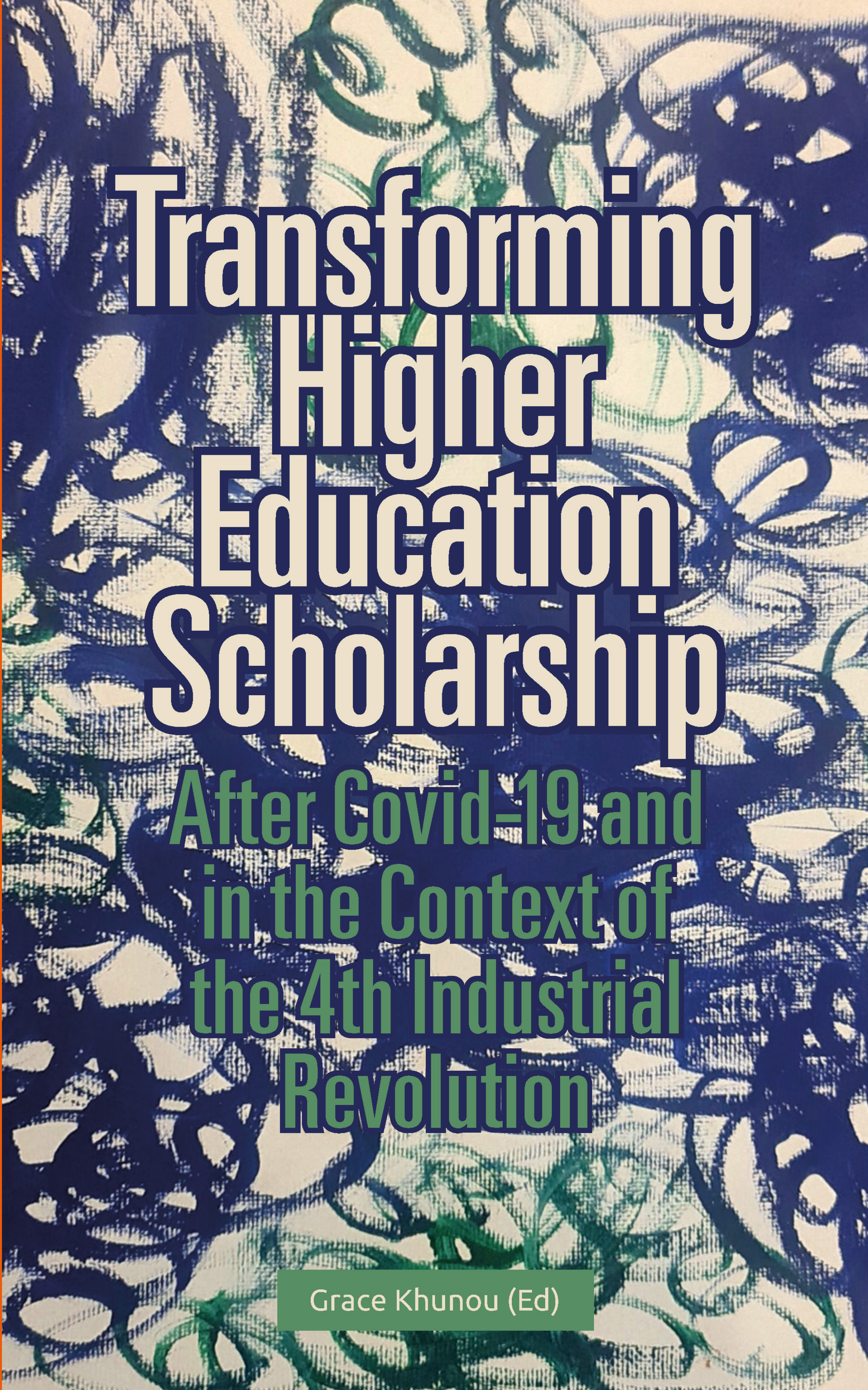

Transforming Higher Education Scholarship

After Covid-19 and in the Context of the 4th Industrial Revolution

Grace Khunou (Ed)

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

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Chapter 1

Transformation Reflections on Opportunities and Challenges in a Context of 4IR Developments and Post-Covid-19

Grace Khunou

Introduction

The current sociopolitical and economic context is made of growing inequality, political intolerance, corruption, fast-changing technologies, inequitable access to technological infrastructure, and, most importantly, the alarming retreat to thinking that discourages and punishes difference (Hlatswayo 2021; Khunou 2023; Ngwane & Tshoaedi 2021; Satgar 2019). With the South African population growing more than 8% since 2011 and growing unemployed (32.9%)[1], growing inequality (0.63) felt at multiple levels of the population and we have to be agile in our tranformation efforts. These structural changes are further influenced by international challenges marked by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia war, and most recently the Israel-Hamas war. All these factors have a direct impact on the higher education sector and particularly on the transformation agenda. These macropolitical issues impact the university sector in terms of funding, facilitation of equitable access, what we teach, our research agenda and our ability to make lasting change.

Transformation endeavours in the South African higher education sector have a long history[2] transcending the

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[1] According to the labour force survey the first quarter of 2024 saw unemployment increase to 32.9%.

[2] Students played a fundamental role in pushing back against apartheid separatist agendas inside universities via their multiple

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implementation of democracy. However, institutionalised transformation efforts started post-1994 with the "Green Paper on Higher Education (1996), the Draft White Paper on Higher Education (April 1997) and eventually the White Paper on Higher Education (July 1997) and the National Plan (2001)" (Reddy 2004). In hindsight, it is now clear that whilst these policies were put in place to facilitate the institutionalisation of transformation, the requisite resources to do so were not provided. This lack was clearly unpacked in the #FeesMustFall movement of 2015 and 2016 where students laid bare the economic challenges in the higher education system, access issues, ongoing racism and sexism, and, most importantly, unshifting epistemic cultures.

Among other factors at the heart of these efforts to transform access was the history of exclusion suffered by Blacks in particular and the high regard they placed on education (Reddy 2004). Access has thus grown in the past few years; however, the other types of transformation (epistemic) are lagging behind. These include curriculum transformation and centring knowledge from the South with a particular emphasis on excavating the knowledges that were historically marginalised. The issue of African languages in teaching and learning also remains a challenge, with their stigmatisation remaining a stumbling block (Ndimande 2004).

Attempts to transform the higher education sector have taken various forms and approaches (Reddy 2004). Many of these early approaches drew from the post-colonial canon and have since been interrogated for their integrationist and reformist angles that make African epistemologies appear as appendages while Western knowledge retains its mainstream status. The second decade of the current millennium has witnessed a further interrogation of these post-colonial approaches and renewed demands for centring African knowledge in the curriculum. These demands have been accompanied by the understanding that a university founded on African philosophy would easily transform into an African university because its ways of doing

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structures. The same is true of the activities of some progressive academic staff who organised with students and civil organisations to challenge exclusive apartheid practices (Reddy 2004).

things would automatically transcend the Western script. This has led to numerous developments in higher education, including curriculum change, culture and governance change, and an overarching shift of policies and systems including those that inform employment principles. This change discourse has been grounded on decolonisation and re-Africanisation notions that perceive change as a praxis.

Given this emphasis on theory and praxis, most recent work on transformation has focused on centring changes not only in meeting employment equity numbers but particularly on foregrounding substantive changes, which include how we theorise and do research. For example, the fallist movement illustrated in real life experience the convergences of the social, political, economic, and epistemological. As a result of this movement, transformation work fast-tracked moves away from focusing on employment equity and diversity as the significant markers of transformation to a more critical and nuanced move towards shifting our epistemological lenses and thus unravelling the multiple ways coloniality continues in post-independence in the African continent and the diaspora (Stevens 2019). The shifts prompted by the fallist movement has provoked us to think from a decolonisation, Africanisation, and Indigenisation perspective with the intent of creating changes with regard to curricula, institutional culture, ideas about science and arts, and, most importantly, "a recalibration of what constitutes the canon across most disciplines" (Stevens 2019: viii). This recalibration that Stevens is referring to provides the space to reimagine what it means to know from the African context and or whilst being Black in the world (Khunou et al. 2019, Musila 2019). Some chapters in this volume illustrate this by focusing their elucidations on a reimagined canon.

This rethinking work is taking place in a fast-changing world impacted by new challenges and continuities of old ones. Thus, this book is about transformation in the higher education sector with a particular focus on how the COVID-19 pandemic and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) impacted (or still impacts) the sector and how we think about and do transformation work as a result. With moves towards 4IR scholarship and doing knowledge in the context of COVID-19, there has been debates suggesting that efforts to decolonise and Africanise have been eroded and/or stalled. This manuscript offers divergent thinking, suggesting that as change is inevitable, transformation work should also be agile and consider the following questions: What are our realities? What are the opportunities and challenges for decolonisation and Africanisation presented by shifts to 4IR? Has the COVID-19 pandemic opened opportunities for reimagining how we do knowledge and build the African University?

Decolonisation And The Higher Education Transformation Project

Although decolonial theorising started long before the #FeesMustFall movement of 2015/16 it was made popular in the South African imagination during this moment. Consequently, a lot of theorising on decoloniality emerges from the South African contexts after this moment. In a 2015 article titled "Decoloniality as the Future of Africa", Ndlovu-Gatsheni makes a case for why decoloniality is a significant theory for Africa's political and epistemological liberation. In making this case, he states that decoloniality is an important liberatory language of the future. Thus, in thinking about 4IR post the COVID-19 pandemic and the future of Africa and the South African higher education sector, decolonial thinking is necessary given the slow pace of transformation and the shifting education funding agendas brought on by centring 4IR discourses in the future of education. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015, 2018) and Benyera (2021) put forward several ideas for why decolonisation is significant for the transformation project. Their ideas include unpacking why the current university in Africa is a 'colonial university'.

Even though the pluriversal idea of the university originated in Africa (Benyera 2021), the colonial university is a product of colonisation, whose intent is to create and recreate colonial systems of oppression. Ndlovu-Gatseni (2015) asserts that even though colonialism ended, colonial systems of oppression remain entrenched via coloniality. Coloniality is articulated economically (via the tentacles of capitalism), politically, socially, epistemologically, and ontologically (Benyera 2021; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015, 2018).

Consequently, central to arguments for decolonisation is the idea of epistemic freedom. Epistemic freedom, as articulated by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) in the introduction of his seminal book *Epistemic Freedom in Africa: Deprovincialization and Decolonization*, Africans must think, theorise, and write from where they are located. This freedom is the bedrock of our ability to transform our universities. Without epistemic freedom, we will continue to tinker on the margins.

Curriculum transformation is argued to be one way of articulating epistemic freedom (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016; Radebe 2023). However, since 1994, attempts to transform the curriculum have basically ornaments knowledge from Africa without truly centring these knowledges in solving our problems and future thinking. This is notwithstanding how these knowledges continue to play a role in informing health and healing (Canham 2023), building philosophies of ubuntu and relationality (Radebe 2023), and in many endeavours of life and development. Radebe (2023) then makes a case for thinking about curriculum transformation from a decolonial epistemic approach, which Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2016) defines as privileging knowledges from Africa and the diaspora without throwing away unprejudiced knowledges from Euro-America.

Outline of the Book

The book is made up of nine chapters including this one. The chapters are divided into three sections as they focus on three themes which make up some of the current transformation discourses in the South African higher education system post-COVID-19. Chapters two, three, and four focus on gender and identity as important transformation questions. Chapters five and six look at how to think critically about 4IR and its place in the transformation landscape of universities in South Africa. Chapters seven, eight and nine provide us with a sense of pluriversal knowledge and how to think about these from an Indigenous Knowledge System perspective.

Chapters two, three, and four focus on gender, feminism, and the higher education transformation project. These three chapters offer a lens into how the transformation project is problematised by inequalities ranging from gender, identity, and histories of exclusion. Chapter two by Tau, titled "Can I call you Ma or Prof? Reflexivity, memory, and space in African feminist research", is a feminist reflexive piece drawing on lived experiences in the academy with a particular focus on the questions Black women deal with as they navigate the academy. Tau looks at how multiple ways of knowing and the complicated registers of engagement in the academy influence belonging. Her reflections are prompted by naming practices from home and within the academy – she challenges us to think about how do we merge the two without taking away from the achievements and self-positioning of especially Black women leaders in the higher education sector?

Similarly, chapter three, "The South Africa academy, intersectionality and attempts to erase Black women", deals with feminist reflections prompted by the heterogeneity of Blackness. Khunou addresses these issues through an intersectional lens, intending to illustrate how Black women who are 'foreign' and African experience the academy differently compared to Black South African women. The chapter further illustrates the significance of intersectionality for explaining African contexts.

In chapter four, "Converging worlds: Exploring gendered and pluriversal possibilities in South African universities", Chauke and Segalo reflect on how they came into the psychology profession. From this engagement, they are able to show us the importance of socially relevant curricula. Their discussion builds on a feminist foundation and centres on the experience of Black women and their personal experiences of the academy to illustrate how exclusion and alienation manifest in cases where curricula and institutional systems and policies are unchanging.

Chapters five and six problematises 4IR in the context of transformation, illustrating how shifts towards 4IR in the South African higher education sectors came about at a time when the expectation was on strengthening transformation efforts.

Again, these two chapters caution against thinking that might suggest that 4IR is neutral and will bring opportunities to Africa. Chapter five, "Unmasking the logic embedded in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in pursuit of transformation in higher education", explores interesting elucidations on how to think about 4IR in the South African context post-COVID-19. In chapter five, Radebe brings into sharp focus the importance of thinking from a decolonial lens when engaging with 4IR in South Africa. She makes a case for maintaining focus on the logic underpinning 4IR as we critically engage with what is important for the South African higher education system.

Similarly, chapter six by Khunou and Pillay, "4IR and transformation: Ally or opponent? Reflections on the South African higher education system", unsettles the suggestion that 4IR is all positive. To make a case for the use of 4IR, chapter six shows potential pitfalls given the positionality of Africa not only in the 4IR but in the first three industrial revolutions and how this positionality makes participation in 4IR challenging. Having indicated the pitfalls, the chapter goes on to illustrate some opportunities in the teaching and learning space and offers further ideas on how to best leverage technologies coming out of 4IR to improve teaching, learning, and access.

Chapters seven, eight, and nine focus their discussion on the significance of pluriversality in the higher education system. They make a case for engaging with a canon that might not have been attractive and/or acceptable in the academy and centre Indigenous knowledge systems in the higher education sector.

For example, chapter seven by Kgope, "Why are we here? Challenging agents of revolutions through independent transformation", helps us think about the importance of knowledge production in the African context. Kgope draws on Mutwa's elucidations to inform our thinking on how technology in this era should be engaged with to retain *botho*. She uses the notion of ancestral algorithms to illustrate how Mutwa's thinking is relevant in helping us navigate some of the social changes we are dealing with currently.

Chapter eight, "A post-colonial influence of COVID-19 and 4IR on the eroded higher educational Indigenous knowledge - South African funeral rites case study", engages with COVID-19 as a lens to think about continuities in the erosion of African Indigenous knowledge. Baloyi illustrates how social change happens fast and slow. His discussions of how COVID-19 impacted mourning practices are done against the backdrop of already eroding African mourning practices. This chapter illustrates that the easy ways in which Africans adapt their traditions to accommodate social crises tend to have a detrimental effect on our ability to use Indigenous knowledge systems to engage with capitalist and colonial logic.

In chapter nine, "A transformative framework for the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems into the curriculum in South African higher education institutions: How do we centre historically marginalised knowers and knowledge?", Ngakane and Madlela provide us with a transformative framework for facilitating the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems into university curricula. Ngakane and Madlela provide a detailed reading of how Indigenous knowledge systems are integrated into the curricula in a number of universities within the African continent and abroad, and then provide a roadmap to indicate the best ways to do such an integration as they also illustrate challenges and theories to build from.

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Chapter 2

Can I Call you Ma or Prof? Reflexivity, Memory, and Space in African Feminist Research

Siphokazi Tau

Abstract

In this chapter, I reflect on a question that came to mind, as I started my interview process with African women leaders in South African universities. The question being, "Can I call you Ma or Prof?" was unexpected and allowed me to delve deeper into establishing a better understanding of my participants' experiences of leadership within the higher education landscape and how they position themselves. Importantly, this question also positioned me within the research itself, the complicated understanding of self as an African who was raised within an African community. With consciousness, "the multiple ways of being black in the world" (Khunou et al. 2020: xvii) in addition to being a student in the current higher education context. I locate this within the understanding of mothering and parenting in the African context as a sociocultural practice (Mkhize 2006; Nathane & Khunou 2021), where an elder or peer of your parent becomes your parent too – uMa/mama. I show in this chapter that our bodies are hosts of memory which carry ways of knowing and registers of engaging with each other that Eurocentric and Western ways of doing research in higher education do not account for. I affirm myself with the knowing that "I am not a researcher doing research, I am a human being doing research" (Mxalisa 2024) and that my being, which is relational, will always remind me of its existence.

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Introduction

Where do I begin to locate myself within my research, and why does this locating happen at the point of engaging with the participants? Why does this research push me and my identity into the research? It was an easy decision to study African women leaders. Growing up, I was intrigued by my mother's strong character and sense of leadership. Later in the chapter, I write of my mother's multiple identities. My mother was the first woman I knew who had multiple names and identities which all had their time and place. From what I could see and to the little ability of mine to "read" her, she moved from one identity to the other effortlessly. By this, I am not suggesting that those shifts were easy, accepted, or well received. Instead, her effortless embodying of these identities means that she showed up and stepped up consistently. She did not need to be cajoled to do so. Similarly, this research affirmed to me that "the various roles that women assume within African households, rupture the limits of gendered pro-marital conceptions of womanhood" (Mohlabane & Tshoaedi 2022: 6). And this understanding is what allows me to see them in different ways outside of the limitation of the professional space.

So, 'mothering' in this chapter ought to be understood as relational, therefore its meanings are not tied to the function of motherhood as biological or action-based, but to the trigger that happens when we read bodies in our surroundings. Be that as it may, there is value in understanding the function of biology[1] and nurture particularly in the discourse of nature versus nurture. The relational use of uMama/Ma, too, can translate to care responsibilities, leading to invisible labour African women perform in the academy (Magoqwana, Maqabuka & Tshoaedi 2019).

In my study, "African feminism(s) as it informs the experiences of African women leaders at universities" (Tau 2022), I interviewed five African and Black women who were leaders in universities in South Africa. These interviews were intended to take place via the traditional face-to-face process to allow me to interview them at their physical place of work. Meaning that it would be in their respective offices and universities, exposing me (the researcher) to the office layout, the architecture of the buildings that they were in, and the overall physical landscape of their institutions. The intention was to experience these African women within their workspaces and to observe them from that lens and perspective. This was to ensure that the participants would be understood from their professional profiles, seeing them within their day-to-day practices of performing leadership work in the university. This was an intentional step to not focus on their identities outside the 'professional' as an attempt to avoid the lens of seeing them within the sociocultural context of 'mothers' or 'mothering'.

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[1] That of my mother birthing me.

Although other studies have considered the intersectionality of women's identities in the community and the academy, such as "othermothering" by Patricia Hills Collins (1994), negotiating mothering and professional life by Lucille Maqubela (2016), and the work of Venitha Pillay (2012) on academic mothers. Other scholars who have also made valuable contributions to theorising gender from an African and Indigenous lens include Magoqwana (2018), Mohlabane and Tshoaedi (2022), Ifi Amadiume (1987), and Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí (1997). By not focusing on their various identities, of which motherhood is assumed to be one whether biological or social, it detached them from the care-work and what Magoqwana et al. (2019) call being forced to care and expected to 'pay Black tax' in the academy because you are a woman and African.

This chapter focuses on two reflective areas, the first being how the question of multiple identities or intersecting identities emerges for me in the study. Secondly, how a reading of space and location gives us the possibility to think of the histories and intellectual traditions these women come from, through specifically thinking of the home as a site of intellectual tradition. In this instance, home is valuable as the participants were mostly working from their homes because we were in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, where workspaces shifted to the home. These reflections offer a window into understanding the relationship "between intellectual histories of bodies in African societies and the everyday meanings that bodies may or may not carry" (Oyěwùmí 2011: 1) in the context of higher education in South Africa.

The modern university in Africa "as an institution is a product of Western traditional culture and intellectualism. This means that its practices, orientation, philosophical and pedagogical models are all geared towards Western values" (Tamale 2020: 13). Within the South African higher education landscape, the culture of the education system is borrowed and adopted from the colonial model (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2017), where the academic is the centre of knowledge, and the students are the receivers. Current debates on transformation within the curriculum, particularly the #FeesMustFall movement in the South African higher education landscape, have challenged this linear transferral of knowledge. Popularly understood to be about elitism and rising tuition fees, the movement also focused on the decolonisation of the curriculum, the exclusionary nature of the university culture, and its exclusionary human resource system. The #FeesMustFall movement courageously championed the insourcing of cleaning and security workers. The movement fundamentally demonstrated that the struggles of students and workers are intersectional in so far as it advocated for access and freedom within our universities as a space of learning, work, cultural making, and belonging.

For many students in the higher education landscape, workers were a direct representation of the people in their communities, as some of us come from working-class backgrounds. Important to note is that there is little literature on students who come from upper classes and their intersections with cleaning and security staff in the university. This intersectional reading was important for the movement to address continued inequalities and dehumanisation of people who come from Black and African communities (Masutha 2015). This meant that the power dynamics within the university shifted, allowing students' voices to also find expression. This de-hegemonizing of power within the university landscape has meant that voices which have been invisibilised are brought to the centre of the fabric of the university.

Thus revealing how the colonial make-up of the university and its culture influences an African student's experience of the space, conditioning the ways in which students conduct research with their participants, in a way that disconnects and disassociates them from themselves. Important to remember is that the African women participating in this study fall in a different class status compared to other African women who also exist in structures of labour and power within the university, such as cleaning and administrative staff. Be that as it may, Khunou et al. (2020) remind us that class movement is not linear. These reflections also demonstrate how class does not supersede the nuances of relating as African and Black people, especially outside of what is African and Black spaces. And that even in a space such as the university, whose framing is not African and Black, Black existence finds expression. In essence, the logic of African mothering or social mothering applies to all who provide nurturing whether intellectual, such as in the academy, or care of space in the case of cleaners, security, and administration.

African societies, like any other space, typically exist within a power structure of some sort. Oyěwùmí (1997), among other African gender scholars (see Magubane 2004; Mikell 1995), have already argued that the African power structure operates differently from the biological-centred, Eurocentric one. That is to say, the structure that would allocate power based on the physical body is not necessarily the only one applicable within African societies. In my society in the Northern Cape and Eastern Cape regions, where I was raised, seniority was the dominant power structure used. This is similar to what Oyěwùmí (1997) argues is one of the structures of locating power. Power thus is located to seniority and seniority is linked to responsibility.

For instance, in the case of my upbringing, young people never refer to senior people by name. Instead, seniors would be referred to by their relational term derived from the responsibility of raising children. For parents or guardians, *mme/mama/ma* (mother) or *rra/tata* (father); for grandparents, *Mme/Nkgono* and *rra/papa*. Although these references emerge out of meaning-making of households and sometimes from biology, they translate to social relations beyond nuclear family make-ups. Thus, it is expected that when you carry a particular title or responsibility reference within your household, it also applies within the society itself. Nathane and Khunou (2021) refer to this as social relatability that functions parallel to biological relatability. Essentially, biological parenting is not the determining factor for whether someone is referenced as a parent, elder, sibling, or grandparent. Instead, age and seniority will award you the responsibility despite biology and genetic relation.

What emerged for me as I was conducting my interviews was the question, "Can I call you Ma or Prof?". I asked my participants this question as part of our introductory conversations ahead of the interviews. In my planning ahead of the interviews and even in the email communication with my participants, this had not emerged for me as I had communicated with them via email and used their professional titles. This realisation of how to relate with my participants emerged as I met them, saw them, and began to talk to them, albeit it being virtually. There was some relief for me in now having to interview my participants virtually, as I felt that they could protect themselves more easily because of this. Furthermore, I was concerned that the virtual space would be a challenge in building rapport as we would not be able to make meaning of our feelings and energies.

These introductory encounters sparked some questions for me such as: What does this question of relatability mean in African feminist research? What does it mean in the context of maintaining objectivity in doing research for a researcher to ask their participants what title of respect is more suited for them? What does it mean in the case of power dynamics and positionality for the researcher to highlight the power dynamics themselves? Where is the power located between the researcher who is a student in the university and the African woman who leads the university? Does this particularly matter or change when the student is the researcher and the leader is the participant? These are the questions that emerged for me as I reflected on those encounters and their meaning for me as an emerging academic studying the university, power, and African women.

Decolonial scholars Lugones (2010) and Mokoena (2020) argue that the coloniality of power structures produces a one-sided understanding of being, and where African women are concerned – an oppressed object. Manning (2021) reminds us that the importance of critiquing Western representations is because colonial power renders the 'other' an object of knowledge and not one who already exists within a canon of knowledge. This is because coloniality enables the continuation of colonial cultures that infiltrate, among others, language and spiritual-political identity (Mokoena 2020). Decolonial approaches insist that the violence of colonialism is not only limited to the past. Instead, it extends to other articulations of Western dominance as well as beyond physical space to psychological, linguistic, and cultural epistemic violence (Readsura Decolonial Editorial Collective 2022). These questions of reflection speak to this very point of how the university produces students who disconnect with their already-existing knowledge repertoires, so by asking the questions shared earlier I was reconnecting to already existing knowledge registers.

Part of what the university does as a colonial product is erase women as persons who ought to be in the space. Noting that women of Western descent had an advantage of entering the university space before African women, the late entry and the intents of gender coloniality (Lugones 2010) makes the experience of African women quite unique. What this also exposes is how the university in its elitist nature continues to erase African women, producing students who in return also become detached from their identities and would refer to African women by the one-sided identity only of Professor (Prof.) or Doctor (Dr). This practice demonstrates what Wane (2008: 185) postulates to be the result of teaching from the European canon, which "disassociated from and devalue the cultural knowledges and wisdom" of the heritage and community of a student. What this further does is limit our understanding of African women, whereas within my socialisation, irrespective of position, social status, and biological experience, a woman who is the peer of my mother would be referred to as my mother too socially. That very same woman would be able to take up the responsibility of parenting even when my mother has not given an instruction to do so. The authority and responsibility of mothering are embedded in the society's social contract, and the understanding and responsibility to respect this is part of the social contract.

My memory of my upbringing points to no instruction ever being made about my body and its limitations in accessing spaces in the world. This changed after learning that my mother, a teacher at the time, only had one of two career choices: either a teacher or a nurse. This is because the historical structuring of education for Africans limited their access to other professions. Mabandla (2014) reminds us that the formation of the Black middle class in South Africa dates back to the colonial encounter and dispossession of land ownership for Africans. Thus, placing educated Africans in professions such as administration, nursing, teaching, and priests would privilege them over poorer Africans but keep them restricted by the colonial system (Mabandla 2014).

Power, for a very long time, seemed to be a gift of age. And so, for the longest time growing old was the aspiration, as I was interested in navigating the various economies of power age would grant me. This power came with responsibilities, and those who have power ought to be respected because of the responsibilities they must perform. This of course should not be understood as a naïve understanding of power – it is not. It is an interpretation of power outside of abuse, control, dominance, and all the problematic traits that are synonymous with it. So, where am I positioned in this network of power? Well, for most of it, I was a child or young enough to still fall under the category of child in my family and community's set-up – and still, I am. Worth noting here is that the use of 'child' is not to be understood as infantilisation. One is a child in a home and raised as a child who grows up to be an adult. Even when one is finally an adult with responsibility, in relation to those who mould and raise you, you are a child. So, 'child' should be understood within the evolution of being and not be reduced to the limitations of a stage in a person's life. Within the role of being a child or young person, senior people, determined by age and responsibility, would not be referred to by their name. Various titles symbolic of role/age/relation can be used. Although they are different depending on region, there are some similarities. These would include *Mme/Rre*, *Nkgono*, *Ousi/Abuti*, *Rrakgadi/Malume/MmeMalume*, *Ngwana*, and *Kgaetsedi/Nnake*.

Like any other organisation, the higher education landscape has roles for people in specific positions. Importantly, it awards titles such as Dr and Prof. to people who have demonstrated an understanding of a field or area of study. The coming to this process is often individualistic. For example, the PhD must be the original work of an individual who will be awarded the title 'Dr'. This is not my contention or the point of disjuncture – the disjuncture is that the title comes because of individual action. Whereas in my context, titles are awarded to individuals in relation to the function they play within the collective. Very rarely is individual success that disconnects one from the collective celebrated. Now, on the point of responsibility and its application in society. Titles being awarded in relation to one's role in the community means that most, if not all, titles function for society. So, titles are for individual action and are likely to emerge within the privacy of the home. However, the application is beyond the private home. If someone plays the role of a mother in their home, the application of the title includes the community and public. That means that as a mother, you are responsible for mothering those who are not directly mothered by you. In turn, they will refer to you by the title of 'mother'. Thus, Mme/Mama in my society is everyone that mothers, and everyone who is the peer of my mother and/or those who mother me. This application plays out differently within the academic space. And this paper is not to progress arguments for academic titles. It does however speak to a disjunction of how to relate as Africans in the higher education landscape, particularly where institutions suggest that they are intentional about their identities with being African, for Africa, located in African, and African-centric.

Reflexivity in African Feminist Research

Among the Akan of West Africa, when the community is totally stumped for ideas on an issue or when there is a deadlock over a decision, the community usually consults the abrewa, 'old lady'. The old lady's wisdom is received without question and the community can relax in the assurance that she will know what to do. No one requires that she produce 'empirical evidence' for her perspectives. Her perspectives are respected and validated because they have been built over a lifetime of experience, including the spiritual insight that comes with being an abrewa. (Ampofo & Arnfred 2010)

The 'old lady' in age and wisdom is common in African cosmology. The amaXhosa have the same concept captured in the song "Dadobawo sicela amandla"[2] when there's a traditional ceremony that is not going well. They approach *udadobawo*, a senior aunt, for guidance and advice.

Danai Mupotsa (2010) writes of an African Feminist ethic when conducting research: "an ethic that is necessarily in process, partial, therefore, and contingent, but an ethic nonetheless that speaks to our palpable yearnings and that exposes our vulnerabilities and our deep desires to re-imagine and re-envision a loving freedom" (Mupotsa, 2010: 4). This position by Mupotsa is important when noting that, by its nature, ''research processes themselves [re]produce power differences'' (Harding & Norberg 2005: 2012). The work of feminist scholars is known to be critical of scientific research and its methods in erasing the researcher and their subjectivities as part of the research process (Ackerly & True 2008; Bowles & Klein 1983).

Reflexivity in research enables researchers to consider moments of subjectivity and reflection as integral to the research experience. In other words, reflectivity inserts the self in the research as a way of affirming that the self is present throughout the research experience, particularly when engaging human subjects. Reflexivity thus is "a process of self-consciousness, of 'researching' one's own position in the research process" (Sokoya 2006: 868). Within feminist research, objectivity and the idea of absolute fact have come heavily criticised because they can distort reality and exclude other perceptions and realities (Hesse-Biber 2012). Feminist ethics within research is about making a commitment to how ways in which we inquire about the power of knowledge, relationships and their hierarchies, and your own positionality as a researcher (Ackerly & True 2008). This is, among other reasons, because power relations exist where “people of different gender, class, and ethnic origins are enmeshed” (Stock 2018: 3). This intentional approach to doing feminist research is argued to produce different and new questions about feminist theorisations and interpretations (Hill Collins 2000). Thus, expanding the “analysis of the historical, political, economic, and cultural forces that shape women’s differentiated lives” (Ampofo, Beoku-Betts & Osirim 2008: 1).

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[2] Ancient song sung by amaXhosa in various ritual, traditional contexts. It is meant to request the presence of uDabawo – the great aunt to offer insights and/or discernment.

Within my study on African women and how social hierarchies (Wolf 1996) emerge, I am reminded of what Linda Tuhiwai Smith cites in her work: “research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary” (Smith 1999: 1). The particular power dynamics being that the participants are understood from the relational lens of being mothers, and me of being a child in the community. There is also a dynamic in that both the researcher and the participants are currently in the higher education space, with me as the student and them in senior leadership positions. Objectivity requires us to look at the research as detached from our consciousness as people. Objectivity in research is about ensuring that there is a barrier between yourself and the researcher. This is premeditated. And the gap this creates is that it removes the space for relationality to determine the research interaction. Being able to connect with my participants through this relation allows for “shifting the theorisation of African indigenous realities beyond racialised, gendered and hierarchical binaries” (Mohlabane & Tshoaedi 2022: 6).

What Ackerly and True (2008) argue for is a researcher’s attentiveness to their epistemology and the authority this holds within research. Furthermore, they argue for a de-stabilising epistemology to enable the researcher to “ask important questions about context, change, interrelatedness, relationships of power, boundaries, and embedded epistemology that empower the researcher to break new ground” (Ackerly & True 2008: 696). De-stabilising epistemology is important because it considers other epistemological perspectives. Nnaemeka (1998) argues that those whose epistemological perspective is located within orality will theorise differently to those located within literary or other traditions. Haraway (1988: 579) champions simultaneously having "an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognising our own 'semiotic technologies' for making meanings, and a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a real world", especially in a context where teaching and research happen in a context of the history of colonialism and its conditionalities (Knowles 2021; Wane 2008). Ackerly and True (2008) remind us that the research ethic applied within feminist research is important to mitigate epistemological power through knowledge claims.

What I specifically argue is that to truthfully argue that my participants are knowledge carriers and to centre them means to possibly accept my vulnerabilities as a researcher. Holding onto the power of being the researcher would have been to deny my own identity as it relates to the participants. Instead, stepping into my vulnerabilities allowed me to step into myself, how my body remembers to relate and how respectability functions. Important to note is that at no point do my participants use the fact that they are senior to me in the university context. There's an absolute humanity without power in our interaction. Which then also affirms the knowing that African women, specifically my participants, do not function from a position of exerting hierarchy unnecessarily although they, more than me, have experience in and exposure to academic research. The interview process felt like a conversation I would have with an elder woman in the community. Earlier I made reference to my mother, her experience and how she navigates the world in the conditions afforded to her. This is integral in how we do research differently because the application of research requires the researcher to be one with the Western lens and rid themselves of their identity to maintain this idea of objectivity. This approach towards maintaining objectivity is harmful as it does not widen the net for understanding for the researcher but also ignores the complexity of identity and history of both researcher and participant.

What does reflexivity teach me within this process? In an interview on *The Path* hosted by Roslansky (2023), Caroline Wanga reflects on how not compromising your identity is fundamental to how we journey through work environments. Often, institutions are there for us to assimilate into their cultures, with little to no adjustment of the culture and ways of being of the bodies that move in those spaces. The argument she makes fundamentally is that we miss opportunities by focusing on where we are, instead of who we are. Through maintaining consistency with who we are, the spaces and environments we are in will adjust to our cultures. As a student in the university studying the university, student voice is not always valued as a long-term stakeholder of the university because of the time limitation of their qualifications. However, this made me realise that to value the student in the university is to value their positionality in complicated ways. Not only as them being a client in the space but as a body that moves within different communities in the university with already existing knowledge registers. This process also affirmed that social hierarchies do not have to be used from a lens of oppression and power. We can uphold social hierarchies "in the shadow of a violent hierarchy" (Gqola 2023) of the colonial university.

