

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

ALI MAZRUI CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES

NEWSLETTER

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From the Director's Desk ~ Prof Michael Cross

Making the Pan-African-inspired global research agenda a reality

The Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) was launched in August 2017, and officially established in March 2019, not just as another University of Johannesburg (UJ) academic structure, but as an enabling arm in the pursuit of the University's Pan-African vision. The name "Ali Mazrui" is not only a symbolic celebration of the intellectual contribution of the many distinguished African scholars on the global stage, but a source of inspiration for current generations of scholars. The key pillars of the programmes of the Centre include research, postgraduate studies, professional development and policy dialogue. For this particular issue, I will only concentrate on research. The organising concept of the programmes is the idea of the "socially embedded university", characterised by its local and global responsiveness, located in the diverse contexts in which it operates, and embodying the principles and

values of access, equity and social justice. Recognising that the success of programmes depends on the quality of scholarship that underpins them – the relevant epistemological and knowledge basis – our first research project concentrated on *Knowledge and Change in African Universities* with the collaboration of a network of young and established South African and international scholars.

Several new projects were introduced in 2019. Firstly, *Size and Shape* explores the configuration and reconfiguration of South African higher education in light of developments in the last two decades. Student Epistemic Access, another project, responds to the massive escalation of students' enrolment from marginalised communities with the introduction of "free" higher education. *Transformation in higher Education* looks at the

**The Future
Reimagined**

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South African higher education experience in policy and practice. Most important, however, are two major projects aligned within UJ's strategic goals. The first is *Generations of African Scholars and Universities* (Flagship Project 2020-2025), a continent-wide project with the primary objective of documenting the African intellectual legacy, particularly the contribution of African scholars, intellectuals, leaders and institutions to higher education discourse and development. The second, *ICT Higher Education Integration in Times of Social Transition – Case Study of Sweden and South Africa*, is an attempt to distil key theoretical, strategic and policy lessons from the Third Industrial Revolution as foundations for South Africa's participation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

The projects reflect ideas expressed at the launch of the Centre by the Chancellor of the University, Prof Njabulo Ndebele, and the former Vice-Chancellor, Prof Ihron Rensburg, about the value of thinking about the university in its South African and wider African context without forgetting its global dimensions. They also reflect on the reminder of the opportunities offered by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) made by current Vice-Chancellor, Prof Tshilidzi Marwala, at the same event. Underpinning these projects is also our commitment to innovative and alternative thinking for our epistemological, theoretical and methodological regeneration. Developing, refining and launching these projects have been part of the core activities of the Centre throughout 2019.

In terms of research output, the results are most encouraging and I would like to express my gratitude to our research team for their dedication and efforts. The eight PhD students attached to the Centre have made considerable progress and are set to complete their studies in 2020. Enhanced research output is also manifested in the work of our four Postdoctoral Research Fellows (PDRFs). I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate **Naziema Jappie**, PhD student, and **Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu**, PDRF, for the awards they received for demonstrating excellence in their work.

Our efforts towards consolidating institutional, national and international networks deserve particular mention. I am glad to see researchers across the Faculty participating in some of our projects and in our scholarship development programmes. AMCHES is committed to dedicating considerable attention to advance these participatory endeavours. Our collaboration with the Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Studies (JIAS) and the UJ Postgraduate School has also strengthened the Centre's programmes beyond the University, while our collaboration with the Centre for Critical Studies at the Nelson Mandela University, NMU, continued in 2019, as did our partnership with the Centre for Diversity Studies, at the University of

the Witwatersrand (Wits). A major highlight in this regard was co-hosting Prof Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a well-known expert on Epistemologies of the South. Prof Santos delivered a lecture at the joint event at Sunnyside Hotel entitled *Towards Alternative Epistemologies and Pedagogies: Conversations with Professor Boaventura de Sousa Santos*. His thought-provoking lecture at UJ was dedicated to the theme: *Information, Understanding, Transformation: The challenges of the 4IR*. We have collectively dedicated the two events to our former colleague, Prof Brenda Leibowitz, who passed on last year. The Centre is working with its partners in preparing a book on *Conversations with Boaventura de Sousa Santos*, which will include the six lectures delivered in South Africa with six local perspectives prepared by local scholars in response to his lectures. These collaborative efforts will be extended to other national and international centres in the field.

Internationally, our links with major African research networks, such as CODESRIA and OSREA, and membership of international associations, including African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE), Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), and the World Congress of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), continued to grow. Facilitating this process is our representation in the WCCES Research Committee and the Education and Peace Committee, as well as in the CIES Higher Education and BANTABA interest groups. BANTABA is an Africa interest group and network of scholars within the CIES. We also joined the Epistemologies of the South Forum (under the Latin American Social Sciences Council – CLACSO), which brings together scholars interested in exploring alternative and context sensitive epistemologies and pedagogies.

