Agency and stewardship theories: An integration

In line with addressing concerns raised about performance management by appealing to critical performativity. The following questions ought to be considered: What might critical performativity mean to work practically within this continuum? How can we reduce the tensions between managerialism and academic culture?

1. There is a need to revisit prescriptive performance contracts in the university, which set high targets and judge performance quantitatively. We should design performance evaluations that consider quantitative and qualitative inputs and outputs equally. The university also ought to measure student success in terms of quality engagement by academics, i.e. showing care, friendship, compassion, and facilitating active citizenship consciousness. In this way, we might deliberately create spaces to enhance the pursuit of these final ends of higher education in the African university.
2. The annual performance appraisal needs to be re-examined in view of the persistent contestation of the nebulous performance evaluation criteria used to determine excellent and outstanding performance (Seyama, 2013). In particular, some staff perceive that the university's expectations require them to 'walk on water'. The university might consider evaluating each year's performance record against the previous year's, since it is likely to reflect higher targets. Thus staff could be acknowledged realistically in relation to enhanced outputs within a particular year.
3. To dissuade individualistic and competitive inclinations among academics, the university could determine overall performance outputs from a department or unit, as opposed to individual performance (which induces individualisation and competition). A departmental approach could promote authentic collaboration, cooperation and transparency in terms of knowledge production.

4. Given that the demanded explicit accountability is very invasive and, to a large extent, thwarts efforts to encourage improved performance, the university should re-establish a trust relationship with academics; this has been compromised in recent years. Excessive reporting demands after attending conferences, workshops, writing retreats, and accounting for activities on research days should be reduced. The outcomes of such activities should be judged against performance outputs relating to a specific strategic goal (and activities underpinning particular strategic goals).
5. The university should authentically exploit a ‘bottom-up’ approach by acknowledging the expertise of academics and permitting their input in responding to varying and escalating challenges. It is critical for the university to authentically and openly engage academics in policy development.

The above suggestions for working within the continuum of managerial and academic tensions are part of an attempt to appreciate the “local ambiguities and possibilities of contextually relevant changes in organizational practices” (Shaefer & Wickert, 2016, p. 217). While I have offered ways in which the university can begin to untangle the performance management conundrum, more needs to be done. Bearing in mind Spicer et al.’s (2009) elements of critical performativity, the following are required: an affirmative stance (getting close to the object of critique to reveal points of revision); an ethic of care (providing space for management’s viewpoint and collaboration with them to achieve emancipatory ends); and deeper engagement between academics and management. Furthermore, since the primary contention of this chapter is that performance management has the effect of subjecting academics to scrutiny, new subjectivities ought to be formed to enable the ‘practices of freedom’ (Foucault, 1997). Such new subjectivities require academics to reject the trend of becoming enterprising capitalists. To reconstitute their identities outside of the compliance, regulatory and disciplinary environment, academics should boldly confront managerialist demands (Clarke & Knights, 2015, p. 1881).

#### CONCLUSION

I set out to explore how performance management in higher education has steadily become an oppressive panoptic tower in its pursuit of institutional accountability, ‘efficiency’ and university rankings. Performance management’s panoptic practices, as highlighted in this chapter, exemplify how universities seem to be shifting from democratic institutions of critical intellectual development to regulatory, disciplinary institutions. There is nothing wrong per se with managing performance—in a practical sense, it is valuable to align staff performance with the institutional vision and strategic goals, and it also provides support for the purpose of promotion. The trouble emanates from implementing performance management in a way that invades academics’ private intellectual and emotional spaces and starts to hinder the quality of their teaching and research. Such a tendency compromises the pursuit of the ultimate ends that an African university should seek to accomplish.

Literature noting academics' experiences give a sense that the more they accept the rationalisation for performance management and seek to conform, the more they are constrained; thus the more intruding and hostile the surveillance mechanisms become (Morrissey, 2013). How can academics freely explore ideas when every aspect of their performance is under surveillance and their livelihood is dependent upon toeing the line? Are academics engaging with their work mechanistically in order to ensure that they function within the performance framework as prescribed so distinctly by management?

Inasmuch as academics are cognisant of the governmentality of institutional truth forms, they engage willingly in the demanded performance activities because these are critical to the survival of their careers. As they set their eyes on promotion, they find the need to self-situate themselves in the nexus of power relations by objectifying themselves and shaping themselves to conform to expectations that demonstrate their commitment to pursuing institutional goals. As it is, their demeanour should demonstrate those who seek approval, but a deserved one that is based on their unflinching commitment and loyalty. Various processes demand that academics 'perform' for the observers, so as to distinguish themselves, i.e. participate in the 'spectacle of performance' by seeking promotion, nomination to faculty, membership of institutional committees, or higher management positions (Clark & Knights, 2015). It then becomes essential for them to say and do the right things, and 'do things right' at the opportune time, so that the 'relevant people' can recognise them. They need to be seen at the right places, e.g. graduation ceremonies, public lectures, colloquia, executive leadership campus visits, etc., and to create the right impression through participation at faculty level because fellow colleagues will be reviewing their promotion portfolios. They have to set an impressive tone in order to positively direct the scrutiny of their portfolios.

However, to Foucault's (1997) disappointment, our current approach is contrary to the notion of the ethical self; it is a veiled form of resistance since we are seen to comply, which "serves to reinforce rather than challenge the dividing practices of managerialism" (Clark & Knights, 2015, p. 1875).