Mothering as a Sociocultural Practice: Potentially Establishing More Transformative University Cultures

"Can I call you Ma or Prof?" is the first question I asked my participants during the data collection process of my research study titled, "African feminism(s) as it informs the experiences of African women leaders at universities" (2022). This was also the question I along with my peers in our feminist circle asked ourselves when they had just announced Nelson Mandela University, (where I was based as a student), would have a Black and female vice chancellor for the first time. And the other questions we asked were:

1. What are the implications of calling Prof. Sibongile Muthwa 'Mama' instead of 'Professor Muthwa' when this was not a question with her predecessor? What does that say about how

we see her in the context of the academy, seeing that this is not a question with male leadership. We simply assign them their title and keep it moving.

2. What does that say about us to not call her Mama when we are mandated by our sociocultural contexts to never refer to an elder by name? What does this question mean in the context of the decolonial project, in bringing in other geographies of knowledge when we question this form of naming?

Yuval-Davis (2006) reminds us our citizenship is multi-layered – it consists of the local, the ethnic, and the national, among others. Asking my participants how to address them was not for them to be comfortable and it was not for me to demonstrate that I respected them. It was a reminder to myself of my own identity. And particularly in my noble attempt to detach these women from their layered-ness, my body reminded me that I, too, was an extension of that very social structure. Oyěwùmí's (1997) work on excavating language to argue against gender as a central power structure shifts us to consider how language and African languages hold registers of knowledge, such as understanding power as seniority. Similarly, Maseko (2018) also argues that within isiXhosa language and people, although stratification exists, it is not in the form of the "biologic", to borrow from Oyěwùmí (1997). Rather it gives us access to understand deeper.

In *Mothering the 'other': The sacrificial nature of paid domestic work within Black Families in the post-apartheid South Africa* (2016), Maqubela argues that participants in feminist research, such as domestic workers, have an epistemic privilege and double advantage. According to Maqubela, African women who are domestic workers have better insight into their own oppression and are thus better 'knowers' in research of themselves and their experiences. Similarly, in the context of African women leaders who enter the university as bodies that were not thought of in those spaces can better articulate the experience of existing within those spaces. Fundamentally, my argument highlighted by my question demonstrates that they carry the experience of existing in a space that is founded on erasing their identities. What identity do they then carry currently where access to the university is not denied? And secondly, by virtue of access to the university, does that mean that the identities they hold outside of the university co-exist within the university?

In answering my question, some of my participants simply responded with "You can choose" or "Students tend to use Mama, so I don't mind". And this was interesting, because by allowing participants to choose how they want to be referred to ensured that they can have a sense of choice and power in the interview process. This, too, would have allowed them to create distance as a way of protecting themselves. One response that stood out for me was from Professor Seipati,[3] who responded by saying: "Well Siphokazi, you can refer to me as any of those. In my time in the university students will often call me Mama or sisi, but if I had to introduce myself, I would say *nna ke mmagwe Lesedi le Larona, ke nkgono wa Karabo*". Meaning: I am Lesedi's and Larona's mom, I am also a grandmother to Karabo.

Maseko, in *Language as source of revitalisation and reclamation of Indigenous epistemologies: Contesting assumptions and re-imagining women identities in (African) Xhosa society* (2018), argues that the stratification in language indicates factors such as "responsibility, seniority, rank and status of that member, not the physiology of that person" (2018: 38). This of course had been something I was aware of. I was also aware of various ways social currency is gained through marriage for example. In detaching mothering, I also detached the marital status of my participants as I was preparing for the research process. I knew that my mother had three names. One was hers from birth: Nomsa. The second, Noloyiso, defined by her ancestors as part of her initiation and qualification as *igqirha* (healer). The third is used in relation to her identity in her marriage to my father: Nomonde. In the Sesotho and isiXhosa cultures, among many others, new names are given to brides/wives as they take up their new roles in the family. The first child in the marriage will have the same name as the bride to link the responsibility of wife to the responsibility of mother. So, the name used to identify a wife is also the name used to identify the first child, giving the name a function for two sets of responsibilities.

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[3] Pseudonym

This memory is my individual one, but it is one that links me to the collective identity I share with my participants. If I understand that my mother carries multiple identities which all exist in the spaces occupied, then my expectation that the identity of uMama or Nkgono for Professor Seipati identities' would exist and be held by my participants as peers of my mother, albeit within the academy, is justified. This question was a reminder about my own history and, importantly as Bozzoli and Nkotsoe (1991) argue, the forms of consciousness that my participants hold because of their gendered history. According to Goniwe and Gqola (2005: 80), the body can be a site to reflect experiences, thoughts, and emotions encountered in life, be it "concrete, metaphysic, spiritual, imagination or fantasy". The body, my body, remembered the legitimisation of seniority as power and respect. Particularly because of how intergenerational relationships function, how we transfer knowledge, and how we value those who have walked before us through experience and through age (*inyathi ibuzwa kwabaphambili*[4]). This is not to be mistaken as the use of seniority as power, the type of ways Western logic would use seniority of your position in the university based on your qualification. You are a professor and therefore respect and authority must be awarded to you.

The concept of seniority as responsibility should not be read outside of the context of understanding social hierarchies and use of titles, noting that African women in the academy do engage in unpaid and unrecognised care work because of their identities and cultural backgrounds (Magoqwana et al. 2019). However, care work and mothering should be read as a frame that outlines seniority for purposes of respect and responsibility between persons in a society. Mothering, as used by Oyěwùmí (2005), is to challenge the universalist idea of the family structure being that of the Western frame of nuclear families, which locate power within bodies. So, in the context of my participants, the use and function of them as uMama would still be applicable even if they are not married (Nathane & Khunou 2021; Oyěwùmí 2005) or do not have biological children.

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[4] Meaning one learns from elders/those who have come before.

Instead, mothering should be understood from the framework of othermothering by Hills Collins (2000), which is understood as a function of and as a community who are carers parallel to the biological mothers. This concept within African society typically works with extended families, however, members of a community, even outside of blood relation, play these roles (e.g., of mothering). The extension of the community as part of the people that parent is so that communities can sustain similar beliefs and ethics of personhood on children – these would ideally start within the homes but are reinforced through everyday living in the community. Therefore, this expectation on African women in the academy to understand what is meant by my question is not to be misunderstood as a burden on them.

According to Oyěwùmí (2003), motherhood is a commitment of a lifetime where one's mother participates in various rites of passage of their daughter or other expectant mothers by assisting them to navigate mothering. *Ukukhapha*, the process of accompanying or companionship, is common in multiple African societies. Be it a mother teaching *motsetsi*, a new mother, how to navigate motherhood or a married woman teaching a newlywed how to understand marriage in a specific family. This practice also reflects itself with these African women leaders. Professor Chantel[5] speaks to how they want to ensure that the next generation of African women academics are able to navigate the space better:

> I think it's difficult to change anything as an individual... and we need to build, you know, networks and communities that create space for us and create space for others and particularly the people who are going to come after us. We need to create those spaces. But I do some very individual things like I mentor young African women, especially at PhD level or just post their PhD.

In a typical African context, as I recall how my sister in-law and later my mother navigated the deaths of my brother and father respectively. Both had a community of other women around them, typically older who would have experienced *go roula* – to mourn a partner. *Umkhaphi*, the companion, is the one that helps you navigate the transition particularly during the process of preparing for the burial, the actual funeral, and the post-death grieving processes. The expectation is that experiences that one has not undergone before should not be navigated independently, and as such advice is mandatory and should be expected. This is what amaXhosa refers to as *Inyathi ibuzwa kwabaphambili.*

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[5] Pseudonym

African cosmology awards respect and legitimises power based on seniority because of the role and contribution you have made in society. That age, wisdom, your humanity, and role in community legitimises your power. Here, my body was remembering that these women were chosen for a specific kind of journey: entering university and pushing to be part of the knowledge-making process of universities although the university was not created with African women in mind. But importantly noting further that the university, and most disciplines, had excluded African and women's narratives and realities out of the canon of knowledge. These women, *ngoMafungashe*,[6] they are the first daughters of these homes/institutions. *oMafungashe* is the first-born daughter or a senior female bodied child (Magoqwana 2021). What we know and expect of *mafungashe*, and any first-born child, is that they hold the institutional knowledge of the home as taught by the family as it is likely to have a community involved in raising first-born children. This is because it would be the first time the parents would be taking that role, so the community or extended family is likely to assist and instil specific values with the hope that the first born will transfer these to their younger siblings. Importantly, *omafungashe* are the first girl children in the household. They become the blueprint for how the other children will be parented. They are expected to end up as an embodiment of their homes, of their institution.

This concept by Magoqwana is applicable in the current discourses around the expectation of African women leaders in the higher education landscape and what they are expected to do in terms of transforming institutional cultures. My body remembered the African ways of being awarded authority and thus responsibility is mutual to the contributions one makes in service of our greater society. With this question, it had been apparent to me that I did not prepare for what an African woman meant to me. My approach had been to take this study with an objective approach of simply seeing them as my participants, they were simply African women leaders in universities. However, that's not who they are only. The intersectionality of their lives and their being became apparent to me in the first encounters I would have with them.

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[6] First born daughter.

Space and the Meanings of Space

Written in 1998, "I have come to take you home – a tribute to Sara Baartman" by Diana Ferrus (2003) is a poem written due to the reluctance of the French government in returning the remains of the body of Sara Baartman back to South Africa.

> I have come to take you home, home!
> Remember the veld,
> the lush green grass beneath the big oak trees?
> The air is cool there and the sun does not burn.
> I have made your bed at the foot of the hill,
> your blankets are covered in buchu and mint,
> the proteas stand in yellow and white
> and the water in the stream chuckles sing-songs
> as it hobbles along over little stones.
>
> I have come to take you home
> Where the ancient mountains shout your name
> I have made your bed at the foot of the hill
> Your blankets are covered in buchu mint,
> The proteas stand in yellow and white.
> I have come to take you home

In the poem, Ferrus writes about bringing Baartman home and linking the coming of home to scents, plants, and physical landscapes. All of these are things in the physical that symbolise the Africa, the home, that Baartman was taken away from: the mountain, the hill, the mint for cooking or medicinal purposes. The remembering of these is flagged as important, almost like Ferrus is trying to intentionally trigger certain memories for Baartman, even as an ancestor to remember because of the time her body was held away from her home. In her MA thesis on Xhosa widows, Gcotyelwa Jimlongo talks about going back to her home to do her fieldwork. All the memorabilia of her late father, the photos on the wall, as memory and legacy of her late father, which has made her mom a widow, is the very thing that informs her research titled, "Inkcitha nzila nobomi obutsha (The release of the widow and life after mourning): Xhosa widows and citizenship" (Jimlongo 2021).

Ferrus in the evoking of this idea of home, writes as if Baartman would be able to return to home as she had left it – as if in the context of land dispossession and the policing of access to land would be available as before. Ferrus here almost shields Baartman from the current state of home by choosing to evoke only the liberatory elements of the memory of home. It may be that Ferrus evokes this position of home because Baartman's violent leaving of home was arguably filled by these memories of home. Ferrus insists on this specific remembering because the loss of being physically alienated from home is already major to the point that Baartman never makes it home alive. This way of remembering is significant when understanding that "we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost" (Rushdie 2010: 1) because memory holds better when it is inscribed in space (Jimlongo 2021).

The making of spaces, or place-making, which is commonly used in the fields of architecture and town planning, seeks to make meaning of a process of establishing spaces that should be useful and appealing for people to exist in, live in, and work in (Lennon 2020). According to Pellegrino and Jeanneret (2009), space in the architectural discipline enables us access to know what our external reality is. Space thus influences how "our own body moves and objects are placed [...] the movement of one's own body" (p.269). Üngür (2011) and De Certeau (1984) suggest that there is a distinction between place and space. Place "is the positioning of objects to each other; space is the experience of them" (Üngür 2011: 6). In other words, space becomes the embodiment of the place, space-making or the meaning of space carries the culture of the place.

This thinking of space making emerges to me during one interviews specifically where both these participants were located at their homes. Professor Tinashe[7] logs into the Microsoft Teams a minute after me. She is sitting on a two-seater couch. I cannot tell if this is a living room or a home office. She seems relaxed. As we begin to exchange greetings, her attention goes to someone in the room with her, I find out that this is her child. She looks to the camera, to me, and says, "Can I have five minutes?". I respond by saying, "Sure, we'll start when you're ready." I was now confronted with the fact that my intention in the study was not to burden my participants with viewing them from the lens of being mothers or having to perform mothering in the academy. Although this appearance of the child does not get engaged in the interview, the conversation takes us somehow back to the child. When reflecting on her early days in the academy, Professor Tinashe mentions that at the time she had joined the institution, she had requested a house as part of the relocation negotiations to accommodate her children. She would subsequently have to leave the children behind and move into a small apartment as the institution said they could not provide for her family needs. She would find out later that a male and white colleague, who had also relocated and joined the institution had in fact been allocated a house to accommodate his family needs, these being himself and his dogs, having said that his dogs would need the yard space.

This made me think about the idea of the home in relation to Professor Tinashe's leadership values which we talked about during the interview. Her leadership style and desired role as a leader is to inform institutional cultures that are rooted in the ideas of belonging, of having a place that is safe, that reflects who you are, your culture, your identity. My argument here is that home as a space becomes a framework for African women leaders that guides the types of institutions they want to be in and contribute towards. I see this in how Professor Tinashe lets out a sigh after sharing the story of her children versus the dogs being prioritised. Whose family structure is interrupted by the disconnect of migration of this job? And what are the parallels, in the values African women use when mothering and the possibilities of new institutional cultures?

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[7] Pseudonym

Home is both a feeling and an experience in as much as it is also a place or places. Memory and identity therefore are fundamental to curating the experience of home. The concept of ‘home’, according to Ratnam (2018: 1), is an “affective construct where homely feelings can encompass a combination of security, familiarity, comfort, and belonging”. The experience of home is built on various elements that encompass its culture – like the university. Collective practices, belonging, and narratives about identity are all part of what builds culture (Ratnam 2018). The idea of home is always in motion in the sense that it connects people, routines, and identities (Arnold 2016; Ratnam 2018). Home, as Jimlongo (2020) alludes to as a space that holds pictures and memories of her late father, is important because it acts as a “source of identity and meaningfulness” and a “symbol of the self” (Valentine 2001: 73) even if the home is made up of mundane activities.

The home for these women becomes the training ground for the type of institutional cultures they wish to create. In her work on *uMakhulu* as an institution of knowledge, Magoqwana (2018: 76) argues that *uMakhulu*/grandmothers are invisible institutions as they “are a body of indigenous knowledge that stores, transfers and disseminates knowledge and values”. Elsewhere, Magoqwana and Adesina (2020) postulate that the position of *uMakhulu* is an integral one to African societies and families as they are not only the pillar in their households but within the broader society. Households that have elderly women in them are likely to produce principled people within a society because how women are custodians of values, culture, and language.

uMakhulu and, by extension, African women make use of the home, the space or as a space for meaning-making to preserve historical foundations and value systems. This is similar to how some of the participants want to view their institutions. Scholars Lefebvre (1991), Soja (1996), and Saar and Palang (2009) postulate that space is both a physical and "social landscape which is imbued with meaning in everyday place-bound social practices" (Saar & Palang 2009: 6). What Professor Tinashe reminds us of in her request to have a space for her children and by extension her vision for possible institutional cultures is that space "includes both the emotional and behavioral bubbles which invisibly surround people's bodies as well as complex spatial organization of practices" (Saar & Palang 2009: 6) that affect the leadership cultures in institutions of higher learning. Space or spaces therefore are both "semiotic as much as pragmatic" (Pellegrino & Jeanneret 2009: 271). Homes, like institutions of higher learning, are factories of knowledge for their everyday users.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reflect on a pivotal question that emerged during my research journey: "Can I call you Ma or Prof?" This question opened up profound insights into the experiences of African women leaders in South African universities, shedding light on their navigation of leadership within the higher education landscape and their self-positioning within it. Importantly, this question also situated me within the research process itself, prompting a deeper exploration of my own identity as an African raised within an African community. Thus, it challenged me to grapple with the complexities of being Black in various contexts, both as a member of my community and as a student in today's higher education environment.

Drawing on the understanding of mothering and parenting in the African context as a sociocultural practice, I argue that this question highlighted the embodied memories and ways of knowing that Eurocentric research frameworks often overlook. Through this exploration, I assert that I am not merely a researcher conducting research, but a human being engaged in a relational process of inquiry. My being, inherently connected to others, constantly reminds me of its presence throughout the research journey. This chapter underscores the necessity of embracing diverse ways of knowing and engaging with each other, challenging the limitations of Western research paradigms in higher education.

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Chapter 3

The South Africa Academy, Intersectionality and Attempts to Erase Black Women

Grace Khunou

Abstract

The position of Black women tends to remain the same due to continuing discrimination and a growing pushback of the feminist wins of the early 1990s. This is particularly true when you think about the differential experiences of Black women. In this chapter the focus is on how an intersectional analysis can assist us to understand the experiences of Black women from the perspective of African foreign women in the South African academy. The argument of the chapter is that even though intersectionality emerges in the West, when used critically, it is able to help us make a contribution in theorising African experiences, especially when the intention is to humanise those experiences.

Introduction

The hiring and promoting of Black women have been problematised using multiple exclusive arguments in South African universities for many years. 30 years into democracy and attempts to transform the South African higher education sector, Black women remain the minority in the professoriate, as heads of research centres, and as leaders in multiple sectors of the higher education system. Multiple stereotypical arguments have been put forward over the years to maintain this untameable status quo, including that Black women do not have PhDs, they do not have the experience, they are outsiders, and or they do not want full-tenured positions as they prioritise motherhood over the

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rigours of academic life (Canham 2014; Johnson & Thomas 2012; Mabokela & Magubane 2004).

These arguments to keep Black women out and junior are becoming more absurd as the numbers of PhD holders for this cohort and their numbers in the academy are growing. Tau (2022) shows that women remain the highest holders of master's degrees and PhDs. The persistence of these exclusionary tendencies is not based on fact and thus bears testament to Badat's (2004: 2) argument that "the inherited higher education system was designed, in the main, to reproduce, through teaching and research, white and male privilege and Black and female subordination in all spheres of society". It is disheartening that we are not seeing concrete shifts with regard to how we position Black women in this system.

Hence, I argue in this chapter that these continuing exclusionary efforts are meant to erase not only the intellectual contributions of Black women from these spaces but their voice, leadership, and desires for full humanised lives. The chapter argues that the erasure of Black women's contribution to multiple sites of society is a form of continued violence on their bodies and psyches. This violence perpetuates the exclusionary status quo and steals from younger generations the pride and lessons useful for building awe-inspiring futures. To illustrate how this violence is perpetuated, this chapter will provide a detailed discussion of different theories on erasure, its intentions, and conceptions of violence to illustrate how structural and systematic violence sustains itself through cultural practices that erase bodies deemed insignificant. Later, the chapter provides examples of how intersectionality as a Black feminist theory and methodology is useful in helping us think about how Black women's lives and contributions are positioned in the South African higher education sector.

The Visible Erasure Of Black Women From History

The erasure of Black women's, contributions from South Africa's history is glaring. What is clear from literature though is that the general erasure of women is a global phenomenon. Shrivastava

(2017) writes about how it manifests in Indian society and argues that this erasure continues even after the development of a disciplinary field titled ‘the history of women’. The idea of signifying the contributions of women in history has been engaged by women writers and feminists as early as the 1970s, including in psychology, literature, politics, and sociology, among others.

Out of these calls and attempts to restore women to history, there remain important gaps. Shrivastava (2017) shows that what remains less invisible is the history of ordinary women of colour. This erasure is not only real with regard to women’s role in everyday life – it is also true in societal institutions like the academy. In the book *Excavating women: A history of women in European archaeology*, Diaz-Adreu and Sorensen (1998) argue that the discipline of archaeology has been particularly good at selecting and forgetting, and thus marginalising, women’s contribution. This is also true in the broader intellectual project. Women’s contribution to the making of the disciplines has been relegated to the margins. Hill Collins (1986) writes about the marginal position of Black women in the academy and how being in touch with this marginality produces distinctive standpoints. Mabokela and Magubane (2004) write about how this marginality manifests in the South African academy by focusing on how racism and sexism try to mute Black women academics. This tendency to just tolerate the presence of Black women in the academy to just tick the employment equity box requirements conspires to continue the substantive exclusion of Black women as worthy contributors to the academic project.

Erasure and Black women academics in South Africa

In the introduction of her essay, “Placing African women’s history and locating gender”, Hunt (1989) asserts that “African women whether as subjects or objects (and to a lesser extent as authors) of history, are no longer invisible in African historiography. Despite continuing lapses in awareness, invisibility is no longer the problem”. She then goes on to point out that a few historical anthologies, monographs, and dissertations have been written on African women thus making the case that African women are no longer invisible. I make a case in this paper that visibility is a complex phenomenon. For Black women in South Africa, the question of visibility is not just about being seen. It is about how the historical lens portrays these women, what is omitted in the processes of making their contributions visible and which woman's contribution remain marginalised, and how all these contribute to the lapse in awareness of women's historical contributions.

Although there have been attempts to acknowledge women's contribution to societal development, these have been inconsistent and have focused on a few "exceptional" women, suggesting that only a few women are capable, thus denying the fact that all women are able (Shrivastava 2017). The problem with centring so-called exceptional women, Lerner (1975) writes, illustrates the limited analytical lens of traditional history, which "fails to tell us much about activities in which most women engaged, nor does it tell us about the significance of women's activities to society as a whole" (Lerner 1975: 5). An important limitation of traditional history is that it overlooked how race and class impacted which roles and which women's activities were deemed historically important. For example, recent critical Black studies, like Magoqwana's (2021) and Magoqwana and Adesina's (2020) elucidations on maternal legacies, are reclaiming motherhood and care work as significant for thinking about Black lives in ways that are particularly different from how these roles were conceived in patriarchal Western thought.

The erasure of Black women from history is also visible in how we phrase the question of what their contribution has been. Lerner (1975) argues that conceptualising women's "contribution history" is problematic when it is judged by standards appropriate to men. When thinking about Black women, we therefore need to be cognisant of their position, and thus centre the contributions that position called for.

Erasure as violence

The abstractness of the concept 'violence' has been made clear by the trouble social theorists get into when defining it. This has been shown by the many forms its conceptualisation takes. Riches (1986), in *The phenomenon of violence*, defines the concept from the premise that everyday uses of the term are problematic and useful at the same time. He argues that they are problematic because in everyday usage, the term is used in relation to the cultural context, therefore bringing forth a lack of universality which makes it difficult to 'appreciate violence cross-culturally'. In dealing with these problematic everyday uses, Riches goes on to give two accounts of understanding violence through the Anglo-Saxon mind. He argues that "violence strongly connotes behaviour that is in some sense illegitimate or unacceptable" (Riches 1986: 1). This, he says, is in the eyes of the observer and the violated, and shows that for the performer of violence, it is seldom seen as such. He further says that the term or concept of violence is for the witness and the victim, which makes the appreciation of violence cross-culturally possible, hence the usefulness of the everyday use of the term 'violence' in understanding its meaning.

Degenaar's (1990) conceptions add intentionality to our understanding of violence. He defines "violence as the movement of carrying extreme force against X in such a way that it is damaging and destructive or physically injurious to X". This contribution brings the notion of violation into our understanding of violence. 'Violation' is defined as a situation when the moral right of X is violated. He then moves on to say that violence on its own does not entail the violation of a moral right. His project here implies that not all uses of extreme force signify violence, but that disrespect of others worth is a deeper type of violation. Through Degenaar's (1990) discussion of structural violence, it is obvious how violence is perpetrated via the structure of political, economic, and family relationships. Ho (2007) also argues that structural violence constrains agency and thus curtails the attainment of fundamental human rights – like contributing to your society and being remembered in ways that inspire those who come after you to be fully human.

Structural violence is not the result of an accident but the result of unequal distribution of power which then constrains agency. Ho (2007) further argues that "the distribution of power through structures, whether it is called exploitation or violence, enhances the agency of some but at the expense of constraining the agency of others". I therefore argue that the erasure of historical contributions of Black women in the South is violent and contributes to socio-economic and political inequality.

Intersectionality: The Promotion and Hiring of 'Foreign' Black Women

This chapter focuses on the problematisation of the foreignness of Black African academics. I want to use this to illustrate the differential experiences of Blackness and see how intersectionality is an important tool in helping us understand the nuances of the Black experience.

In a *Mail and Guardian* article by Hugo Canham (2022), "Afrophobia: The violence of the letter R", he writes: "only in the South African context, the foreigner is always African". Canham writes about how one's accent can make one a victim of negative labels of being an African. He writes that "to be Shona is to be Zimbabwean. To be Zimbabwean is to be the harbinger of failure and trespasser. Job thief. Foreigner neighbour and resource grabber". They, Zimbabweans, Somalians, Nigerians, and Mozambicans, evoke the 'African as foreigner' because they don't easily blend in like those from Lesotho and Eswatini (Canham 2022). Their different language, dress, and mannerisms induce the idea that difference is dangerous. In this context, the term 'African' fails to conjure the fact that the term was claimed to represent "the assertion and affirmation by Africans of their humanity, and as human beings, both makers of history and contributors to the history of human emancipation" (Manji 2019: 50). Instead, it evokes the negative which represents the African as

> a synonym for the non-human or lesser human being that justified enslavement, slavery, colonialism and exploitation, and how the meaning of the word evolved subsequently to consider the African as 'uncivilised' under colonialism, and then 'underdeveloped' in the post-independence period.

This view of the African contributes to why, when thinking about foreign in the South African context, it never implies others from Europe, Asia, and the like but only those from the continent.

When thinking about Black African women in the academy – what does it mean to reimagine the use of intersectionality in the South African higher education context? Intersectionality allows us to hold constant multiple intersecting issues of oppression. For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus on two conceptual frameworks emanating from intersectionality. The first is that which theorists on intersectionality have already provided detailed discussions on (Crenshaw 1989; Hill Collins 2000; Meer & Muller 2017; May 2015); which maintains that intersectionality allows for the interrogation of conventional frames and thus it challenges and dislodges 'traditional' explanations (May 2015). This is particularly significant when thinking about Black women. I also like that intersectionality would have us do a more heuristic analysis (Crenshaw 2011: 232). That is, "draw attention to dynamics that are constitutive but generally overlooked or silenced". For example, in Khunou et al. (2019), Black academics' experiences of the South African academy are re-centred as significant knowledge from trustworthy knowers. *Black academic voices: The South African experience* (Khunou et al. 2019) attempts to do away with the traditional injustice of viewing experiences recounted by Blacks, and Black women in particular, as 'suspicious'.

To draw attention to those traditionally overlooked and/or silenced intersectionality provides an analytical method that cuts across scales and thus provide a lens to challenge false binaries and illustrate important connections between systems of oppression (May 2015). This is made possible by the matrix orientation central in intersectionality. Hill Collins (2000) says that this matrix of domination is the organisation of power in a society, where a specific matrix has a particular arrangement of intersecting systems of oppression, and these systems come together in a historically and socially specific way. Furthermore, Hill Collins (2000) suggests that this matrix of domination is made up of four domains of power, namely structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal. How these matrices of domination work is fundamental in thinking about why intersectionality is a relevant analytical tool. An important take away from intersectionality, which this chapter intends to centre, is the notion that there are “few pure victims or oppressors” (Hill Collins 2000: 287) and thus, no single-issue struggles because there are no single-issue lives (Lorde 1984: 183). This idea is an important one to remember as it challenges the simple theories that have the potential to trap Black women in unsalable rigid conceptions. Having said that, I suggest that it is important to be context-specific in our endeavours to understand how the matrices of domination are experienced in different contexts. This is more so for South Africa given that most knowledge consumed in the country is created by the West with Western contexts and epistemologies in mind.

The second conceptual framework that is of interest in making a case for the significance of intersectionality in South Africa is that it teaches us to ask incremental and continuous interrogative questions (May 2015), thus leaving limited space for self-fulfilling and limiting analytical approaches. An example of self-limiting thinking is that which assumes that Black women’s experiences are homogenous. Nash (2008: 6), who offers an illuminating critique of intersectionality, points out that one of the limitations of intersectionality is a lack of intersectional investigation. She argues that “intersectional projects often replicate precisely the approaches that intersectional theorist’s critique”.

At a decolonial feminist workshop I attended in Brazil, the critique launched against intersectionality was the fact that it is a theory borne of the West and thus its ability to move across national borders is similar to American culture and its dollar. Nash (2008: 12) suggests that one of the fundamental limitations of intersectionality has been its “tendency to ignore the intimate connections between privilege and oppression”. She argues that this tendency to ignore how subjects might be both victimised by patriarchy and privileged by race (also ignores how subjects might take pleasure in some of the trappings of patriarchal power) in patriarchal social, cultural, historical, and political moments.

My interest in using intersectionality to understand the experiences of Black women in the academy is because, like Nash (2008), I see the opportunities that intersectionality can provide in our effort to conceptualise Black womanhood from the vantage point of difference. Nash (2008) captures this idea thus: “conceptualizing black womanhood as its own contested, messy terrain requires that intersectionality theory abandon its commitment to sameness, what Rinaldo Walcott has termed (in an admittedly different context, a critique of black studies tendency to elide differences among blacks) … a regime that trades on the myth of homogeneity” (Walcott 2005: 93). Thinking from homogeneity we all know provides some comfort, i.e., when the enemy is clearly out there then we can focus our energies on it – for example apartheid. Unfortunately, post-1994 we had to grapple with our heterogeneity as Blacks. My work on the Black middle class shows how these differences manifest (difference informed by educational level, occupational level and residential location among others). In this chapter, I use the work of Batisai (2019) to argue for the usefulness of intersectionality in the South African academy. In her chapter in *Black academic voices: The South African experience*, Batisai shares that

> The self-reflective exercise unpacks my race, gender, nationality, class and socioeconomic identities in ways that illuminate how transformation contours can be mapped through intersecting subjective positionalities.

This chapter by Batisai problematises the notion of homogeneity of experience and thus provides us with an improved intersectional analysis, which according to Nash (2008) is because it “considers the differences between Black women producing a potentially uncomfortable disunity that allows for a richer and more robust conception of identity” (Nash 2008: 12). To do this, I want to speak to how bringing back difference is useful in thinking about the nuances of Black women’s experiences in the South African academy.

Theorising from the South and intersectionality

The blind use of theories from the West has created challenges for fully understanding African contexts and how the intersecting identities of Black women impact their everyday life experiences. This has been so especially in contexts where these theories are appropriated without a critical engagement with the circumstances around the development of those particular theories. For example, even though I have found Marxist theory attractive in my formative years as a daughter of a unionist and a student of labour in South Africa, I find it challenging how ‘dogmatic Marxism’ (Satgar 2019) refuses to see the importance of intersectionality of class, race, gender, and disability, among others. Even though Marxism is a theory developed in the North, its use in the South African context by some illustrates the importance of intersectionality. For example, Satgar (2019: 2) makes a case for the contributions of Marxism to the fight against racism during apartheid. Satgar’s theorisation is a good example of how to engage with theories emanating from the North – that is, “class analysis should be linked to race and gender” and other forms of oppression.

The idea that Africa should be a blind consumer of theories developed in the West and that the West should lead in theorising is not only held by those in the West – it is perpetuated by those in Africa and other so-called peripheral countries (Mallavarapu 2005). This notion remains one of the biggest challenges for decolonisation and for providing relevant concepts to understand and humanise experiences from African contexts. Tamale (2011: 30) argues that “repositioning both the geographical and conceptual locations of what is African will avoid the slippery terrain of the essence of who and what is African”. In making a case for theorising sexualities in Africa, Tamale (2011) further makes a case for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. This, I believe, is not only a must for sexuality studies but for most studies in Africa to “deepen our understanding of Black experiences”. Many African scholars come at research and theorising in Africa from an understanding that research, and not untested assumptions, is central to humanising the African experience (Amaduime 1987; Magoqwana et al. 2020; Oyěwùmí 1997, 2016).

To make a case for the significance of intersectionality as a useful theory in South Africa, this chapter engages with similar questions articulated by feminist researchers on how we should use intersectionality in disciplines outside of law. Can we use it in other institutions without limitations and what would be those limitations? I think intersectionality can be argued to be a grand Northern theory only in contexts where its uses are not critical and aimed at making it work for the contexts in which it is being used. For example, Purkayasha (2012: 61) cautions that "we need to encapsulate marginalization structures that are salient in other locales and the ways in which these hierarchies play out in transnational spaces". Other important debates on intersectionality have been on understanding its appropriations outside of theorisations of Black women's experiences of oppression. Are these debates useful? My personal experiences with intersectionality in the South African context are that it has been empowering in providing tools to deepen already existing Black feminist/womanist thinking on Black women's experiences.

Bringing Back Difference: The Complex Experiences of Black Women with Privilege and Oppression

The racial and gendered inequalities experienced in the academy have been debated and written about in many geographical contexts. What remains interesting is that Black women throughout the world share important experiences of exclusion and marginalisation. This is not only true with regard to exclusions of Black women as knowledge producers but with regard to Black women in different parts of the academic structures. In South Africa, research on the experiences of Black women is only gaining ground now, and many of these studies echo the argument by Rabe and Rugunanan (2012: 2): that "the imbalances of race and gender do not seem to have disappeared, instead they re-appear in new ways that seem to perpetuate the racial and gender inequalities of the past". I want to add here that with the democracy and seeming opening-up of our borders to those in the continent, we see historically hidden sites of difference for Blacks.

In the introduction chapter of the book *Black academic voices: The South African experience* (Khunou et al. 2019), it is clearly articulated how Black women grapple with intersecting matrices of power in their experiences in the academy. Furthermore, Khunou et al. (2019) accurately indicate that Black women are not mere consumers of knowledge but active knowers and knowledge producers. From this starting point, this chapter engages with how these historically excluded knowers experience the academy as an uninviting space. I want to argue that Black women can see and decipher power dynamics in ways that other players in their context refuse to acknowledge. Magubane (2009), in her piece "Ethnography's showcases as sites of knowledge production and indigenous resistance", shows how the idea of Blacks as lacking the capacity to see or recognise racist and sexist reality is an act to objectify them and continue racism and the exclusion that comes with it. This notion of the inability to recognise racism, Afrophobia, and sexism is also quite visible in the South African academy.

The first example I want to speak to is reflected on in Batisai's chapter in *Black academic voices: The South African experience*. The title of the chapter is "Black and foreign: Negotiating being different in the South African academy". In this chapter, Batisai captures succinctly how, as a Back woman, she is othered because of her 'foreignness'. She writes from a feminist standpoint and argues that her writing standpoint is informed by

> Gqola (2002: 11), who asserts that a feminist standpoint is when we do not write back to white feminists, to colonialism, to patriarchy, to apartheid...but the intention is to refashion the world in exciting ways where the difference within is not a threat but a source of energy.

She further shares that

> When 'stitched' together, the intersecting subjective identities alluded to above do not merely constitute my

> biography, but they are profound lenses for exploring multiple systems of exclusion in the academy, and through which transformation could be imagined, understood, and eventually realised.