Launched in 2017, our book series on *African Higher Education: Developments and Perspectives* continues to grow. To the three volumes – *Knowledge and Change* Vols. I and II and *Regionalization of African Higher Education*, we have added three new titles: Emnet T. Woldegiorgis & Christine Sherer (eds.) (2019). *Trends in Higher Education Partnerships* between African and European Universities. Brill/Sense; and I Rensburg, S Motala and M Cross (eds.) *Higher Education Transformation: Pathways to Higher Education Reform*. AHE Book Series. Brill/Sense; and Amasa Ndofirepi and Martin Musengi (eds.) *Inclusion as Social Justice: Theory and Practice in African Higher Education*. AHE Book Series. Publisher: Brill/Sense.

In the next issue of this newsletter, I will chart the progress of the Centre's postgraduate programme, highlighting key successes, challenges and opportunities.



Generations of African Scholars and Universities Project: An idea whose time has come

The Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies at the University of Johannesburg is gearing itself to launch its flagship project, *Generations of African Scholars and Universities*, in 2020. The main purpose of the project is to reclaim the neglected intellectual legacy of the continent in the scholarship of higher education. The project will be led by African intellectuals across and beyond the African continent. **Prof Morgan Ndlovu**, based at the University of South Africa, and a member of the project team, explains the rationale and motivation for the project:

“Speaking rationally about Africa [or being African] is not something that has ever come naturally”. This is precisely because “Africa is never seen as possessing things and attributes properly part of ‘human nature’”. These were the words that were used by leading African scholar, Achille Mbembe in his book: *On the Postcolony* (2015), when characterising the present dominant discourse about being and becoming African – a discourse that presents ‘African’ as though it is a spatio-historical temporality that is bereft of history. Thus, in this discourse, the African identity is not just presented as though it is monolithic, circumscribed and frozen in time but also as an empty land or ‘dark continent’ that is devoid of history-making and agency. The most problematic question about the existence of such a long-standing myth about Africa and being African is not the question of: for how long will such a myth be propagated by the dominant academic discourse, but the question of who must take charge in correcting this negative narrative about being African?

To exacerbate matters, the presence of a dominant discourse that projects a derogatory image of Africa and being African has a tendency of reproducing itself through the African subject him/herself. This makes it even more difficult for alternative narra-

tives to emerge, especially at this moment in time when knowing ‘thysself’ has clearly become one of those few viable options that can enable the African subject to attain a respectable position in the family of human beings. As a consequence, part of the problem with the continued marginalisation of the African subject within the global family of human beings has always been the distortion of African image of him/herself by those who colonised him/her to the extent that this subject would believe this false image as a true reflection of who he/she is. While this was the envisaged state of things by the coloniser, it is quite encouraging to note that this colonial project did not succeed in its mission, as Africans themselves have not only maintained that Africans are history-making subjects but have actively participated in this history-making process. Hence today, Africa has a rich intellectual heritage to depend on for re-imagining its future.

*The Generations of African scholars and universities’ project is thus one of those projects that does not only appreciate the contribution of African intellectuals, scholars, leaders and institutions to the existence of a rich African knowledge-base but the project also systematically documents the contributions by Africans and people of African descent in a way that challenges the dominant colonial discourse about being and becoming African. At the centre of the *Generations of African scholars’ project is the idea of re-asserting the ‘African factor’ in history by recognising and re-interpreting the works of African scholars, intellectuals, leaders and institutions, ranging from pre-colonial ‘traditional African intellectuals’, Islamic intelligentsia, early African Western educated elite, the 1960s generation, and many more, that have contributed to the African archive.**

Distinguished Visiting Professors in the spotlight

Seminar series and interview with Prof Boaventura de Sousa Santos

The Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES) had the pleasure of co-hosting Prof Santos for a series of seminars and interviews in October 2019.

In a thought-provoking presentation, Prof Boaventura de Sousa Santos outlined his views on the subject: *Information, Understanding, Transformation: The challenges of the 4IR*, at the Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Studies (JIAS), which co-hosted the event with AMCHES, on 3 October 2019. In his lecture, he warned against “technology take-over” in relation to intellectual endeavours and the risk of the Fourth Industrial Revolution deepening existing inequalities in emerging economies. He also stressed that the rapid production of data and its use in shaping policy and public discourse has become big business, espe-

cially by policy think tanks and the likes of Cambridge Analytica. In considering 4IR’s impact on the African continent, Prof Santos cautioned that countries, such as South Africa and Nigeria, could become proxies of advanced economies in the era of “digital colonialism”, captured in his notion of “sub-imperialism”. The lecture was followed by short responses from Profs Morgan Ndlovu, Unisa, Aslam Fataar, University of Stellenbosch, and Shireen Motala, University of Johannesburg. This was followed by a lively discussion with members of the audience.