In this chapter, I have sought to contribute to the debate on the darker side of performance management, i.e. its constraining nature and subjection of academics. Perhaps, with more open and frank discussions beyond performance review meetings with line managers and faculty boards, the scholarly community can work together to alter the current performative trajectory. Hopefully we can engage meaningfully in a more critical performativity, which appreciates that HEIs ought to be functional, while at the same time answering Morrissey's (2013) question: "In the world of education, does one have to be in a benchmarked competitive environment in order to be productive and accountable? Can we reason and insist upon other ways of being accountable and productive?" (p. 807) Moreover, in an African setting, can academics envisage the possibility of performance that is in line with the mandates of the continent's HEIs, one that is devoid of power structures (reminiscent of colonialism), remedial of past injustices, conscious of cultural differences, and wholly non-panoptic?

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## 10. THE CHALLENGES FACING ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN AFRICA

*A Critical Analysis*

### BACKGROUND, CONTEXTUALISATION AND INTRODUCTION

A significant educational issue which was evident when the majority of African countries gained political independence in the 1960s and 1970s concerned institutions of higher learning, particularly universities, which were deemed to be the verve and nerve of envisaged post-colonial African development. Discussions at the time revolved around the role these institutions would play in championing the cause of Africa's regeneration and repositioning, in line with the changed political atmosphere occasioned by liberation from colonial rule. Indeed, politicians not only had to grapple with transforming and redefining the role of those universities that existed at the time of independence, but they also had to establish new national universities as part of the independence euphoria which engulfed the African continent.

In the ensuing years, the university in Africa has faced many challenges, which have in turn affected academic scholarship in one way or the other. In spite of the early promises, very few universities in Africa today manage to compete on a worldwide scale in terms of scholarship as it is understood in its general sense and outlined later in this chapter. Up to the present day, the majority of African universities have not managed to produce scholarship that significantly challenges or parallels that established in the West. Some of the evidence for this is manifested in the worldwide university rankings.

Debatable as they are, university rankings tend to give a grim picture of African participation in the worldwide process of knowledge production across academic disciplines. For instance, even the top universities by African standards do not perform very well by international standards. According to the *Ranking Web of Universities* (2016), while the University of Cape Town topped the African rankings in 2016, it ranked only number 332 internationally. Makerere University which ranked number eleven in Africa, ranked 1156 by international standards. Such international rankings demonstrate how African scholarship still needs to improve.

It is also of concern that the excellence of African scholarship is not spread across the continent. The few universities that are doing relatively better in terms of producing scholarship are largely located in South Africa. The university rankings reveal that seven of the top ten ranked universities in Africa are from South Africa.

There are only three from other parts of Africa which made it to the top ten list – these being Cairo University and Mansoura University (Egypt) and University of Nairobi (Kenya).

Amongst other aspects, the growth of African scholarship should be manifested by a corresponding growth in the academics that are produced at African universities. However, as Mouton (2010) lamented, South African universities, which as noted above, dominate the African rankings, are not producing sufficient PhD holders to sustainably replace those who are retiring or looking for opportunities overseas. This implies that African scholarship is being stunted, especially if one considers the transformation goals that universities may intend to achieve.

Our primary focus in this chapter is to revisit the trend in the relationship between the state and the university and to establish how this relationship has affected African scholarship. Secondly, we bring globalisation into the equation on the understanding that African scholarship is partly (if not significantly) influenced by global developments which dictate the direction universities need to take if they are to remain relevant and competitive. Thirdly, and most importantly, we consider the role of the international community (foreign national governments and other funding agencies) with regard to the independence and autonomy of African scholarship. Within this discussion we also consider factors such as corruption, political greed, nepotism, lootocracy, political deployments and many such factors which wittingly or unwittingly impact on African scholarship in general.

Structurally, we begin the discussion by addressing the conceptual definition of African scholarship to set the foundation for the rest of the chapter. We consider this exercise to be important because various authors ascribe different meanings to this concept. Secondly, we provide a succinct history of the development of higher education in Africa so that the reader may appreciate the changes that have occurred over the years that impact on African scholarship—both positively and negatively. We then address the relationship between the state and the university by invoking concepts such as ‘academic freedom’ and ‘university autonomy’ which became dominant in the 1960s and 1970s when most African countries obtained political independence from their erstwhile oppressors. We finally engage with various exogenous causal factors that have led to the decline of African scholarship (such as external donor funding), so as to explicate the complexity of the situation. In considering the various factors that have contributed to the decline of African scholarship, we are convinced that no matter how brilliant an idea might be, without funds to implement it such an idea remains an ideal, almost a mirage.

#### CONCEPTUALISING ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN AFRICA

Before we begin to trace the history of academic scholarship in Africa with the view to establishing how it developed and what led to its subsequent decline, it is of cardinal importance to begin our discussion by delineating the meaning of African scholarship as a concept. Our view is that it would be foolhardy to assume that the

concept is self-explanatory. In essence, there is no specific entity we could point to as the epitome of African scholarship. In other words, there is no standard or universal definition of this concept. Instead, we consider a wide range of issues which together amount to what we, for the purpose of this chapter, refer to as 'African scholarship' (or synonymously 'academic scholarship in Africa').

From a general perspective, African scholarship is simply about how we intellectually position ourselves as people (more especially as African people) in a world that is constantly experiencing globalisation (Ntuli, 2004). In other words, African scholarship in this context is about finding an African scholarly identity by drawing from Africa's repertoire instead of relying on Western philosophies and other inventions which work in Europe but might not resonate with the African context. Operating within this framework, we hold the view that indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and African philosophies such as *ubuntu/botho* (which emphasises how humanity is defined by connection to the other) constitute part of what we would term 'African scholarship'. We associate the term 'African scholarship' with the kind of knowledge and philosophy that is original to Africa.