Her chapter captures her experiences at the University of Cape Town (UCT). She shares the following experiences which marked her entry into the South African academy:

> When I graduated with my PhD in 2013 at UCT, exactly a year before South Africa celebrated 20 years of democracy, we were only two Black African graduates – from Zimbabwe and Ghana. Reflecting on these statistics, I asked myself: 'What happened to my Black South African counterparts?' and it immediately dawned on me that my experience as an 'other' in the academy should shape the long journey of transforming higher education institutions in South Africa.

One of the reasons I wanted to use Batisai's experiences to support the argument of this chapter is the fact that she was forced to decline participation at a book launch discussion of *Black academic voices: The South African experience* (2019). She had initially agreed to participate, and as colleagues working in the same department at the time, we had multiple corridor discussion about the upcoming launch with excitement. At the time of the launch (2019), South Africa was experiencing a number of xenophobic attacks, especially in the Gauteng Province. It was really difficult times with heightened violence that then moved to other parts of the country. Newspaper articles at the time carried the following titles:

- **Xenophobia in South Africa: What happened to Ubuntu?** (*Daily Maverick*, Susan Tolman, 30-08-2019) – "have been watching the violence and looting of foreign owned-businesses over the past few weeks across South Africa, first in Johannesburg and now escalating in Pretoria, with despair. The authorities seem to be standing by and watching the attacks against migrants and foreign nationals, and their businesses, who dare to try and make a living or work for a better life in our backyard".

- **Xenophobia: South Africa's 10 worst attacks ever** (*Punch Newspapers*, Oluwakemi Abimbola, 11-09-2019) – "Nigerians and other foreign nationals in South Africa have been the targets of xenophobic attacks in recent weeks. It started when a taxi driver was killed by an alleged drug dealer in Pretoria. The death of the taxi driver led to a protest, which escalated into the killing of foreigners, looting, and burning of businesses owned by foreigners in August".
- **Xenophobia has reared its ugly head again in the Rainbow Nation. African nations have had enough** (*CNN*, David McKenzie, 02-09-2019) – "this week at least 10 people were killed, and hundreds arrested in a spasm of xenophobic violence and looting in Johannesburg, Pretoria and elsewhere in the country. Much of the violence and crime targeted foreign African migrants from countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Kenya. Of course, there is a difference between feeling separated from the continent and its people and violence against African migrants".

The headlines are multiple and some of the pictures that accompany them illustrate the types of violence experienced at the time. To communicate her decline to participate in the book launch, Batisai sent me an email indicating that even though she wanted to attend, she felt unsafe to do so given the violence experienced by 'foreigners' at the time.

Fellow contributors and I were able to attend the launch as we did not experience the same fears or trepidations. Even though we were keenly aware of the violence, our nationality allowed us a privilege that Batisai did not have. Her middle-classness as a Black woman did not take away the fact that she is not of South African nationality. That fact makes her experiences as a Black academic in South Africa different in ways that limit how she moves – her foreignness thus trumps her class, gender, and racial identities. In her chapter, she reflects thus on why she invokes the Black foreign concept to frame her experiences of the South African academy:

> I argue that the experiences of black foreign academics are noteworthy. Wondering, one might ask why the category

> ‘black and foreign,’ and its realities matters in South Africa’s higher education transformation narrative. The category matters because when the definition of black in higher education transformation discourses is restricted to Black South African academics, it misses the struggles and testimonies of black foreign academics. Writing from experience and observation, I strongly believe that stories of how black foreign academics navigate the higher education landscape in South Africa are an inroad into insightful discussions about transformation at large.

As a scholar interested in understanding how difference is experienced and how inequality manifests as a result of erroneous readings of such differences, Batisai’s evocation of the Black and foreign frame made me uncomfortable at first. But I reflected on how it can help us understand that the Black experience is never homogenous and how that is significant for grounded theorising, transformative questions, and policy engagements. The differential experiences of Black women migrants and nationals is a case in point. Most of the recent research on migration illustrates that Africans who migrate within the African continent find themselves in a precarious position as compared to nationals (Hungwe 2013). In these contexts, their ‘foreign’, othered status confers unequal access to taken-for-granted resources and opportunities and in more cases than not, they experience institutional bias (Hungwe 2013).

To be defined as ‘foreign African’ reduces one to being incompetent and unwelcome. South Africa has seen a number of knowledge workers from outside the continent for generations. According to Sehoole et al. (2019), in 2000, these numbers included 95 from Asia, 19 from Australia and Oceania, 409 from Europe, 81 from North America, and 18 from South America. In 2010, these numbers included 87 from Asia, 19 from Australia, 369 from Europe, 75 from North America, and 11 from South America. However, in public discourse, when we hear conversations about foreigners in the academy it is usually about African foreigners. Sehoole et al. (2019) suggest that reasons for these differential experiences is because some groups tend to want to preserve their own nationality. Furthermore, Sehoole et al. (2019: 4) suggest that “African, Asian, and Latin American academics and students in the US face discrimination that far surpasses the challenges faced by academics and students from western nations, including Europeans, Canadians and Australians”.

I want to suggest that the same is true in the South African context: Western foreign academics have better experiences compared to those from the African continent. This is because, as articulated by Oyedemi (2018: 400), “[c]oloniality is totalizing”. This totalising aspect of coloniality is undertaken through the coloniality of power, which Oyedemi (2018: 400) defines thus:

> Coloniality of power presents a model of power on three core axes. One is the creation of an ideology derived from a ‘natural’ difference between the colonizer–oppressor and the colonized–oppressed based on the body and codified in the idea of race. The other is an exceptionalism of a culture that encapsulates the ways of being and knowing codified in Eurocentrism. The third is the establishment of a structure of economic power through the control of labour, resources, and products because of capital and global market system of capitalism.

This conception of the coloniality of power shows us how the othering of academics from the continent, as illustrated in Batisai’s experience, is one of the ways coloniality continues in the South African academy. The coloniality of power codified in the idea of race facilitates the continuity of epistemic violence which, according to Heleta (2016: 3), “marginalises Africa and is often full of patronising views and stereotypes about the continent”.

Intersectionality: A Tool to Inspire Social Justice Action in Africa

Finally, I want to suggest that even though intersectionality complicates sameness and difference with regard to oppression, it remains an important tool for centring the inter-connectedness in Black women’s struggles and continues to be an important tool for justice action in our world. This becomes more so when thinking about the struggles of Black women from a decolonial perspective. The move away from the single-axis analysis that Crenshaw (1989) and many feminist writers warns against (Lorde 1981) is useful in facilitating the discontinuity of coloniality. Coloniality is the glue that interlinks the oppressions experienced by Black women and in the knowledge creation space. In our attempts to understand the experiences of Black women in the South African academy, Kiguwa suggests that it is important to "avoid the trap of homogenizing Black women's experiences in ways that do not account for intersectional nuances" (Kiguwa 2021: 213). At some point in the chapter, Batisai makes the following assertion:

> My controversial positionality opens a can of worms that allows those interested in questions of belonging and the politics of exclusion to engage in progressive conversations about transforming South Africa's higher education landscape.

She is making an important assertion here. If we are going to do work with lasting impacts on the lives of our institutions and our people, we have to ask the uncomfortable questions and recognise where we could open ourselves up for learning. I have claimed in this chapter that intersectionality provides multiple possibilities for us to do so. According to Meer and Muller (2017), looking at issues such as the one presented by Batisai in the above quote from an intersectional lens "can reveal the multiple identities that define people, exposing the different types of discrimination and disadvantages that occur as a result of the combination of these identities". This is important as it illustrates that being Black and foreign as Batisai suggests makes her experiences and challenges very different, thus allowing us a lens into the importance of critical engagement with the nuanced Black experience.

Meer and Muller (2017) also allude to the importance of intersectionality in building collaborative organising across social movements. I find their elucidations important as the silos in social movements illustrate the capitalist colonial logic with a basis in the profit motive. Their suggestion for collaboration via intersectionality as a methodology and action orientation is worth considering for why intersectionality can work in African contexts.

Tilling the Ground for the Excavation of Her-Stories

The fallist movements was led by South African students in 2015. This movement called for the removal of the Rhodes statue from UCT, for university fees to fall, and for a shift away from contracting support staff. Although these movements were university based and primarily focused on student-related issues, the movements shook South African society as it also called for the decolonisation of society. The fallist movements made visible the continuing inequalities in broader society, including in the workplace, in university curriculums, and, most importantly for this paper, the movement revealed the problems in gender politics.

At a particularly important moment in the fallist movement, there was a rupture in the unity among the leaders. This rupture led to a new hashtag – #PatriarchyMustFall. The young women leaders refused to be erased from the narrative of that moment and the making of her-story. The actions by the young women leaders revealed the "pervasive positivist attitudes of hyper-masculine privilege within society" (Ndlovu 2017) and made visible how women's contribution to development gets erased. The #PatriarchyMustFall movement was argued by other, especially male, fallist leaders to be detrimental to the main movement against increasing university fees. This type of thinking was similarly evoked in the struggle against apartheid where women were called to curb their intention to confront patriarchy in the interest of fighting racism (Ramphela 1989). This illustrated how women's issues have been historically marginalised.

Past struggles against apartheid became single-issue politics with women's issues argued to be less significant. Single-issue movements are violent as they tend to erase and marginalise the experiences and contributions of those grappling with the oppressive tendencies of patriarchy and capitalism. Although that seemed like a good strategy at the time, it buried the experiences of women and delayed their emancipation. Thus, the call for patriarchy to fall during the fallist movement in 2015/2016 is a call emanating from that unresolved past in gender relations.

What this call did for me was to awaken the truth about the invisible place of the majority of Black women in South Africa's history. Since 1994, we have had several firsts. The first professor in the humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) was Pumla Dineo Qgola in 2016. Pumla is not the only one. There are a number of these first in all sectors of society: Mamokgethi Phakeng and Puleng LenkaBula. I was also the first South African Black African woman full professor in the humanities at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the first South African Black African woman vice-dean research. The recording of the contributions of these Black women firsts matters. My contention is that in focusing on celebrating these achievements we should not lose sight of the conditions that have created these firsts and, in more cases than not, ends with them. According to Materre (2018), the conditions these women engage in are filled with uncertainty and toxic, unchanging institutional cultures. My discomfort with the many Black women firsts we see post-1994 is the underlying, unspoken assumption that it is difficult to find numerous capable Black women, that the few who are contributing are an exception to the norm. This idea of exceptionality is at the heart of the violence of erasure, because it allows for the contributions and experiences of 'ordinary' Black women to be rendered useless and thus easily marginalised.

The discomfort I have felt on these issues of firsts and exceptionalism informed my entry into these questions of erasure and its violence against Black women. A few questions came to mind and continue to drive the transformation work I engage in: Where were the Black women before 1994? What were their contributions? Why do we not know about them? What are the effects of this lack of information on the consciousness of young women? What have been the mechanisms for their erasure from history? And what are the reasons for their erasure? Although this chapter addresses some of them, these remain important questions for advocacy work and remembering work that I engage in.

Conclusion

The work of theorising Black women's experiences of the academy should appreciate the history of knowledge production and the position of Black women as silent and gaze-less. To centre Black women as active knowers and knowledge producers of their autobiographical experiences of the academy has been invaluable in unmasking the link between 'surveillance and knowledge'. In this chapter, Black women's ability to speak back, deliberate silence, and their return of the look are significant in the fight against racism and sexism in the academy as an institution and in the knowledge-making space.

On another note, this chapter has also made a case for how intersectionality presents an opportunity for those of us attempting to theorise the experiences of Black women in the academy. Intersectionality reveals and allows us to hold constant the multiple identities and intersecting systems of oppression and matrix of domination in our attempt to understand the lived complex experiences of those from and in Africa. This chapter has presented arguments to illustrate the view that intersectionality remains an important theoretical lens to understand gender identities as experienced in the African context.

It is important to excavate the stories of women to restore them as important historical players. This excavation should be in multiple forms. Shrivastava (2017) argues that it should include discovering and preserving women's records and, most importantly, it should involve broadening "the conceptual and narrative frameworks of mainstream historical traditions". I argue that this excavation should centre the contribution of all women – in South Africa, the stories of women who might be considered elite include Winnie Mandela, Mariam Tladi, Lilian Ngoyi, and Charlotte Maxeke. However, when one goes deeper into the narratives of their lives, it is obvious that they were ordinary people who did extraordinary things. However, the challenge of focusing on women whose names we all remember limits the project of signifying all women. Therefore, I argue that it is violent to think of ordinary women's contributions as insignificant as their untold stories take away from us the opportunity to see what we are capable of.

Erasure of the contribution of all women makes invisible everyday structures of violence and sustains the status quo of inequality.

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Chapter 4

Converging Worlds: Exploring Gendered and Pluriversal Possibilities in South African Universities

Chauke Tinyiko and Segalo Puleng

Abstract

In this chapter, we critically analyse the current state of Psychology within the South African higher education system, shedding light on the enduring impact of colonial and apartheid-era agendas on the contemporary practice of Psychology. We advocate for a paradigm shift from an exclusive focus on the individual towards a recognition of the systemic influence of apartheid and colonialism on mental well-being. This necessitates formulating a decolonised and Africanised version of Psychology that integrates historical and contextual factors. As scholars and activists, our perspectives as intergenerational Black women in Psychology bring a unique and invaluable dimension to the discourse, emphasising the imperative of transforming the discipline to be more inclusive and relevant within the South African context. We challenge the persisting colonial power dynamics perpetuating inequalities and underscore the significance of acknowledging diverse voices and challenging research hierarchies. Furthermore, we advocate for the potential of community-based engagement research methods in addressing the marginalisation of Black women. By advocating for transparent, inclusive, and participatory research approaches, we aim to contribute to the ongoing critical discourse. Ultimately, we argue for the crucial need to reassess and transform the discipline of Psychology in South Africa, taking into account the historical and contemporary adversities faced by marginalised

communities, particularly Black women. Additionally, we critically examine the inadequacies of numerical accessibility in higher education in capturing the daily struggles of navigating the intersections of gender and race, highlighting the persistent exclusion of women in public and private spaces despite their statistical representation.

Introduction

Mapping our academic identities: Situating ourselves within higher education and the discipline of Psychology

In this chapter, we aim to shed light on our individual journeys in higher education and Psychology, while also drawing clear connections between community convergence, Afrocentricity, and decoloniality as potent mechanisms for deconstructing the traditional image of the university and challenging the dehumanising aspects of Psychology. Afrocentricity refers to centring African and African diasporic perspectives in analysing and interpreting social, cultural, and historical phenomena. Decoloniality involves challenging and dismantling the enduring impacts of colonialism on knowledge systems, including those in the field of Psychology (Maldonado-Torres 2007). Furthermore, we will emphasise the African philosophy of *ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am because we are), which underscores the interconnectedness of individuals within a community. This concept posits that the self is inseparable from the collective, highlighting the need for a collective and inclusive approach to community engagement. By exploring these themes, we seek to present an argument advocating for a more inclusive and community-oriented approach to higher education and Psychology. This approach would involve centring diverse perspectives and actively involving communities in the teaching and learning process, thus challenging enduring colonial power dynamics within these fields (hooks 1996).

Our chapter is founded on the principle that collective activities and gatherings are integral to traditional African societies, with an emphasis on consensus-building. In addition to Maqutu's (2018) study, Hlongwane et al. (2018) conducted research in various African communities, reaffirming the central role of older women in facilitating communal dialogues and activities. Furthermore, Smith's (2017) anthropological work highlighted the prevalence of *Imbizo* and *Legotla* as integral components of traditional African societies, shedding further light on the vital role of older women in these communal gatherings. This accumulation of scholarly evidence staunchly supports the argument that older women are crucial in orchestrating and facilitating important community exchanges in various African traditional settings. Thus, we deem community-based methods an effective alternative for contesting hierarchies in research, increasing multivocality, and developing more transparent participatory research (Maqutu 2018).

The concept of multiple perspectives is a fundamental aspect of many African cultures, a testament to the diversity and richness of African psychology. It recognises that people's meaning-making and understanding of the world are not just influenced by their individual experiences but also by the collective culture and history they are a part of. Asante (2020) argues that African identity is not defined by race, gender, or background but by a shared connection to Africa and its people. This shared connection can be understood as a common bond beyond individual attributes, rooted in a sense of belonging to the African continent and its diverse cultures.

A central aspect of our discussion is the concept of 'self-storying' (Goodson 2014), a powerful tool that allows us to share our unique experiences and perspectives. These personal narratives are about our individual journeys in Psychology and our collective pursuit of decolonising and Africanising Psychology as a discipline. To achieve a decolonised and Africanised Psychology in Africa, we propose a shift in focus. Instead of an individual-focused approach, we advocate for examining historical and contextual factors and communal methods that shape people's experiences and worldviews. This shift enables us to challenge and deconstruct colonial power dynamics to create equitable societies. Furthermore, positionality is a critical consideration in our discussion as it relates to where we come from and how we position ourselves within psychology. We offer an embodied encounter of how Psychology can be reimagined and moved towards a more Afro-centred approach, emphasising multiple views to understand heterogeneous realities.

The Personal Context

Dr Tinyiko Chauke - Postdoctoral fellow and co-supervisor to postgraduate students

Reflecting on my upbringing, I cannot ignore the profound influence of my roots in Tsakane, Brakpan, and rural Mpumalanga. Despite my family's relocation to Gauteng to pursue better opportunities and education, our connection to Mpumalanga remained deeply ingrained. Our move was motivated by the sluggish economic development in Mpumalanga, a region still endeavouring to bridge the gap with the rest of the country. The persistent issues of income inequality and poverty further emphasised the challenges faced by the community. Thus, my parents instilled in me the value of education, which ignited my academic journey at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and later at the University of South Africa (UNISA), where I pursued my undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Psychology. In our family, it was customary for the eldest son to contribute to the education of younger siblings, fostering a culture of shared responsibility and support.

Despite financial constraints, I completed high school in 2004 with unwavering support from my mother and eldest brother. Pursuing higher education presented its own financial hurdles, but my determination led me to pursue a PhD in Psychology. UNISA was a practical decision, given its affordability and proximity to home, combined with invaluable financial assistance from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). This allowed me to continue my community volunteer work, which is integral to my personal and academic journey. The challenges I faced as a young black African woman in both South Africa and Mpumalanga are mirrored in the broader sociopolitical landscape of the country. Hence, institutions of learning and teachers must make an effort to understand the historical factors and the enduring impact of colonial and apartheid policies on the experiences of Black communities. This contextual understanding and experience have shaped my journey and solidified my commitment to addressing the challenges African students and communities encounter in their daily lives.

In considering my academic journey, I cannot help but acknowledge the profound impact of Black women and historical figures who, like myself, sought to pursue careers aimed at healing, growth, and education within their communities. Women such as Winnie Mandela, Lillian Ngoyi, and Nokukhanya Luthuli serve as inspiring examples of individuals who placed their community's well-being at the centre of their career paths. Their ability to inspire mass mobilisation and unite people, especially women facing daily struggles, resonated deeply with me. This connection solidified my belief that I belonged in the Human Sciences faculty.

After several visits from professionals representing different universities, I was convinced that my path lay in Psychology. I realised that there was a lack of Black psychologists in my predominantly Black community, and accessing professional training in Psychology meant enrolling in a traditionally 'white' university. Consequently, my enrolment at UJ in 2005 coincided with a significant transformation within South African higher education institutions. The theme of transformation in higher education has been a subject of extensive discourse, with the definition and interpretation of this term evolving. While initially focused on achieving parity among faculty and students regarding race, gender, class, and disability, the concept of transformation has expanded to encompass a broader spectrum of higher education aspects. This includes institutional culture, pedagogy, curricula, research methodologies, community involvement, and the development of graduates who can contribute positively to society (Luvalo 2019; Jowi et al. 2013).

However, the lack of a clear definition of transformation and the contested interpretations of this term have had adverse effects on students, particularly those who identify as Black.

The course materials often failed to connect with their cultural background and instead pathologised their ways of being. Furthermore, the Westernised approach to teaching Psychology in African Psychology departments neglected to address the experiences of individuals with differing viewpoints, further alienating Black students. Reflecting on my journey, I grappled with the pressure to assimilate into a new culture presented before us as Black students. It felt like a constant struggle as I navigated the unfamiliar territory of tertiary education while grappling with the dual identity I was expected to assume. It was clear that the lack of clarity in defining transformation, combined with the Westernised approach to teaching, had a detrimental impact on Black students.

This experience underscored the urgent need for a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to the discipline of Psychology and higher education. Sadly, Carolissen et al. (2015) exposes how the discipline of Psychology is a common choice among historically disadvantaged undergraduate students both locally and abroad. However, this is the same population whose Psychology continues to mirror the colonial wounds inflicted by colonialism followed by apartheid. Naidoo's (2000) argument is further supported by the works of decolonial scholars and theorists, such as Mignolo (2007) and Grosfoguel (2007), who also critique the passive nature of disciplines and courses that predominantly teach Western theory without effectively engaging with non-Western socio-historical contexts. These scholars advocate for a more inclusive and meaningful approach to education that considers diverse perspectives and experiences.

In light of the challenges I faced in higher education and my struggles at PhD level in my studies in 2016, I actively sought a supervisor who could empathise with the experiences of Black individuals. At this point, I crossed paths with Professor Puleng Segalo, and that encounter marked a significant awakening for me. I was deeply inspired by her approach to interacting with students and her encouragement to embrace and take pride in my African heritage. She also emphasised honouring our elders and acknowledging them as custodians of African knowledge. Furthermore, she instilled in me the belief that Western knowledge is not the sole epitome of wisdom but rather that various perspectives and realities can enrich it.

Prof. Puleng Segalo - Research Chair, psychologist, and lecturer)

Reflecting on my experience as a student in a historically white university in the late 1990s, I was confronted with glaring colonial symbols inside and outside the classroom. The colonial buildings and privileging of Western theorists contributed to a heightened sense of alienation and unbelonging. Despite the resounding messages and politicians' voices that "doors were open" to Black students, I felt like an outsider and a body out of place in a space where I did not belong. This was because I was entering an institution that, for decades, was meant for whites only, the University of Pretoria (UP). Doors were open, but we found inside that we entered an unwelcoming reception where we would even be told explicitly that the status quo would not change just because the law says so and that teaching would continue in Afrikaans. For some modules, English classes were only offered in the evenings, even though many students relied on public transport, which was unsafe at night. Having to navigate such hostility daily was exhausting both physically and mentally.

Language was also used to widen the divide between Black and white students under the guise of accommodating white students. The institution continued to provide classes in Afrikaans and only added English to accommodate those who were now entering the system. Afrikaans was used as a dividing marker and served as capital for those who could understand and speak it. I remember one of the lecturers who refused to teach in English, reminding us that this was an Afrikaans university and the new policy was meaningless to him. How do you challenge that as a first-year student coming from a township and not skilled in the art of arguing or challenging? You draw from your communal spirit! I was lucky to have done Afrikaans at school and understood it well enough to assist my fellow students struggling with the coursework. Language can be a powerful weapon of inclusion or exclusion (Segalo 2022) and has been used in both the colonial conquest and the apartheid regime (Simango & Segalo 2020) to serve as a marker of who belongs and who does not belong.

Even in spaces that were supposed to be transformed, such as universities that moved from excluding Black people to accommodating them, coloniality continues to persist. The coloniality showed itself in how I felt alienated from the curriculum that did not recognise my culture and my history. This was evident in the prescribed textbooks that solely relied on theories from the West, with all theorists being white men. Yes, I could now go to this formerly whites-only university. However, the transformation was superficial as I had to leave my history, knowledge systems, and what I was taught in my community at the door of the lecture hall as I was to be transformed into 'an educated' psychologist with tools to go back to the same community that raised me, with diagnostic tools developed elsewhere. The alienation was also because I did not see myself in those who stood in front of the lecture hall to teach me. I was made to sit and listen to how problematically my communities were pathologised and seen as a problem (Du Bois 1903; Manganyi 1984). It was in how Euro-western theories of development, social learning, and psychometrics were applied to (mis)diagnose challenges happening in most Black communities. The misunderstanding and misrepresentation of how people view and respond to the world led to imported theories used to make meaning of Black realities (Simango & Segalo 2020).

These experiences were all about identity, belonging, and finding a place in a space that was never meant for someone who looks like me. Now, as a psychologist and lecturer in Psychology, I have shifted from the other side of the class to the one facing it. I have seen faces of relief, knowing they have found someone who understands them. In his research, which "examines how teaching and learning in the racialised context of a predominantly White institution affects the pedagogical interaction between Black faculty and Black students in the classroom", Tuitt (2012: 186) argues that the students have hope and expectation that Black faculty will understand and connect with them better. This is because people's historical and social histories contribute to how they come into the world and, by extension, into the lecture hall.

This moves beyond just seeing someone who looks like them teaching psychology – it is also about how I teach psychology.

Together with other colleagues, we revised and reimagined how psychology can be centred on people's experiences, acknowledging and considering their history and theorising from the body and their contexts (see Canham et al. 2021; Terre Blanche et al. 2021). This has also meant contributing to the existing body of knowledge by conducting research with communities and rethinking psychology by consciously centring African experiences, thereby enabling students to bring themselves into the learning spaces. According to Mkhize (2021), it is imperative to consider African societies' cultural heritage and traditional beliefs when teaching and practising psychology.

The 2015 #FeesMustFall/decolonise the curriculum movement helped to make visible the struggles that I and others have been fighting for years. It forced institutions to rethink their transformation agendas, and the journey towards true inclusivity and diversity continues.

Towards a Socially Responsive and Relevant Psychology

This section aligns with the preceding background of how we have come into psychology. The literature we reviewed on African Psychology has endowed us with the thinking that higher education institutions in South Africa continue to define and construct transformation and its meanings for themselves, the students, and the communities it serves. It, therefore, becomes critical that academics, researchers, and educators reflect on the meanings of an engaged, porous university. Thus, it is necessary that we start by acknowledging the many truths and varied ways of knowledge production, the diverse identities, racial groups, and realities of Africans. This parallels our critique of a discipline whose preoccupation lies solely with the individual and overlooks the importance of assessing the social elements and structural issues contributing to how people navigate the world. Arguing from an African Psychology approach, we contented that Western Psychology in Africa is a conduit of colonialism that perpetuates an oppressive socio-economic and political system (Dawes 2001). We agree with Bulhan's (1985) enduring critique of the discipline of Psychology in South Africa that, in its approach, it continues to masquerade as a servant of the apartheid era and its governors. Similarly, guided by decolonial and African Psychology principles, we capture our and students' critique of Western Psychology in Africa below.

1. Western Psychology has and continues to privilege the experiences of graduate students in the United States of America, positioning them as a representation of all humanity (Nwoye 2021).
2. In most parts of South Africa and Africa, the promotion and provision of mental health care services continue to be inaccessible and inappropriate for the needs of Black (African) communities (Naidoo 2000).
3. Psychology continues to neglect to address the sociopolitical concerns of the survivors of colonialism and apartheid.
4. Psychology isolates and distances Black psychologists and students alike economically, socially, and politically from the same communities they come from (Mkhize 2021).
5. Psychology in Africa has failed to embrace *pluriversality* in knowledges and realities in their approach to inquiry, thus further alienating the Black communities it purports to serve and further misrepresenting our (Africans') multiple realities and experiences (Nwoye 2021). Currently, the discipline of Psychology and the universities in which it is taught on the African continent are an extension of the Eurocentric paradigm.

Considering the above, our chapter has incorporated specific theoretical frameworks proposed by Lazarus and Seedat (1995) in their work on community Psychology in South Africa, which we believe are pertinent to our endeavour. These scholars argue that for psychologists to remain relevant in South Africa's broader healthcare portfolio, they must assume the roles of community mobilisation and networking (Lazarus & Seedat 2011). Our objective is to promote reflection on the strategies and objectives of effectively engaging African communities in Psychology and communal healing, as suggested by these scholars. Moreover, Preece (2000) has provided insights into the characteristics of a socially responsive university in present-day South Africa.

The author highlights the pivotal role played by South African universities in challenging the injustices of the apartheid regime and the ruling party, the National Party, concerning unequal housing, education, and healthcare services. In keeping with Preece's (2000) assertion, we propose a theoretical framework that draws on African Psychology principles and the principles embedded in a convergence and dialogue method with previously disadvantaged communities and those trapped in the periphery. Our argument for pursuing this theoretical window of opportunity is premised on finding a curriculum approach that privileges the community as much as the students, academic staff, and researchers (Preece 2000).

In Nwoye's (2021) rendering, not only has colonialism led to the dispossession of land, but it has also succeeded in erasing interdisciplinary knowledge traditions that constitute African Psychology. Parallel to the community dialogues we facilitated and the principles of African Psychology, we demonstrate the inclusive nature of African Psychology in epistemologies and transdisciplinary methods. We further undertook this method with the idea that pursuing knowledge and other realities is infinite (Nwoye 2021). This is because human-centred Psychology requires the recognition of diverse identities and holds space for entering a dialogue with individuals who embody varied histories, philosophies, ontologies, and knowledges (Nabudere 2006). It is, thus, through such dialogical encounters that knowledge emerges.

This is consistent with the commonly cited maxim, *ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am because we are), the community enriches the individual. A person's self-worth can be located in one's community and is regarded as essential to being human (Karenga 2022). As such, we shift our attention to the collective construction of beings and the prospect of co-constructing knowledge through dialogue. In this regard, Ramose (1999) elaborated that a dialogue constitutes a mutuality of beings. The meanings and purpose of a dialogue embodied in an African setting are perfectly captured in isiZulu as *ingxoxo*, *indaba*, and *ubu-dlelwano* (loosely translated as discussion, communion, unity, or closeness). Similarly, De Sousa Santos (2019) illustrates the value embedded in dialogues, referring to its methods as an encounter between different knowledge ecologies, wherein all are equally superior. Given these insights, we, thus, elected to privilege community dialogues in the context of Psychology as dialogues seek to connect experiences from where they are constructed. Following Sefa Dei's (2005) reprove, Psychology's failure to utilise African languages has led to the *invisibilisation* and silencing of the rich ideas embedded in these languages. For example, Nabudere (2006) offers that African proverbs are a rich source of psychological knowledge. Central to the discourse of meaningfully engaging our communities through dialogue, the foundation of African Psychology lies in listening deeply to African people's experiences through their voices.

Thus, the project of undoing colonial traumas begins (Ratele et al. 2018). As evidenced in our trajectories in higher education institutions in South Africa and those of many other Black academics and students, while it is critical to change demographics, this does not entail transformation or how students and staff experience navigating the university and the discipline of Psychology (Ratele et al. 2018). Among other ideas on how to decolonise and centre the Psychology curriculum in Africa, scholars suggest that we must investigate the research projects we are involved in and who our funders are. This will determine whose interests we serve. We further need to reflect on where our work is published and by whom, access or a lack thereof to therapy, and how it is conducted (Ratele et al. 2018).

Moving from Theory to Praxis: African Women's Convergence (Movements) and the Intersections of Community Psychology and Pluriversalism in Higher Education

This section explores the theory of convergence in the context of African women's histories of converging for a common purpose, albeit under oppressive patriarchal and, at times, dangerous circumstances. These initiatives inspire us to explore and understand African women's leadership techniques and strategies and how these may be useful as the university forges towards converging with the communities around it.

Moreover, scholars have revealed how women utilised their titles as mothers to converge publicly to resist oppressive patriarchal structures that impinged on their quotidian lives and, subsequently, their livelihoods (Gasa 2007; Magoqwana n.d.; Ngcobozi 2017; Zwane 2000). Similarly, throughout history, African women have always organised and collectively 'talked back' at unjust laws of oppressive states, namely, colonialism and apartheid. Evidence shows that women's convergence and struggle for justice against unjust apartheid laws, namely the pass laws, began as early as 1898 (Wells 1993). These discourses were centred on issues that affected women as mothers, leaders of organisations, and everyday lives as ordinary South Africans living in townships (Goldblatt & Meintjies 1998; Zwane 2000).

Ginwala (1990) eloquently points out that women's resistance emanated from issues that disrupted their daily lives and the financial maintenance of their families. The preceding challenges progressed to women's discourses and gatherings in church. In this chapter, we explore the gatherings of the Methodist Church women. Historically, Black women would join *Umanyano* in the church but could only meet on Thursdays when Black domestic workers were off duty from the white households. They would meet to pray, develop one another, and collaborate on ways to respond to social issues in their communities. In this way, women's *manyano* organisations were agents of transformation in Black and poor communities. *Umanyano* has been appropriated by women of the Methodist Church of South Africa since the 1870s to describe women's organisation in the Methodist Church. *Manyano* is a Xhosa name initially given to African women's prayer unions in South Africa, originating in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. It is derived from the verb *ukumanya*, meaning 'to join' or 'unite', 'unity' or *kopano* in Setswana or Sesotho (Madise 2008). According to Preston (2007: 42), the word '*manyano*' signifies "purity of speech, the holiness of life, conduct and temperament, and service to the glory of God for the extension of his Kingdom".

In keeping with women's leadership in their communities and converging to address injustices in their roles as mothers, Magoqwana's (n.d.) concept of *inimba* becomes pertinent here. She describes *inimba* as an attribute of African women's leadership.

Building on this, she challenges the view of motherhood as an exclusive title to those categorised as female. She contends that *inimba* may be a useful leadership tool that all members of society can utilise and learn from in leadership in communities (Magoqwana n.d.). She continues that as much as the principle of *inimba* is "life-giving, life-sustaining, and life-preserving" (p.2), it also serves as a tool to deconstruct the prevailing patriarchal disparities that continue to exist in our country (Magoqwana n.d.).

Magoqwana's provocation coincides well with the tenets of the philosophy of *ubuntu* that may be traced back to African leadership and traditional societies' convergence and solidarity (Hofstede 1983). Thus, most traditional African community duties were performed collectively. Furthermore, *ubuntu* is marked by relatedness, collectivism, communalism, and spiritualism (Maqutu 2018). In addition, Mbigi (1997) affirms that *ubuntu* is not an exclusive principle to African people. It can also be located in the lives of marginalised communities who converge together for a common purpose on issues that continue to decentre their experiences (Mbigi 1997). Traditional African societies assembled to facilitate collective educational and social events such as *Imbizo's* and ritual ceremonies (initiation schools) for young men and women to educate the younger generation on traditional African customs and norms (Maqutu 2018). What seems to emerge from the aforementioned African structures is that convergence, collective education, and *ubuntu* are a way of life for African communities.

We underscore the interconnectedness between the philosophy of *ubuntu*, diverse truths, and the lessons that universities can glean from the solidarity of African women. We urge Psychology to focus on the social and ethical dimensions of human existence within African cultures. In these cultures, the community enriches human beings and is enriched by them. Embracing the principles of *ubuntu*, which include Truth, Justice, Caring, and Reciprocity, is essential to being human in these contexts (Karenga 2022). We posit that by embracing the social and ethical principles of being human from an Afro-centric perspective, Psychology can better cater to the needs of individuals and communities in these settings.

Tapping into the Principles of *Inimba* and *Oomama Bomthandazo*: Towards Nurturing University-Community Partnerships

We argue that it is pivotal for the same department of Psychology that was instrumental in shaping the development of apartheid to play a critical role in responding to the current mental health needs of communities in our country. This has not occurred. In Townson's (2018) reprove, institutions of higher learning in South Africa have distanced themselves from the communities around them due to their failure to respond to their needs. In line with the objectives of this chapter, Matthews et al. (2018) affirm that the relationship between the university and the community is nurtured through the community's participation in the university's projects and where the community's strengths are utilised. In this way, universities are not seen as detached agents of knowledge but as co-actors partnering with communities towards their economic and social growth (Groulx et al. 2021).