Prof Cross and Santos sharing a moment

Prof Santos also presented a public lecture titled *Towards alternative epistemologies and pedagogies*, jointly organised by AMCHES and the Centre for Diversity Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, at the Sunnyside Park Hotel on 2 October. In his lecture, he pointed out that the task of decolonising knowledge universities is complex. His main contention was that the methodologies and pedagogies used in universities and research centres were aimed at reproducing a repressive and asymmetrical approach to teaching. He argued that such methodologies and pedagogies are unable to perform a liberating task, and posed the question: "Is there an alternative?" In answering, Prof Santos asserted that once one enters the walls of universities, it is difficult to see the alternatives; however, once one steps outside universities, alternatives can be found in citizens' struggles against injustices, colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy. His experiences in countries of the South and elsewhere have revealed that while people's resistance is evident, they are not being listened to, asserting that universities hardly reach out to the struggling masses, thereby contributing to their isolation. He stressed that academics need to stand up and help solve societal problems. In his view, the resulting academic paralysis prevents universities from discovering alternatives to the dominant Northern knowledge paradigms.

Earlier in the week, Prof Santos gave a series of talks on the subject, *Decolonising the University and Beyond* at the Diversity Conference at the University of Witwatersrand on 1 and 2 October 2019. He drew attention to the lingering challenges posed by colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism in society. In his view, decolonising does not make sense unless it is anti-capitalist, and that capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy are intertwined. In order to decolonise universities, knowledge production, which cuts across the past, present and future, as opposed to information that depicts the present, is crucial. He pointed out that as a result of the domination of the ideologies and practices that flow from capitalism, colonialism and



Prof Santos during one of the presentations

patriarchy, universities teach the "knowledge of the winners and not that of the losers". Hence, decolonising knowledge is a task to be undertaken with an anti-capitalist stance and that cannot be achieved inside the universities. They are situational and require universities to first change their epistemic base. This implies foregrounding and privileging knowledge and experiences of the 'losers', that is, the poor and marginalised among us.

Interview with Prof Santos

Before leaving for the Free State and Eastern Cape provinces, where he gave three more lectures at Nelson Mandela University, Rhodes University and the Central University of Technology, a video interview with Prof Santos was conducted by Prof Michael Cross, Mr Ahmed Essop and Dr Logan Govender at the AMCHES offices at the University of Johannesburg on 7 October 2019. The interview covered a wide range of topics, namely, *Reflections on the South African and African experience, Alternative Epistemologies, Alternative Pedagogies, Alternative Methodologies and Fourth Industrial Revolution issues*. In his responses, Prof Santos elaborated on a number of themes that he had expounded on during the above lectures, such as the re-colonisation of Africa, the 'sociology of absences' and 'sociology of emergences' in relation to indigenous and marginalised peoples, the 'rights of nature' and a 'Universal Declaration of Duties'. The underlying premise of his thinking was the importance of tackling the triple challenge of colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy that continue to plague the developing world.

Reflections on the South African and African experience

In response to the question on knowledge, human rights and social justice in the context of Africa, Prof Santos acknowledged the "great deal of diversity" at universities across the continent. He stressed the importance of recovering ideas of the 60s as captured in the books by Nkrumah on colonisation, Nyere's

humanist philosophy and Cabral's writings. Prof Santos asserted that "colonialism does not exist without capitalism", and welcomed "the sense of mixing the Western idea of critical thinking with African thinking". In respect of human rights, he stated that the continent made an important contribution to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by insisting on recognition of colonialism as a violation of human rights. Social justice challenges, in his view, continue to plague the continent in spite of independence, due to persisting social and economic inequalities wrought by industrialisation and 'digital colonisation'.

Alternative Epistemologies, Alternative Pedagogies, Alternative Methodologies

When asked about his writings on Epistemologies of the South, Prof Santos made a strong case for "different kinds of knowledge, born in struggle" by the marginalised and poor among us, against colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy and fundamentalism. He emphasised the importance of ancestral knowledge, which is not useful to capitalism as it cannot be commodified. With regard to the land question, he suggested that the alternative epistemologies of the south can offer new solutions as opposed to current solutions, which are essentially capitalist and colonial.

Commenting on the decolonisation of knowledge at universities, he urged Africans "to use our own criteria to select knowledge we want to use, not western criteria", which are tainted by the conquerors' knowledge and the notion of essentialism. Alternative epistemologies question the notion that rationality and science are the only basis for valid knowledge; "truth is always evolving", hence the search for truth is ongoing and to be found in the work of social activists – "not rationality but solidarity, emotions,

senses, not reasons". As such, epistemology of the south privileges senses, ancestral knowledge, customary knowledge, popular knowledge – "deep-seeing, seeing the invisible", for example a "blind person sees things we don't see". Similarly, the "ecology of knowledge" starts from the idea that knowledge is born in struggle: labour struggles of workers, and the "abysmal line" that separates the rich and privileged from the poor and unfortunate (immigrants, displaced peoples, women and children) – and in terms of knowledge, this means that the knowledge of the poor/marginalised is not present.