It should be noted that the nature of 'being original to Africa' is not fixed, especially if one considers the contemporary postcolonial condition. In fact, some strands of postcolonial theory acknowledge the hybridity of the postcolonial being, which implies that African scholarship is not immune to the influence of globalisation. Indeed, Baker, Dovey, Jolly and Deinert (1995) remind us that in most neo-colonial studies "the project of decolonization is erroneously, or at least naively, conceived if its goal is to return to the source or to recuperate native wholeness" (p. 1047). However, we concur with the aspect of postcolonial theory that emphasises how postcolonial societies should be able to garner their indigenous knowledges to understand their own circumstances. As Said (1978) contends, the subaltern cannot possibly be post-colonial if it relies on colonial concepts. Such an understanding resonates with a conceptualisation of African scholarship that is based on Africanisation of the African university and the knowledge it produces.

Thinking along these lines, Sithole (2004) advocates the view that African scholarship is about "creating space where people can face up to all the issues that are relevant to the continent" (p. 1). Implicit in this definition is the view that Africans have the ability to find solutions to their endemic problems using their own knowledge and skills, and therefore they do not need to look elsewhere for solutions. Following this trajectory, the African Union's (AU) call for African solutions to African problems as discussed by Apuuli (2012) fits neatly within the ambit of African scholarship. In a nutshell, African scholarship assumes that Africans should generate their own knowledge and share it amongst themselves and with the global community. Where a need arises for them to borrow knowledge and skills from elsewhere, they should ensure that the local context is not excluded. The bottom line is that Africans should not simply be consumers of knowledge generated elsewhere, but should also be able to generate their own. This focus would achieve three related goals. First, African scholars would be able to find context-specific

solutions to African problems. Second, they would be able to offer something to the global community. Third, African scholars would earn respect from their counterparts elsewhere in the world.

#### BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Africa is no exception to the fact that higher education is the apex of any education system. Teferra (2014) writes: “African higher education has recorded unparalleled expansion in the last decade with enormous implications for the sector in particular and social and economic development of the region as a whole” (p. 1). What is not obvious, however, is that there appears to be no direct correlation between the expansion of African higher education and the growth of African scholarship. But what exactly do we mean by the concept of higher education? For us, this is another necessary concept to define for our current analysis.

The term ‘higher education’ is often used interchangeably with ‘tertiary education’ to refer to post-school education (Mngomezulu, 2014a). The term “has had many explicit as well as implicit definitions in scholarly and policy documents” (Luhaga, 2003, p. 1). Broadly speaking, higher education simply means “all forms of organised educational learning and training activities beyond the secondary level” (Mohamedbhai, 2008, p. 2). For Assie-Lumumba (2006), higher education refers to the scope of knowledge and skills imparted to students within the tertiary level of education, i.e. beyond both the primary and secondary levels of education, or equivalently, in the post-school phase. However, for the sake of this chapter, we use the term to refer more specifically to *university* education and not any other form of post-school education.

Historically, the development of academic scholarship in Africa is intricately linked to the growth of university education on the continent. The establishment of institutions of higher learning in Africa predates the advent of colonialism which only started in the mid-nineteenth century. The existence of African institutions such as Sankore in Timbuktu (Mali), the Qarawayin in Fez (Morocco) and Al-Azha in Cairo (Egypt) serve as evidence that higher education in Africa is not a European phenomenon or invention. As a matter of fact, some African institutions of higher learning existed long before Europe’s oldest universities came into being. However, as Ashby and Anderson (1966) remind us, “... but the modern universities in Africa owe nothing to this ancient [African] tradition of scholarship” (p. 147). This statement implies that African scholarship in the modern sense lost its connection with ancient African scholarship. Instead, it now manifests more remnants of European influence.

In most African countries, university education in the modern sense came with European colonisation which established colleges in the colonies in collaboration with universities in the metropole such as the University of London in Britain (Mngomezulu, 2004; Mngomezulu, 2012b). While some African youths agitated for the provision of higher education in the 1920s with the hope that this would accelerate African liberation, Europeans began to seriously entertain this idea in

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the post-World War II period. They did this for their own political reasons, namely to contain Africans and prevent possible political agitation if they travelled abroad to obtain this level of education. The British, for example, were worried about American institutions such as the Tuskegee Institute, and therefore injected funds into Makerere College in Uganda so that East African youths would not leave East Africa (King, 1971).

The university colleges that were established in various parts of Africa reflected a European outlook in terms of infrastructure, staff contingent, curriculum content, research focus, research methods, teaching methods and many other areas. The only thing that made them 'African' was simply the fact that they were physically located in Africa and had a predominantly black student population. It was for these reasons that at independence, both the political and academic African leadership called for the Africanisation of these institutions (Mngomezulu, 2013).

Another distinguishing feature of universities in colonial Africa was that they were not autonomous. Even with the advent of independence in the 1960s, when these universities broke ties with their metropole paternities, they fell under the control of African governments and thus continued to lack autonomy and academic freedom. Within the following decade, debates raged over the role of the university in Africa. One of the worries for the African political leadership was that the universities had been bastions of Western education and if unreformed, they could turn out to be spaces breeding anti-nationalism and counter-revolution. Indeed, the demands for academic freedom and the criticism of the post-colonial governments' policies and practices did little to allay these fears. Some of the notable political criticisms of the concept of academic freedom and university autonomy came from esteemed African nationalist leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. The same call reverberated throughout the continent.

#### ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

In simple terms, academic freedom means "the academic's right to freedom of thought and expression" (Ajayi, Goma, & Johnson 1996, p. 242). Encapsulated in this definition is the view that under normal circumstances, academics at universities should have the freedom to think, conduct research, and publish freely without being subjected to restrictions, either by government or any other forces. In this sense, academic freedom is essential for teaching and learning, as well as research and publishing. Whenever any of these elements are restricted, academic freedom is negatively affected.