This engagement enables community needs, resources, and strengths to be advanced and utilised (Miller 2020). As Sachs and Clark (2017) emphasised, engaging with the community allows academics to understand its challenges better and assist community members in utilising their skills and capabilities to improve their community. Furthermore, we argue that universities can nurture meaningful partnerships with communities by tapping into the principles of *inimba* and *ooMama Bomthandazo*. This approach shifts the university's role from being a detached source of knowledge to a collaborative partner in communities' economic and social growth (Groulx et al. 2021).

Universities must adopt a more integrated approach to community engagement by actively involving local community members in research and teaching activities. This inclusive approach fosters a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and facilitates co-creating innovative solutions that are more relevant and beneficial to the community (Gumede 2020). By establishing genuine collaborative partnerships with local stakeholders, universities can address community-specific challenges and harness local talents and resources, promoting sustainable development and positive social change. This strategic alignment with community priorities accentuates the university's role as a proactive contributor to broader societal well-being, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and collective empowerment.

Thus, a community-centred approach to university engagement transforms the historical role of universities as the sole beacons of knowledge. It lays the foundation for a more inclusive, equitable, and mutually beneficial relationship between academia and society and the mutual exchange of knowledge and learning. This transformative collaborative model enriches the educational experience and significantly contributes to communities' holistic development and resilience, positioning higher education institutions as integral partners in advancing societal progress and fostering meaningful social impact. This strategic alignment with community priorities accentuates the university's role as a proactive contributor to broader societal well-being, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and collective empowerment.

Adopting a strategy that focuses on nurturing university-community partnerships in South Africa has the potential to benefit African students significantly. By actively involving local community members in research and teaching activities, universities can establish a more inclusive and culturally relevant learning environment for African students (Johnson 2020). This approach allows students to engage in practical and contextually relevant projects addressing community-specific challenges and experiences. It also fosters a sense of belonging and integration into these institutions, hoping that students will not have to encounter the challenges I, Puleng, and other #FeesMustFall movement activists and students experienced from the year 2015 leading up to the year 2017.

Emanating from South Africa, the #FeesMustFall movement was driven by students' passionate advocacy for free, decolonised education, aimed at addressing the financial challenges experienced by many students and striving to rectify the inequalities within the education system (Mathebula & Calitz 2018). The movement provided a platform for students to voice their concerns regarding financial burdens that hindered access to education and confronting authorities in government and higher institutions of learning and exclusionary institutional cultures (Ndlovu 2017).

While the media and other stakeholders labelled the movement as disrupting pursuits, these experiences underscore the students' desperation, determination, and resilience in their pursuit of a just and equitable education system. We hope no student will have to resort to these measures again if the curriculum and institutions we study and work in are transformed, decolonised, and inclusive of its students and the communities they come from. Moreover, by embracing the principles of *inimba* and *ooMama Bomthandazo*, universities can cultivate a sense of shared responsibility and collective empowerment among African students. This collaborative model enriches the educational experience by promoting a deeper understanding of community needs, resources, and strengths. African students are offered the opportunity to contribute to their communities' economic and social growth, instilling a sense of pride and ownership in their academic pursuits. Furthermore, this approach can facilitate African students' access to local talents and resources, promoting sustainable development and positive social change. By nurturing meaningful partnerships with communities, universities can create opportunities for African students to develop essential skills and capabilities while contributing to their communities' holistic development and resilience. By embracing nurturing university-community partnerships, African students can benefit from a more inclusive, equitable, and culturally enriching educational experience that equips them to be proactive contributors to societal progress, nurturing feelings of belonging and contributing to progressive institutional cultures.

Conclusion

The potential for transformation in higher education is immense. By reconceptualising the notion of transformation, we can confront gender disparities and the specific experiences of Black women within African contexts. This chapter underscores this potential for change. We propose that universities can play a pivotal role in this transformation by striving to become socially relevant, anchoring their significance within local communities and their everyday experiences (Johnson 2020).

An extensive analysis of the literature and community engagement initiatives within South Africa’s higher education system shows that partnerships between universities and communities often result in power imbalances. Despite the noble intentions of these collaborations, they frequently perpetuate existing disparities. To address this critical issue, psychologists, educators, and researchers must implement Afrikan psychology principles and proactive strategies to effect positive change within the communities they serve. Drawing upon the works of prominent scholars such as Magoqwana and Adesina (2020), who assert the necessity of examining the representation of women in the curriculum and broader knowledge production, it is clear that systemic changes are urgently needed.

By acknowledging and valuing these communities’ experiential knowledge and lived experiences, we can lay the foundation for meaningful and sustainable progress. By integrating these insights into our educational practices, we can foster an environment conducive to positive change and inclusive growth. We conclude that psychologists, educators, and researchers must critically engage with African Psychology principles and actively implement strategies that empower communities and address power imbalances. We need to work collectively and collaboratively towards a more equitable, inclusive, and empowering space for academic staff and students who constantly feel alienated. We reiterate the importance of drawing from the philosophy of *ubuntu* as it offers new perspectives on interpreting convergence, socially engaged universities, transformation in higher education, and leadership in African contexts.

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Chapter 5

Unmasking the Logic Embedded in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) in Pursuit of Transformation in Higher Education

Nompumelelo Zodwa Radebe

Abstract

The advent of COVID-19 accelerated the implementation of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as it became the only viable option to teach during the lockdown. Indeed, this changed the trajectory of teaching and learning as we know it. However, it must be noted that 4IR is not a neutral tool in teaching but has a capitalist logic embedded in it that dehumanises in the interests of profits. It becomes critical therefore to pay attention to the impact of 4IR in human lives over and above the facilitation of education. This propels us to ask this fundamental question: "What is education?". To respond to this question, the chapter reflects on online teaching in higher education. It pays attention to the social distance effects of online teaching that undermine the basic tenet of social relations. This chapter takes into account that 4IR is not just a tool that transmits education but a pedagogy. As such, it reads its impact on human relations. The paper argues that the transformation of higher education is precisely about unmasking the logic embedded in epistemologies and pedagogies in higher education to redress the injustices of the past. The call for transformation in higher education is therefore a call for epistemic justice to create a world that is informed by ecologies of knowledge and thus responds to the devastations of modern technologies. Achieving true transformation in higher education requires that we open up to other ways of knowing in the pursuit of epistemic justice.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the importance of transformation in higher education in pursuit of epistemic justice in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The 4IR has become inescapable since the advent of COVID-19. As Chaka (2022: 1) argues:

> the pandemic has not only caused major sudden changes, but it has also put a halt to the old ways of doing things in different spheres of life [...] higher education (HE) has not been immune to such pandemic-induced abrupt changes and their associated challenges.

This means the programmes of higher education that were in place had to be halted, such as the transformative agenda. For example, at the University of South Africa (UNISA), the transformative agenda is pronounced through the Africanisation and decolonisation of the university inscribed in the university's mission and vision. It states: "Towards the African university in service of humanity, shaping futures". During the lockdown as a result of COVID-19, the 4IR became a necessity that could not be negotiated but accepted as the only solution to the crisis brought forth by COVID-19. In other words, there was no time to check the impact of 4IR concerning Africanisation and decolonisation which anchored the transformative agenda at UNISA. According to Koopman and Koopman (2021: 155), "this new world of digitisation, which has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is the new cultural imprint (or world) that universities must instil in their students to understand so that they can be active role players in the system". It is important to mention that online teaching did not just come as a response to the pandemic but had made inroads already and the pandemic was just a catalyst. Chaka (2022: 2) reminds us that "since its pre-pandemic days, Education 4.0 was already being seen as holding the prospects of being a game-changer within the HE sector". It is important to pay attention to this because it reveals the aspect that 4IR is not just a response to a crisis but has been long coming.

Marwala (2022) argues that the 4IR is the only option for economic growth. In his book, *Closing the gap: The Fourth Industrial Revolution in Africa*, Marwala vehemently advocates for the advancement of 4IR in the education sector. It is in this context that Koopman and Koopman (2021: 146) argue that the online world of virtual reality was "forcibly implemented despite fierce resistance from students throughout the country due to the huge economic inequalities that produced the immense digital divide". The argument presented by Koopman and Koopman becomes evident in the reflections of Khunou as she presents the challenges of one of her students and writes: "Our move to virtual teaching, learning, and work has come with what looks like new challenges; however, when one uses the lens Lesego provides in her reflection, underdeveloped infrastructure continues to be our challenge." (Khunou 2023: 93). Marwala acknowledges that the 4IR "has the potential to exacerbate poverty and inequalities" (2022: 2), except that it is not potential but real. This means that the 4IR does not solve the already existing challenges – it refashions them, if not exacerbates them.

Obviously, we cannot go back to the old ways of doing things as that will be like going against the tide. Jansen posits: "Whether we like it or not, the traditional university fashioned on the long dominant model of face-to-face teaching is a thing of the past" (Jansen 2021: 136 citing Pham & Ho 2020). Firstly, I must emphasise that by unmasking the logic embedded in technologies used in higher education, I am not rejecting the use of these technologies. Secondly, I am not denying the achievements made through these technologies. As Zeleza (2002: 3-4) advises: "Engagement with the new technologies allows universities to provide their students with critical technoliteracy, democratised and customised higher learning, and to help to shape the emerging ICT educational regime." Clearly, there are many positive effects derived from embracing new technologies in higher education. The interest of the chapter is in the less explored aspect of 4IR, its impact, and its cost to human life in its totality. I argue that this "darker side" – using Mignolo's (2011) expression – of 4IR is concealed in the dominant narrative of its successes.

The purpose of understanding the logic that informs the 4IR is in a way shifting the gaze, as it is somehow studying upwards "to examine the processes of the powerful, yet understudied, who govern society in various capacities" (Kekana 2024: 74). Clearly, the 4IR falls squarely on the powerful, so asking what ideology informs it in a way is studying up. This is critical because technologies encapsulated in the 4IR are not just instruments to transmit content, but in them, there is an embedded ideology. As such, the technological world should go under scrutiny. While it is apparent that we cannot go back to how we used to do things, this does not mean that we cannot ask questions. The more pertinent question in higher education is: "What is education?". Real education is not to accept what is presented to you without scrutinising its logic and effects. This is the responsibility of higher education to nurture the inquiring mind to be sensitive and responsive to the immediate environment. This chapter is not studying up per se but it is asking questions as part of the reflection on the impact of the 4IR in higher education.

Before we delve into attempts to unmask the logic of the 4IR, it is important to explain what we mean by '4IR'. In this chapter, 4IR is the usage of technology as a benchmark for quality higher education (Yende 2021). This is supported by Marwala (2022), who asserts that the 4IR is actually the confluence of all other technologies. So, 4IR is all the technologies that are used to facilitate education. Understanding technologies and their role in this chapter is the reflection on the 4IR, its prospects, and its effects. Following Koopman and Koopman's (2021) pursuit of using Heidegger's views to explain the philosophy behind technology, similarly, the chapter draws from Heidegger to show the philosophy behind technology. Heidegger, writing in Germany after the end of World War II asks questions concerning technology. He warns:

> But we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it [technology] as something neutral; for this conception of it, to which today we particularly like to do homage, makes us utterly blind to the essence of technology. (Heidegger 1977: 4)

It is in this spirit that I question technology as it is not neutral. Heidegger (1977: 32) continues to argue that "[s]o long as we represent technology as an instrument, we remain held fast in the will to master it. We press on past the essence of technology". Scrutinising technology therefore enables us to reveal what is concealed by the 4IR in the guise of inescapable necessity. The technology is presented in such a way that it cannot be challenged; how it was produced and to what end should not be questioned but absorbed. To the former colonised, this approach is not new. We have experienced this before in Western science. Ramose (2005: 32) reminds us of the approach as he argues: "European colonisation was intent upon establishing and maintaining in all the colonised parts of the world, the European conception of reality, knowledge, and truth." So, the 4IR is presented using the Western conception of reality without any engagement with other ways of perceiving the world. It is in this context the transformation in higher education is necessary to precisely redress this attitude that marginalises all other epistemologies.

The main aim of the chapter is to unmask the ideology concealed in modern technologies to show the need to transform higher education. The emphasis of the paper is on the pervasive logic reproduced by technologies in higher education that serve the neoliberal agenda of expansion of markets. It uses decoloniality as a theoretical framework which enables us to reveal the continuities of the colonial logic observable in the 4IR era. Through the reflections on the impact of the 4IR in higher education, the chapter argues that the move to digitalise higher education is not the true transformation of universities. In South Africa, transformation should be understood in the historical past of higher education which was defined by the exclusion of Africans in the design and governance of higher education. Transformation therefore is paying attention to this past by bringing African ways of knowing as part and parcel of the design, content, and governance of higher education. The chapter brings an African epistemology to show how the 4IR can be understood from an African perspective. It concludes by arguing that remaining true to the principles of transformation as envisioned provides possibilities for epistemic justice where all epistemologies can be used in times of crisis.

Theoretical Orientation

Understanding the logic embedded in 4IR requires unmasking coloniality which hides the continuities of colonialism. I, therefore, employ decoloniality as the theory to show the entanglement of 4IR with Western epistemology that gave birth to the capitalist logic. It is important to explain the theory to assist the reader in how to read the chapter. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020: 71), "decolonization/decoloniality provides the overarching conceptual-theoretical framing as it challenges present and past globalization and its pretensions of universalism". Decoloniality is therefore a theory informed by the continuities of colonialism in the former colonies. So, to make a case for decoloniality means that we need to point out the colonial continuities. This is not to centre colonialism but to further develop decolonial theory so that true liberation is achieved. Thus, decoloniality is about

> epistemic freedom which speaks to cognitive justice. Epistemic freedom is fundamentally about the right to think, theorise, interpret the world, develop own methodologies and write from where one is located and unencumbered by Eurocentrism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018: 3).

Decoloniality is concerned with knowledge production that in turn transforms the society at large as this is the knowledge used to interpret the world. This means we need to decolonise existing knowledge. Keet (2019: 204) argues that "the decolonisation of knowledge is meant to disrupt the disciplines in order to dislodge the rules that generate the existent patterns of rewards and sanctions within the academy". In other words, decolonisation is about dismantling colonial legacies. Of course, this is not to centre the colonial but it is to ensure that the continued injustices are exposed and proper connections and the root cause of these injustices are not forgotten. The insistence on using the term 'decoloniality/decolonisation' is not to make it central but to ensure that we do not forget the devastation of coloniality and that it still informs the present existence of the colonised. This is important because evidently the global power structure continues to dictate what and how knowledge is produced long after the independence of the former colonies, and that is coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Zondi 2016: 4).

So, pointing out coloniality is critical in exposing the continuities of colonialism which prevents us from attaining true liberation where we can think for ourselves without the West continuing to encroach on how we should live and think. However, there is a growing 'discomfort' with decoloniality. The classic example is Jansen's (2019) critique that moves from making wild claims such as, "the student protests starting in 2015 added a new term to the lexicon of South African universities – decolonisation [...] Literally overnight, the word decolonisation rolled off the lips of activists" (Jansen 2019: 1). Obviously, this is an epistemic extractivism (Grosfoguel 2019) that misrepresents the truth. At UNISA, I attended decolonial seminars in 2012. Just because Jansen (2019) is not aware of these initiatives, 'they never existed'. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, this is cynical. He writes:

> What is very worrying about Jansen's critique of decolonisation is that he does not attribute it to any work of decolonial scholars or any identifiable decolonial scholar. They seem to come from his head. What he does is to apportion his misunderstandings to decolonial scholarship in general and then quarrel with them. (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2021: 88)

In the main, the discomfort with decoloniality/decolonisation should be read as coloniality masquerading as critical thinking. In actual fact, what Jansen is doing is what Grosfoguel (2019: 208) calls 'epistemic extractivism', which "involves decontextualizing [concepts] in order to remove the radical content and may depoliticize them in order to make them more commercially attractive". In addition, the attention on the concept 'decolonisation' would seem to confirm Keet's (2019: 204-5) assertion that it "is intended to turn decolonisation into a metaphor and thus an ideological strategy to maintain epistemological orientations and justify existing positions". More dangerous is the fact that the so-called critique shifts the focus from the injustices created by Western dominance and deviates us from challenging the continued impact of Western epistemology.

Decoloniality thus assists in talking about the atrocities of colonialism that are in the present. So, while coloniality is critical in ensuring that we guard against the penetration of the empire, equally important is safeguarding the decolonial work for the contribution it is making. Decolonial work can be drawn from scholars such as Mafeje (1998) who exposed coloniality in 'critical' scholarship. Mafeje (1998) noted coloniality in the post-colonial critique of anthropology and wrote:

> Whether *Writing Culture* is a pastiche or hotchpotch, it is interesting and truly innovative. It also has an important message for the Third World scholars, but it has no medium for communicating with them. There might be two reasons for this. First, while it talks about Anthropology, it makes no reference to Anthropology as it is practiced by Third World scholars, if at all. Instead, it emphasises ethnographic writing as collaboration with the natives who are not a counterpart. The frontispiece of the book features a white ethnographer busy at work, writing ethnography against the background of a passive dark native. This is very symbolic and might belie the claim of 'collaborative' effort. (Mafeje 1998: 15)

In this excerpt, Mafeje raises the critical danger of coloniality, which does not SEE the Third World scholars. For instance, in the excerpt above, clearly, the critique is informed by the displacement of the 'subject' who is no longer the knowing subject. If the knowing subject does not know, no one should know. This not-knowing is thus imposed on everyone, and all of us in the academy get implicated. This is of utmost importance to pay attention to because it has a way of introducing itself even in the most radical initiatives. Third World scholars are often expected to denounce their knowledge and experience and thus produce scholarship from the position of the radical Western man. If the Third World scholars insist on bringing their knowledge, languages, and experiences, they risk being labelled as essentialists and fundamentalists or worse, nativists! If we become the radical Westernised man, we start SEEING ourselves and present ourselves as a problem. This chapter is writing against this. The 4IR is therefore read from an African experience and knowledge.

Unmasking the Logic of the 4IR

To make sure that we reflect on the impact of 4IR, we need to provide some background information that created a fertile ground for the 4IR. In the past two decades, universities have been under pressure to produce employable graduates. Thus, the focus became the content that students get without centring the students as human beings. This has been pronounced in the commodification of the university as a response to the ‘market’. This is well articulated by Koopman and Koopman (2021) as they write:

> One colleague, when asked how much time he allocates for discussions in his lectures, laughingly said, ‘You are joking, right, I simply do not have the time for discussions... not even sure I’ll finish my work’. In other words, instead of placing the student at the centre of the planning, design and delivery of lectures, the focus is mainly on curriculum delivery with little regard for the lived realities of the students. (Koopman & Koopman 2021: 149)

They continue to argue that, thus “the vision of universities is to become engine rooms and innovative hothouses of global capitalism, instead of guiding students to develop a better understanding of the self in the world” (Koopman & Koopman 2021:147). So, prior to the advent of COVID-19, the 4IR was already deemed a remedy to address the needs of the marketplace (Yende 2021: 57). The digitalisation of education precedes the advent of COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, digitalisation in higher education was presented as “imperative to close the gap between the industry and the educational sector” (Yende 2021: 65). It is clear that COVID-19 is not the reason for the digitalisation in higher education but the markets. Hence, it is argued that "[e] merging economies around the globe are rushing to figure out how to adjust their education systems to this new reality" (Jansen 2021: 136 citing Pham & Ho 2020). The 4IR is therefore driven by economic logic over and above the preservation of life.

It is not surprising therefore that when COVID-19 hit, the focus in higher education was on saving the academic year over for the markets. Even though this was not pronounced as such, one is not far from the truth when they argue that the main issue behind the "saving the academic year" was fuelled by the financial implications to universities and students alike. For Koopman and Koopman, it does not seem that the impact of the 4IR in human lives has ever been considered outside the employability of graduates. It would seem that the focus has been on the markets over the livelihood of students and educators. Koopman & Koopman (2021: 153) continue to argue that "[o]ver the last two decades, we have witnessed how students in our classrooms are viewed as raw materials in need of crafting for a market-driven knowledge economy within global capitalism". Education in this manner ceases to inculcate critical thinking in students such that they are responsive to their immediate environment.

The introduction of virtual learning and teaching is expressed by Heidegger's prediction cited by Koopman and Koopman who say

> that the final goal of all human behaviour and action is predicated on the idea of pushing maximum profit at minimum expense, while at the same time gaining control of human behaviour and optimising them as resources. (Koopman & Koopman 2021: 153).

This is evident in the education that is advanced which in the main responds to the demands of the markets. Even where student support is pronounced, the underlying tone is throughputs, not nurturing students' minds. Marwala (2022), as a proponent for the 4IR, has outlined new fields of study that universities should focus on if South Africa is to 'catch up' with the countries that have advanced in the 4IR. The idea behind these new fields is to tackle unemployment and economic growth (Marwala 2022). So, the success of any programme depends on the employability of the graduates. One wonders how is this different from the apartheid education? According to Yende, "[t]he ideology behind the structure of the educational system indoctrinated black pupils with a culture of service dependence and sale of labour-power for survival in the economic system" (Yende 2021: 59 citing Bunting 2006; Francis & Hemson 2010; Polak 2013). The presentation of the 4IR in higher education indeed feels like we must indoctrinate students to be servants of the labour markets.

The Impact of the 4IR on Higher Education

As already posited, the chapter is not against the 4IR but is paying attention to its logic and impact. To understand the impact of the 4IR correctly necessitates understanding the global matrix of power. Assié-Lumumba (2007) argues that another important aspect to pay attention to when thinking about the transformation of African universities

> is the sheer power that is vested in the allocation of financial resources for education [...] that translates into full decision-making power and authority over all the aspects of the higher education bodies and their priorities (Assié-Lumumba 2007: 10).

The approach that higher education is taking when it comes to the 4IR must be understood in the context of financial implications. As such, the chapter is not passing judgement but aims to highlight the disruptions that emanate from these decisions. It is also important to think about the intentions of these decisions that seem to go beyond just the markets to perpetuate the marginalisation of African thought where Africa is forever behind and thus plays the catching game which makes Africans perpetual students. The introduction of technologies in teaching and learning disrupts the priorities of universities.

The disruption in the facilitation of education is often downplayed in advocacy for the 4IR. The aspect of education that is interconnected with all other spheres of existence is undermined and the content with no context is privileged. Jansen shares his experiences of teaching as follows:

> Teaching is *a profoundly emotional activity*. Faced with a few hundred students, I rely on all my senses when I teach. I not only see but hear, feel, and touch as I move around the lecture room. As I lead a discussion of government policy on corporal punishment, I notice a student whose eyes start to tear up. It is quite possible that he is recalling a harsh experience with *lyfstraf*. This is a cue for me to soften the tone, to slow down the pace, and as I walk past the young man, to place a brief, reassuring hand on his shoulder. (Jansen 2021: 139)

It would seem, therefore, that virtual education is not interested in the whole person but the individual. African scholars such as Ramose (2005) and Ani (2013) have argued extensively on the interconnected embedded in African philosophy. So, virtual education anchored by the 4IR seemed to be drawing from a particular ideology that is individualistic. For instance, the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which according to Chaka (2022: 4)

> entails the use of programmed machines that simulate human intelligence, or the use of software programmes capable of using language, forming concepts and abstractions, solving problems, and executing cognitive tasks reserved for a human brain.

This means that the reliance on other people becomes minimal as AI can replace human intelligence. But more salient, the emphasis on the markets, reveals the logic that anchors the 4IR that privileges profits. As Koopman and Koopman (2021: 147) posit: "universities have become engine rooms and innovative hothouses of global capitalism". It becomes apparent that the 4IR is rooted in capitalism that does not care about the well-being of humanity but the maximisation of profits. The human aspect is not considered when the focus is on the markets and making sure that we do not upset the markets. Jansen continues to show the limitations brought by the virtual and writes:

> Keeping both sides in a difficult conversation on race and admissions requires that I see, hear and feel the class. Behind a screen, such teachable moments cannot be grasped. And finally, teaching is a spiritual activity. Students (sure, not all of them) come to class to connect, to be inspired, to be heard, and to sense hope. Teaching is intended to bring out the best in students, to point to something beyond themselves. Now imagine a gallery of muted students on your screen and try to inspire those dark blocks from a little room in your attic. (Jansen 2021: 140)

Jansen is reminding us of the importance of the interconnectedness of our existence, that even in communication, it is not just about what we say – body language is part of the conversation too. It is this body language that probes responses in face-to-face engagements that sort of happen automatically. Virtual teaching disrupts the flow of the conversation and this has a direct impact on human relationships. Khunou (2023), reflecting on teaching online, writes:

> My questions would go unanswered, and my usually effective prompts for engagement with concepts I teach seemed to have lost their power to inspire conversation. I was also unable to feel the room to gauge if there was confusion, irritation, and a need to change tack and/or pause. (Khunou 2023: 97)

Clearly, the facilitation of teaching is disrupted in virtual teaching. The importance of articulating one's views becomes minimal in a virtual space because of the invisibility of oneself. The focus on technological education, for example Education 4.0, seems to be focused on hard skills at the expense of soft skills. This seems to be informed by separatist logic that seems to suggest that life is fragmented. African epistemology moves from a premise that life is interconnected, and undoubtedly, it can offer a different approach to technological teaching. This is notwithstanding that African knowledges in higher education for the longest time have been presented as superstitions that could not be proven scientifically and thus not do not belong to the formal education system. The truth is all societies have their ways of producing and transmitting knowledge. Virtual learning and teaching are not concerned with human needs but the market needs. Chaka, looking at Education 4.0, found that:

> most of the soft-skill affordances such as communication skills, social and cultural awareness skills, critical and analytical thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving skills, innovation, empathy, responsibility, teamwork, and leadership skills referenced by some of the reviewed articles are twenty-first century skills that predate the Education 4.0 era. (Chaka 2022: 10)

The emphasis on hard skills in technological education has dehumanising effect. This dehumanising effect is two-fold. Firstly, students are turned into objects of the markets that should present the hard skills to maximise the profits. Secondly, and more enduringly, technology is presented as neutral and conceals the ideological underpinnings. This presentation of 4IR as neutral closes the space for engagements on the ideology that informs it. The assumption would seem to be the colonial assumption pronounced in the discourse of emptiness. This discourse was dehumanising because it suggested that Africans were without reason and therefore not quite human (Ramose 2005). Unmasking the ideology that informs the 4IR feels like *déjà vu*, like we have been here before. The same strategy used to colonise the world is used again, unchanged. So, I am one of the sceptics of technologies that Zeleza (2002: 2) says

> the reigning ideology of free market capitalism increasingly sees education not primarily as a social or public good, or as a human right, but as an economic investment. Consequently, universities are increasingly being turned into mills to produce and retool entrepreneurs and information operatives, instead of oases to nurture the values of democratic citizenship.

The apartheid government was mainly criticised and fought against for teaching Black students to be subservient to the labour market. Interestingly, the same logic is being introduced where the main focus is to prepare the students for the job markets instead of real life in its totality. As already posited in the previous paragraphs, virtual education produces students who are not socially aware of their immediate environment but are market-orientated. It is clear that technology is embedded in the capitalist logic that is concerned with profits. This logic is dangerous as it compromises life in its totality. Heidegger (1977: 5) argued that "[t]he closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become. For questioning is the piety of thought". We therefore need to continue asking questions and, at the same time, look at other ways of understanding life. The call for transformation is precisely about asking more questions by opening up to epistemologies that were pushed to the periphery during the apartheid era in South Africa. It is important therefore to show the role of transforming higher education in the era of 4IR.

A Call for Transformation in Higher Education

It must be stated from the onset that digitalising is not the transformation of higher education. The transformation of the university in South Africa is about redressing the imbalances of the past. So, it is a holistic approach that is inclusive of governance, epistemologies, pedagogies, languages of teaching, and curricula. Yende explains the transformation of higher education in South Africa as follows:

> As a crucial component of institutional reform, the democratic government of South Africa adopted transformation as an indispensable phenomenon to systematically alter the pre-democratic system associated with the institutions of higher learning. (Yende 2021: 60)

Transformation in higher education is not about the facilitation of learning and teaching but the entire functioning of the universities. The 4IR thus occupies one aspect of many in the functioning of the university and cannot therefore dictate the transformative agenda. For example, the curriculum transformation framework at UNISA has five pillars and one of them is digitisation. In fact, the opposite should happen, where the transformative agenda should dictate the implementation of technologies in higher education. Universities should not operate like hospitals where in times of crisis, there is no time to think because a life will be lost. Universities should be in a position to pause and ask more questions before a decision. This is the point of the chapter: to pause and ask questions.

It is mandatory for South African universities to transform. As such, different universities have to articulate the transformation trajectory for individual universities. UNISA developed a transformation charter to outline the goals for transformation. Among other things, UNISA declares that

> Transformation keeps us at the frontier as pathfinders: to find ever better and innovative ways of enriching the student experience, elaborating and building upon African epistemologies and philosophies, developing alternative knowledge canons and advancing indigenous knowledge systems that ground us on the African continent, without averting our gaze from the global horizon. (Unisa Strategic Plan 2016-2030: 79-80)

This declaration shows the magnitude of the transformative agenda, which is holistic. The first aspect of finding innovative ways of enriching the student experience is critical as it centres on the student experience, not the needs of the markets, which is pronounced on the employability of graduates. Of utmost importance is the declaration of grounding these innovative ways on African epistemologies and philosophies.

Against this background, it is clear that the transformation of higher education means to Africanise and to decolonise. When we talk about Africanisation and decolonisation of the universities it is important to mention that we are not starting from point zero, but we are building on the efforts of those who came before us. In South Africa post-1994, there was intentionality to transform universities because of the role they should play in the transformation of our society. The formation of the Council of Higher Education (CHE) was precisely about transforming the university, and at the core of transformation is quality to ensure that we provide quality education. Also, to redress the systematic imbalances of the past. Hence the intentionality in articulating the discourse of academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and public accountability.

So, transformation is a response to the continued attempt to erase African knowledges. It is important to emphasise that they have not been erased because colonialism did not colonise everything. We still have our cultures to draw from. These knowledges are embedded in metaphors, proverbs, songs, art, stories, even in the names of things, just to mention a few. Indigenous knowledges are not buried somewhere far, but are in the present, being lived and are complete knowledges that shouldn't be compared to anything. They have survived the onslaught and distortion and are kept safe in the everyday practices. African people in South Africa are among the many that Mellet (2020: 19) refers to "who do not need to 'revive' the memory because they did not lose their cultures and identity. Instead, they kept it alive under the difficult and impossible circumstance". It is therefore not a complicated and difficult process to transform, but it requires willing bodies. Transformation is therefore not mimicking the so-called first-world-class universities because they are not the standard, but we have defined the standard for ourselves. Fanon spoke about the importance of not mimicking others:

> So, comrades, let us not pay tribute to Europe by creating states, institutions and societies which draw their inspiration from her. Humanity is waiting for something other from us than such an initiation, which would be almost an obscene caricature. If we want to turn Africa into a new Europe [...] then let us leave the destiny of our countries to Europeans. They will know how to do it better than the most gifted among us." (Fanon 1967: 254)

In other words, Europe is not a model of what a transformed society should look like. Ours is not to develop or civilise but to transform our societies from the thesis that Europe has put forward which "most horrible was committed in the heart of man" (Fanon 1967: 254). The envisioned transformed society is the antithesis of Europe. A transformed university will be sensitive to the plight of the poor and marginalised. The task at hand is to ensure that there is proper engagement in the future of humanity. Universities have institutional autonomy and academic freedom that is anchored in public accountability, not the markets. Just like the advent of COVID-19 accelerated the implementation of the 4IR, the 4IR should accelerate the advancement of transformation to ensure that it is not just the 'academic year' that is saved but humanity.

Clearly, the 4IR is not an enabler for the transformative agenda as its advent has exacerbated the inequalities between the rich and poor universities (Jansen, 2021; Koopman & Koopman 2021; Yende 2021). Zeleza supports this:

> Electronic technology, like most technologies, is deeply underpinned by the social and spatial inequities of gender, class, race, location, and language, which manifest and reproduce themselves in terms of such factors as access, production of content, citation systems, dissemination, and consumption (Zeleza 2002: 5 citing Zeleza & Veney, 2000)

More importantly, the 4IR is informed by the neo-liberal agenda that serves the interest of the markets at the expense of the interconnected of life. The 4IR has separated humanity from one another, so there is an urgent need to look at epistemologies capable of the restoration of life. The transformative agenda has to take centre stage and facilitate the dialogue between epistemologies in an attempt to preserve life. At UNISA, to remain true to the declaration made on the transformation charter, this is the time to seek wisdom from African epistemologies and philosophies. I, therefore, turn to African philosophy as an alternative epistemology to the restoration of life decapitated by the 4IR.

Indlela Ibuzwa Kwabaphambili: Towards the Epistemic Justice

I begin this section with a proverb, *Indlela ubuzwa kwabaphambili* (you can only ask for directions from those who have travelled the path before you), to bring a different epistemology that can shed light on the transformation of higher education. In doing so, I turn to the Indigenous people of South Africa who have travelled the path before. According to Mellet (2020: 29) "the San communities that still survive in the 21st century the oldest peoples today. [Whose] ancestors exist in the bloodlines and cultures as hidden foundations for all other African groups in South Africa today". So, the Indigenous people in South Africa "have old San communities as part of their genetic, ancestral and cultural heritage" (Mellet 2020: 32). I bring this to show that we have survived and we are still here, thus we have a past to go back to when times of uncertainties engulf us. We have the people to ask directions from to understand the African epistemology.

In the first book of the Holy Bible, we are told that after God had created everything, he said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Genesis 1: 26, Holy Bible, King James Version). We are learning here that without man, the creation is incomplete. The advancement of technologies without man is not progress. At the centre of all progress is a "man". Africans have the understanding of this. Hence, the philosophy is *ubuntu*, which can only be practiced by *umuntu* (a person). In African philosophy, the understanding is that one's existence is dependent on others. The proverb, *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person because of other people), is precisely the acknowledgment that one's existence is dependent on others because it is others that can confirm one's humanity. Without a relationship with other humans, one can never be sure about their humanity. So being human is relational. With this understanding, one is therefore obligated to preserve the life of the next person over and above one's needs, hence the seSotho proverb "*feta kgomo o tshware motho* (means that if and when one is faced with a decisive choice between wealth and the preservation of the life of another human being, then one should opt for the perseveration of life" (Ramose 2004: 752-753). This means the next person takes precedence over oneself (Radebe 2024). This is embedded in Indigenous education as Assié-Lumumba (2007: 25, citing Ajayi et al. 1996: 4-5) argues that

> It is now clear that indigenous education involved far more than ward-looking process of socialisation [...] indigenous education produced and transmitted new knowledge necessary for understanding the world, the nature of man (sic), society, God and various divinities.