Neoliberal knowledge, in Prof Santos' view, "cuts social relations", as such knowledge is "based on data of people who have no relation to each other" (billionaires, poor) – social relations are about unequal power relations, "neoliberalism tries to depoliticize conflict", that's why there is no social responsibility, only guilt, if you are poor, you deserve to be poor, if rich, you deserve to be rich. As such, problems that arise from the existing social structure has to be dealt with "not by social policies but by therapeutics, instead of social policy we have two instruments, police repression and therapy" to help combat depression, isolation, alienation, drug addiction, alcoholism, suicide – "we psychologize a social condition, that's what we are doing with neoliberalism".

Fourth Industrial Revolution

In response to the question on 4IR, Prof Santos warned against South Africa becoming a "sub-imperial power", used by the West in the context of digital colonisation; the biggest impact of 4IR in Africa is "making jobs redundant" and the promise of the internet of things, all of which could lead to new forms of "segmentation", a kind of "neoliberal apartheid". He also warned that South Africa's obsession with 4IR could render it incapable of nurturing new alternatives.



Part of the audience at Prof Boaventura de Sousa Santos presentation at JIAS



Prof Boaventura de Sousa Santos



Prof Michael Cross, Programme Director at the 4IR public lecture by Prof Santos on 3 October, talking about the importance of academic collaboration in hosting distinguished scholars

Distinguished Visiting Professor Jane Knight delivers keynote address at Eric Molobi Memorial Lecture



Prof Jane Knight

Is knowledge diplomacy an effective tool to tackle global challenges?

This was the question posed by Distinguished Visiting Professor Jane Knight at the 4th Eric Molobi Memorial Lecture on 13 November 2019. The title of her talk was *The role of higher education in international relations: Soft power vs knowledge diplomacy*. A short abstract of her presentation follows:

In today's more complex and interdependent world there are new rationales, opportunities, benefits and risks attached to the role and contribution of higher education, research and innovation to international relations. In addition, there are pressing global challenges such as climate change, food and water security, refugees, epidemics which know no borders. A multi-lateral and inter-disciplinary approach is critical.

Examining the role of higher education in building relations between countries is not new. Traditionally, it has been done through a cultural, scientific, or public diplomacy lens, and more recently soft power. These approaches do not adequately capture the potential contribution of higher education, research and innovation to address current global challenges and strengthen relations among countries. The focus of the lecture was the introduction of a new knowledge diplomacy framework. The principles, strategies and approaches of knowledge diplomacy were discussed and juxtaposed to using a soft power approach.

In traditional diplomacy, governments and their representatives were the primary actors. Contemporary diplomacy is different. Today, civil society, inter-gov-



In the picture from left to right: Professors Michael Cross, Angina Parekh, UJ Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic, Jane Knight, Tshilidzi Marwala, UJ Vice-Chancellor, Sarah Gravett, Executive Dean: Faculty of Education and Shireen Motala, Senior Director: Post-Graduate School.

ernmental organisations, the private sector and professional organisations are key diplomatic actors. This includes higher education institutions, research organisations, think tanks, Centre's of excellence, and foundations among others. Knowledge diplomacy involves these actors, working in collaboration with other sectors and disciplines, to address issues of mutual interest using the principles of mutuality, reciprocity and collaboration. This differs significantly from a soft power approach where dominance, authoritarianism and competitiveness are often the priorities. Knowledge diplomacy is based on negotiation, conflict-resolution, mediation and cooperation because partners have different needs, priorities, resources and self-interests but must work together to find solutions which bring benefits to all. In contrast, a power approach, emphasises strategies of control, competition, persuasion, attraction so that self-interests dominate, and the winner tries to take all.

The challenge facing us is how can a knowledge diplomacy approach, rather than the current emphasis on soft power, be acknowledged and supported as an effective tool to tackle global challenges and strengthen relations between and among countries?

For further analysis and current examples of effective knowledge diplomacy initiatives, see Knight, J. (2019) *Knowledge Diplomacy in Action*. A British Council report available at <https://www.british-council.org/sites/default/files/research-knowledge-diplomacy-in-action.pdf>

Farewell to Prof Knight

Prof Jane Knight joined AMCHES in October 2017. She played a major role in advising the Centre on its programmes, and in particular the development of the concept paper of the book series on *African Higher Education: Developments and Perspectives*. She has delivered several lectures on themes related to her areas of specialisation, notably on the internationalisation of higher education. During her work at AMCHES, she co-edited, with Emnet Woldegiorgis (AMCHES Research Associate), and published a book on *Regionalization of African Higher Education*. She has also completed a research project on "International Programme and Provider Mobility (IPPM): A mapping study of national policies, regulations and data collection in selected African countries". AMCHES will continue working collaboratively with Prof Jane Knight.