University autonomy refers to "the freedom and independence of a university, as an institution, to make its own internal decisions, whether its decision-making processes are with regards to academic affairs, faculty and student affairs, business affairs, and external affairs" (Ajayi et al., 1996, p. 243). In other words, the university as an academic institution should be a 'free agent'. However, in reality, colonial governments did not allow this freedom, nor did post-colonial African

governments allow national universities to push an agenda that was different from government thinking. In other words, in both instances, the freedom of academics and universities was controlled by governments.

The concepts of academic freedom and university autonomy have been used by universities in a bid to delineate their roles and their sources of influence. At the centre of the debate is the role of the university and academic scholarship in a particular country. To date, African universities have not been self-sufficient enough to be able to declare their autonomy. Referring to the examples of Makerere University in Uganda, the University of Zambia, and the University of Zimbabwe, Dlamini (2002) dismisses university autonomy as a myth. Indeed, the majority of African universities still rely on government funding, not only for research projects, but also for staff remuneration. The issue of funding is discussed further in the next section.

As noted earlier, post-colonial African universities had to reorient their roles, including pursuing the major objective of Africanisation. Tensions between black and white academics resulted in some cases, in Black academics calling for more government involvement in order to push transformation agendas (Dlamini, 2002). The catch though, was that for some governments, control of the university was expedient in pursuing their own objectives. While it may be argued that Africa has been moving in the right political direction, with a reduction of cases of overt dictatorship, governments do not generally welcome criticism from academics in their countries. South Africa has one of the strongest democracies on the continent, but even there, the current president Jacob Zuma, has made a habit of mocking African analysts who criticise him and his government, labelling them as “clever blacks” (*City Press*, 2012). The insinuation is that once an African becomes educated, they get too clever for their own good.

Although the landscape is changing, there are still more state universities than private ones in Africa (Murisa, 2015). As a result, political interference continues to be prevalent in most universities. In many African countries, academic leaders such as chancellors and vice chancellors tend to be political appointees. For example, in Cameroon, many academic leaders tend to have overt political affiliations. The Cameroon situation is described by Konings (2004) thus:

There has been no clear separation of politics and academics in universities since the one-party state was established in 1966. All promotions and appointments to administrative posts are politically motivated: loyalty to the regime appears to be more important in a university career than intellectual merit. (p. 293)

Another case of overt government control is evident in countries where the political leader is simultaneously the chancellor of all state universities. This was the case even in the heyday of universities such as Makerere University in Uganda, and is still the case in many African countries, including Zimbabwe (Dlamini, 2002). Although the chancellor's position is generally a ceremonial one, vice chancellors are compelled to bear in mind who is in charge. As a result, major university occasions, such as graduation ceremonies are planned in accordance with the president's itinerary. A case

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in point is the 2011 graduation ceremony at the Chinhoyi University of Technology in Zimbabwe, that had to be delayed for two weeks in President Mugabe's absence (Guma, 2011). Kenya under President Daniel arap Moi faced the same situation; he presided over graduation ceremonies in all universities across the country.

Therefore, although academic freedom remains an ideal for academics to rally around, in reality it remains an illusion. If academics work in environments where control ranges from political influence to arrests, detention, torture, deportation or even execution, then their scholarship will undoubtedly be affected. Only a minority would dare to openly condemn corruption and human abuses by governments because of the constraints to be mentioned later.

## CAUSES OF THE DECLINE IN ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN AFRICA

We hasten to state that the decline of academic scholarship in Africa has not been caused only by the lack of academic freedom and university autonomy (important as these factors might be). On the contrary, both endogenous and exogenous causal factors (including globalisation) are to blame for the evident decline in academic scholarship. Some of the reasons are structural, some are material, but financial issues are the most significant. Financial constraints, in our view, are at the core of the evident decline in academic scholarship. As such, we shall dwell much on this topic and try to explicate its nuances and demonstrate how it plays itself out.

### *Lack of Funding*

One of the causes of the decline of academic scholarship in Africa is the lack of funding. This factor hits African universities in many ways. Firstly, African universities cannot compete with their Western counterparts in terms of staff salaries. This results in the brain drain, which sees African scholars heading for Europe and the Americas where they establish themselves and make a much better living. There is evidence that emigration has increased, partly as a result of rapid globalisation which has opened doors for African academics who are not content with their local situations (Dlamini, 2002; Konings, 2004). After relocating, it is not a given that an African academic will promote African scholarship, given the dynamics in their host institutions.

Secondly, even those academics who remain at African universities do very little to promote African scholarship, not because they do not want to, but because they have no means to do so. Instead, many African scholars end up carrying out research that satisfies their sponsors, even if it is of no local relevance. This assertion is buttressed by Mouton (2010b). As Director of the Centre for Research on Science and Technology and Head of the African Doctoral Academy at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, Mouton has observed the negative impact resulting from the failure of African governments to support social science research, such as the lack of research institutes and centres at which to conduct social science research aimed at promoting African scholarship.

As a result, very little social science research is being carried out at African universities. Where some research is being conducted, it is not being done under terms dictated by Africans themselves. Mouton concluded that even some of Africa's previously strong universities such as those in Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe are now literally struggling to maintain even low levels of output in scholarly journals (Mouton, 2010b; Mngomezulu, 2014b). In response to the situation whereby funds are either lacking or non-existent, African scholars are forced to make pragmatic decisions. They then feel obliged to pursue 'consultancy social science'.