So, from an African perspective, education is not just about transmitting content necessary for the job market but is inclusive of life in its totality. It is about ensuring that all citizens are responsive to their environment. As such, African epistemology brings a different understanding to the economic logic that in fact the person *(umuntu)* is wealth. It will follow then that if African epistemology was at the centre of the advancement of technologies, the well-being of humans would be the priority over profits. For example, during COVID-19, the language in higher education would not have been to save the academic year but rather to save lives. It must be stated that life does not just refer to physical life but social and spirituality too. From an African epistemology, the restoration of a person is privileged. The focus on human life is ensuring the harmonious existence of life, which ensures that *umuntu* is not dislocated from the cosmic order that orientates human actions. According to Ramose (2005: 46), peace is preceded by justice because “peace without justice is the dislocation of *umuntu* from the cosmic order”. It is important that human action is anchored within the cosmic order so that everyone abides by the principles of *ubuntu*. Reciprocity sustains *ubuntu*, without reciprocity *ubuntu* dies. It is in this context that the preservation of *umuntu* takes precedence over materiality.

Today we are faced with dominant logic that decapitates human life for profits. There is an urgent need to find ways to restore life. African epistemology that is premised on *umuntu* seems to be the much-needed philosophy to save the world. The African worldview understands the universe as one whole, where everything is in it. So, when theorising from an African worldview, a theorist cannot get outside the universe to see it objectively because they are in it. In other words, the theorist does not think as an individual and sees things that other people cannot see. Hence, Ani (2013) argues that in an African epistemology, a theorist theorises from and for the community. This means transformation should take the communities who are the custodians of these knowledges seriously. This understanding that life is interconnected and interdependent means that to produce knowledge in an African setting one cannot break things into atoms but should make the connections. By using the proverb *indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili*, I argue that other epistemologies outside Western epistemology still exist and can be used to inform the transformation agenda.

Conclusion

The advent of COVID-19 fast-tracked the implementation of the 4IR in higher education. The crisis presented by COVID-19 closed any possibilities for honest engagements around the pros and cons of the 4IR. As such, the 4IR was presented as a solution to the crisis. The unintended results emanating from the 4IR, because everyone had to learn to swim or sink, are concealed in the rhetoric of the future. This chapter attempts to pause and try to understand the logic of the 4IR and its impact on the transformative agenda in higher education. It would seem that the 4IR has reduced the transformation in higher education to mean new technologies for learning and teaching. However, true transformation in our context is about redressing the imbalances of the past to ensure justice. Clearly, the 4IR is not one size fits all. There are more compelling reasons to open up the debates on the transformative trajectory. More research is needed that will 'study up', using Kekana's (2024) expression to understand the logic of the 4IR and its intention. The takeaway from the chapter is in unmasking the logic embedded in new technologies that seem to displace a person. It offers a different logic to understand wealth that privileges *umuntu*. To conclude, I bring Ndlovu-Gatsheni as he argues that:

> Indeed the whole world is experiencing the deep and catastrophic effects of double crisis. The crisis is both

> systemic and epistemic. The epistemic part has led to the reopening of the basic epistemological question and set in motion planetary epistemic struggles that are simultaneously unmasking what has been concealed by Eurocentric epistemology while searching for new knowledges capable of taking the world out of the epistemic crisis. (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018: 37)

So, the transformative agenda in higher education must facilitate the search for new knowledges capable of creating a world that is more just.

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Chapter 6

4IR and Transformation: Ally or Opponent? Reflections on the South African Higher Education System

Grace Khunou and Roshini Pillay

Abstract

The introduction of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as a significant agenda item in the South African higher education system came at a time when the aspirations of students and staff were on significant shifts in transformation. Thus, the take of many theorists was initially negative. Nevertheless, since COVID-19, contentions on the 4IR have rightfully shifted to engage with both the challenges and possibilities of 4IR. In this chapter, we engage with these affordances and challenges from the lens of teaching and learning technologies in the South African context. We make a case for the importance of acknowledging the challenges so as to open up space for the possibilities and conclude by stating the significance of co-creation in making space for growing the affordances of technology-enhanced learning (TEL) and 4IR generally.

Introduction

The notion of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) was introduced in 2016 to South Africans as a viable endeavour for Africans to contribute as producers and not merely consumers. However, its introduction led to an uproar as it seemed to be overtaking and disrupting calls to transform and decolonise the higher education sector. These calls for 4IR came shortly after the #FeesMustFall movement for decolonisation of the higher education sector in 2015. The critique for centring 4IR was because, at this time, it seemed to be overtaking university boardrooms, seminar programmes, teaching agendas, and funding imperatives and pushing the transformation imperatives called on by the #FeesMustFall movement to the sidelines. The arguments put forward to centre the 4IR was that South Africa should be vigilant lest they find themselves in the same situation as the rest of Africa at the times of the first, second, and third Industrial Revolutions. The 4IR and its significance was put forth by Claus Shwab in 2016 as a period of significant change. What is also important to note is that this change brings with it challenges and opportunities, including the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which can increase the digital divide between the rich and poor (Goldstuck 2024; Safodien 2021). Thus, as Africans, we need to be cautiously optimistic of the challenges and affordances of teaching and learning during this revolution.

In South African higher education, these new calls for a focus on 4IR were spearheaded by then vice-chancellor and principal of the University of Johannesburg (UJ), Prof. Tshilidzi Marwala, who was later appointed to head the Presidential Commission on the 4IR by the President in 2019. The introduction of the 4IR as a potential tool for solving South Africa's socio-economic challenges resulted in a lot of debates on the challenges of jumping headfirst into the ideas around 4IR. Most of the early critiques came from sociologists arguing for more engagement on the concept and then on its current challenges in the West before assuming that it will solve all our problems (Sey & Mudongo 2021).

Undoubtedly, the time we are living in is one of great disruptive changes resulting from AI and its impact on multiple societal sectors. It would be a mistake to assume that the current Industrial Revolution will solve Africa's challenges. Benyera (2021) cautions that "instead of producing knowledge which exposes and challenges the (re)colonisation of Africa, African scholars' reason that Africa's moment has arrived courtesy of the 4IR". In this context of AI-driven change, Africa is seen to be mainly a consumer of these technologies and not actively leading in their developments. Therefore, careful consideration needs to be given to how technology is adopted in the African continent and how technology is guided by ethics and social justice (Johnson & Wetmore 2009).

There is therefore significance in focusing on the potential negative of 4IR. To this end, the National Planning Commission (2020: i) says:

> rather than focusing narrowly on the potential and dangers of so-called 4IR technologies, South Africa needs to develop a transversal digital policy that is far more comprehensive than one focusing on artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, blockchain and drones although these would be important forward-looking parts.

In this chapter, we make a case for focusing on both the opportunities and challenges of using AI in teaching and learning.

To articulate the argument of this chapter, we reflect on the convergence of transformation and the 4IR and illustrate how the COVID-19 pandemic played an important role in fast-tracking the use of technology-enhanced learning (TEL), thus building a starting point for thinking about the challenges and possibilities of AI for society. TEL is defined as the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) for the improvement of teaching and learning by creating learning opportunities for students whenever they choose (Watling 2009). The early jump into these technologies, however, lacked the necessary deep engagement of what TEL means and how we would want it to be ushered in should we want it in the first place (Moll 2021).

Moreover, post-COVID-19, it is clearer that technology alone cannot improve teaching and learning. Rather, a deliberate and thoughtful way to use technology shaped by passionate educators, contextual variables, instructional design, and digital tools supported by a shared culture whereby students learn through experience and social interactions is required (Wong et al. 2022).

Positionality of the authors

The authors of this chapter are academics: one from a distance higher education institution and one from a contact higher education institution based in Egoli. In this chapter, we consider how TEL and AI have influenced our thinking, teaching, and learning as well as our environment. Our disciplines include sociology and social work. Both of us have used TEL in our work and have seen how disruptive it can be in how we communicate with students and colleagues (Khunou 2023; Pillay 2023). Consequently, we have both observed such considerations in our individual institutions and also in literature coming out of the African context. Using auto-ethnography, this chapter adopts a reflective approach to examining the realities of higher education post-COVID-19 by using our first-hand personal experiences of navigating the pandemic as a rich source of data (Roy & Uekusa 2020).

The second aspect of this chapter is transformation. We have both engaged with multiple shifts in the university sector as students, staff, and researchers. One of us is a transformation scholar and practitioner – a position that influences her thinking and how she navigates knowledge production, teaching, and learning. This positionality is also central to how we engage with the themes in this chapter.

Conceptualising the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

The 4IR is argued to be the fourth as its technologies are built on the back of the previous three Industrial Revolutions. For example, the first revolution focused on production using steam engineering; the second on the invention of electricity, and the third was driven by the digital revolution owing to the development of the transistor, facilitating easy information storage (Moll 2021; National Planning Commission 2020; Olaitan et al. 2021). Even though the '4IR' term is now in daily use in a taken-for-granted kind of way, it is a contested term and its usefulness in teaching, work, and general interaction remains questioned. The contestation is firstly on whether it is sequentially correct to call it 'the Fourth Industrial Revolution'. According to Moll (2021), an analysis of the debates between Shwab and Rifkin suggests that the notion of a 4IR is a leap too far.

However, there seems to be some agreement that the fourth is more accurate as many who engage in the idea choose it rather than the third. According to Olaitan et al. (2021), the fourth is particularly different from the third because "[t]his revolution, according to Schwab (2017: 1), is different in that it is technologically integrating physical, digital and biological worlds". So, the salient feature of the 4IR is its focus on blending historically separate systems. As a result of this blending, Olaitan et al. (2021) suggest that we will now see a growth in the development of 'smart industry', 'intelligent industry', 'smart factory', and 'smart manufacturing'.

According to Marwala and Nkomfe (2017) and Xing and Marwala (2017), the 4IR is driven by AI and cyber-physical systems (CPS) as compared to the third which was driven by the Internet of things (IoT). Another way of defining AI is the process whereby machines can be used and designed to imitate "human cognitive functions such as learning and problem-solving" (Cheuk 2021: 826). AI has been defined in a humorous way by Google's AI system, Gemini, as follows: "Artificial intelligence is when a computer can do something that you're pretty sure you could do with a few more hours and a lot less coffee" (Goldstuck 2024: 13). AI can save time and will make changes to almost every aspect of work and play. AI will become indispensable in solving current problems, but the ethics of social justice and care need to prevail (Johnson & Wetmore 2009). Therefore, there is a need for greater focus to be given to how this 4IR evolves, how technology is chosen, and how upskilling of citizens occurs in the African continent.

Transformation of the Higher Education Sector and 4IR

Higher education transformation was put on the agenda after the first democratic election of 1994 when the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was appointed to develop a transformation framework for the higher education sector. The framework was later developed into a policy document directing the transformation of the higher education sector. The intent of transformation was to address racism and sexism in higher education and address issues of equitable access (Soudien 2010). In 2015, however, the #FeesMustFall movement put on the agenda issues of epistemic justice and free education. This was an important moment in the history of transformation in the country. The significance of these demands was not that they were novel, but that they were reigniting the links between higher education transformation and structural transformation (Ntombana et al. 2023).

However, as early as 2017, the 4IR started framing debates within universities – shifting the focus from the possible wins of the #FeesMustFall movement and thus transformation. This shift rightfully influenced the initial negative take on the 4IR. According to Benyera (2021: 116), unlike the Industrial Revolutions prior, the 4IR does not destruct political systems but epistemologies and ways of doing things. It is therefore not a sociological moan to critically engage with the challenges presented by the 4IR for the African contexts. Rather, given the history of engagement between the West and Africa, it is an important endeavour. Benyera (2021: 118) argues that for Africa to participate fully in the 4IR it should have various contextual variables in place such as

> Conventionally, the key success factors for any country in the 4IR are political stability, sustainable macroeconomic policies, ICT skills, ICT infrastructure, and finally the rule of law, not rule by law. Africa, by colonial designs and by its own failures and omissions, lacks all the above or has them in negligible quantities and qualities.

It is therefore important to engage with what the 4IR means for Africa from a suspicious and critical perspective. It would be remiss to do otherwise.

We are also aware that technology can, in a suitable context, improve equality and allow access for those who might have not had it. As we think from a critical perspective, we also ask what these possibilities for Africa are and will they improve the lives of the majority, or are they marginal? It is, therefore, the contention of this chapter to foreground this history of Western extraction as we address the issue of opportunities and challenges of TEL in the South African context.

South Africa is a new entrant as a user and developer of the multiple tools of the AI revolution. Although the use of these tools is growing, South Africa and much of the African continent are still largely left behind in the development of these tools (Olaitan et al. 2021; Sey & Mudongo 2021). What is obvious thus far is how little we have engaged with the implications of the developments emanating from 4IR. The work of Marwala (2020, 2021), Schwab (2016), and others leading the debates on this socio-economic phenomenon has been limited to its benefits. Most recently, the edited volume by Ngwane and Tshoaedi (2021) begins to engage with the challenges of the 4IR from a sociological perspective, thus providing the much-needed critical engagement on how this phenomenon is impacting everyday life. Moll (2021) illustrates how deep conversation and thinking on the implications of these technologies on teaching and learning are important if we are to centre human-centred teaching pedagogies.

In South Africa, moves towards the 4IR came at a time just after the #FeesMustFall movement of 2015. Thus, the focus of both government and leaders in the higher education system on 4IR seemed to be a shift away from the wins of the 2015 movement and transformation imperatives put forth after 1994. This was because university agendas and budgets started shifting towards funding 4IR themes in research. Bursaries also started focusing on themes related to 4IR. The 2019, State of the Nation address was the first moment we saw the formal shift towards the 4IR as a significant agenda for education institutions. In this address, this agenda setting was articulated thus:

> The President went on to say that the education sector will be introducing several new technology subjects such as technical mathematics, technical sciences, maritime sciences, mining sciences, aviation studies and aquaponics. The president in preparing for the nation for 4IR believes that the education sector plays an important role and as a result subjects should be realigned with 4IR dynamics. (Maisiri 2020: 4)

Thus, budget and university priorities shifted accordingly. According to Maisiri (2020: 6) this was evident at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) when the vice-chancellor announced that

> We have invested R500 million in an ICT upgrade, adopted a new cutting-edge research strategy, and introduced innovative blended learning options, including a digital campus, online courses and high-tech classrooms.

Furthermore, Prof. Vilakazi, vice-chancellor in his plans for Wits, said one of his goals for his tenure is to create a Massachusetts Institute of Technology-styled digital technology hub at the university that will commercialise some of the ground-breaking research it produces. At the same time, he was scathing of 4IR indicating that skills development and a culture for respect of facts and scientific reasoning was required which went beyond students sourcing information from Wikipedia (Mthethwa 2021).

Other concerns raised with the idea of 4IR as a leap too far is its contributions to existing epistemic injustices (Benyera 2021). One reason for this injustice is that relying on technologies from elsewhere potentially impedes transformation as such technologies were not necessarily developed with our context, cultures, and cosmologies in mind. Benyera (2021) argues that, similarly, debates have been raised by scholars in the United States and England. They have been contending with the everyday impacts of developments from these technologies on human rights and how they perpetuate existing inequalities as the algorithms used in the development of these technologies learn from an unequal socio-economic and political environment (Olaitan et al. 2021). What has been visible from Western countries as a result of social equality scholars and activists is also how the development space for these technologies is led by one main demographic – white males. What does this mean for decolonial and transformation scholarship in South Africa and elsewhere in a context where data mining by large Western corporations is not regulated or is under-regulated? Benyera (2021) suggests that the power of the West in the 4IR context is ‘coloniality of data’ and its effects will be similar for those without the same powers. This is evident in how some of the technologies coming out of these data sets are beginning to show discriminatory tendencies against people from Africa.

Education Access Equality and 4IR

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we appreciated the availability of digital tools for teaching and learning as many of us in the higher education sector were thrust into lockdown and in no time forced to find ways to continue teaching and learning (National Planning Commission 2020; Shange 2023). For many that meant converting existing digital tools like WhatsApp to keep in touch with students and to source new tools like the invigilator app (Shange 2023) for online teaching and learning. Some learning management systems (LMS) like Moodle and Canvas were integrated into the university systems to allow for online teaching, examination writing, and assessments. These LSMs were not without challenges. For example, in the distance higher education institution environment of the first author, the pressure to maintain integrity in our online teaching, learning, and assessment during the lockdown required us to use online invigilation or a proctoring app. Although this app was important in allowing exams to continue during lockdown, it came with a multitude of challenges. Shange (2023) found that some of these ordeals included issues with personal data protection, system failures due to the difficulty the app had with recognising dark skin, and pedagogical issues. The issue with 4IR and the recognition of dark skin is an epistemological one and it makes Africans inferior in an effort to recolonise them (Benyera 2021).

As a result of this recolonisation, these current tools ignore transformation imperatives made possible by face-to-face engagements. For example, Shange (2023: 218) makes a case that some of the proctoring tools used do not support "transactional and transformative education". This is a challenge in the South African context as transformation is an important aspect of teaching and learning in the higher education sector. Challenges experienced in a contact institution included students who lived in areas that did not have adequate Wi-Fi signal, overcrowded homes, and digital literacy required for take-home examinations and online assessments (Czerniewicz et al. 2021; Nichols et al. 2023).

In the few years since COVID-19 lockdowns, we have learnt that the 4IR is not a panacea for all societal ills and that it is not all doom and gloom. As much as there are possible wins brought on by AI, there are also challenges. In the teaching and learning space, the challenges have to do with existing inequalities and their continuities. In South Africa, these inequalities are exacerbated by infrastructure challenges. Hlatshwayo (2021) illustrates that electricity challenges in the country impacts equitable access to these technologies. These infrastructure challenges also mean that as a country we are unable to participate optimally in the production spaces of these technologies (Benyera 2021; Khunou 2023). Olaitan et al. (2021: 2) further highlight the importance of readiness for countries in the South to benefit from AI. These readiness challenges include inadequate digital technologies, IT infrastructure, and digital literacy. Without these resources, Olaitan et al. (2021) suggest that countries in the South will be impacted negatively by 4IR developments. Continuing resource challenges would also mean a further decline in employment as the adoption of these new technologies will mean more job losses. Benyera (2021) argues that 4IR will lead to deindustrialisation in Africa, and this is why unemployment will increase.

Notwithstanding, a country like South Africa can benefit from the possibilities offered by the 4IR. These possibilities include addressing unemployment, poverty, inequality, improved public service delivery, organisational efficiency, and deindustrialisation (Olaitan et al. 2021; Sey & Mudongo 2021). The first opportunity lies in education. Olaitan et al. (2021: 3) suggest that "to avert the risk of job losses, there should be sufficient investment in training of the future workforce and retraining of the existing workforce". This is similarly articulated by Sey and Mudongo (2021), who argue for the importance of deliberate skilling if Africa is to compete in the scientific development of AI technologies and the challenge of bias automated decision-making.

While Sey and Mudongo (2021) argue for positive possibilities presented by skilling and AI impacts in Africa, the chapter cautions against the challenges of leap-frog strategies, showing how the ideas of acceleration in the African context have failed to make the continent competitive, an equal player, in previous revolutions. Catching up does not always work due to historical distortions and their continuing inefficiencies. To avoid these possible inefficiencies in skilling to accelerate, Sey and Mudongo (2021: 7) make the argument that whilst

> rapid skills development can produce short-term boosts in expertise; however, in the long-term, the result might be a work-ready, but narrowly tooled workforce with primarily entry-level job capabilities (Garrido & Sey, 2016). In contrast, the slower (e.g., formal education system) route may produce less work-ready graduates, but with a broader knowledge base, critical thinking preparation and more readiness for management-level positions.

Therefore, it is important for universities to urgently take on appropriate teaching for this new era.

Opportunities and Challenges for Using Technology in Formal Education Systems

Opportunities for TEL in teaching and learning

The world as we know it has changed and continues to change as we move beyond the pandemic days. There are some changes that have been positive such as the greater and wider use of TEL and how blended learning has become the new normal. Soon all students both at distance and contact institutions will develop greater agency and will request TEL as part of a central requirement for curriculum design.

For a distance university where students come from all walks of life, the use of TEL and Authentic eLearning has been a boon for allowing students from various geographical areas to gain access to knowledge and qualifications. Simmone Titus (2024), an educator from South Africa, regards the creation of personalised learning as one of the affordances of AI in higher education. Titus suggests that personalised learning is a significant benefit because learning can be adapted to the needs of the students and this adaptation is part of an ethic of care. Another advantage is that TEL offers multiple perspectives and gives students a wider range of knowledge sources. This access teaches students skills in the discernment of information and critical thinking.

A huge opportunity of online resources is that it results in flexible anytime learning by extending classroom learning to online learning. In this way, students have access to knowledge when and where they choose to study, which is most beneficial for part-time students. The opportunities of using pedagogical theory to better design courses using TEL can result in:

- The development of critical thinking and decision-making skills (Cottrell 2017).
- The consumption, construction, and co-construction of knowledge (Herrington et al. 2010).
- The development of understanding where to seek and discover information and tell fake news from facts.
- Learning how to collaborate in online spaces for peer learning (Zurita & Nussbaum 2004).
- The development of reflective and reflexive skills (Özverir 2014).
- The availability of a multidimensional approach to learning (Herrington et al. 2010).
- The development of skills in using the World Wide Web for students' learning, both for current studies and beyond, thus increasing the skills that will be required in the real world.

The development and design of courses using pedagogical theories that support the use of TEL may include theories such as the Community of Inquiry (COI) social cognitive and teaching presence (Garrison & Arbaugh 2007), Laurillard's Conversational Theory (Laurillard 1999), the Authentic eLearning framework (Herrington et al. 2010), and Wenger's Community of Practice (Wenger 1998). It must be clear that this list is just the tip of the iceberg and there are various other learning theories. For example, the Authentic eLearning framework is useful as it emphasises the use of "complex, realistic task[s] closely linked to real world professional practices" (Herrington et al. 2010:

58). This framework is important in the South African context as transformative teaching and learning should be constantly contextualised. Then again, it is clear as South African higher education moves forward after the COVID-19 pandemic that TEL and 4IR will be a necessary and essential part of this journey. In doing so, one needs to be cognisant of the constraints.

Challenges of TEL

While there are significant affordances of working in the 4IR period using TEL, there are some very real challenges that require attention, especially when considering the social justice and ethics of care considerations. High on this list of constraints is reaching students who live and work in poorer areas that have unstable Wi-Fi and have to contend with expensive data. In a study by Msekelwa (2023: 59), writing from the Eastern Cape, the issue of expensive data was captured thus by one of his participants: "The cost of one hundred megabytes is relatively high, amounting to twenty-nine rand, and its usage duration is limited to a mere twenty minutes". For poor students having to study online, a 20-minute purchase is not enough as one lecture lasts for about 45 minutes. In addition, concerns about poor network coverage remain a huge infrastructure challenge for online learning.

Another big concern about using TEL is that many educators have gone back to a chalk-and-talk mode of teaching, partly because this is what they know best and partly because of insufficient training and fear of technology. Often, the statement is made 'I am a BBT', which means 'born before technology'. Thus, the need for effective personalised and discipline-specific training is required to upskill educators to design courses for specific use in a TEL environment. This specificity will foster the learning goals of students and integrate transformative principles, and not just as a repository for storing information.

Often, the reason cited to go back to traditional ways of teaching and learning is the fear that once students begin to use AI, real concerns around plagiarism will arise. The need to teach students how to use AI is a matter of grave importance. Equally important is teaching students the skills to distinguish fake from authentic facts. One way to overcome this fear is by asking students to get a first draft of an assignment from ChatGPT or other programmes, hand this in as a first draft, and then rework the assignment. In this way, the learning is designed to use AI to develop ideas and concepts and then refinement by students so that through the process of iteration, learning is enhanced.

AI based on large language models from the global North has been seen to be biased, racist, and even unethical. Consequently, Cheuk (2021) advocates for a more socially just type of machine learning. There are various examples of how machine learning has prejudiced people of colour. For example, money lenders who used an algorithmic model to screen their clients have found that it created "discriminatory impacts for Latinx and African American borrowers" (Bartlett et al. 2019). In another study, Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) discovered that machine learning resulted in Black females being the most misclassified group in three commercial classification models, unlike that of white males. Therefore, white normative able-bodied people are more privileged by AI because it is mainly developed in the West from data mined from these contexts (Bunyera 2021).

In South Africa, English is the most used language for teaching and assessment and educators need to be mindful of how students who have English as an additional language may be discriminated against as they might not speak standard academic English. The use of African languages in teaching and learning is a fundamental transformation issue, and many universities in South Africa have put in place language policies to address it. However, what we see is that these languages have still not made it into the teaching and learning space. With the introduction of 4IR, we see possibilities of further marginalisation of these languages and, most importantly, those who speak these languages. Many students do code-switch when learning and may struggle to express themselves in academic English, which may prejudice them when AI and machine learning programmes are used for screening. Thus, their thinking "is at odds with how it polices linguistic borders and place learners into proficiency bins" (Cheuk 2021: 828).

Structural Factors and TEL

Any discussion of the cost benefits of AI involves open access to all, which requires open-source software and Open Education Resources (OERs) so that there is a socially just and ethical manner in which knowledge is shared, curated, and reused. Other benefits include allowing all people to build and use ethical AI systems. Proceeding with an ethical framework and decolonised curriculum, mindful stewardship is important so that the Internet can be a tool for good with the potential to solve many global problems (Goldstuck 2024; Johnson & Wetmore 2009). TEL and 4IR offer great conditions for emergent learning and cultural cognisance of complexity theory. Using TEL and a variety of activities to engage students and educators across disciplines and institutions to co-create African homegrown magic and solutions is possible.

Given that teaching and learning do not exist in a vacuum, co-creation is important for the effective uptake of TEL in the South African context. This co-creation should be based on the idea that there are other factors that support the effective and efficient use of TEL and AI. These factors include physical infrastructure and shared personnel for upskilling of staff. Below is a list of some of the possible scenarios for how these factors can come together for effective TEL in Africa and South Africa.

- Higher education institution infrastructure – creation of spaces where students can work. In East London, a town in the Eastern Cape province, there is a new library called the Phyllis Ntantala Collaborative Library centre where three higher education institutions offer services to students, including a safe 24-hour learning space, with ongoing power, good lighting, and desks. In a face-to-face establishment, the library is easily accessible physically and users can borrow both physical and digital resources with friendly and helpful staff.
- Professional development and training. Benyera (2021) illustrates that Africa is lagging behind in terms of appropriate skilling for effective engagement in 4IR, whilst future thinking shows that 4IR will lead to growing unemployment

for those whose jobs will be replaced by 4IR. Unlike the current education system that teaches remembering, we need to teach critical thinking skills, innovation, and solution-oriented thinking.

- Financial and infrastructure support policies. We will not be able to participate optimally in the 4IR with our current electricity challenges and other communication-related infrastructure problems.
- Content creation in Indigenous languages.
- Access to water is another structural challenge necessary for effective teaching and learning. Water shedding, like electricity load-shedding, is a concern that faces students and educators alike.
- Improve the ability to download information from LMS, use it without Wi-Fi, and ensure the use of LMS and online resources are mobile friendly.
- The careful and nuanced use of data analytics to support students and not just for punitive measures to identify students at risk.
- The creation of learning centres and libraries for differently-abled students.

It is clear there will be future challenges and disasters, and the use of TEL and 4IR can offer more opportunities for educators to change learning environments to suit the needs of contextual occurrences and learning conditions.

Conclusion

As we navigate the changes of 4IR after COVID-19, we are forced to think of both the challenges and opportunities. This is important as history teaches that Africa has not benefited equally from the previous three Industrial Revolutions. We are thus called to engage with the question of what would be different with the 4IR. This is especially important given that the 4IR was introduced in the South African context at a time when many were looking for strengthened funding and agenda setting on transformation.

What the chapter has illustrated is that even though the 4IR brings mirrored challenges, it also brings possibilities in the teaching and learning space. It is, however, unfortunate that these opportunities will require a lot of catching up as South Africa and the rest of the continent are still caught up in challenges of poverty, inequality, and growing unemployment with a possibility of continuities as the 4IR brings rapid deindustrialisation. The possibilities in TEL hold some positives for not only improving access for students but also for providing the necessary training for improved participation in 4IR. However, these possibilities require co-creation and a recentring of African languages.

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Chapter 7

Why are we Here? Challenging Agents of Revolutions through Independent Transformation

Tebogo Victoria Kgope

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) simply informs us that humans can no longer trust each other, let alone trust themselves, and that we feel better immersing ourselves and trusting machines, robotics, simulated automation, etc. In the context of seeking appropriate analytical modes of understanding in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), the saying that *motho ke motho ka batho* is re-imagined, meaning you are human because of other people's humanness to you. If *motho ke motho ka batho* can machines that are tasked to do what human beings can do also become machinery because of other robust robotic machines? The search for answers also guards against contestations that warn against the existence of superstitious thinking to embrace evidence-led scientific thinking. However, in applying what may commonly be assumed as superstitious thinking when Credo Mutwa warned against the French and Russian industrial revolutions on actions that would propel Africans to adapt to foreign ways of living, we learn and observe as this chapter affirms that the perceived superstitious thinking was Mutwa's African scientific thinking which is evidenced today. 'We' is used here provocatively to denote in plurality the ancestors or those who walk with someone. It is fundamentally used in the realm and unity of considering that the AI algorithms are also categorised as a "set of rules that instruct a computer to execute specific tasks". Similarly, with the consideration of ancestors as guiding through a set of ancestral algorithms, one is also able to execute tasks that are instructed to them. We showcase how it is easier to

take up developments from algorithms that emerge elsewhere, specifically in the global North than for Africa and Africans to assume and resume development and independence from what they have in the global South and accelerate this development to the global world. The chapter concludes that Mutwa(ian) algorithms inform that the African Renaissance is the equivalence of self-discovery and the fearlessness of breaking the oath of one's cultural norms.

Introduction

While it is important to indicate why context matters, it is not only intersecting social theory with the epistemic and ontological realities of the (geo) politics of knowledge (Mignolo 2011) where transformation and adoption of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) development are navigated from one's locus of enunciation. The context in this chapter also applies partially to realities observed in the global North especially when there are ethical dilemmas because of newly-formed and engineered revolutions that shift how we work and pursue education in institutions of higher learning. Artificial intelligence (AI) simply informs us that humans can no longer trust each other, let alone trust themselves, and that we feel better immersing ourselves and trusting machines, robotics, simulated automation, etc. Asante (2004: 3) cautioned against technological advances and various modes of telecommunications in creating Africans who "move mindlessly in an abstract world of machines and telecommunication equipment". For example, dependence means "reliance on tools, instruments, machines, computers and weapons of war" with disconnection to the human spirit (Asante 2004: 4). Therefore, it is necessary to ask, if AI machines can do what human beings are created for and knowing being human is a function of other people's humanness, can humanity be robotised?

The 4IR, in the context of seeking appropriate analytical modes of understanding, create the reimagination of the saying that *motho ke motho ka batho*, meaning you are human because of other people's humanness to you. If *motho ke motho ka batho* can machines that are tasked to do what human beings can do also become intensely machinery because of other robust robotic machines? Segun (2021: 104), Marwala (2020: 173; 2021) and others support that AI machines can be aligned with existing human values from an African perspective. I argue that overreliance and dependence on 4IR can be curbed when one asserts one's ancestral algorithms or ancestors that walk with you.

Öhman (2024: 3) also agrees that AI models "through their perceived extra human superiority are just like religious communities that submit to the superior wisdom of their ancestors". Öhman (2024: 2) asserts that "many forms of AI should be interpreted as forms of gods". Hence, this chapter argues that an African intellectual sage, Credo Mutwa, revolutionised the same superintelligence by drawing from his ancestral algorithms or hidden knowledge of his ancestors. I contend that it is problematic when Black or African-derived revolutions are superseded by revolutions that emerge elsewhere, in many cases from the global North. Therefore, this chapter uses the conceptual framework of Credo Mutwa to discuss how an African renaissance and revolution derived from the global South can be immortalised through Mutwa's indigenous ways of knowing.

The question asking why we are where we are is an appreciative inquiry into the emergence of the First, Second, Third, and, now the most palpable and disruptive Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which is more illuminated within the scope of this chapter. The positionality and contexts in this chapter depict real-life social and theoretical realities due to afflictions and confrontations caused by agents of powerful revolutions. In this regard, 4IR in creating modes of being left behind as industries of work, institutions of higher learning, and societies at large. The state and zone of being in the modes of feeling left behind is also an inquiry that asks where the elevation is and embraces a Black or African revolution. Why is it always Blacks in their numerical majority who are at the helm of promoting that which was not invented by them? Even in the state of being faced by the three spheres of inequality, poverty, and unemployment, Black people and the most marginalised are challenged by the niceties of every revolution (Chauke et al. 2023).

The author of this chapter is not an expert in AI technologies. However, avowers, as an Indigenous African scholar, the importance of elevating African ways of thinking in developing Africa and the global world at the same wavelength with theories of Western modernity. For AI enhances the dominance of Western values and theories of knowledge that alienates African ways of knowing (Muldoon & Wu 2023). These concerns pose serious ontological and epistemological difficulties for transformation and its role in redressing the injustices of the past. This is important to elucidate especially in higher education systems where discourses on African epistemologies and Black existentialism ought to inform curriculum reform. It would also appear as if the arrival of the 4IR is the largest disrupter contributing to the widening inequalities in society (Mhlanga & Ndhlovu 2023). The chapter seeks to challenge the existing and dominant revolutions by demonstrating and arguing how Credo Mutwa's alleged superstitious thinking is in fact scientific thinking that utilises and applies algorithmic data enhanced by the ancestors.

It is the negated labelling of what is equally scientific thinking that should be embraced as a restoration of balance in all that seeks to destabilise and erase the value and relevance of Indigenous epistemologies. What is problematic is when Indigenous epistemologies as a potential area of research have less hegemony and currency than AI, a phenomenon that has more currency than other transformational aspects. Transformation, often applied as a "political keyword[,] is propelled from long experiences and intense contestations around hierarchical, authoritarian and exclusive practices of decision making" by the higher education sector (Jansen 2023: 103). The Council on Higher Education (2022: 1) views transformation in the higher education sector to show a nation's "social progress, in particular when all forms of unfair discrimination have been eradicated and injustices of the past are redressed".

It is adequate to suggest that the application of AI should be rejected in some forms, especially when AI specifications do not demonstrate affection to African contexts. What Carman and Rosman (2021: 13,16) recommend has the potential for enactment as they argue for the principle of explicability in AI as requiring contextual sensitivity in its application. They concur that this must be balanced with relevant principles compatible with the values and needs of where people live, that is, when considering our African realities. Some level of responsibility in rejecting AI should at least conform to Helfrich's (2024) attributes that AI technologies pose an existential risk. This is especially true in the global South where people may experience harm over the development and deployment of AI (Helfirich 2024: 4).

The noise and publicity given towards AI, machine learning, etc. far outweigh the vision for Agenda 2063 with its notion of striving for the Africa we want. It would appear as if the 4IR era is a catalyst to disrupt while spontaneously at speed AI is painting what it envisions for (South) Africa and the global community. Birhane (2020: 393) writes: "tech monopolies project algorithmic colonialism that is dressed in technological solutions for the developing world and often receive the applause as they rarely face resistance and scrutiny". As a result, there is more applause and a lack of resistance to AI algorithmic technology but resistance when accelerating the African Agenda.