AMCHES Welcomes New Staff



Dr Logan Govender

AMCHES extends a warm welcome to Dr Logan Govender, who has been appointed Senior Lecturer at AMCHES from 1 September 2019. Prior to joining AMCHES, Dr Govender was the Education Thematic Head of Save the Children South Africa from July 2016 to August 2019, responsible for programming in Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Basic Education. With more than 25 years' experience in the education sector, he has worked as a teacher, policy analyst, independent researcher; and as senior research manager in the Education and Skills Development Programme of the Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria. He has consulted for parastatals and policy think tanks, and held part-time research associate positions with the University of Johannesburg and Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Dr Govender has a keen interest in student development, having mentored a number of young researchers and development practitioners, as well as supervised and supported Education doctoral candidates. He has a PhD in Education Policy and Management from the University of the Witwatersrand (2008); and holds a Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of Illinois-Chicago. Dr Govender has published on education development, reform and policy analysis, with a special interest in teacher unionism and professionalism; the most recent being a co-edited book publication (2017) on *Systemic Educational Reforms: Lessons from the Eastern Cape*, funded and published by the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA). He is the current facilitator of the ECD Work Stream of the Education Labour Relations Council, a South African statutory body.



Welcome to Mr Tembile Kulati

Mr Tembile Kulati is assisting AMCHES in developing its research strategy on 4IR. In this regard, the Centre will be hosting an international colloquium on 4IR in 2020 (*details to follow*).

Mr Kulati comes with a strong background in higher education research and policy analysis, specifically higher education planning, institutional management and governance, including student leadership and governance. He has amassed over 20 years' experience in management and leadership positions, both in government and in higher education institutions. These have included being an Adviser, Higher Education Policy to the former Minister of Education, Prof Kader Asmal, and management and executive positions at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Central University of Technology, Free State. Over the years, Mr Kulati has established solid working relationships with a range of stakeholders from within the university sector, government, the private sector and communities. He has published widely, including refereed journal articles and book chapters on higher education governance and leadership, the management of institutional change, and on research management in higher education.

AMCHES Forums, Seminars and Writing Retreats

2019 Academic Writing Retreat

Phefumula Nyoni

The Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies' academic writing retreat was held at the Wits Rural Research Facility in Acornhoek, Mpumalanga from 14-20 July 2019. The thirteen participants were led by the Director of the Centre, Prof Michael Cross, and included some of the Centre's Research Associates, Postdoctoral Research Fellows, South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) representatives and three PhD students. Participation was informed by a shared goal of using the retreat to work on various writing assignments and to ensure production of tangible outputs. The retreat focused on two core activities: review of chapters for the SADTU book project on professional unionism, and reading and commenting on draft chapters of PhD candidates supported by the Centre. The SADTU book project saw chapter contributors from both SADTU and the Centre engage in intense discussions, which significantly contributed towards the improvement of the chapters. As a result, a composite book manuscript was produced by the end of the retreat.

Simultaneously, PhD students were supported by a team, led by Prof Cross, to prepare presentations within a given thesis framework. The PhD session began with a reflection on the progress, challenges and concerns of students drawing on their experiences. Emphasis was placed on students ensuring that each chapter contained an aim, focus and argument with clearly distinguished key issues. Students were also given opportunities to provide feedback on how the retreat experience benefitted them, specifically relating to thesis-writing skills and overall thesis progress.

From comments and observations made, it was apparent that participants appreciated the quiet intellectual space provided by the Wits Rural Research Facility, located in one of South Africa's scenic provinces.



Participants at the writing retreat, just outside the Wits Rural Research Facility.

Postdoctoral Research Fellows' Annual Forum

The 2019 Postdoctoral Research Fellows' Annual Forum took place on 30 October under the theme 'Rethinking African Development in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)'. The event was attended by PDRFs drawn from the seven faculties of the University of Johannesburg. **Dr Phefumula Nyoni**, PDRF at AMCHES shares some of his reflections of the event.

The poster and oral presenters focused on 4IR from a multi-disciplinary perspective, which afforded an opportunity for an exchange of diverse ideas and collaborative research exchanges. Messages from senior academic leaders, such as Prof Saurabh Sinha, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation at UJ, and Prof Fulufhelo Nelwamondo, Executive Manager: Next Generation Enterprises and Institutions Cluster of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), underscored the importance of using a holistic approach in dealing with societal challenges within the 4IR context. Prof Sinha emphasised the significance of PDRF work and the collaboration between research institutions such as the CSIR in coming up with real-time solutions, while Prof Nelwamondo highlighted the importance of South Africa's participation in the 4IR being anchored in the pursuit of local solutions for local challenges. The event closed with the presentation of awards in recognition of Postdoctoral Research Fellows who have excelled in terms of research outputs and academic citizenry. **Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu**, a PDRF from the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies, was one of two winners from the Faculty of Education of the Postdoctoral Excellence Award.