Traditionally, academic social science research entails the projects that academics carry out informed by their area of expertise and curiosity within the university. However, consultancy social science research is also carried out by African academics based at African universities, but takes place outside the university environment. In this type of research, African scholars engage in consultancy work for international agencies or foreign governments who provide them with funding designated for particular research projects. This is not by choice, but by situational demand. These scholars carry out such research activities in order to supplement the meagre salaries offered by their universities, which fail to keep pace with the rising costs of living and annual inflation. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to promote African scholarship, since some of the commissioned research projects tend to focus specifically on selected subject areas identified by the sponsors, rather than African solutions to African problems, as mentioned earlier. Such projects need to satisfy the demands of the sponsors, even if the deliverables are not in line with the African university agenda or even the national government focus. It would be too ambitious (if not impossible) to expect the promotion of African scholarship under such circumstances.

There are many other studies which corroborate Mouton's (2010b) observations and findings. For example, a study conducted by the Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST, 2008) at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa arrived at the same conclusion. This extensive study was carried out under the auspices of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with the primary aim of establishing how academics in the SADC region augment their salaries in order to survive. The results show that approximately two thirds of the more than 600 academics who participated in the study stated that they engage in consultancy work in order to supplement their low monthly salaries. Country case studies revealed that the situation varies in magnitude from country to country. For example, in South Africa, the figure of academics who admitted to doing consultancy work stood at 54%. This was relatively better compared to the rest of the SADC region where it was 69%. Furthermore, as many as 42% of the respondents (excluding South Africa) obtained up to 90% of their research funding from funders located outside the African continent. This figure was against 6% of South African academics who reported that they receive research funding from abroad (CREST, 2008). While it is common, worldwide, that academics may get involved in consultancy work, two points are telling: that those who do so in Africa are unhappy about their remuneration and that they end up being foreign-funded.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, South African universities seem to be performing better than most other African universities in many areas, including research outputs, which can be considered to constitute the core of any university operation. While it is unfortunate that South African institutions are not well-challenged by institutions from the rest of the continent it is irrefutable that South African institutions (including universities) are in a better financial position compared to those in other parts of the continent (Ogunnubi, 2013). The National Research Foundation (NRF) in South Africa and the national government provide funding for research and other activities within universities. Thus when South African researchers or scholars apply for foreign funding, it is to augment or supplement funds already provided within the country. The same cannot be said for scholars in other parts of Africa.

The situation described above is reflected by the social science research outputs of African universities, not only in the SADC region, but throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Statistical figures of the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) outputs in sub-Saharan Africa for the twenty-year period between 1987 and 2007 confirm our conclusion that South African universities tend to out perform others on the continent. [Table 1](#) provides evidence of this assertion, showing the percentage distribution of journal articles by those African countries which produced more than 200 papers during the period under review.

*Table 1. Social science and humanities output by country in sub-Saharan Africa according to ISI, 1987–2007*

<i>Country</i>	<i>% Distribution of articles</i>
South Africa	50.7
Nigeria	16.5
Kenya	8.1
Zimbabwe	4.6
Tanzania	3.8
Ghana	3.2
Botswana	3.1
Ethiopia	2.4
Uganda	2.3
Cameroon	1.9
Zambia	1.4
Malawi	1.2
Namibia	0.9
GRAND TOTAL	100

*Source: World Social Science Report (2010)*

The funding problems that be devil most institutions of higher education in Africa mean that they depend heavily on their respective governments for research funding and remuneration. Government influence and control then tend to go beyond the financial aspects—most academics and university leadership, being civil servants, are careful to conform to government demands. Furthermore, projects that comply with government policies and visions are most likely to get funding, which means they must comply with the politics of the day, lest the funding be withdrawn. This leaves academics at universities (or any other institutions of higher education) without the power to decide what to teach, what to research, and what to publish. These choices tend to reside with the sponsors, particularly African governments, which then simultaneously influence the kind of scholarship they want to promote. In the event of weakened government financial resources, the voice of international donors becomes louder. Nevertheless, even private funders would think twice before they weigh in with support for projects that may seem to challenge the ideals of the government of the day.

By the late 1970s, most African governments preferred to take a utilitarian approach to viewing academic scholarship—that it should be of direct functional value to the country within which it is situated. Advocates for academic freedom, however, argued that their scholarship should not be dictated by any powers independent of the scholar. This created a schism which lessened only in later years, even though academic scholarship in Africa today is still affected by political leadership. In fact, the levels and quality of African scholarship seem to be declining, which is why the issue of academic freedom is still as topical in Africa today as it was half a century ago.

#### *Conditions of Service*

Another factor that affects African scholarship is poor conditions of service for academics and researchers. This factor is also linked to the issue of political interference, as discussed above. Besides cases of overt political intimidation, many African academic scholars do not obtain the support (monetary or otherwise) required to pursue their academic endeavours. Some African scholars feel despondent and that their worth is undervalued by the institutions in which they operate. Such conditions are contrary to some characteristics of universities as communities of scholarship, such as mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire (Wenger, 1999). In fact, the effects of managerialism which are manifested in practices such as performance management have been largely negative (Maistry, 2012).