Marwala (2020: 172) does concur that "AI fears are not completely baseless, that AI can be programmed to create AI weapons or develop destructive methods of performing otherwise-simple tasks, there are already misuses of digital and 4IR technology". What counts as knowledge in the 4IR era is also contested based on who and how many citizens are influenced, and what the impact is (Mbembe 2021: 87). Marwala (2020) gives an account worth noting, especially today. In 2019, the house of Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the US House representative, was reduced in power by 25% so that her speech may appear altered as if her words were incoherent. Post the 2019 AI interference, in October 2022, Nancy Pelosi's husband was attacked with a hammer in their own house. To position this example in the context of this chapter, it supports the fact that indeed "AI fears are not unfounded" and that (lack of) showing independence on anything that poses as AI risks has the potential to bring unnecessary harm. It is Marwala (2020: 173) who also warns that humans are the ones who should persist in the regulation of AI "so that AI machines can be able to do what we want them to do".

To indicate that the previous statement is problematic, Marwala (2020: 173) is also concerned with the challenge of how ensuring control would be measured and on what type or set of ethical principles. The previous example is once more relevant as one remembers how the same US government recently warned South Africa of an imminent terror attack that did not occur, a moment that had everyone questioning the security intelligence of South Africa (Arde 2022). What may be assumed as superstitious thinking would kick in in terms of questioning whether this false alert was a reckoning or reaction towards South Africa's response to constantly abstain or even demonstrate condemnation in the continuing Russian-Ukraine war. Wiredu (1997) supports the idea that the African discourse has not always been supported by Western thinking. Could this have been a typical "misuse of digital and 4ir technology" (Marwala 2021) that was about to create AI weapons to strike terror in South Africa? In this case, I argue that whatever the response could be to this question, what remains a fact is that the ethical dilemmas, fears, and crises of the social-technological-political issues in AI have been substantiated to be a cause of concern (Helfrich 2024). Refusal of AI should apply when Western-developed AI is incompatible with African problems (Birhane 2020: 389).

A Conceptual Framework from Mutwa for Transformation

Compelling an African revolution and Black consciousness in his seminal book, *Indaba, My Children* (1964), healer and Indigenous knowledge holder, Credo Mutwa stimulates our revolution by locating us geopolitically:

> One day our descendants will want to know something about their own native heritage in Africa. They will want to bring about a Bantu Renaissance. It has happened to many races, this is inevitable self-discovery, and it shall happen to you too. Oh my fellow Africans, and much sooner than you think. What is there for the modern African to

> look back upon? If the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Russian Revolution, and the American War of Independence mean absolutely nothing to the African, as far as his heritage is concerned, what else is there that will mean anything to him? Can he find such things in a library? (Mutwa 1964: 690).

The threats and promises of foreign revolutions were already stated by Mutwa to pose weaknesses that would afflict the Black majority class in ways that would erode their emancipation. The realisation or awakening would command Black people to stimulate their African renaissance and Indigenous epistemologies. The calls for decolonisation, Africanisation, and transformation of knowledge systems in higher education are evidence of this renaissance.

Decolonisation, like transformation, is also a keyword illustrating the relevance of socialising Black people within their culture while unlearning the disconnections that have been posed by colonial mentality. Colonial mentality disengages Africans away from their ways of knowing and understanding, what Mutwa termed the works of the "strange ones" (Mutwa 1964). And when Black people lack the foresight presented to them by the strange Eurocentric knowledge production, everything about Africans becomes peripheral and marginal. Hence Mbembe (2021: 56) aptly argues that "the absence of a theory of knowledge and a theory of institutions" makes the order to decolonise a "compensatory act to heal what amounts to racial shame". This is the shame that has caused Blacks to see themselves in the margins and periphery while they promote revolutions that emerge from the West (Nyamnjoh 2016). Hence Mbembe (2021: 56) contends that to date it is still not clear what a "truly decolonized knowledge might look like". What Mbembe (2021) alludes to as a lack of both the theory of knowledge and the theory of institutions is what Africanisation seeks to do. When true Africanisation has taken place, what resembles decolonised knowledge will be evident. Msila (2021: 313) explores Africanisation as embedding African culture and values that promote an inculcation of African ways of thinking for an African renaissance. Mutwa was South Africa's renowned and phenomenal ancient knowledge keeper who was instructively clear about the Bantu or the African Renaissance as comparable to African her(story) or history.

As indicated, it remains unclear what decolonised knowledge might look like. I position Credo Mutwa as a mirror or *seipone* that portends what decolonisation and Africanisation are. *Seipone* is a Setswana translation for a mirror, *go ipona*, meaning to have pride in oneself, to look at oneself, for example, honour in African values and, in particular, humane values. In the context of this chapter, which asks why we are where we are, being challenged by revolution after revolution in poverty, unemployment, and inequality, I argue how Mutwa's gaze at Africans' challenges are unmatched. Mutwa said history should not be scoffed at or mocked. We learn the same from Kovach (2021), who is scholastic about this, stating that "the purpose of decolonization and transformation is to create space in everyday life. Through research, academia, and society to reach indigenous perspectives that are free from being neglected, shunted aside, mocked, or dismissed" (Kovach 2021: 85). This explains why Mutwa's elementary contribution in this chapter participates in epistemic and ontological disobedience by referring that "the reason the Strange Ones have repeatedly made ridiculous mistakes in South Africa and Africa is that the Black man has consistently been too scared, too reserved to explain himself clearly" (Mutwa 1964: 692). The mocking and scoffing acts of African Indigenous episteme not only inferiorise the domain of this knowledge but reveal contempt for those who relate with Indigenous episteme and by those who are "consistently too scared, too suspicious or even too reserved to explain the self clearly" (Mutwa 1964: 692).

What is the purpose of conceptualising Mutwa's Indigenous African knowledge as appropriate for transformation in the education sector? I put it forward that as a historically marginalised knower, his knowledge of the Bantu or Africans centres concrete African ontologies, epistemologies, spiritualism, and ways of how to constitute African institutions of power. This positionality is useful for transformation because the level of criticism and lack of support for revolutionary thinking from Mutwa's lens has been misunderstood (Kgope 2023; Podolecka

2018). I argue Mutwa's position here by indicating reasons why Black women and men of Africa have allowed themselves to consistently be dominated by revolutions of the "robot-like world" (Mutwa 1964: 691) using Lewis Gordon's analyses from *Fear of Black Consciousness* (2022). The fact that "the Black man has consistently been too scared" (Mutwa 1964) and to date is even frightened to elevate their existence is a disengaged mode of epistemic disobedience by suicidally engaging in their epistemicide.

For Gordon (2022: 19,125) the zone of being scared or too reserved implies that one would still face the oppression of the dominant revolutions that are rife and that another reason could also be a "revelation of a feared truth of Black empowerment". This is the fear that Mutwa describes the African as being too scared and reserved to express his or her knowledge. It is my contention that being "too scared or too reserved" as espoused by Mutwa (1964) explains the question this chapter so aptly asks, why are we where we are, that is, the question is based on the timelines that constantly prove that the marginalised knowledges, herein, Indigenous epistemologies of the global South are always overpowered by knowledges derived from the global North. Therefore, I argue that being too scared, too suspicious, or even too reserved to promote African revolutionary epistemologies can have several meanings in higher education. It can result from feelings of being ashamed of one's culture and African being-ness, an epistemology that demands a theory and praxis of African identities; the suspiciousness emanates from *batho ba tlareng,* i.e., what will people say when one promotes a scholarship that has complexities that have been painted as barbaric and backward, in this regard Black men and women become frightened. I maintain again that the 'reserved' mode is observed when it is easier to accept and approve developments that emerge elsewhere, specifically in the North than for Africa and Africans to begin their development and independence from what they have in the South and take this development to the global world as Africa's renaissance and revolution to the world.

On another point, Mutwa (1964) believes that Western knowledge has repeatedly made mistakes in Africa that made

Blacks too scared to challenge Western modernity. Gordon (2022) alludes to the repetitions of mistakes made by Western worldviews, what Mutwa refers to as the strange ones as a validation of fear that Black consciousness will happen, specifically, Black power in its essence and existence. To advance these arguments it also implies a response to why we are where we are. It is because agents of domineering revolutions, revolutions that Credo Mutwa referred to continue these "ridiculous mistakes" (Mutwa 1964: 692) that propel Western paradigms because of Black inferiority complex being scared and too reserved to exude Black power what yields African unity and African renaissance.

Transforming Societal Rituals According to Decolonial Principles and Thinking in Black

Using the context of real-life social and theoretical realities this depicts and indicates where we are in terms of the transformation of a reformed curriculum that speaks to our own African realities. I highlight some of the Eurocentric mistakes mentioned by Mutwa (1964) as characterised by the symbolic posturing of the developments of the inauguration of the Zulu monarch, King Misuzulu kaZwelithini. During the inauguration, the Anglican church rituals were performed on the king. The act of the ritual attracted myriad contestations, claiming that the king's "handing-over ceremony amounts to an attempt at recolonisation" (Mavuso 2022).

The concept of recolonisation is not new. When it was advocated by Ali Mazrui (1993: 60), he referred to it foreseeably as follows: "the recolonisation of the future will not be based on the white man's burden or lion of Judah, it may instead be shared on a shared human burden". Mazrui, like Mutwa, is very instinctive in writings that compel African revolution and existentialism. Mazrui's (1993) analogy of recolonisation, when used with what appears as contestations of the Anglican rituals performed on the Zulu monarch's coronation, does in some ways impart that Africans will continue to have a burden when Judeo-Christian faiths encroach on their African traditional religions and Zulu culture. The term ‘recolonisation’, according to Mazrui, can also be argued that the “burden over the lion of Judah” is synonymous with Black discourses that argue on the relevance of Jesus in African history, hence the burden of the “lion of Judah” or Christianity. This aspect posed a cultural dilemma for the Zulu royal king’s coronation. Again, the question of why we are where we are, discussing these matters remains pertinent for posterity.

In the context of this chapter, the disjuncture performed engages a need for institutions of higher learning to engage with traditional authorities in intellectual decolonisation (Mamdani 2016). Mamdani espouses that when a scholar or academic engages with organic or public intellectuals there is social cohesion. This form of social cohesion has been welcomed by scholarly networks, however, more work that is free from fear of Black consciousness needs to bring a revolution and ascend (College of Graduate Studies 2021). These social and scholarly collaborators are crucial for the independent transformation of all sectors. It is scholarly collaborations in the form of community partnerships that address the challenges of working in isolation at the community level (Ditlhake 2022: 186). According to Gram-Hanssen et al. (2022), transformation and decolonisation demonstrate ‘interconnections that ensure sustainability in different relations”. Gram-Hanssen et al. (2022) believe that when the concept of ‘right relations’ is exercised transformation is reciprocal. This reciprocity is in terms of Black thoughts and Black thinking claiming their traditions because they have been misused and misinterpreted (Andrews 2018; Chidester 2013).

Challenges with Current Coloniality in Scholarly Traditions

Vuyo Mvoko asked not long ago why are we where we are based on the lack of diversity in the context of schools in South Africa, where Andile Mngxitama, political leader and leader of Black First Land First, lambasted the lack of transformation in the schooling sector which he blamed on the lack of not forging justice by starting with the victimised, i.e., Black people, “the Black child” (SABC News 2022). Dlamini (2022), excluded from the academy for not being "too scared or too reserved" to explain and tell the world what Black existentialism and renaissance should entail, writes that:

> In SA, black people have to work hard to be integrated in a system that was meant to exclude them and once in the system they have to ensure they do not offend those who control the system (Dlamini 2022).

Dlamini's exposition is his lived reality of having suffered being expelled for applying what Mutwa recommends as a method of challenging the claws of foreign revolutions. By expressing his 'likes and dislikes' in the higher education sector resulted in him being socially and economically excluded. I argue that applying Mutwa's framework of thinking in Black (Andrews 2018) and in a place of African justice validates that those who exclude others are sell-outs. Those who are selling out, sell the knowledge that is emanating from the strange ones (Mutwa 1964), i.e., knowledge from the global North.

Mngxitama (SABC News 2022) also attests that it is the experiences of the victimised that must be attended to, alluding that Westernisation or whiteness has not adequately come to the fore or raised its hands to say it has benefited from dominant revolutions. With this acknowledgement, Mngxitama posits that Westernisation must come up with a plan for reparations (SABC News 2022). Mngxitama's ventilation herein corroborates what Mutwa (1964: 692) said about "the strange ones or Westernisation as repeatedly making mistakes in Africa because the Black man is too scared or too reserved". The repeated mistakes are what Mngxitama rightly describe as failures of whiteness and agents of dominating revolutions to raise a hand and say this is how reparations will be conveyed.

Mutwa (1964: 692) would respond to the question of emerging revolutions that it is because the Black man has not adequately stressed to the whole world "who and what he (she) is, what are his (her) likes and dislikes, what we believe in and what we hope for". Mutwa (1964: 534) would further reiterate that we are in this current timeline challenged by every revolution after revolution because "the troubles seen in Africa today, the unnecessary death and suffering for which agitators and communists are conveniently blamed have origin in one thing only, the ignorance of your forebears". Mutwa is very explicit here, advancing that we are in this rude awakening as a people, as a nation, as institutions of higher learning because of the ill-conceived superiority and arrogance that was assumed post-1994. Mutwa (1964) states that it is this arrogance that is entrenched as "colonial powers of Africa" that will continue to cause "much bloodshed and suffering in Africa in the near future" due to arrogance. In the context of this chapter, the arrogance observed in the current situations of unnecessary strife, suffering, deaths, etc., where little is done to remedy the situations are implications that depict the existing dismemberment and erosion of African epistemologies from institutions of higher learning. The latter is also because "universities have failed to do much, if anything, to change the curriculum since the demise of apartheid" (Heleta 2016: 3).

Similarly, the notion of inclusive education when it comes to Black scholarship and curriculum transformation is not given the necessary attention it deserves compared to the dominating Western-centric system as an included form of education. In the context of this chapter and this section, a summation is made that concurs with Gordon (2022: 162) that "Black consciousness is political, but it is a quest for liberation which requires a radical change of society, we could also call it revolution". This statement is also evidenced next when key observations of Credo Mutwa's statements and evidence are politicised and not conferred the deserved liberating revolution as with statements and corroborations that originate from Western domination.

4IR Scholarship and Doing Knowledge in the Context of Covid-19

Although the challenges that emerge from the 4IR are numerous, studies in the institutionalisation of 4IR in the context of higher education indicate that "most universities have adopted blended learning to implement the convergence between human and machines in the 4IR era" (Moloi & Salawu 2020). While in the category of those who hold managerial positions, Mayer et al. (2021:10) report that managers have a good understanding of the need to upskill and reskill during the 4IR. However, they indicate that their study included the participation of a population of ten white males and seven females. The survey does not depict various South African cultures.

These challenges in the form of inequality, poverty, and unemployment are also incited by the 4IR as a disrupter of all things (Kgope 2022: 216,219; Nhede et al. 2022) and encourage a mode of re-thinking, re-membering, and re-learning processes that increase local and marginalised scholarship as espoused by Mkandawire (2011) for the sake of African development and radical change that call for better livelihoods. Mkandawire (2011: 13) emphasises that "the catch-up mode of proceeding with the demands of the competitive global world is fraught with all kinds of risks". In other words, the constant pursuit of running to speed up African or Africa's development with the rest of the world is not without disparities that always hamper the livelihoods of those who are vulnerable. In his recent book, *The New Apartheid*, Mpofu-Walsh (2021: 106) points out that the current and emerging new apartheid in South Africa "has entered the age of techno-capital, in this age Black people still risk becoming hewers of code and drawers of data". A phenomenon which is the true reality of many Black people.

Alexander (2021) states that the transformation brought by AI and the 4IR not only poses risks and ethical dilemmas but also changes "how the economy operates and how people's daily lives are structured". As indicated previously, 4IR may pose threats that come with shortcomings in skills. This is why Feyerabend's (1978) ancient philosophy of science remains relevant and important as it challenges African nations to be cautious of "the kind of technology and science it imports into the continent" (Akpan 2005: 61).

This section addresses the context of this chapter as an interrogation of why we are where we are, the response deliberating on rejecting AI is unwise. Rejecting some of these revolutions is often not an option for many African countries and nations which remain underdeveloped. Also, the modes of wanting to catch up with the rolling technological advancements that are brought by Western development often leave Africa and Africans as consumers and hewers of big data. This is despite the inequalities that affect Africans in the main, e.g., the rate of high unemployment in the youth in South Africa (Oyedemi & Choung 2020; Statistics South Africa 2023) remains a challenge for the transformation of the higher education sector. In summarising this section for a transformed scholarship, I concur with Marwala (2021:2) that

> [t]hose who are interested in science and technology should also be required to study the human and social sciences and similarly, those who are interested in human and social sciences should also be required to study science and technology (Marwala 2021: 2).

Using this leadership style alluded to by Marwala (2021) in the academy is an act of "decolonizing research sensibility" (Donald 2012). Breaking the oath of being rigid in disciplinarity, which means disengaging the "abyssal divide found in western thinking" (De Sousa Santos 2007). A critical point that a transformed scholarship ought to drive home is when an African will feel comfortable wherever they are in the world, that is, in scholarship and their interpretations of such a scholarship in terms of African ways of understanding (Kgope 2022: iv). Similarly, Hart et al. (2023) assert that scholarship should entail reciprocal partnerships.

Superstitious Thinking Versus Scientific Thinking: Doing Knowledge in the Context of Covid-19 and 4IR

This section underscores what a disengaged mode of Western scientific thinking is and how the alleged superstitious thinking in Mutwa's work is essentially scientific thinking. I also expand on how this knowledge and its thinking is merged with ancestral algorithms as a set of rules that also apply to African spiritual healers. Mutwa (1964: 657) writes that African indigenous people "believe in omens which they interpret as outward warning signals sent by the soul to warn the body" but "Europeans call this phenomenon superstition". It is these signals that are a pattern of one's ancestral algorithms. The case in point is how in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the global world including in South Africa, the warning signals that Mutwa discovered many years ago would be experienced as positions of indecent human capture by the 4IR. But because of the paralysis of undermining African knowledge systems what Mutwa designed as sculptures of metal works that epitomised exactly what resembles what the world of the 4IR employs as caricatures of the world and symbolism of robotics has not been comprehended by many. This implies that the educational sector is lagging in dissecting in theory and praxis what those who like Mutwa *see* as visions.

Mutwa was also perceived as controversial and, most of the time, he was misunderstood. For example, his exposition of having seen extra-terrestrial beings or aliens, which he later called the Chitauri, became evident during the COVID-19 era. I contend that what Mutwa foresaw as the Chitauri is similar to what today the 4IR utilises to epitomise the world of AI robotics in the images used. AI has captured the world by propelling accelerated digital transformation that divides human beings. Mutwa (1999: 30) alerted us that the:

> Chitauli means the dictators, the ones who tell us the law and that these are the creatures that took away the great powers that human beings had, the power of speaking through the mind only, the power of moving objects with their mind only, the power of seeing into the future and their past and the power to travel spiritually to different worlds.

Producing knowledge in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 4IR brought elements of what Mutwa attests to in this statement. As observed with many technological tools that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is evident how the innate powers that human beings possess are made to lie dormant and less functional due to the overreliance on these technological advancements. The value of superstitious thinking as would be demeaned by many is again empirically scientifically observed in what is evidenced to date with the 4IR. What I argue is that Mutwa had already visualised the AI era through the Chitauli and metalworks he sculptured. A study that corroborates the relevance of superstitious thinking concluded that:

> As coping mechanisms, superstitions are culturally specific and have documented effectiveness for understanding events that cannot be controlled. If their use during the COVID-19 pandemic provided a therapeutic benefit for direct care providers and any perceived control over the challenging circumstances, superstitions should be embraced and supported. (Thomassy et al. 2021: 217).

By alluding that superstitious thinking may have the inclination to be found in specific cultural groups, Thomassy et al. (2021) confirm what Mutwa (1964: 657) and Taher et al. (2020) posited that African people are intensely superstitious and modern technologies have not been able to reduce their superstitious tendencies. These superstitious tendencies are also equivalent to one's ancestors' algorithms or *ditaelo* or instructions as superior wisdom from ancestors as entrenched in the individual or, in this context, the higher institution of learning's level of self-knowledge. That is from the perspective of how our educational sector understands itself.

Self-Discovery and Breaking the Oath as Symbolic of the African Renaissance and Black Revolution

In this section, I use the term 'tolerance' to imply that breaking the oath is unprotest-like. Those who embark on its path do not participate in *toyi-toying* despite what confronts them as their daily African realities. My observation is that this muted, unprotest-like state and posture are implicit because of the vast immersion and reliance on the African spiritual, metaphysical lens.

In arguing for counter-hegemony of treating African epistemologies as if they do not exist, it is important to dissect how Africans also downplay the need to uphold and embrace Black scholarship as critical pedagogy. I argue that using indigenous research concepts and methodologies produces an upsurge in African experiences to be in a state of Black supremacy, the supremacy of imperative pedagogy (Kgope 2022: 67). This is an independent transformation in knowledge production and sustainability. For Asante (2011: 50), this independence in transformation is through "interrogating domination", in this case, "being interested in breaking down the barriers that impose unnaturally, herein, artificial, and sometimes arbitrary barriers on human communication". In this way, the application of Mutwa's revolutionary writings makes an exposition to coin them as paving a framework for humanity's liberation (Mutwa 1964: 534) because of their motifs of "interrogating domination". I conclude that Mutwa's framework of human liberation theorises how to obtain an African revolution and renaissance in the algorithmic method of self-discovery and breaking the oath, both yielding a need for a renaissance or revolution in African existentialism. For Mutwa (1964: 693) breaking the oath is an action and curriculum of "bringing out many things hidden in our villages, things that whisper of Africa's not-yet forgotten past".

Mutwa (1964: 693) defends the mode of being in the state of breaking the oath, saying "it is not selling people out to strangers". To advance Mutwa's statement is characteristic of demonstrating epistemic disobedience, and independent thoughts (Mignolo 2009) that have the potential to yield Black independent transformation. Mutwa's (1964: 693) assertion of breaking the oath, as not selling people to strangers but demonstrating independent thoughts of people, was experienced during the COVID-19 outbreak. This was the case particularly when some academic institutions introduced mandatory COVID-19 vaccination shots to those who had access to the sector, i.e., the students and staff. The idea of vaccination was met with a lot of resistance and hesitancy as the ravages of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were widespread (George et al. 2022). The lessons that are learned from one who was a Sanusi, Credo Mutwa, i.e., one who senses things from far, are emphasised by Kgope (2023: 7-8) stating that:

> During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mutwa is reimagined asking about *abantu bethu bazohlawulwa ngani*? *batho ba rona batla rufiwa ka eng*? (What is it that will be compensated for our people?) for this sufferance? During the week the nationwide lockdown was announced, Mutwa decided he was drained, that South Africa could go to hell for all he cared because when he spoke he was stoned, he begged to speak and he would be called a wizard.

Kgope (2023: 7) writes that the global COVID-19 pandemic was a period that also repeated images of the pass-law systems, as observed during the colonial times when Black people had to negotiate their freedom to speak or to pass at certain areas. Hence, during the COVID-19 period, the freedom to be was constrained and negotiated. And as the amalgam of self-knowledge and the ability to break the oath by choosing what appeals and applies to our contexts yield motifs of an African revolution. Those who are imbued with the ancient wisdom that superstitious thinking with its signs and idiosyncrasies is equivalent to scientific thinking, interpreted the timeline at which Mutwa transitioned to his ancestors on 25 March 2020 as critical and meaningful to what futures can be imagined. As he points out in the previous section, Africans believe in signs and warnings which they interpret as warning signals sent by the soul to warn the body (Mutwa 1964: 657).

Since Mutwa was in his geriatric phase, the period of his passing before the COVID-19 pandemic national lockdown is fundamental to highlight as it would warn of many negatives rather than positives that would be experienced. It is the COVID-19 pandemic that propelled the acceleration and introduction of the 4IR scholarship and remote working environments in various sectors. As Mhlanga and Moloi (2020: 9) also assert that although the COVID-19 pandemic "brought massive human suffering across the globe, it presented an opportunity to assess successes and failures of deployed systems because, during the lockdown, various 4IR tools were unleashed for primary education to higher and tertiary education where educational activities switched to remote learning or online learning". When we reflect on the emergence of the Chitauri, as highlighted in the previous section by Mutwa (1999), the Chitauri qualify the prescripts of Indigenous knowledge. I posit that Mutwa's observations of the Chitauri resemble various 4IR tools that remain to be released to date. Therefore, it becomes evident from Mutwa's approach and lens that provided African epistemologies are treated at the same wavelength as Western scholarship, developments that shape Africans and the African continent can also be capitalised on, to shape the global world. Simply put, the voices and visions of those who are like Mutwa should not be left behind, ignored, or locked down. As also examined by Kgope (2023: 7), leadership in South Africa did not consider the Indigenous knowledge wisdom of Mutwa.

Conclusion

The journey of this chapter cannot be concluded as it is aimed to continue to unravel many other aspects that critically reflect on why (South) Africa and Africans are where they are in the current timelines. This chapter has demonstrated through unsystematic accounts that the revolution and renaissance of those who have been oppressed and marginalised are often challenged by already dominating foreign revolutions, in this regard 4IR and rapid changes that were brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. My arguments and analyses also highlighted how exclusion and modes of the need to change in favour of these revolutions are always the norm whether the shoe fits or not.

The chapter illustrated the advanced revolutionary thinking of Credo Mutwa as conceptualised from his seminal work (Mutwa 1964). As painted in some of the scenarios in the chapter, industries and institutions of higher learning have all adopted mechanisms to upskill and reskill to level up with the rest of the world. We have allowed ourselves to be eroded by foreign revolutions that emerge, while what fosters movements of the African revolution, Africanisation, and decolonisation remains at the bottom. Often without questioning and re-questioning, when will we give credibility to an African revolution? 'We' is in this summation applied advisedly to state that the quest and rights to continue this discourse for an African renaissance need Africans who understand themselves. How do Africans understand themselves, Mutwa(ian) conception of self-discovery and breaking the oath leads to a Black man and Black woman's revolution and renaissance. Through breaking the oath, that is, rejecting being 'too scared' and 'too reserved' when foreign revolutions are 'repeatedly' brought to us. This chapter has reignited the need to call for an African revolution so that South Africa and Africa can be positioned in their true African identity to which they belong. The conceptual analysis illustrates that a standard of procedure can be made as an analytical tool that proves that Mutwa's algorithmic method of self-discovery and breaking the oath can lead to an African renaissance and African revolution that delivers a framework for human liberation.

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Chapter 8

A Post-Colonial Influence of Covid-19 and 4IR on the Eroded Higher Educational Indigenous Knowledge – South African Funeral Rites Case Study[1]

Magezi Elijah Baloyi

Abstract

In addition to colonialism being a political conquest, it was also a cultural conquest in which Black people's ways of knowing and doing were relegated to mere superstition and, at some stage, even called barbarism. This attitude played an important role in ensuring that Black people's knowledge and traditions, including those regarding burial, were eroded and their cultural identity diminished and replaced by Western traits. To this day, most African knowledge on funerals and other traditions are unwritten, hence they are excluded from theories and teaching. Indigenous knowledge, which assisted Black people in regulating their lives, has been replaced by Western ways of knowing, but these ways do not give all the necessary answers to the calamities and suffering that Black people go through. The purpose of this research was to highlight that the shift of Indigenous knowledge from the educational sect is a serious concern and will render decolonisation of higher education incomplete if not attended to. The success of colonialism was linked to the demise of African knowledges, the erosion of Black funeral traditions being one example. Therefore, bringing and revising African ways of

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regulating funerals and burials back to the foreground is the focus of this chapter. This centring is done so as to also highlight the COVID-19 context and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and their influences on funeral practices in an African context.

Introduction

There is enough research to indicate that the various African cultures have traditional beliefs and customs regarding death and burial (Setsiba 2012: 16). Then again there is no doubt that colonialism succeeded in pushing the unwritten knowledge about these practices from the centre through unjust colonial wars, miseducation, and the fragmenting of African families and communities. African *ubuntu*, among other traits, was drowned in these unjust colonial wars (Dladla 2017). The demise of this Indigenous knowledge from the centre meant that it was not afforded space in the education system. This decentring of African knowledges and epistemologies in most South African universities have not changed but remained in support of coloniality and Western worldviews (Heleta 2016: 1). It was this notion that forced Waghid (2002) and Terblanche et al. (2023) to argue for the reconsideration of the idea of an *ubuntu* university.

South African and most African education has always been criticised for its lack of relevance to the communities it intends to serve. This question of relevance came up in the #FeesMustFall movement of 2015 in their emphasis on decolonising education and the South African higher education sector. For Kaya and Seleti (2013), the gap left by the exclusion of Indigenous knowledge within the higher educational sector is the reason for questions of its irrelevance. This absence of African knowledges within the educational system does not only diminish African identity, but it also negatively affects the higher education transformation agenda.

The higher education transformation agenda initially focused on employment equity and access to those historically marginalised during colonial apartheid. This is where Ndimande (2004) argues for the vernacular language and upholding our own cultures as a way to redress the contradictions done by apartheid in our education system. The difficult part is that these contradictions continue to be evident even in post-apartheid education. Separating culture from education is one of the bewitchments that is seeing the education system and its curriculum being irrelevant to the majority of the people it should serve (Ndimande 2004: 51). It was an issue of fighting for native language into education which saw Kenyan Ngugi wa Thiong'o being detained in 1978 (Ngugi 1986).

It was learnt that inequalities of gender, race, education system, and other related matters that affected the education system need to be decentralised for the sake of equal opportunities for all children of this country. The education minister resolved to appoint Transformation Oversight Committee (TOC) as early as 2012 to monitor the progress of such transformation within all universities in the country. According Luescher et al. (2023), redressing the historical inequalities, especially of education, is at the centre of the transformation in this chapter. This transformation is expected to leave no stone unturned as far as education policies, curriculum review, and other progress reports are made available from time to time, as a way to reverse the damage made by the past inequalities. Unfortunately, the 2015 #FeesMustFall movement unveiled some of the issues which are continuing to haunt and delay processes of transformation like: continuing Eurocentric curricula, contestations around exclusion of languages, unaffordability of education for children from previously disadvantaged groups, untransformed academic teaching staff with regard to gender and race, etc. This was a reminder that South African education among other things must begin to decolonise and transform.

It is within this crossroads of transformation where Maringe (2021) comes with a discussion of what I would call the necessary disruptions of education where in issues of Africanisation, decolonisation, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) are taking the space to play their role in enhancing the transformation agenda. Innovation, digital citizenship, and creativity are role players in this situation (Maringe 2021). These disruption to the way we live and work are shared also by Khunou (2023), who went further by indicating how our normal ways of doing things, especially face-to-face teaching, are interrupted by virtuality coupled with loadshedding. Her paper opens a lot of relevant issues for transformation, like the push made by COVID-19 and 4IR to the direction of transformation. While many have adopted the blended kind of learning, those who are doing better can also afford to put solar systems in place to close the gaps caused by loadshedding. My observation is that everything depends on the situation and affordability of the concerned people.

The kind of redress we seek to correct in South African education cannot ignore or undermine robust engagements on concepts like: Bantu, first nations, Blacks, whiteness, native, Indigenous people, and Africans. It would either be suicidal or re-colonisation if these concepts are avoided in this discussion (Tufvesson 2012).

While Le Grange (2016: 6) argues that decolonisation is a process of change that does not necessarily destroy the Western knowledge, but decentring it, Assie-Lumumba (2017) argues that there are continued contradictions in the educational process that existed before. Whether or not it is easy to do it, as Le Grange argued, for the author of this chapter, decolonisation must involve removing that which was unnecessarily at the centre while putting back that which was dislocated for colonially selfish reasons. This should have happened a long time ago now, before even the student campaign of #FeesMustFall came in 2015. If we wait to just change on top of what Western epistemologies left for us, then one of the remaining challenges would be the issue of vernacular languages which is continuing to be a norm while native people's language is not getting a space into the education sector (Maringe 2021: 157). This transformation work led to the equal recruitment of staff from designated groups, that is Blacks[2] and women. From the student's side, transformation imperatives led to open access to Black students in historically white universities. However, for many years after calls for transformation, the curriculums of universities reflected the knowledges and epistemologies of the West (Tufvesson 2012). However, with the #FeesMustFall movement, we saw some important shifts towards calls for curriculum transformation and the use of African ways of knowing as important in teaching and learning (Khunou et al. 2019). It is as a result of these calls to transform our curriculum that the study informing this chapter was developed.

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[2] Black is inclusive of Africans, Coloureds, and Indians.

The hypothesis of the study informing this chapter is that to dismantle the epistemic violence of colonisation and Eurocentrism in South Africa, there is a need for higher education to be inclusive of African knowledge systems (Heleta 2016). According to Kaya and Seleti (2013), the South African National Treasury in 2012 indicated that about 6% of its national budget was put into higher education and training, which continues to be irrelevant to respond to the challenges faced by most of its citizens. This irrelevance is fuelled among other things by the dismissal of the relevant Indigenous knowledge from the centre of education, typical African funeral traditions as one example. For African people, to be human means belonging to a community, and a community has its own way of viewing life and death. This knowledge is not part of the education system. The identity of being an African, which has been undermined and even eroded, is something to be concerned about, particularly in relation to Africanisation and decolonisation. For example, African funerals have lost what they should be and if decolonisation is about Africans finding themselves, then the Africanisation of their ways of mourning and burying should not be excluded.

This study attempts to address the question of Africanisation of the curriculum by centring African mourning and grieving practices as significant for understanding how Africans conceptualise the journey of life (Baloyi & Makobe-Rabothata 2014: 236). In this regard, Njoku (2002: 24) states: "Life is seen as a rhythm or cycle which includes birth, puberty, initiation, marriage, procreation, old age, death, entry into the community of the departed and finally entry into the company of the spirits". This understanding of the sequence of life provides a basis for writing, studying, understanding, and transmitting African knowledges on funeral practices as values to the upcoming generations. To centre African knowledges through reflections on funeral rites, this chapter will also look at how the COVID-19 pandemic shifted our understanding of presence during funerals because of the introduction of 4IR technologies for enhancing access to funerals.

Conceptualising Death and Dying in Africa

Even though death is a universal phenomenon, every culture has its own way of defining it. Africans need to know how death is defined in their culture to be able to understand the dynamics of dealing with it accordingly. Radzilani's (2010: 44) opinion that death is an end of life is opposed by scholars like Mbiti (1970: 145-161) who argues that death is a rebirth in another world of spirits. In this respect, Backer et al. (1994) refer to a transition from one form of life to another. Therefore, the rites that are performed during the funeral of a deceased represent a way of assisting him/her to settle in the new world, as well as assisting those left behind to continue coping with life in his/her metaphorical absence – metaphorical because, for Africans, the departed can still influence the lives of the living as an ancestor.

In emphasising that death is an inevitable reality, Owuor (2006: 9) agrees with Ocholla-Ayayo (1976: 169) in drawing attention to a popular Luo saying: "It is believed that since your death was arranged on the day of your birth, it cannot be changed". For every death, there is a fundamental question of who or what the cause was. Interestingly, Radzilani (2010: 48) makes a good distinction between what is traditionally called a "good death" and a "bad death". A good death happens in a home situation where every family member of the person who is dying gets an opportunity to bid him/her farewell or to speak with him/her a few minutes before his/her death. This kind of appropriate death is also understood as important for the healing of those left behind. By contrast, sudden or unexpected deaths like accidents cause a lot of distress for the deceased's family members, and it takes a long time for the family members to cope. Opoku (1989) sees such deaths, like suicides, violent accidents, and others, as wild deaths because the deceased die far from their families who do not have an opportunity to prepare for their departure.