Postgraduate seminars and presentations

SEMINARS BY POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS & STAFF

Date: 18 March 2019

Postdoctoral Fellow: Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu

Topic: Challenges in the preparation of learners for higher education: The case of learners with disabilities in South African rural schooling

Date: 14 May 2019

Postdoctoral Fellow: Phefumula Nyoni

Topic: Ubuntu philosophy and the gender crisis within South Africa's higher education sector

The paper presented by Dr Nyoni highlighted the forms of gender discrimination experienced by women academics in South Africa's higher education spaces, especially within the context of transformation. In addition to providing insight into the utility of culture, particularly Ubuntu philosophy towards transformation of academic spaces and entrenching social justice, the presentation highlighted the epistemological interface between Ubuntu philosophy and feminism. Through challenging the normative dimension of Ubuntu wherein also lies the crisis associated with internalised abusive tendencies mainly linked to patriarchy, the presentation highlighted how Ubuntu can equally be used to eliminate cultural constraints and entrench 'respect culture' onto academic spaces. Equally crucial was emphasis on the need to ensure that women's day-to-day experiences occur within a just environment.

Date: 21 May 2019

Postdoctoral Fellow: Dr Dennis Zami Atibuni

Topic: Academic Writing: A hands-on approach to APA 6

Date: June 2019

Postdoctoral Fellow: Dr Hlengani Baloyi

Topic work in progress: Classroom-based research in the post-apartheid South Africa: with special focus on classroom accessibility

Date: 4 June 2019

Staff member: Prof Yu Ke

Topic work in progress: The Intelligence black box in the age of Artificial Intelligence

TUESDAY PRESENTATIONS BY PHD STUDENTS

Date: September 2019

PhD student: Mackenzie Chibambo

Topic work in progress: Investigating the flip-side of e-Learning Malawi universities

Date: 29 October 2019

Name of student: Nonhlanhla Crystal Ndlovu

Topic work in progress: Mitigating poverty-related challenges at secondary schools: the role of school leadership

Below is a photo of one of the work in progress presentations by the Centre's PhD candidate, Mr Eckson Khambule.



CONFERENCE PAPERS

Papers Presented at ICET 2019 Conference, 8-11 July 2019

A 4IR Fundamental Paradigm Shift in Teacher Education: From Training to Teach, to Preparing to Produce Learning

Dennis Zami Atibuni, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES), proposed a fundamental shift from the long-held instruction paradigm to the now much needed learning paradigm in teacher education and development to prepare 21st century learners in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The proposed shift to a learning paradigm espouses that teacher training colleges should serve as institutions that produce teachers who will enhance the production of learning as an end through interactive strategies – hence teachers who are 'meddlers in the middle', in which case instruction or teaching merely serves as one of the very many means to achieve the end. In line with the dictates of the 4IR encapsulated in the 21st century skills, training institutions should cultivate in the teacher the versatility to continuously identify, develop, test, implement, and assess effective learning technologies against one another. This adaptation is envisaged to prepare teachers

who will take cognisance of learners with different demographic characteristics. Graduate teachers should be able to value learning as a continuous process for themselves, for their learners, and for their institutions. Their focus should be on learner success as the primary goal.

Fourth Industrial Revolution: Feasible for students with disabilities learning in higher education?

Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu, another Postdoctoral Research Fellow at AMCHES, also presented a paper entitled *Fourth Industrial Revolution: Feasible for students with disabilities learning in higher education?* at the ICET Conference that was hosted by the University of Johannesburg on 11 July 2019. Using specific tools drawn from Critical Disability Theory, she explored the feasibility of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in empowering students with disabilities to engage in learning in the South African higher education context. The presentation was informed by the fact that students with disabilities in the South African higher education context have limited access to education broadly, and classroom learning specifically, because of contextual and their impairment-related disadvantages. Drawing on South African and international literature, she on the one hand, discussed specific trends of 4IR such as the internet of things (IoT), robotics, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI), as having the possibility of enabling students with specific categories of disabilities to access learning. On the other hand, she highlighted the challenges that the same trends could present, creating new obstacles for particular students. The argument in her presentation was that while 4IR could positively influence the learning of students with disabilities, it was important for the lived experience of these students to be recognized from the outset by learning programmes based on the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Dr Ndlovu's presentation drew attention to the marginalised and 'ever forgotten' students with disabilities' inclusion within the Fourth Industrial Revolution. As 4IR is a strong focus of research at the University of Johannesburg, her presentation made a strong case of representation of the 'forgotten' and the under-researched.

Developing second language comprehension through technology: A case of learners with a hearing impairment in a Botswana village secondary school

Gaone Molapisi, also a PhD candidate at the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies (AMCHES), presented a paper on *Developing second language comprehension through technology: A case of learners with a hearing impairment in a Botswana village secondary school* at the ICET Conference that was hosted by the University of Johannesburg on 9 July 2019. The study explored the use of technology to enhance the comprehension of English as a second language for lower secondary school learners with a hearing

impairment. The study discussed how technology is used to develop language literacy and highlighted the importance of flexible representation, engagement and expression. Molapisi argued that a classroom environment that employs the use of technology allows the learners to connect better with the curriculum content. As such, technology provides opportunities for cooperative learning and relevant pedagogy that assisted learners to access the curriculum and enhance their general academic development and progress.