Critics such as Maistry (2012) argue that the predominant forms of performance management have not only been inappropriately adopted, but have become “a form of subtle and sometimes overt ‘violence’ against and humiliation of marginalized individuals and groups within the university community” (p. 515). Instead of desired mutual engagement, the power dynamics leave academics feeling that they are treated with distrust regarding their competency and commitment to their work. As a result, the brain drain intensifies, which is clearly a debilitating factor in the

development of African academic scholarship. In such situations, some scholars may tend to be more comfortable within communities of scholarship that are outside their own institutions. These may include specialised academic associations or research spaces, such as the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

### *Prejudice*

Africa has a long history of prejudice including racism, ethnicity and sexism. These factors plague African politics as much as they do African academic scholarship. Consequently, diversity may seem to be a challenge rather than a strength, as some universities fail to work as social groups that are bound by mutuality in a community of practice (Wenger, 1999). The impact of ethnicity in Africa cannot be overstated, as it cuts across a large spectrum of the African social fabric (Aquiline-Tarimo, 2008). This, in turn, impacts academic scholarship through discrimination against scholars from certain ethnic groups, regardless of how qualified they are. For instance, an audit of a sample of six public universities in Kenya revealed that “the majority of staff either come from the same ethnic group as the Vice-Chancellor, the principal or the locality of the institution” (Opiyo, 2012).

Cases of racism continue to occur, reminding the African university of the bygone colonial era. This is especially so in South Africa, which remains arguably the most racially diverse country on the continent. The wave of discontent that swept through South African universities in 2015 exposed, amongst other things, prevalent cases of racism and resistance to transformation. It also revealed the low numbers of female academics and that their contribution to African scholarship is yet to be felt in any significant way. *The Mail & Guardian* (Machika, 2014) reported thus: “In 2007, it was found that three of the 23 vice-chancellors (13%) and five of the 23 registrars (21%) in South Africa were women. Women also comprised 21% of the deputy vice-chancellors, while another 21% were executive directors”.

These different forms of discrimination may manifest themselves in terms of academic promotions, funding, or focusing research on particular population groups over others. For example, Mabokela (2002) and Naicker (2013) argue that female academics in South Africa tend to have the highest teaching workloads which, in turn, means that they end up doing less research, in the process limiting their chances of academic promotion.

### *Constrained Agency of African Academics*

Academics themselves cannot be spared from taking some responsibility for the decline in scholarship. Academics as a community have been slow to raise their voices to demonstrate their concern about the issues affecting them. In some cases, academics have raised objections as individuals; others tend to adopt an apathetic ‘don’t care’ attitude whereby they simply conform to the status quo. At worse,

some collude with politicians and all those who undermine academics for their own egoistic agendas. It is worth noting that the late 1980s witnessed the formation of the Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa (CAFA) (Federici, Caffentzis, & Alidou, 2000). However, its impact across the continent has been very limited. Indeed, many local academic unions have been formed in Africa, especially after the political liberalisation of the 1990s (Konings, 2004). These are positive developments. It is therefore through more such militant agency that academics can ease the constraints within which they work. Regrettably, unless this happens, academic scholarship in Africa will continue to show a downward spiral.

#### CONCLUSION

Drawing from the discussion in this chapter, we can safely say that academic scholarship in Africa has been faced with a number of challenges for many decades. Most of these challenges stem from the nature of systems that control higher education on the African continent. Under colonial rule, academic scholarship was controlled by the colonisers. Since independence, African political leaders control the type of work and research that academics should or should not engage in. Recently, exogenous factors such as funding and globalisation have begun to play a role in dictating the route African scholarship should take. The end result is that academic scholarship in Africa faces a lot of challenges. Robust debates and context-specific research cannot happen because the stage is determined by external forces which operate outside the university environment.

In the process of trying to redeem themselves from being blamed for their ineffectiveness in problem situations, African academics could be in danger of “becoming driven by crisis and compelled by panicking governments to find speedy solutions to insoluble emergencies” (Bloom & Freeman, 1988, p. 59). It is imperative, therefore, that the current situation of declining academic scholarship in Africa be addressed with sober minds, avoiding haphazard decisions. There is a danger of encompassing too many issues in what may be portrayed as the epitome of African scholarship. To avoid this temptation, it would be advisable for Africans and Africanist scholars to define what they mean by ‘African scholarship’ and then work towards promoting it. Institutions such as CODESRIA have played this role for some time and can continue to contribute to the debate.

The African continent is home to a sufficient number of scholars who are of a reputable standard internationally. Therefore, the goal of reviving African scholarship is, in our view, achievable. What is needed is for the political and academic leadership to join hands with the private sector and raise funds to give African and Africanist scholars the freedom to generate fresh knowledge that will not only resonate with the African context, but also exportable to the global community. In a globalising world, no knowledge should be confined to one nation or locality. Africans need to give as much as they take. Building such international knowledge communities in a spirit of mutual engagement is what scholarship is all about.

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## 11. BEYOND CLOSURE AND FIXED FRAMEWORKS

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this conclusion, we synthesise and reflect on the key themes emerging from the conversations in all the chapters in volumes one and two. Since it would be impossible to scan through all the issues flagged in the various chapters, we focus only on those that constitute the primary focus of our conversations, i.e. the epistemological and theoretical reflections that might have some bearing on future debates. The task of moulding these into a cohesive and comprehensible shape would not have been easy without the insights distilled from our constant engagement with the contributors throughout the different phases of this project, particularly at the colloquium hosted in 2015 by the University of Johannesburg. The colloquium was designed in such a way as to enable critical reflection on the general conception of this book, in order to jolt pre-conceived notions and mental sets, through a framework that immersed the contributors into the various epistemological and theoretical facets and strands of current debates. All contributors and a team of independent reviewers participated in the colloquium.