Moreover, there is the notion that even though there is room to accept that death is a natural occurrence, every death has a cause and such cause forms part of determining how the mourning and burial will be handled or performed. That is why there will be differences in the approach that is followed in burying and mourning, of say, a person who was terminally ill and who had a prolonged sickbed and a person who was killed in a car accident or who died after a very short illness. This is why the coffins of most people who were killed by, for example, a gun is not allowed to be brought into the homestead. It is still believed today that allowing a coffin to come into the homestead will invite death to take some of the deceased's family members. If it is suspected that someone caused a person's death else via spirits, then the diviners will work hard to ensure that such a person is tracked down for revenge and to ensure that he/she no longer lives within the specific community (Awuor 2006: 21). Consequently, a funeral coincides with several practices and rituals aimed at preventing the cause of death of the deceased from carrying on. The implication of this is that, for African traditionalists, death can be prevented.

The respect that African people have for an individual's life does not end in death. Therefore, it is not acceptable to refer to a departed person as a dead person. African people do not die, they depart. In Africa, the language of dying and death applies only to animals; human beings depart. In Tsonga, for example, people will say, "*U hi siyile*" or "*u hundzile emisaveni*", which means "he/she left us" or "he/she passed on". This connects very well with the notion of the rite of passage, where it is believed that after this life, people pass to the next life. Although it is not the intention of this research to explore the next life, it should be emphasised that even before the missionaries came with the Gospel, Africans always believed in life after the present life. Despite death being a departure into the spiritual world, African people also understood death as a punishment. For them, disobedience angers the ancestors, who will strike the culprit with death. This is what Mbiti (1970: 77) refers to in saying: "Luo elders pray God to strike dead with thunder bolts those who are notorious wrongdoers".

African Funeral Traditions and their Histories

In traditional African culture, the moment a person's death became known, neighbours and other community members would flock to the bereaved family to verify the details and to offer their support. While the church provided psychospiritual support in the form of prayers and counselling, the community members would organise themselves in groups to provide support in the form of labour, like pitching a tent and preparing food (Magudu 2004). Shiino (1997) highlights the importance of communal life from a Kenyan perspective, Maloka (1998) emphasises it from a Tanzanian perspective, Ranger (2004) emphasises it from a Zimbabwean perspective, and Wiredu (1995) highlights it from a Ghanaian perspective. Traditionally, a sizeable portion of the community would attend a person's funeral. These days, a person's social class and position in the community, among other things, will determine the number of people who attend his/her funeral.

Lost Africans must grapple with the question of what constitutes a decent funeral or a deserved send-off in an African context. What many would call a decent funeral others would call a dignified burial or a well-deserved send-off. Traditionally, a whole village would say "*u lahliwe kahle swinene*" after a funeral had gone well. It is also believed that a decent funeral becomes part of the coping process for the bereaved family because the spirit of the deceased will rest in perfect peace. However, there are contestations over the meaning of a dignified or decent funeral.

While some people speak of wealth and good food (for instance, the killing of a beast), others would speak of satisfaction with the performance and observance of rituals. Traditionally, the killing of an animal for a funeral was not aimed primarily at providing food for the mourners – it was a way of getting an animal skin in which to wrap the body of the deceased upon burial. Tlhagale (2000) touches on this fact. Yet, some people think that if there is no killing of a cow to provide a lot of meat for people, then a funeral is not a decent one. Originally, the homestead of a deceased person was not expected to do cooking for the funeral.

Food was provided by neighbouring families since the deceased could not stand up and do the cooking.

The issue of animal skins as coffins brings in the argument about actual coffins today. Some people would rate the decency of a funeral by comparing the quality or the price of the coffin used with that of other coffins they saw at other funerals, and if the coffin was not an expensive one, then the funeral was not decent in their view and the deceased will not rest in peace. Therefore, a lot of people join funeral schemes and choose coffins, which they start paying for when they are still alive. According to Semenya (2013), a funeral scheme is a kind of insurance that a member pays for monthly so that by the time he/she passes away, the funeral parlour will take care of everything, from the mortuary services up to the burial, and provide some groceries along with a coffin. Membership of such a scheme is always advised, even by local chiefs, because most Black people are so poor that they cannot afford a funeral if they do not have a funeral scheme. In line with Lee, it is argued here that the commercialisation of funerals does not signal any form of transformation of so-called traditional funeral rites (Lee 2011: 227). The point made is simply that it is not wealth or the expenses incurred in a funeral that qualifies it to be a decent funeral in the traditional sense.

Even though many Africans had cattle, some were too poor to own cattle and relied on relatives to assist them in times when skins were needed for burials. Most people wish to have a decent burial when they die. Hence, they start preparing for their death by joining funeral parlours and undertakers (Semenya 2013). For some people, a decent meal, an after tears, the type of speeches given, the decoration in the tents – that is to say, the wealth displayed in the whole set-up – are regarded as essential for a decent funeral. It is difficult for some families to have decent funerals today, especially because funerals have become an opportunity for people to buy new, fashionable clothes and show off their cars. Then the dilemma is how can this inequality be resolved in the absence of *ubuntu* philosophy, which should be part of our education and socialisation?

Although it is not the intention of this chapter to detail when and how death is regarded as natural or not among African people, it is argued that the kind of death determines the kind of funeral that is held. A person's age and status in the community will determine the kind of funeral that is arranged upon his/her death. If, for instance, the head of a family dies, his funeral will not be the same as that of his wife or child. Moreover, the kinds of funerals that are held for chiefs, indunas, and other community leaders will be determined by their influence in society. Even the type and the venue of a person's grave will be in accordance with his/her status.

When a young person or child dies, the funeral arrangements will also take a different direction, depending on the specific culture and clan. Because it was not expected that a young person would depart, such a death was regarded as a great loss, touching everyone in the village. This aspect relates to the notion that death is not the end of life but a passing through to the next life of ancestors, making it difficult to imagine a young person becoming an ancestor (Ekore & Lanre-Abass 2016). That is why young children were not exposed to a dead body, why passing through a street where a death had occurred was taboo at times, and why women and children were barred from funeral situations.

As Ekore and Lanre-Abass (2016: 370) note: "For example, why should a 5-year-old die instead of a 50-year-old? It does not make logical sense except, perhaps, from a religious perspective". The death of a young person, from whom a lot was still expected, was regarded not only as a taboo but also as a great loss from which the community needed time to recover (Ebewo 2015: 245). For Africans, a young person is an investment in so many ways, for instance, as a future mother or father, as a leader, and as one who will carry the family name forward by bearing children.

The details of the coming together of the family, the clan, the community, and all people from different walks of life into a mourning homestead from the date on which the departed's death was announced to the date of his/her burial are discussed in detail by several scholars (Baloyi 2014; Maboea 2002; Masango 2006; Mkhize 2004). From the day of a person's death, the death announcement, funeral programme, speakers, preachers, pallbearers, and all other aspects need to fit together for a decent funeral to be achieved. This comes from the background that African tribes handled death and funerals as very sensitive, private family matters that could not be discussed, announced, or spoken about everywhere by everyone. Even the announcement of a person's passing was not just done by any person but was expected to be performed by a close relative or family member, particularly the one who was an eyewitness or who was present when the transition from sickness to death happened.

According to the Tshivenda and Xitsonga, someone who knows about a person's death and the details of its coming (sickness) would be tasked with making the announcement, relating the story with acceptable humility, and using the correct wording. That is why, in the case of a radio death announcement, like *Rothovhowa* (Venda) or *Lava hundzeke emisaveni* (Tsonga), an elderly and experienced person from the family is selected to communicate the relevant information (Musehane 2012: 55).

Lawuyi (1991) argues against the use of the media to make death announcements. In this chapter, it is argued that the issue is not so much that the media should not make death announcements but that the way in which death announcements are made should not disturb the grieving families. These kinds of announcements need to be handled very carefully so that the bereaved families feel that they are represented well. A good command and use of language, together with humility, are traits of elderly people that enable them to make death announcements without hurting anyone. Announcements made by young people in the media often leave families and communities with a lot of questions.

Changing Times and their Effects on African Funeral Traditions

There has been an outcry over the lost or forsaken practices relating to death, burial, and mourning in African culture. Setsiba (2012) argues that one of the successes of colonialism was to dislocate African culture and its epistemologies. Jindra and Noret

(2011) indicate that some of these changes were affected by the loss of power of traditional leaders, such as chiefs and elders, who are the custodians of these practices.

African funerals have not been the same since the colonial conquest. Amundsen's (2022) thought of arguing for Indigenous knowledge in ensuring the bridge of older adult higher education students makes a lot of sense in this argument. The *ubuntu* and communalism, which are mainly observed during a funeral and form the backbone of African society, had been left out from the educative curriculum. One example in the funeral context is that of Setsiba's (2012: 11), who argues that when a death occurs, there are prescribed behaviours regarding what should be worn, how the bereaved family should be addressed, and so on. According to him, the Zulu people have asserted that they are unable to perform their traditional customs for burial owing to the changed nature of the environment in which they live (Setsiba 2012: 14). For Setsiba (2012: 35), a lack of mourning practices results in incomplete mourning and unresolved grief, which in the end causes psychiatric and psychological problems among bereaved family members.

Setsiba (2012), for example, wrote a thesis about this need, referring to missed traditions from a South African Sotho context. He argued in favour of maintaining African traditional mourning rituals against the newly creeping practice of township after tears parties. He indicated that after tears parties are inappropriate, lack respect, hurt the bereaved families, and defy the African moral teachings at home (Setsiba 2012: 72). In addition to that, Opong (2004) highlights certain aspects of Basotho funerals. He argues that Western education and Christianity have influenced the burial rituals among the Basotho people. For instance, the way people seek transcendental meaning in life is often a determining factor in the particular funeral ritual (Opong 2004: 1). In this way, colonialism, which has come with Christian missionaries, managed to dislocate the African traditions. That links with what Kaoma argues in the Zimbabwean context where she says that within Chimurenga funerals, shedding light on the dimensions in which colonialism subverted certain cultural and traditional traits of funerals within the former greater Rhodesia.

Manenzhe (2007) argues that African funerals have lost their solemn dignity through imposed traditions and political influence. Politicians use funerals for their own gain and the youth use them as occasions to be out of control. As an example, Mamphela Ramphele (1996: 106) argues that "political formations naturally want to make as much political capital as possible out of the death of a comrade". This was in line with comments based on the funeral of Duduzile Zozo. According to Miller and Schmahmann (2017: 268), the funeral of Duduzile Zozo, in which some conservative ANC Women's League were present, was regarded as opportunistic by the activists. The same sentiments were shared by Dennis (1997) in his thesis titled "The cultural politics of burial in South Africa, 1884-1990".

Traditionally, explosive music and partying were avoided in a village where death had struck. Since everything had to be done in moderation, overeating, a loss of one's temper, loud laughing or talking, and other related behaviours were to be avoided in a funeral homestead. Even the way in which one addressed the bereaved family had to demonstrate the kind of respect that was expected, for instance, it was taboo to shout at someone (even if the shout was a deserved one) during a funeral. Furthermore, it was expected that, for the sake of respecting the funeral and the bereaved family, every planned celebration would be suspended or postponed not only by those in the family but the surrounding community (Radebe & Phooko 2017: 242).

Another important change that occurred in African funerals is that communalism has been replaced by individualism. It was not easy to separate between the rich and the poor in terms of food in the funeral since food for funeral was brought from neighbouring families cooked and ready for use. This is not to say that neighbours must still bring food to funerals since a lot has changed. However, a supporting spirit is crucial. It was communal life and sharing, as expressed in funeral rites among other things, that kept African people together (Baloyi 2014; Maboea 2002).

According to Kgatle and Segalo (2021), grief, whether theological or psychological, remained a communal affair. The saying "*Izandla ziyagezana or masakhane*" ("hands wash each other" or "let us build together") conveys the notion of a communal, interdependent, and cooperative spirit (Baloyi & Makobe-Rabothata 2014; Masango 2006; Mkhize 2004; Mutonho 2016; Nassbaum 2003). Even if people do not agree in other spheres of life, they should reach some form of compromise and strive for cooperation in a funeral situation so that the common enemy, death, can be dealt with. That is why the elderly would ask those who were non-cooperative with other people or who kept fighting with others "*u ta lahla hi mani?*", that is, "who will bury you?". This would always be used to remind those who did not behave well within the community. People were expected to avoid quarrels and battles with other community members so that the day other people needed them, they would have no reason to withhold their assistance.

There is a new practice of discharging guns at funerals. The author decided to call it a new celebration. Any form of music would traditionally be suspended unless if it were played in a considerate manner to show one's solidarity with the bereaved (Radebe & Phooko 2017: 242). This practice is not very common among ordinary Black people, particularly in rural villages. Setsiba (2012: 32) remarks as follows regarding this practice: "When they were buried, shots were fired as a show of solidarity and what started out as heroic behaviour was the beginning of a threat of danger to many ordinary people". Some people who support this practice argue that it must be done if the deceased was killed by a gun. However, guns are discharged at the funerals of persons who died naturally. Older citizens from villages regard this as a serious problem, and some of them no longer go to gravesites since that is where gunshots are fired.

Whenever it is announced that a person was killed by a gun, most older people who anticipate that gunshots will be fired, decide not to attend the funeral because of fear, regardless of whether the person was a close relative or not (Dayimani 2022; Singh 2019). According to Singh (2019), a funeral at the Mophela Cemetery in Mpumalanga erupted in chaos when police tried to stop an AK47 gun salute, which was a very negative experience for the bereaved family and people from the older generation. In another incident, 38-year-old Teaspoon Petros Cele was shot dead in a funeral gun salute in Gamalakhe, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Some people are now afraid to attend funerals in that area (Dlamini 2021). A one-year-old girl landed in hospital after having been wounded by a bullet coming from a nearby gravesite where shots were fired in a gun salute in Mamelodi. In another incident, a young man was arrested after he had used an unlicensed firearm to fire shots in the air at his brother's funeral. The man claimed that his deceased brother had been killed by a bullet, though he had, in fact, died in a car accident (The Herald 2011).

Setsiba (2012) argues that an after tears can be a useful coping mechanism if it is utilised properly. It still must be determined how after tears parties can be useful and how they can become inclusive of elderly people, who deserve to mourn with respect. The big question is that if after tears parties are part of culture, whose culture do they belong to? Asante (2013) from Ghana argues that after tears parties are a way for people to respond to and engage with experiences of life and may direct them to reclaiming and recovering who they are as African people. By contrast, Setsiba (2012:16) and Posel (2002) argue that after tears parties are not only strange but also foreign to African people.

Covid-19 and the Introduction of 4IR Technologies into African Funerals

Khunou (2023) gave a good explanation of what disruptions mean in a context where the normal way of teaching and learning was pushed to virtuality because of rules to minimise or even eliminate the spread of the pandemic. The very same tune is sung by Subur (2021), who argued that since the goal was to acquire knowledge regardless of the pandemic, different methods of technologies which look efficient were put in place for the purpose. It cannot be ignored that good as these are, the need for hardware, connection, signals, and other related staff remained a challenge for those who cannot afford them. This also exposes the high level of inequality, which is still a factor in education (Kim et al. 2021). Therefore, these kinds of challenges make it difficult, if not impossible, to accept the shift as a perfect move when we have not addressed the distribution of equal access for all students. Hence, the question of equality will keep evolving around the transformation of education.

The postcolonial erosion of the knowledge of African culture and traditions can be attested to in many ways, including shifts in how Africans used to conduct burial rites and mourning. It is partially the task of the academics to research and find possible contextual ways for bereavement, coping, and closure. With COVID-19 funerals, some unfamiliar 4IR educative strategies were introduced to minimise the spread of the pandemic (Khunou 2023). In their article titled "Exploring the use of virtual funerals during Covid-19 pandemic", MacNeil et al. (2020) mention that some of the 4IR strategies were used to include the bereaved family while avoiding social contact as prescribed, for instance, watching the funeral on YouTube and other platforms, cutting the number of mourners to 50 in each funeral, etc. In avoiding traditional physical closeness, families were forced to adopt innovative online rituals where video viewing and scanned photos were shared on a virtual slideshow (Bitusikova 2020; Mackenzie 2020).

The lives of many people were changed and affected since the absence of familiar rituals and traditional ways of grieving caused prolonged grief responses (Burrell & Selman 2020; Goveas & Shear 2020). For instance, some who were barred from attending funerals due to the limit of 50 people per funeral are still psychologically concerned that they did not make a decent send-off to their loved ones. Others are still yet to believe that their relatives are gone since they did not participate in the rituals and practices like viewing the body for the last time. The adjustment from physical attendance to online attendance is still a challenge to traditional people, just as it is with traditional teaching and learning (Subur 2021).

During these times of lockdown, funeral professionals and pastoral caregivers were also forced to modify their services to the distressed bereaved families. Instead of attending to the grieving family physically, WhatsApp and Zoom were used to contact families, while Teams, Facebook, YouTube, and other platforms were used to allow funeral attendance. During lockdown, physical funeral attendance was restricted to only 50 individuals. Thus, 4IR virtual tools like Teams, Facebook, and YouTube allowed those barred by the lockdown rules to observe the funeral proceedings from elsewhere. Although these modalities were important in providing some form of access, research indicated the sadness that resulted from the inability to grieve in spaces like churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples (Corpuz 2021; Wilensky 2020). Given infrastructure challenges and inequality, not every relative or friend had access to these technologies (Khunou 2023). This was particularly true for the older generation as well as the poor people who are the majority in South Africa (Carr et al. 2020; Muturi et al. 2020).

It is confirmed that the colonial changes in the mourning traditions will have lasting effects on Africans who failed to reach their sacred places for their historical and cultural significance (Mahohoma 2020: 8). It is for that reason that Masoga and Nel (2014) agree with Mahohoma (2020: 8) that the lack of contact with the sacred world may anger ancestors and cause ancestral vengeance. Some family relationships were negatively affected when a selection of the top 50 relatives were selected from bigger families. The selection criteria would find some resistance from those who would question the inclusivity and exclusivity of the African relationships. Bank and Sharpely (2020: 152) raised a very sensitive statement which makes this research even more relevant moving forward: "It is as if this COVID virus is caused by our customs". It is the intention of this chapter to spend time trying to seek reasons and perhaps some responses to this statement.

It can also be noted that COVID-19 also played its part in making things worse with regard to shifting away from African funeral traditions. While Agbehadji et al. (2021) indicate how economical changes were affected by the arrival of COVID-19, Mhlanga and Moloi (2020) emphasise the acceleration of the 4IR, which forced adjustments on African traditions on funerals. It is mentioned that South Africa is the most advanced among the Southern African countries like Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Botswana, Lesotho, Angola Namibia, and Eswatini.

Transforming Higher Education and Rebuilding African Respect and Dignity within a Funeral Context

The issues of reforms, which include politics of vernacular language in education, dislocated cultural change, and politics of knowledge, are clear evidence of the radical need for transformation of the higher education system in South Africa (Ndimande 2004). It is long overdue that Western education continues to bring its irrelevance to the future of our society. The redress of the situation requires many things, for instance: readiness to transform, preparedness to unveil the muted epistemologies of African people to the centre, dealing with issues of politics of loyalty and other relevant radical changes that need to be used as tools to decentralise the Western ways of knowing (Tufvesson 2012). Let me open this section by quoting Rothblatt (2012):

> Higher education cannot escape history as it moves from serving royalty and the upper classes, the ancient professions and the church, to serving all persons and all institutions in the more democratic and industrialised societies based more on new knowledge and higher skills. (Rothblatt, 2012: xiv)

This argument is to indicate that higher education cannot be fully autonomous from the context it serves. Hence, traditions and cultures of the people must necessarily be incorporated. Magara (2015) from Makerere University, Uganda did a wonderful piece of work while researching the integration of Indigenous knowledge into the university curriculum. She argues for the integration of Indigenous knowledge into the university teaching curricula in Uganda. Without generalising, she is careful to advise the education management to select heritage that is free from negative cultural values, practices, and traditions. This is true for every dynamic culture. She concluded by making a statement that such transformation of education needs the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including traditionalists, economists, politicians, etc. This is what I am trying to argue in the South

African situation with a case study of funeral practices at hand (Magara 2015). The involvement of CONTRALESA in my study is just a beginning to find relevant stakeholders who must play their part in creating knowledge that will influence the decolonisation of the teaching curriculum. Making Indigenous knowledge available will make it easier for decolonial projects to have resources for the transformation journey.

Therefore, if people had differences, mediation occurred so that the parties involved could co-exist. There is an amount of truth in saying that the emergence of new social and cultural norms and values because of missionary Christianity gradually remoulded the rural-urban relationship. Moreover, communal life was affected by industrialisation and labour migration (Jindra & Noret 2011: 17). Living in isolation is not African, hence the saying in most African languages: "*Rintiho rin'we a ri nusi hove*" ("one finger cannot pick up food").

Transformation of the Curriculum for Context-Bound Healing after Death: Some Thoughts for African Psychology/Counselling

The implications of a Eurocentric kind of education are clear. One of its results is that our deaths, mourning, coping, and restitution, which are determined by the kind of education we have, will also be irrelevant. The argument is that the curricula that ignored African cries will not suddenly produce coping or healing mechanisms for African wounds. That is why there is a need for context-bound education which is inclusive of African needs during their deaths and mourning sessions. This is what African psychologists like Nwoye (2000), Ratele et al. (2013), and others have been raising within the African psychological arena.

The changing modes and methods of teaching, which is part of the transformation agenda, must allow the community to engage through community services to engage with the education sector in developing relevant curricula (Gordon 1997; Waghid 2002). Nwoye (2000) already unveiled that the African psychology of healing and reintegration into normal life is missing in our knowledge systems. Hence, there are delays and even a lack of complete healing when the family loses its loved ones. The Eurocentric forms of healing are not helpful for many African bereaved families. This is what Muya and others refer to when arguing that higher education in the continent was made distant from community concerns (Muya 2007; Smith 2002; Walter 2002).

There is always a need for bereaved family members to be helped to heal and to carry on with their lives. Death can cause stress and threaten the psychological well-being of those close to the deceased. The process of returning to normal life is called restoring the psychological being, and someone or something must fulfil the role of helping this process along (Corr et al. 1987). The question is who or what can fulfil this role since Western methods seem to have been unsuccessful? In some cases, a bereaved family could find healing if the deceased had a decent funeral and a 'good death'. However, in cases where a person's death was not natural or a cause is suspected, coping mechanisms are ineffectual because the family will not know any rest or peace until the cause has been found and removed so that it cannot come back. A bereaved family cannot simply be expected to accept the departed person's death and move on. Many people try to escape the mourning period by taking sleeping pills, tranquilisers, or even drugs (Sanders 1992). In such cases, the postponement of dealing with bereavement the African way and its attendant feelings has a negative effect on people's lives (Fulton & Metress 1995). Since grief is socially constructed, it is important and advisable to seek healing methods that will traditionally and socially work for the bereaved. This view is supported by Bento (1994: 37).

According to Radzilani (2010: 56) and many African scholars, 'coping' is a word that is used to describe the process that a grieving family goes through. In her PhD thesis in a Malawian context, Kapuma (2018) draws attention to the need for contextual healing among African people in times of crisis. This demands a particular Indigenous knowledge to be part of educational literature. Although she focuses on challenges associated with widowhood, she discusses the trauma and psychological disorders that many people experience after the loss of loved ones. Cultural and traditional practices related to mourning may either heal or cause more pain for grieving persons. Nwoye (2000) highlights the need for what he terms African Grief Therapy (AGT).

AGT is explained as a form of knowledge trying to avoid Western individualistic care by being inclusive of the community, who also needs healing. Nwoye (2000: 60) presented a paper on AGT at the first World Council of Psychotherapy Congress held in Kampala, Uganda, in November 1997. This congress was attended by psychotherapists from different parts of the world. Nwoye's AGT is a community participative practice that includes giving gifts to a bereaved family and coming together and helping the family in various ways, like preparing meals, cleaning the yard, pitching tents, and digging the grave. He anticipated that, for many Africans, this will be another form of healing since everyone, even those who did not have a good relationship with the deceased, will feel relieved that they played a part in his/her funeral. The AGT works like banking investments, meaning that when you go to render a service to bereaved family, you will also receive good treatment when bereavement visits your family too. That is why most people will refrain from helping a bereaved family if the deceased did not cooperate with other people in the community or made a bad name for him/herself.

This approach is close to what Mouton calls a "community-directed approach in pastoral care" (Mouton 2014: 100). This sentiment is echoed by Louw (2011), who articulates a community approach or a holistic and systematic approach to pastoral care. Baloyi (2014) argues that African communalism on its own constitutes a healing process for calamities like death, indicating that when people come to a funeral from all over, including distant areas, the bereaved family members experience a sense of belonging and feel supported, which are part of healing. Moreover, as Musehane (2012) found in his research, knowledge of burial rites play an important role in the healing of bereaved families and should be included in the transformation of higher education. From the New Zealand context, some evidence of transformation by including indigenisation in higher education is indicated in Durie's works (Durie 2009). This can be an eye-opener for South African higher education to open up for this kind of inclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter unveiled, among other things, that African practices regarding mourning and burial were not only neglected but also dislocated from the centre of knowledge, including the educational sect. Even though culture is dynamic and evolving, the way in which colonial apartheid treated Black people's culture was a demise to an extent that their epistemologies, which were supposed to have played a role in formulating educational curriculum, were eroded away. What is very clear is that the Western ways of knowing, teaching, and learning with its own irrelevance, exclusiveness, and inequalities are not responsive to the contemporary African challenges. What African people lost with regard to their burial and mourning traditions is part of the aftereffects and consequences of the colonial erosion of African traditions. This makes a call for radical transformation of higher education not only an urgent one, but the one that is long overdue.

The arrival of COVID-19 exposed the need to accelerate the adoption of virtual reality and collaborate with other 4IR developments. However, as we engage in this decentralisation agenda, language, culture, and African traditions are some of the important tools into this journey. It is not enough to just know the challenges that Africans are faced with regarding their eroded traditions. It is even more important to seek ways by which they can redeem themselves and reclaim their own space, without trying to evade the new normal with regard to 4IR and post-COVID-19 lifestyle. The intention of this chapter is not to blindly propose the workability of everything about African culture (on funerals) without considering contemporary lifestyles, which must conform to current demands, like the 4IR and urbanisation. Africanising and decolonising are the vehicles to take us there, but without ignoring the 4IR voices and other factors like urbanisation, civilisation, virtuality, etc.

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Chapter 9

A Transformative Framework for the Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems into the Curriculum in South Africa's Higher Education Institutions: How do we Centre Historically Marginalised Knowers and Knowledge?

Bonny Ngakane and *Benkosi Madlela*

Abstract

During the prolonged colonial and apartheid era in South Africa, local knowledge systems were subjugated and deliberately excluded from the higher education curriculum. After the 1994 independence, many studies called for the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the formal curriculum. The study by Madlela and Ngakane developed a transformative framework for the incorporation of IKS in South Africa's higher education curriculum to contextualise it. A detailed literature review of published journal articles and conference papers, books, dissertations, and theses inform the analysis in the chapter. Case studies relating to IKS integration into Australia's and the Philippines' higher education curricula were analysed and juxtaposed with African and South African case studies. This made it possible to benchmark and emulate best practices from others who have restored the dignity and rights of local people by successfully incorporating IKS into their education systems. The study is situated on the African Renaissance Theory and the constructivist teaching and learning theory. The study concludes that the curriculum in most institutions of higher

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education in Africa, including South Africa, is still dominated by Western colonial content and policies that are antagonistic to IKS. It was further concluded that as people move from rural to urban areas, they tend to abandon their African culture and adopt Western culture. This makes lecturers and students fail to recognise the importance of IKS and the need to incorporate it into the university curriculum. The study recommended that institutions of higher education should develop indigenisation policy frameworks to guide the funding and holistic incorporation of IKS into the curriculum, train staff members and students, decolonise and transform the curriculum through holistic IKS incorporation, adopt the Madlela and Ngakane transformative framework alongside South African legal framework that supports IKS to holistically incorporate IKS into the curriculum across all faculties.

Introduction

Koma (2018) notes that since the attainment of the democratic order, South African higher education continues to be European-Western driven and centred. Though the racist and oppressive apartheid system ended in 1994, epistemologies and knowledge systems in South African universities remain rooted in Western colonial epistemological traditions (Heleta 2016). The curriculum is still Eurocentric and reinforces white privilege and Western dominance. The Council of Higher Education (2017) states that decolonising the curriculum is a fundamental change in the nature and identity of institutions and the dismantling of the apparatus perceived to support and continue a colonial legacy. It requires an Africanisation or indigenisation of the curriculum to become more relevant to a changing student population. Du Plessis (2021) expresses that the decolonisation of universities involves people who were previously marginalised under apartheid, choosing to embrace and recognise their own cultures, tell their own histories, study from books written by Africans, and run institutions based on values that are reflective of African culture, as opposed to Eurocentric models.

Scholars and academics such as Heleta (2016), Madlela (2017, 2022a, 2022b), Mabasa-Manganyi and Ntshangase (2021), Ngulube et al. (2004), and many others call for the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the formal curriculum in South Africa and other African countries. Ngulube et al. (2004) argue that the curriculum discourse in higher education should change the dominant Western perception of what counts as knowledge and bring about a university that is based on the universal notion of humanity, which resonates with IKS and their perception of the essence of humanity and *ubuntu*.

Heleta (2016) notes that though new policies speak about equality, equity, and transformation and change might be instituted, universities have done very little since 1994 to open up to different bodies and traditions of knowledge and knowledge-making in new and exploratory ways. McKaiser (2016) raises concerns that the South African higher education system remains a colonial outpost reproducing hegemonic identities instead of eliminating hegemony. Molefe (2016) posits that in 2015, South African students and a small number of progressive academics began a campaign to decolonise the university curriculum by ending the domination of Western epistemological traditions, histories, and figures. Heleta (2016) and Mabasa-Manganyi and Ntshangase (2021) call for the decolonisation and Africanisation of the curriculum which remains largely Eurocentric and continues to reinforce white privilege and Western dominance while at the same time being full of stereotypes and prejudices that demean views about Africa and its people. The curriculum can only be decolonised and Africanised through indigenisation. Higgs (2016) views the curriculum as a critical element in the transformation of higher education and calls for the inclusion of African epistemologies to decolonise higher education curriculum in South Africa.

In light of this background, the study was conducted to develop a transformative framework for the incorporation of IKS into South African institutions of higher education's curriculum. Successful integration of IKS into the curriculum would provide alternative worldviews and contextual epistemologies. Such a move would decolonise education in higher institutions of learning and make it relevant and responsive to the needs of the South African and African contexts. The study was embedded in the African Renaissance Theory, which calls for Africa to develop using its own knowledge, and the constructivist theory of teaching and learning, which calls for a learner-centred approach grounded on learners' prior knowledge. Madlela (2022a) argues that learners tend to understand concepts better if their prior knowledge is utilised in class. In the African context, the foundation of the learners' prior knowledge is IKS.

A brief methodology overview

Qualitative data was gathered through reviewing literature in published journal articles, conference papers, books, dissertations, theses, and policy documents. Ethical guidelines were observed by acknowledging all sources of information in the text and in the list of references. The study began by discussing its guiding theories, the African Renaissance Theory and the constructivist theory, and proceeded to conceptualise key terms such as IKS, decolonisation, and indigenisation to put the reader into perspective. It went further to discuss the challenges of integrating IKS into the curriculum of higher education institutions in South Africa. Based on the analysis of case studies of IKS and its integration into the curriculum in Africa and internationally, a Madlela and Ngakane transformative framework for IKS incorporation into higher education institutions' curricula was developed. The study ended by drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

The following three questions were used to guide the literature review:

1. What is decolonisation and indigenisation?
2. What are the challenges of incorporating IKS into the curriculum of higher education institutions in South Africa?
3. How can IKS be incorporated into the curriculum of higher education institutions in South Africa?

African Renaissance: A Framework for Centring IKS in Curricula of African Universities

The African Renaissance was the study's main theoretical framework. Cossa (2009) asserts that the term 'African' defines those things that are indigenous to Africa while Koma (2018) says that 'renaissance' means rebirth, renewal, or re-awakening. 'African Renaissance' therefore entails the rebirth and renewal of the African continent, taking into cognisance the social, political, economic, technological, and educational dimensions. The African Renaissance Institute defines 'African Renaissance' as a shift in the consciousness of an individual to re-establish diverse African traditional values, so as to embrace the responsibility of an individual to the community and that he/she together with others in the community are in charge of their own destiny (Cossa 2009).

Higgs (2016) argues that the call for an African Renaissance has been present in the period marking the nearly four decades of African post-independence. The process of decolonisation that unfolded during this period saw Africa assert its right to define itself within its own African context. Evaldsson and Wessels (2004) locate the roots of the African Renaissance in1948 when a well-known West African academic, thinker, and author, Cheikh Anta Diop (1923-1986), published on an African Renaissance. Another example is Nigerian Nnamdi Azikiwe (1904-1996), who wrote the book *Renascent Africa* in 1937, in which he distinguished between an old and a coming, new Africa, which would be based on socio-economic regeneration, mental emancipation, and national self-determination. Great African leaders like Kwame Nkrumah also spoke about the African Renaissance (Evaldsson & Wessels 2004).

Evaldsson and Wessels (2004) note that former South African President Mbeki has played and continues to play an important role in the contemporary discourse on the African Renaissance. Cossa (2009) reveals that when Mbeki addressed the Corporate Council on Africa in Chantily, VA, USA in April 1997, he formally introduced the term 'African Renaissance'. He also addressed an audience from academia, business, and politics in a meeting held on 28-29 September 1998 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The main objectives of the meeting were to define who we are and where we are going in the global community and to formulate practical strategies and solutions for future actions that would benefit the African masses (Cossa 2009). Koma (2018) notes that the concept of African Renaissance in higher education is significant, as it offers a unique opportunity for Africans to define themselves and their agenda according to their realities, considering the realities of the world around them (Makgoba et al. 1999). It is about Africans being agents of their own history and masters of their destiny. Higgs and Van Wyk (2007) argue that the foundations of Africanised education are in the African philosophy which has to do with African experiences, concerns, and aspirations and how Africans construct knowledge.

Msila (2009) asserts that the call for an African Renaissance in the educational discourse seeks to demonstrate how African IKS can be utilised as a foundational resource for the socio-educational transformation in the African continent. Higgs and Van Wyk (2007) say that the Africanisation of knowledge has a bearing on a number of societal aspects such as the attainment of African identity, emancipation of education, and political and economic liberation. Higgs (2016) argues that a call for an African Renaissance in education insists that all transformative educators in Africa should embrace Indigenous African world views and ground their nations' education paradigms within an Indigenous African sociocultural and epistemological framework. This means that discourses of decolonising and Africanising education in Africa at all levels, including at higher education level, should be centred on Africa Renaissance theory and grounded on IKS. To incorporate IKS into the curriculum effectively, a transformative framework embedded in the principles of the African Renaissance Theory should guide the entire incorporation process. Successful incorporation of IKS into higher education institutions' curricula in South African will promote a constructivist approach to teaching and learning as learners will be able to build new concepts based on IKS that they already possess from their communities. This will make South African education relevant and responsive to the contextual needs of communities where learners come from.