South African Humanities Deans Association (SAHUDA) conference

Dr Phefumula Nyoni, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at AMCHES, participated in the South African Humanities Deans Association (SAHUDA) conference that took place at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa from 3-4 September 2019. The theme of the conference was 'Time, Thought and Materiality and the Fourth Industrial Revolution'. The conference highlighted the significance of humanities in relation to 4IR and new technologies that are having a complex combination of disruptions, constraints and positivity on people's day to day lives. Presentations highlighted the significant role that Humanities can play in moderating the possible inequality, exclusion and precarity that are likely to emerge from embracing 4IR, especially considering how previous industrial revolutions have engendered such ills. The multi-disciplinary conversations provided insights on the technological and ontological implications of 4IR linked changes. Dr Nyoni also co-presented a paper with Ms Vuyiswa Sokutu, titled "Kinship obligations, capital and forms of belonging among South Africa's farming communities in the 4IR". The paper highlighted the experiences of marginalised groups, such as women farmers within the context of a rapidly transforming society and the prospects and challenges that the 4IR brought to this group.

Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) 2019 and the World Congress of Comparative Education Societies (2019) conferences

AMCHES was represented at the Annual Meeting of the CIES in San Francisco from 14-18 April 2019 and the World Congress WCCES in Cancun, Mexico from 20-24 May 2019. Former CIES President, current World Congress of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) President and Distinguished Visiting Professor (DVP) of AMCHES, Prof N'Dri Assie-Lumumba, delivered the keynote address at the World Congress. The title of her paper was: *Temporality, Human Geography and Comparative Education: A Sankofa Perspective*. Prof Michael Cross presented a paper on *"Transition, reform or transformation? Mapping out the discursive space of African Renaissance in Higher*

Education” at the CIES Conference in San Francisco, USA. He also presented a paper on “Mapping out the discursive space of African Renaissance in Higher Education” at the World Congress in Cancun, Mexico.

SAERA South African Education Conference 2019

Prof Cross presented a paper on *Revisiting the pedagogy of normative induction in South African Universities*, and Dr Amasa Ndofirepi (AMCHES Research Associate) presented a paper on *Re-visioning new epistemologies in the 21st century African university: a critical purview* at the 2019 SAERA conference in

Durban, which paid special attention to the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Prof Saleem Badat, AMCHES Research Associate also attended the conference.

2nd WCCES Symposium in Geneva

Prof Michael Cross presented a book chapter titled *Migration, Xeno/Afrophobia and human rights in South Africa* at the 2nd WCCES Symposium, UNESCO International Bureau of Education in Geneva, Switzerland, from 14-15 January 2019. The book is in the process of being published.

Awards and Accolades

Naziema Jappie received an Emerging Scholar Award at the *6th International Conference on Learning: Learning to Make a Social Difference*, at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on 24-26 July 2019. The award is given to outstanding graduate students and emerging scholars who have an active research interest in the conference themes. The award provides a strong professional development opportunity for early career academics – meeting experts in the field, interacting with colleagues from other parts of the world, creating networks, and lasting connections.

Our Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu, has been awarded the 2019 Postdoctoral Research Fellows (PDRF's) Excellence Award.



Naziema Jappie receiving an Emerging Scholar Award at the 6th International Conference on Learning: Learning to Make a Social Difference, at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland.



UJ Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Prof Saurabh Sinha & Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu



Prof Yu Ke, Dr Sibonokuhle Ndlovu, Dr Chinaza Uleanya, Vice-Dean Prof Mdutshekelwa Ndlovu and Prof Saurabh Sinha

Prof Samir Amin passing

It was with great sadness that the Centre learned of the passing of Prof Samir Amin. Prof Amin met his untimely death on 12 August 2018, a month before his planned visit to the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies. The news was received with even greater shock by spouse and life-time comrade of 68 years of our beloved Prof Samir Amin, Isabelle Eynard Amin, who fell and broke a leg when she received the news of his untimely death, just days after he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Several colleagues of AMCHES were able to attend the funeral, as well as visit Isabelle at the hospital where she was confined. This was an opportunity to give comfort and share moments of good memories and hope. The late Prof Samir Amin had accepted an invitation to visit AMCHES to give a series of lectures at the Centre on the contribution of African scholars to global knowledge; sadly, this was not to be.



Distinguished Visiting Professor N'Dri Assie-Lumumba & wife of Prof Samir Amin, Isabelle Eynard Amin, with other colleagues

Publications Highlights

Books: Published and Forthcoming

Emnet T Woldegiorgis & Christine Sherer (eds.) (2019). *Trends in Higher Education Partnerships between African and European Universities*. Brill/Sense. Part of AMCHES African Higher Education (AHE) Book Series.