### A REJUVENATED INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENT IN AFRICAN SCHOLARSHIP

Universities in Africa should reinvent themselves to find their legitimate space in an increasingly globalising world. This, at its simplest, is the message running through the two volumes in this collection. Two primary concerns underpinned the choice of the theme knowledge and change in African universities. The first is the fact knowledge has become the engine of change in all domains of social life. It is certainly what should inform all efforts towards revitalisation of the university. The second stems from the realisation that the struggle for positive representation and recognition of Africa in the global intellectual arena must mirror the real experiences, needs and aspirations of the African people, not simply the negative and often depressing representations of them within the colonial or Western epistemological logic. In this sense, for African scholarship it is a crusade for recognition and global scholarly affirmation. A major challenge in this context is the much needed critical review of the prevailing notions of epistemology, theory, research, knowledge, knowledge application to establish a solid platform for meaningful change in our scholarship and our universities.

While our past efforts adopted retrospective outlooks that confined our analysis to rhetorical critique of Western knowledge hegemony, we have emerged in this effort as activists who, through the voice of evidence, are determined to “promote a prospective and prophetic vision with a sense of possibility and potential, especially for those who bear the social costs of the present” (West, 1995, p. 171). In these volumes, “we look to the past for strength and inspiration, not solace and paralysis” (West, 1995, p. 171); we look inwards, into the African context, for reflexive critical introspection; we look outwards, to the global world, to borrow where necessary and lend our imagination where possible; and “we look toward the future, and vow to make it different and better” (West, 1995, p. 171) for our own sake and the sake of humanity in general. We recapture here the words of Prof. Rensburg at the opening of the colloquium: “I see here the emergence of a new intellectual movement, the strength of which lies in its commitment to set a new direction to the course of higher education in our continent”. Our effort is a timely response to the state of desperation, open or concealed (depending on the political circumstances), but fiercely manifested in recent student protests in South Africa, Kenya and other countries on the African continent.

#### ABOUT CRITIQUE AND BEYOND

The Knowledge and Change book is intended to underscore the fluidity and vexing nature of recent conversations around research, epistemology and theory in African universities. It builds on the assumption that, although there is already a significant pool of postcolonial literature in the area of higher education in Africa, it suffers from shortcomings that need to be addressed urgently—hence the scale of human resources invested in the this book. We believe that, under current intellectual circumstances, our effort can only be meaningful if it makes a novel contribution to, or extends the narrow boundaries of the field, instead of rehearsing well-established arguments in the critique of the hegemony of Western knowledge in the academy, without considering the current West-Africa nexus in global scholarship. We did not, however, want to shut ourselves off from the opportunity to step back, backtrack and interrogate the discourses embedded in the legacy of critique of the West, with its assumptions about global power dynamics and power relations in the domain of knowledge. Such debate remains indispensable today, particularly in the context of emerging South-South academic dialogue which should be reduced to sterile ideological and intellectual muscling. This debate is now even more pertinent as early optimism has faded into what has now become a crisis of knowledge relations between the North and the South.

Beyond the legacy of rhetoric, we thus needed to pursue systematic engagement with the postcolonial literature, or indeed contemporary literature, on knowledge and knowledge production in the academy, particularly to map out meaningful pathways towards breaking constraining boundaries in African scholarship. This open-endedness of our agenda allowed for the convergence of an enriching multiplicity

of authors, questions, approaches and messages. What has been labelled by a publisher as “a rather odd essentializing notion of ‘the African University’, which does not seem to do justice to the incredible diversity of contexts on the continent” (personal communication, 2015) was for us intentional and purposefully framed to steer the debate more productively. Rather than narrowing our perspectives, our approach was meant to be a heuristic device to think through the diversity of perspectives emanating from the diversity of contexts within the African continent. More specifically, it emanated from a particular and useful construct: a metaphoric representation of Africa as a common space with a shared experience, as constructed under communacritic African traditional social and political institutions, as constructed by Western discourses, and as embraced by post-independence decolonial projects. Such construct(s) also stand, regarding South-South intellectual movements and interactions.

#### AN INTELLECTUAL HOSPITALITY OF IDEAS

An effort was made in several chapters to bring about clarity in the epistemological and theoretical language of scholarship in African higher education, and in the context of African and South-South scholarship. This triggered a movement into the concepts and constructs at work in the current debate—concepts such as ‘North’, ‘North-South dialogue’, ‘South-South dialogue’, ‘West’, ‘Western knowledge hegemony’, ‘Africa’, ‘African’, ‘Africanness’, ‘African University’, ‘Africanisation’, ‘Africa-rising’, ‘local and global knowledgeable’, ‘indigenous knowledge systems’, etc. Two important insights emerge from various chapters. First, these are highly contested concepts and constructs, without single, undisputed meanings. They are used with different meanings or different connotations in different discourses. A common thread running through them is the idea that beyond their analytical function as ‘categories of analysis’, they are also used in a political and ideological sense as ‘categories of practice’. From this point of view, they tend to raise social and cognitive justice concerns about egalitarian and hierarchical connotations (e.g. reaffirmation of identity; redistribution of power, privileges and opportunities; as well as the power of knowledge representation in marginalised societies). In this regard, interrogating and reworking these constructs remain a major imperative for future conversations. The possibility is also open that in the future, more appropriate categories could emerge, particularly through the pursuit of more systematic empirical work.

Second, in some contexts, these constructs are often articulated or received with a profound emotional charge that is not always conducive to adequate analytical vigilance. In such instances, we tend to view them through the tainted lenses of our academic histories and cultures, with a somewhat innocent reluctance to move beyond the boundaries these lenses impose on us. At worst, we may view them with anger, frustration and alienation, triggered by the colonial past or current disempowering dynamics in the academic and scholarly domains. The temptation towards building frontiers and seeking closure sometimes appears to be irresistible, and we cannot

all claim innocence on this matter. It is ironic that one of the guest speakers invited to the colloquium decided not to participate because the term ‘African university’ in the title suggested to him that the event was purely for Afrocentric scholars. This incident points to the need for de-clouding the intellectual climate in this debate.