I Rensburg, S Motala & M Cross (eds.) *Higher Education Transformation – Forthcoming*. AMCHES AHE Book Series. Publisher: Brill/Sense.

Amasa Ndofirepi & Martin Musengi (eds.) *Inclusion as Social Justice: Theory and Practice in African Higher Education* AHE Book Series. Publisher: Brill/Sense.

Dennis Zami Atibuni (ed.) (2020). *Postgraduate Research Engagement in Low Resource Settings*. IGI Global Information Science Reference (an imprint of IGI Global).

M Cross, Ahmed Essop & Logan Govender (eds.) Forthcoming. *The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the Struggle for Professional Unionism*.

M Cross, C Long, S Ndlovu & P Nyoni (eds.) Forthcoming. *Transformative curricula, pedagogies and epistemologies: Teaching and learning in diverse higher education contexts*. AHE Book Series. Brill/Sense.

NT Assie-Lumumba & B Davies. (Forthcoming). *Pan-African Connections: Personal, Intellectual, Social*. Africa World Press.

Oliver Seale. Forthcoming. *Bridging troubled waters: Deanship in South African universities*. Brill, AHE Book Series.

Amasa Ndofirepi & Ephraim Gwaravanda (eds.) Forthcoming. *African Higher Education in the 21st Century: Some Philosophical Dimensions*. Brill/Sense, AHE Book Series.

Chapters in books: Published and forthcoming

M Cross. (2019). Migration, Xeno/Afrophobia and human rights in South Africa. In: Zehavit Gross (ed.) Published. *Migrants and Comparative Education*. Brill/Sense.

DZ Atibuni. (2019). How work-life balance and research skills proficiency affect research engagement. In: DZ Atibuni (ed.) *Postgraduate Research Engagement in Low Resource Settings*. IGI Global.

S Ndlovu. (2019). Obstacles for students with disabilities in the supervision process at postgraduate level in South Africa. In: DZ Atibuni (ed.) *Postgraduate Research Engagement in Low Resource Settings*. IGI Global.

P Nyoni. (2019). Pedagogy and agency in postgraduate student supervision in a rural South African University. In: DZ Atibuni (ed.) *Postgraduate Research Engagement in Low Resource Settings*. IGI Global.

M Cross & S Motala. Transforming higher education: A new perspective on education reform? In: I Rensburg, S Motala and M Cross (eds.) *Higher Education Transformation*.

M Cross & S Ndlovu. Dilemmas of unionism and professionalism in the promotion of teacher accountability. In: M Cross, Ahmed Essop & Logan Govender (eds.) *The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the Struggle for Professional Unionism*.

S Ndlovu & P Muzite. *Disablism must fall: Students with disabilities' participation in protests in South African higher learning*. Wits University Press.

Published Journal Articles

DZ Atibuni. (2019). Shifting from assessment of learning to assessment for learning in postgraduate research. *Psychology and Education Journal: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 56(2).

L Jeannin. (2019). International staff contributions to their host institution: a case study in South Africa. *International Journal for Academic Development*. Doi 10.1080/1360144X2019.1608210.

D Matsepe, M Cross & M Mugwena. Re-thinking staff recruitment and retention and retention in South African higher education institutions: Towards a Conceptual Framework. *Gender & Behaviour*.

B Macfarlane & D Burg. (2019). Women professors and the academic housework trap. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 41(3): 262-274. Doi: 10.1080/1360080X.2019.1589682

B Macfarlane. (2019). The CV as a symbol of the changing nature of academic life: performativity, prestige and self-presentation, *Studies in Higher Education*, Doi: 10.1080/03075079.2018.1554638

S Ndlovu. (2019). Access into professional degrees in South African higher learning: A decolonial perspective. *African Journal of Disability*. Doi.ORG/10.4102/ajod.v8i0.514.

EJ Oketcho, F Sempala, MSS Ujeyo & DZ Atibuni. (2019). Head teachers' Management styles and teachers' role performance in secondary schools in Tororo District, Uganda. *Journal of Education* 1-9. Doi10.1177/0022057419877393.

Journal articles accepted

M Cross, T Isaacks & P Nyoni. Academic capitalism? The politics of ranking and rating academic scholarship in South Africa. *Critical Arts*.

S Ndlovu. Radical inclusion: The case of students with disabilities' professional learning in a South African institution of higher learning. *South African Journal of Higher Education*.

Published Conference Proceedings (accredited)

DZ Atibuni. (2019). Research as assessment for learning vs assessment of learning at higher education. *The International Academic Forum (IAFOR) Conference Series*, January 03-05, 2019. Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

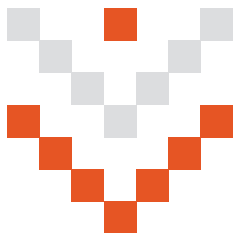
For a comprehensive list of publications, see <https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/facultyofeducation/alimazrui-centre>

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