At an international seminar in 1998, in an atmosphere where discursive difference and diversity tended to proliferate, one participant called for the need to develop “an intellectual hospitality of ideas” (Cross et al., 1998, p. 197). Vismanathan (quoted in Cross, 1998, p. 197) translated this idea as follows:

Local knowledges, tribal knowledges, gendered knowledges, civilizational knowledges, dying knowledges, all need a site, a theatre of encounter which is not patronising, not preservationist, not fundamentalist, but open and playful.

We have experienced such openness in pulling this project together; the scholarly camaraderie and mutually supportive climate throughout the process leading to this concluding stage suggest that we should strive at all costs to maintain such ‘hospitality’.

The concepts and constructs discussed above raise a number of questions: Should these, as analytical categories, be understood as an encounter between distinct intellectual traditions? Or should they be understood as an encounter between individuals with different perspectives shaped by their own or different social contexts? Or perhaps both of these standpoints might be relevant? Will such conceptualisations survive the tide of an increasingly globalising world? Can they provide adequate analyses in the diverse contexts that make up the African continent? Is there a principled way of closing the gap between African and Western scholarships? Does such dichotomous reasoning in a highly globalised world still hold? Are we prepared to move beyond current universalising perspectives that tend to overlook our complexities—which are concerned only with how others read and interpret our experiences through their own perceptions? What epistemologies are suited for making sense of our own lived experiences? Is there something about us and for us to learn from Western epistemologies? As stated elsewhere, asking such questions is not just a matter of “ecumenism of goodwill” (Cross et al., 1998, p. 194). It is a way of reframing the problematic which increasingly affects our understanding of, or engagement with knowledge production and utilisation on the African continent. In this sense, the chapters in these volumes stand not as closure, but as a challenge to existing frameworks, with a view to soliciting constructive, bold and innovative insights for the future of the universities in Africa.

#### THE ENCOUNTER WITH A GLOBALISING WORLD

There are two basic responses to the question of globalisation and its impact on the academic world, and both of them have their own relative strengths and weaknesses. The first response is the ‘market place approach’, with globalisation pre-determining the ‘common place’ of ideas and knowledge through market forces. This is entwined

with the idea that, in spite of the critique and rhetorical responses, it is unrealistic for the people of the South, more specifically Africa (the periphery) to think that they can sidestep the intellectual or knowledge patronage system of the West. The latter is driven by the world's most powerful forces—knowledge production and distribution institutions and their supporting economic agencies. Under such circumstances, the knowledge order is determined by cultural imaginary that circulates in the world market of ideas through the technologies of mass communication. This view is tied up with the conception of knowledge as an abstraction, as being essentially universal and a-contextual.

The second response is what West (1995, p. 167) refers to as the “go-it-alone” attitude very much embedded in narrow Afro-centric perspectives, which often calls for an arrogant insularity, dismissive of the global domination machinery. This response risks accusations of parochialism and narrow chauvinism. West (1995) says the following about such an attitude: “It is self-defeating, in that it usually reinforces the very inferior complexes promoted by the subtly ... mainstream” (p. 167). It would certainly risk scholars being relegated to self-ghettoisation. What then are the challenges for overcoming this dilemma? The idea of a common intellectual personality in the global village is unimaginable, in the same way that the confinement to group insularity is untenable in the domain of knowledge and ideas (regardless of the degrees of surveillance, censorship, and violations of academic freedom and autonomy). The challenge is well articulated by Scot (1997, p. 20), in his reflections on the effects of globalisation:

So long as the intellectual and scientific culture of the West persisted in its universalising claims, other cultures were marginalised, obliged to choose between imminent (and irreversible) redundancy and angry ideological opposition. But these claims have been eroded from ‘within’, in the cognitive sphere, by the radical scepticism that has always been part of the Western tradition and the epistemological doubts that have emerged recently; and from ‘without’, in the wider social and economic environment, by new patterns of knowledge production. As a result, the tension between Western and ‘other’ elite and democratic knowledge traditions has eased. Perhaps we no longer have to choose because perhaps we can no longer clearly differentiate them.

The reality is that African universities exist in the context of globalisation. This points to a response of ‘coming along together’, which rests on the following premises: (i) the realisation that, as a consequence of the colonial experience, the misfortunes of post-coloniality and the pressures of globalisation, African universities today operate at the interface of both local (African) and global (Western) spaces, and some of the imagery Africans celebrate in some discourses can no longer realistically be reclaimed; (ii) mutual engagement between the local and the global would ensure a balance between (global) universality and (local) singularities through suitable dialogue and conversations; and (iii) today's knowledge practitioners operate in knowledge intersections in which globalising and converging ideas are prominent,

although in an apparently singularised mode. Such approach to globalisation does not represent a blind concession to the essentialising and homogenising trap that has dominated Western discourses in the globalisation era. For lack of a better term, we refer to this approach in respect of the positioning of the university in Africa as the ‘universal African university’ (UAU). What is the UAU and how does it operate in the knowledge domain? We draw on a classic insight from Balibar (1997) to address this question. It is a university that in its mission does not seek “to affirm African singularities as universality, or crush singularities for the sake of global uniformity, or even exacerbate singularity to the point of isolationism” (self-ghettoisation). It is a university “that affirms singularity through the mediation of the universal and affirms the universal through the mediation of singularities” (Balibar, 1997, p. 175). In other words, the UAU is a university that takes cognizance of its African insertion in the globalising world “without losing its soul” (Downing, 2013: 1).

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