Constructivist Teaching and Learning Theory

The constructivist theory was used as a supporting lens to the African Renaissance Theory in guiding the study. The most popular constructivists' views include Piaget's 1964 cognitive development, Vygotsky's 1978 zone of proximate development, and Bandura's 1986 social learning theory. Alanazi (2016) and Hein (1991) state that constructivists assert that learners construct knowledge for themselves. Attention therefore should be focused on learners and on creating collaborative and interactive environments. Hmelo-Silver et al. (2007) note that in constructivism, learners conceptualise and perceive concepts based on their prior experiences. This means that knowledge is constructed based on the knowledge that already exists in the minds of learners. Mayer (2014) also argues that learners need to have previous knowledge to build upon. In addition, Madlela (2017) asserts that learners' prior knowledge and experiences are engrossed in their local IKS. Consequently, Madlela (2022a) calls for the blending of constructivism and IKS to help learners to understand concepts better, actively participate in class, and construct new information using their prior knowledge.

Given our articulation in the prior section, it is our assertion that the African Renaissance Theory and the constructivist theory of teaching and learning work well together for thinking about how local knowledge that learners already possess is considered to facilitate teaching and learning. It is therefore essential for any curriculum, especially in the South African institutions of higher learning, to value learners' interests and build on what learners already know. It is vital to state that what learners already know is not Western knowledge, but it is their local IKS that they use on a daily basis in their families, communities, and other everyday institutions.

Conceptualisation of IKS

Donato-Kinomis (2016) posits that IKS are local knowledge systems developed over centuries of experimentation and are passed orally from generation to generation. IKS has proven to be a perfect scaffold for sustainable development, connecting the past, the present, and the future. The North-West University Indigenous Knowledge Systems Centre (2022) states that IKS are the unique knowledges that have been developed by a particular culture in the local setting as they solved their survival challenges and sought for meaningful life. The IKS Centre stresses the fact that Indigenous cultures and people have survived for centuries. This bears testimony that they had scientific knowledge of harnessing their environmental resources to meet their needs. IKS is called *kitso yasetso* in Setswana, *ulwazi lweSiNtu* in isiZulu, and *Ndivhonga ha mvelelena Vhuvha* in Venda.

IKS includes various interconnected aspects of local cultures like arts, music and dance, craft, agriculture, food preparation and preservation, animal husbandry and leather work, hunting, health and herbal medicine, nutrition, woodwork, architecture, leather and beading, commerce, leadership and management, and languages and folklore (Department of Science and Technology 2006; North-West University Indigenous Knowledge Systems Centre 2022).

Decolonisation and Indigenisation are Tools for Effective Higher Education Transformation

Boti (2022) argues that there are many dimensions of transformation of higher education such as digital transformation, social transformation, curriculum transformation, leadership, governance and management, research and knowledge production, higher education funding, and transformation of institutional environments. This chapter focuses on higher education curriculum transformation. Watson et al. (2011) assert that curriculum transformation is part of a worldwide challenge that higher education institutions currently have to address to tackle inequality and oppression, and for professional development. The University of Pretoria (2016) expresses that curriculum transformation involves continuously rethinking and re-evaluating how teaching and learning are done. This includes responsiveness to and training in new pedagogical methodologies and approaches within disciplines. It further entails retrieving and foregrounding historically and presently marginalised narratives and an acknowledgement of IKS hitherto repressed in the South African context. Boti (2022) spells out that the South African higher education transformation embraces the empowerment of academics to develop teaching and learning curricula that contribute to society's development and the realisation of a dignified, sustainable life for all Africans. Decolonisation and indigenisation can be used as instruments for transforming the curriculum of South African higher education institutions.

Ajani and Gamede (2021) say that in South Africa, the decolonisation of higher education gained prominence in 2015-2016 during the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall protests in the country's higher education institutions. Students called for the decolonisation of higher education curricula to ensure reflection of South Africa's diverse realities. Matiwane (2017) argues that decolonisation is about unlearning, deconstructing, and dismantling the cultural violence of dehumanisation as a culmination of the systemic oppression of colonisation. It is about gaining and building a national consciousness that progressively and independently allows for the optimum actualisation of the self without bondages to the oppressor. This requires the creation of alternative knowledge and knowledge systems (Matiwane 2017).

Guerzoni (2020) and Harvey and Russell-Mundine (2019) view decolonisation as the removal or reorganisation of structures, ideologies, and discourses within a social institution which has historically perpetuated the privileging of Western people's ideologies and practices to the detriment and discrimination of Indigenous people's ideologies, languages, customs, and practices. It is usually accompanied by promoting and empowering of Indigenous people's ideologies, structures, and discourses.

Nakata (2017) argues that a key pedagogical feature of decolonisation involves emphasising the development of critical thinking and reflexivity skills, alongside the challenging of Western predispositions on Indigenous people's culture and knowledge. Tlostanova (2019) notes that to be truly successful, decolonisation requires the complete re-structuring of the university, an institution inherently Western in its structures, hierarchy, pedagogy, and ideology. It is pivotal to state that if Western colonial curriculum content, structures, and practices are to be successfully changed, decolonisation via the African Renaissance theoretical framework should be implemented concurrently and complementarily. The African Renaissance theoretical framework and ideologies such as Black consciousness and *Ubuntu* should be used to educate and decolonise the minds of decision makers and all higher education stakeholders. In Steve Biko's words, decolonisation should begin from the mind (Ajani & Gamede 2021). Hence, the chapter views indigenisation as a vital local tool that can be leveraged to decolonise the mind and the curriculum. This aligns with Fanon's 2008 views in his book *Black skins, white masks*, where he affirms the need to liberate Black students by decolonising their minds to dismantle Eurocentric learning experiences. The chapter views curriculum indigenisation as a giant step towards decolonisation and Africanisation of the curriculum to make it relevant and responsive to contextual local needs.

Le Grange (2018) posits that curriculum indigenisation involves the incorporation of Indigenous epistemes and content within the units of a discipline and the overarching degree as a whole. Harvey and Russell-Mundine (2019) state that Indigenous epistemology involves students learning from Indigenous people whilst content involves learning about Indigenous people. According to Yunkaporta (2019), Indigenous epistemology incorporates the repository of knowledge of a traditional group of people whose knowledge is held through songs, stories, and art. Traditional holders of this knowledge should be recognised as experts in their cultural fields in the same way Western scholars are recognised.

Rigney (2017) views indigenisation as a multi-layered and holistic university-level and university-wide organisational change initiative guided by the respect for and recognition of Indigenous people's culture and knowledge. It involves the reorganisation of the university to be more inclusive and representative of Indigenous people, perspectives, and places. It includes the incorporation of Indigenous perspectives, content, and knowledge within the curriculum including pedagogy, structures, provision of Indigenous facilitates in campuses, and space on boards and committees, personnel, and governance. Newcastle University in Australia brought Indigenous perspectives into its faculties, including the faculty of law. Out of 24 units offered in the law curriculum, 15 of them included

Indigenous issues in their content. Interesting content involved Indigenous law and customary law, property law, Indigenous cases, and Indigenous perspectives on legal issues (Maguire & Young 2016). Bringing Indigenous content into the curriculum the way Newcastle University did makes the curriculum inclusive and representative of Indigenous people's cultural perspectives.

In the context of South African institutions of higher education, Indigenous content should be included in the curriculum of programmes in all faculties. For example, in the faculty of law, the African Indigenous justice system should be incorporated into the law curriculum. In the faculty of health, Indigenous pharmacology and medicinal practices should be incorporated into programmes. In the faculty of commerce, Indigenous entrepreneurship can be incorporated into business programmes, etc. On institutional governance issues, Indigenous people should be included in the university governance committees like the research ethics committee, etc. because research is conducted in their communities. They should also be included in the university's higher decision-making bodies like the academic council and the senate. Experts and custodians of Indigenous knowledge should be involved in curriculum development and implementation. This would promote inclusiveness, balanced representation, and decisions that serve the interests of Indigenous African people. In addition, the environment around the institution should be given an Indigenous outlook and transformed from the colonial one. Doing so would restore the dignity of Indigenous people that was degraded and violated during the colonial and apartheid eras and continues to be trampled by neo-colonisers and imperialists many years after the attainment of independence.

Challenges of Integrating IKS into the Curricula of Higher Education Institutions

In our review, we found that incorporating IKS into the curriculum was not easy. The reasons for this were multiple, but the first reason was historical power inequalities. For example, Kaya (2014) sees IKS as facing challenges due to unbalanced power relations stemming from colonialism and other forms of imperialism that allowed other nations and cultures to universally impose their knowledge systems, cultures, and languages on local people.

Secondly, the issues barring effective incorporation of IKS into the curriculum emanate from lack of availability of materials to work from. Banes and Baniqued-Dela Cruz (2021) view the following as challenges experienced in the integration of IKS into the formal curriculum: limited IKS reference materials, limited knowledge and cultural exposure, limited appreciation of IKS among faculty members, and a lack of university mechanism in monitoring the integration of IKS into the curriculum. Ngohayon and Gonzales (2011) assert that changing context is a factor in the lack of IKS appreciation. As people migrate to cities for education and job opportunities and get detached from their Indigenous communities, they start to practice city lifestyles that have been influenced by Western education and culture for years. It should be noted that Western influence has forced most African people to be too dependent on irrelevant, ineffective, and unproductive external Western solutions to their local problems. Banes and Baniqued-Dela Cruz (2021) assert that the perspectives of students and educators about Indigenous cultures have been changed by modernity.

Third, our analysis found that one of the biggest challenges is modernisation. For example, the introduction of Western education and modern technology led the current generation to perceive Indigenous cultures as backwards and not fitting in their current time. Younger generations have a tendency to be more open to Western culture than their local cultures. Banes and Baniqued-Dela Cruz's (2021) study revealed that modern technology discarded traditional agricultural ways of irrigation and harvesting rice grains. This resulted in most community members abandoning those ways and embarking on modern agricultural technology like water hoses and tractors. It can be argued that problems arise though because most people in African communities cannot afford modern agricultural equipment. After abandoning traditional ways of agriculture that managed to sustain communities for centuries, they lose self-reliance and end up relying on donated handouts.

Fourthly, the ideas about Africa and its lack of useful knowledge by colonialists influenced to a large extent the history of neglecting IKS in the higher education sector. In the context of South African higher education, Heleta (2016) says that the colonial and apartheid curriculum in South Africa stereotyped Africa and promoted white supremacy and dominance. As a result, Ramoupi (2014) states that the present curriculum in higher education still grossly reflects the colonial and apartheid worldviews and is disconnected from the realities of Africa including the lived experiences of the Black majority of South Africa. Pillay and Swanepoel (2018) argue that the South African higher education curriculum remains largely Eurocentric and continues to reinforce white and Western dominance. This kind of curriculum is incapable of moving the continent forward as it fails to develop students' critical and analytical skills needed to develop Africa.

It is necessary to state that Eurocentrism has pushed and continues to push African academics who teach about Africa to primarily rely on Western interpretations of the continent. The knowledge produced by African academics about Africa continues to be ignored. Ignoring contextual knowledge produced by African academics by policymakers has made it a big challenge for IKS to be incorporated in a meaningful way into the curriculum of higher education institutions in South Africa. Heleta (2016) calls for the dismantling of epistemic violence and Eurocentrism in South Africa. Doing so would result in the emancipation of long-excluded IKS and pave the way for its integration into the formal curriculum.

A Transformative Framework for the Integration of IKS into Higher Education Institutions' Curricula

Notwithstanding the challenges of IKS use in university curricula, it is worth noting that our reviewed literature reveals that scholars and academics such as Heleta (2016), Madlela (2017; 2022), and Mabasa-Manganyi and Ntshangase (2021) advocate for the incorporation of IKS into the formal curriculum. The University of South Africa (UNISA) has passed a language policy that allows examination questions to be asked in Indigenous languages and answers to be written in English or Afrikaans. This is a good step forward, but it is not enough, as Mabasa-Manganyi and Ntshangase (2021) call for the decolonisation of the South African curriculum content of courses and subjects in basic education and the higher education sectors as a whole.

North-West University (NWU) has established an IKS centre and has started to offer IKS programmes. Some of the programmes include a bachelor's degree in IKS (BIKS), etc. This move is commendable, but it falls far short of decolonising and indigenising the curriculum in a meaningful manner. As long as colonial and apartheid structures and attitudes are not removed and IKS given a major status in the curriculum, then marginalisation and exclusion of pertinent IKS will persist. This means that integration of IKS should go beyond the offering of a few programmes and the use of Indigenous languages into the use of Indigenous content in the broader formal curriculum in institutions of higher education.

Madlela (2017) argues that the use of Indigenous languages as mediums of instruction to deliver a curriculum laden with Western Knowledge Systems does not empower IKS at all. It still perpetuates Western imperialists' hegemony conveyed this time around in African languages. Eurocentrism is Eurocentrism whether conveyed in local languages or foreign languages. It still promotes a colonial mentality that continues to oppress African creativity and knowledge systems.

IKS can only be empowered if the whole curriculum content in all disciplines is decolonised and Africanised through the incorporation of IKS content. Such steps can only be possible if a transformative integration framework is developed and implemented. Based on benchmarks and analysis of IKS curriculum-related cases in countries such as Australia, the Philippines, and some African states, a Madlela and Ngakane transformative framework for the integration of IKS into the curriculum of higher education institutions was developed. The framework is also anchored on South African education policies and law. Below is an analysis of how other countries managed to integrate IKS into their formal curriculum.

Australian IKS incorporation case studies

Guerzoni (2020) discusses how universities such as Charles Sturt University and the University of Newcastle indigenised their curriculum in Australia. It should be noted that these cases are not absolute, but analysing them gives opportunities for benchmarks and adaptation to suit local contexts.

Charles Sturt University

Gainsford (2018) and Guerzoni (2020) describe the curriculum indigenisation process in a school of law that was undertaken at Charles Stuart University which was meant to develop the students' cultural competence. At the university level, staff members were given a cultural training programme involving Indigenous scholars, elders, and persons within the industry. Guerzoni (2020) says that embedding Indigenous cultural competence entails educating students on the richness of Indigenous cultures, the impact of history, and its contemporary social realities.

Gainsford and Evans (2017) give a case study of indigenising content within Charles Stuart University's Faculty of Business. The process was guided by the principles of the Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework of 2009 and involved several stages, facilitated by an Indigenous consultant. Those stages were 1) preliminary work, 2) curricula indigenisation, and 3) implementation of Indigenous content embedding.

At the preliminary work stage, Gainsford and Evans (2017) say that the consultant established rapport and relationships with academics and undertook conversations concerning culture and seeking to initiate mutual learning. This opened the door for indigenisation and reduced the resistance that is normally associated with the top-down approach. Those scholars who disagreed with the indigenisation process targeted the consultant as the person to vent against (Gainsford & Evans 2017). Cultural competency of staff members was seen as essential in providing the means of indigenisation at the faculty level to move people beyond simple compliance and create compassion and care for Indigenous people, culture, and knowledge.

At the curriculum indigenisation stage, the Indigenous consultant oversaw the indigenisation process. Specific content for the discipline was developed collaboratively and consultatively with Indigenous businesses and practitioners. Case studies tailored to the unit and the formation of partnerships with Indigenous businesses and practitioners were deemed valuable. This aided the understanding and valuing of Indigenous knowledge in businesses (Gainsford & Evans 2017).

Implementation of Indigenous content embedding was achieved through changes to the curriculum content, education of teaching staff, and establishment of supportive teaching environments (Gainsford & Evans 2017).

The University of Newcastle

Guerzoni (2020) asserts that as a component of its audit in 2008, the University of Newcastle required its faculties, Business and Law, Education and Arts, Engineering and Built Environment, Health, Science and IT, to identify and report courses that did not include Indigenous knowledge. They were also required to identify courses that needed to be revised to include Indigenous content. Faculties reported varying commitments to indigenisation. Some of them indicated the introduction of specific Indigenous units within their degrees, while others readily integrated across the courses overall, for example within the Fine Arts. Maguire and Young (2016) spell out that in the university’s law curriculum, 15 out of 24 units included Indigenous issues within their content, such as fights for native title in property law, Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous law, and customary law. Maguire and Young (2016) demonstrate how numerous legal subjects like property law, constitutional law, criminal law and procedure, and administrative law can be primarily indigenised through the introduction of Indigenous cases and having Indigenous perspectives on legal issues. Though some scholars argue that there is the understandable complaint of complexity surrounding the indigenisation process, it is achievable through a structured integration of content and issues throughout legal units (Maguire & Young 2016).

Collins-Gearing and Smith (2016) describe the indigenisation of the English curriculum at the University of Newcastle through the gradual introduction of Indigenous texts within their English units. This involved the creation of an Indigenous literature unit where students could examine Indigenous texts. Since it was noted that there was no significant resistance from students, a children's literature unit was selected to incorporate Indigenous knowledge and content. Based on the case studies of Australian universities, it can be argued that UNISA should not stop at the introduction of the language policy that promotes Indigenous languages but should go a step further and incorporate IKS content into its curriculum across all faculties as Australian universities discussed above did.

Philippine IKS incorporation case studies

According to Meneses (2003), the Philippines has more than 110 ethnic tribes and cultural communities whose cultures and traditions are in varying states. Their inheritance, cultural products, and practices are vanishing due to large-scale industrialisation and climate change. Environmental degrading projects like mining and climate change have affected their primary source of livelihood. The Philippines used their ancestral traditions to define their social relationships, values, and economic growth. The loss of their natural land, on which they depend for their traditional and cultural practices, meant disempowerment and loss of their cultural identity. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the Philippine government passed the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA), which maintains Indigenous people's lifestyles and guards against discrimination. The IPRA calls for the establishment of Indigenous schools. This led to the introduction of Filipino as a language of teaching and learning in schools. The Asian Council for People's Culture (ACPC) started a programme called Schools for Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions (SIKAT). The main agenda of SIKAT was to develop a system that aligned with mainstream education grounded on

Indigenous culture and traditions as a means for community development (Meneses 2003).

The national network of Indigenous educators who were considered to develop and promote a culturally responsive curriculum for the Indigenous Filipinos was facilitated by the inter-tribal council of elders. In addition to this, the Kalinga Declaration document was developed, and it entailed Indigenous education that recognises wisdom whilst maintaining cultural and spiritual traditions and worldviews. Following this document, ACPC facilitated tribal leaders' forums, curriculum development workshops, and teacher training in preparation for SIKAT. The main principles of the latter were based on ownership controlled by SIKAT's Council of Elders made up of 15 elected members of different tribes nationwide. Another principle consists of Indigenous people defining, developing, and implementing their own education and content. Inputs in the curricula, lesson plans, and manuals come from the Indigenous people involved in the SIKAT programme. Other principles were centred around cultural diversity and environmental sustainability rooted in day-to-day reality and recognition of quality basic education.

SAGU-ILAW SIKAT

In 2002, SAGU-ILAW SIKAT tertiary school was established with the aim of training para-teachers in cooperation with ACPC and SIKAT. *Sagu-ilaw* means wisdom of the true, good and living story of Magbabaya (Abejuela 2007). The mediums of instruction used are English, Tagalog, Cebuano, and Binukid. Learners were introduced to the Philippine constitution and the IPRA Law during the first year of their studies. They were taught teaching methods, community development, literacy and numeracy skills, and traditional songs, dances, and art and craft. Indigenous and migrant culture was taught to avoid communication barriers between locals and migrants. Students were taught history, customary laws and heroes of the tribe, ethnic cultural practices and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, and environmental conservation and protection. Traditional political leadership and the Philippine justice system were also taught. Learners were encouraged to conduct cultural research. This was a four-year programme which was also inclusive to employ non-degree community members who were experienced in cultural traditions and practices (Abejuela 2007).

African states IKS integration cases

Owour (2007) argues that there is less research in the area of African IKS due to the foreign paradigm and the realities of solving African problems using Western theories and methods. Western formal education has been a threat and a stumbling block to the African education systems. The cases below reflect how African education systems have been prejudiced while superiority was given to Western education systems.

Dar es Salaam

In Dar es Salaam, law students were against the Americanisation of the law syllabus. They wanted it to be readjusted and contextualised to Africa. Mazrui (1978) referred to African universities as multinational corporations with their headquarters outside Africa. African languages in most universities are not incorporated in the curriculum, yet French, English, Portuguese, and Afrikaans are studied. Despite this assertion, the University of Botswana (UB) offers short courses in African languages programmes such as Kiswahili, Ikalanga, Setswana, IsiZulu, and Shekgalagari. Botswana is currently working on infusing the Kiswahili language into the school curriculum after it was adopted by as the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Surprisingly, UB is offering degrees in international language programmes such as Portuguese, French, and Chinese. These foreign languages programmes are given more importance by the university than Indigenous language courses, which are currently offered just as short courses. This implies that a Botswana student will be more fluent in foreign languages than Indigenous languages that are only offered for nine weeks. This scenario reflects the need to transform the curriculum in African universities and give it an African identity.

Agricultural courses in African schools and universities are still centred around European models, textbooks, and climates.

African education systems ignored the Indigenous farming methods that have been successful and environmentally friendly for centuries. Education systems of the continent continue to promote Western farming methods that deplete the environment with toxic chemicals and also adversely contribute to climate change. Hart and Vorster's (2007) reveal that local African households rely on their Indigenous agricultural knowledge systems and practices to ensure a productive yield and alternative source of food supply despite the constraints imposed by poverty and drought. The Indigenous farming system therefore is an untapped source which can sustain agriculture, hence the need to be integrated into the university.

Kenya

In Kenya, IKS is developed and sustained through traditional education transmitted to the dropout youths or those who did not attend formal education. This constitutes lifelong learning conducted by family members and clan tribes. The post-independence reform of the Kenyan government focused on the reconstruction of the curriculum to integrate IKS at all levels of the formal education system (Ominde Report 1964). This reflects that the integration of IKS into their education system is not a new phenomenon. It has been on their agenda since the 1960s, though little or no meaningful progress has been made up to date. Owour (2007) argues that there should be a paradigm shift that can decolonise Western curricula and reclaim African cultural identities. The Ominde Report (1964) states that curriculum reconstruction meant including Kenyan histories, cultures, oral literature, and teaching methods that would reflect IKS. It was within this realm that the first president of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, viewed education as a tool for maintaining the traditional structures of family, kinship, gender, and age groupings to ensure the stability of African ethnic communities (Kenyatta 1965). Without the stability of communities through the process of education, Kenyatta foresaw the onset of the disintegration of the social systems (Owour 2007).

South Africa

The IKS policy in South Africa was adopted in 2006 to promote and protect IKS. One of the policy directives is the integration of IKS into the education system of South Africa including universities. The North-West province leveraged this policy by incorporating IKS into research, teaching, learning, and community engagement in NWU. This university is the only local institution, and in Africa, offering an accredited IKS programme (Kaya & Seleti 2013). This programme is limited to a multidisciplinary Bachelor in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (BIKS). It attracts students from South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, and Cameroon. This alone indicates the need for IKS incorporation into the curriculum of African universities. Though this is a milestone achievement, NWU is currently faced with challenges of integrating IKS across all of its campuses and system of education (Kaya & Seleti 2013). Kaya and Seleti's (2013) study revealed that the current primary history content in South Africa represents very little African history, and participants advocated for the inclusion of IKS in the modern curriculum. IKS Centre in NWU works in partnership with UNISA, the University of Venda (UV), and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) to facilitate research, education and training, information brokerage and networking.

UNISA has a language policy that recognises the use of IKS. The aim of the policy is to inform the use of local languages in all aspects of communication of the university, i.e., teaching and learning, research, public, and internal and external communication. The university however has not yet incorporated IKS content into the curriculum across its faculties. The South African IKS ACT (2019) identifies IKS as a national asset, a key component of human capital, decolonisation, social cohesion, transformation, and sustainable development. Institutions of higher learning can leverage IKS resources to decolonise and transform their curricula so that they can be responsive to the contextual needs of the country and the continent and serve as a viable engine of socio-economic development in the country, the entire continent, and beyond.

Madlela and Ngakane Transformative Framework for IKS Incorporation into Higher Education Institutions’ Curricula

The South African constitution, South African Indigenous Knowledge Systems Policy 2006, and the IKS Act 2019 support IKS and languages. The legal framework supports the incorporation of IKS and languages into the formal curriculum. Institutions of higher education in South Africa can leverage the legal support and incorporate IKS holistically into the curriculum to decolonise and contextualise the curriculum so that it becomes relevant and capable of addressing lived experiences and realities of South Africa and Africa as a continent. The study developed a Madlela and Ngakane transformative framework that can be used by institutions of higher education to incorporate IKS into their curricula to decolonise and transform them. The model is based on the information generated by the study pertaining to IKS incorporation into the curriculum in African countries and those outside Africa, like Australia and the Philippines. Best steps and practices from different countries have been benchmarked to develop the framework.

In Australia, the incorporation of IKS into the curriculum at Charles Sturt University was guided by the principles of the Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework of 2009, and it involved stages that were facilitated by an Indigenous consultant. These stages were 1) preliminary work, 2) curricula indigenisation, and 3) implementation of Indigenous content embedding. These have been discussed in detail in the study. In the Philippines, IKS incorporation into the formal curriculum was inspired and guided by the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act (IPRA) which was enacted by the government in the 1980s and 1990s. This act maintains Indigenous people’s lifestyle and guards against discrimination. It also calls for the establishment of Indigenous schools. The Australian and Philippine cases show that the successful incorporation of IKS into the formal curriculum needs to be guided by a framework and also be supported by the law.

Madlela and Ngakane transformative framework stages

The framework has the following five stages:

1. Stakeholder engagement and consultative forums
2. Indigenisation policy framework development
3. Promoting African consciousness
4. Decolonisation and transformation of the curriculum
5. Establishing a full-fledged IKS faculty and centre
6. Implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and report writing.

1. Stakeholder engagement and consultative forums

Transforming the curriculum through indigenisation cannot be done in silos – it needs wide stakeholder engagement and consultations. Gainsford and Evans (2017) say that at Charles Sturt University in Australia, the consultant engaged with the faculty to create rapport and set conditions for learning. At this stage, institutions of higher learning in South Africa can engage all stakeholders internally and externally. Stakeholders can include university staff members, students, alumni, IKS custodians and practitioners, academics, book publishers, communities, youths, community leaders, and the business community. A comprehensive stakeholder and consultation report needs to be compiled by higher education institutions at this stage.

2. Indigenisation policy framework development

Based on the stakeholder engagement and consultation report, an institution's indigenisation policy framework should be developed. Such a framework is essential as it would act as a roadmap and legal instrument for the incorporation of IKS into the curriculum. The policy should also be embedded in the African Renaissance Theory and African philosophy, the country's constitution, the IKS Policy 2006, and the IKS Act 2019. Embedding it in the law would save it from legal challenges likely to be launched by colonial architects and their supporters who are petrified with fear when they see Africans breaking the bonds of colonial oppression. The policy should be developed through stakeholder involvement and continuous consultations.

Promoting African consciousness

Banes and Baniqued-Dela Cruz (2021) view the challenges experience in the integration of IKS into the formal curriculum as limited knowledge and cultural exposure and limited appreciation of IKS among faculty members. Ngohayon and Gonzales (2011) spell out that as people migrate to cities for education and job opportunities and get detached from their Indigenous communities, they start to practice city lifestyles that are influenced by Western education and culture. The perspectives of the majority of students and educators about Indigenous cultures have been changed by modernity. To decolonise students, staff members, and key stakeholders, African consciousness must be brought among their mist. The African Renaissance Theory can be used to bring that consciousness through interpreting, promoting, and transmitting African philosophy, thought, culture, and identity (Koma 2018). It is advisable to move to the next stage when everyone has been Africanised and understands and appreciates the incorporation of IKS into the formal curriculum in higher learning institutions. Workshops can be used at this stage, facilitated by IKS specialists, practitioners, and custodians including community leaders and resource persons.

3. Decolonisation and transformation of the curriculum

Once African consciousness has been successfully disseminated to all stakeholders at all levels, the crucial stage of incorporating IKS into the curriculum content can be undertaken. Some scholars call for incorporation by adding a few IKS modules or programmes. Some scholars think that using Indigenous languages as mediums of instruction or setting examination question papers in local languages is a sufficient incorporation of IKS into the formal curriculum. Madlela (2017) criticises such incorporation as weak and lacking the much-needed impact and meaningful transformation of the curriculum. Madlela (2017) calls for the holistic incorporation of IKS into the content of the formal curriculum. Western knowledge is inadequate in solving African problems. It has its own serious limitations and has dismally failed the continent. Hence, the African Renaissance Theory calls for the development of Africa based on African knowledge. IKS needs to be incorporated in all faculties, programmes, modules, and study materials.

Maguire and Young (2016) assert that in Australia, the University of Newcastle indigenised its law curriculum. Out of 24 units offered, 15 of them included Indigenous issues within their content such as fights for native title in property law, Indigenous perspectives, Indigenous law, and customary law. The incorporation demonstrated how legal subjects like property law, constitutional law, and criminal law and procedure can be primarily indigenised through the introduction of Indigenous cases and having Indigenous perspectives on legal issues. This scenario shows that in all disciplines, IKS content can be meaningfully incorporated. For example, in the faculty of agriculture, sustainable Indigenous farming methods have more value to the curriculum than Western methods. Indigenous seeds are drought and disease resistant while Western GMO seeds are less drought resistant. Western imperialists imposed them on African farmers, and it resulted in perennial famine and dependence syndrome on handouts due to poor harvests. Seemingly, imposing GMO seeds was a deliberate move by Western imperialists to fail African agriculture so that Africans could be impoverished and forced to depend on unsustainable Western handouts that have oppressive conditions attached to them.

4. Establishing a full-fledged IKS faculty and centre

NWU has demonstrated that it can be done. Kaya and Seleti (2013) note that NWU is the only local institution and perhaps in Africa offering an accredited IKS bachelor degree programme. The programme attracts students from South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, and Cameroon. This shows that IKS programmes are in demand in Africa, but Africans are prejudiced since institutions of higher education do not offer them. Though NWU has made a good move, the programme offered is only limited to a multidisciplinary Bachelor in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (BIKS). This means that other faculties and disciplines are not covered.

In addition to offering a viable IKS programme, NWU has an IKS centre that works in partnership with UNISA, UV, and UKZN to facilitate research, education, training, etc. This also shows the viability of IKS. The Madlela and Ngakane framework at this stage calls for the establishment and launching of a fully-fledged IKS faculty with its executive dean and all structures. The faculty should offer a wide range of IKS programmes like any other university faculties. These programmes can focus on areas such as Indigenous agriculture, mining, medicine, architecture, pharmacology, disaster and environmental management, veterinary science, arts and culture, African languages, etc. UB offers short courses on African languages for only a few weeks, yet it offers full degree programmes in foreign languages like French, Portuguese, and Chinese. Instead of continuing the colonial hegemony of promoting foreign languages at the expense of Indigenous ones, higher education institutions should develop and offer full programmes of African languages in a fully-fledged IKS faculty. At this stage, an IKS centre can be established to act as a hub of IKS initiatives, projects, and activities.

5. Implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and report writing

Once the curriculum decolonisation and transformation process has been completed, the decolonised and transformed curriculum should be disseminated and implemented immediately. Implementation should be followed by monitoring and formative evaluation. Formative evaluation helps to discover areas that need to be attended to before it is too late. It also makes summative evaluation easy since information is gathered on an ongoing basis. This information feeds into summative evaluation reports at the end of the year or programme cycle, which is usually two or three years. Evaluation reports inform future action plans.

Madlela and Ngakane Transformative Framework for IKS integration into HEIs curriculum

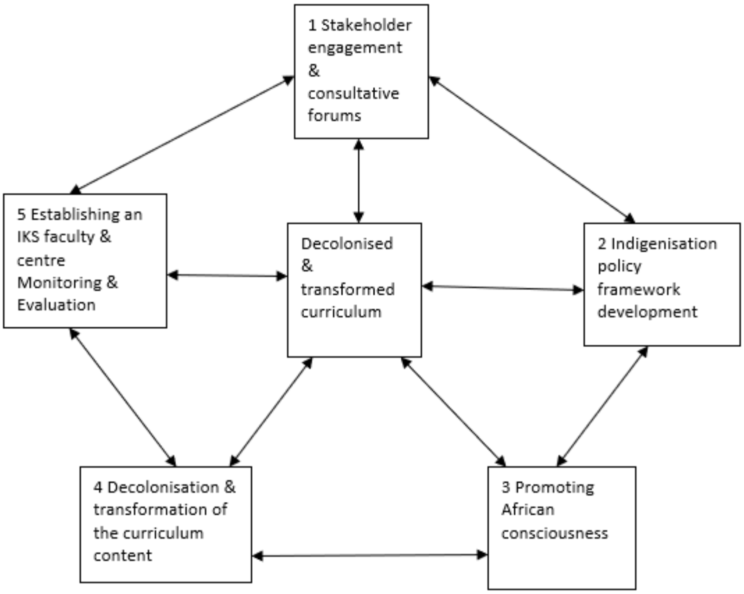
1 Stakeholder engagement & consultative forums
5 Establishing an IKS faculty & centre Monitoring & Evaluation
Decolonised & transformed curriculum
2 Indigenisation policy framework development
4 Decolonisation & transformation of the curriculum content
3 Promoting African consciousness

Figure 9.1: Madlela and Ngakane Transformative Framework for IKS integration

The Madlela and Ngakane Transformative Framework has bidirectional arrows to demonstrate that the incorporation of IKS into the curriculum would not sail freely towards one direction. At times it would require returning to the previous stage for further analysis and verification. Higher education institutions in South Africa should play a significant role in making the holistic integration of IKS into the curriculum a success. It is difficult to achieve that without a guiding framework. Institutions can therefore adopt/adapt the Madlela and Ngakane Framework to their contexts and use it as a guiding framework alongside relevant legal documents and policies to integrate IKS holistically into their curriculum across all faculties in consultation with all stakeholders. Such integration would review, decolonise and reform the curriculum in South African institutions of higher education. Stakeholders that should be consulted include academics, professionals, students, faculty leadership, researchers, book publishers, the business community, local communities, youths, community leaders, and IKS practitioners and custodians. This list is not exhaustive.

Institutions should enact an IKS policy framework to support IKS funding and incorporation into the formal curriculum. Institutions should also train staff members and students through workshops and seminars facilitated by specialists, professionals, and IKS custodians and practitioners and introduce them to the African philosophy and consciousness so that they embrace IKS. Finally, institutions should establish IKS centres and full-fledged IKS faculties offering a wide range of IKS programmes like Indigenous agriculture, veterinary science, medicine, pharmacology, astronomy, architecture, arts and culture, environment and disaster management, etc.

Conclusion

From the reviewed literature and an analysis of IKS incorporation into the curriculum in African countries and those outside Africa, it was concluded that most institutions of higher education in Africa, including South Africa, have not yet incorporated IKS into their curriculum. Most of them still follow colonial policies that over-glorify Western knowledge and vilify IKS. It was also concluded that as people move from rural areas to urban areas, they tend to abandon their African culture and way of life to adopt Western culture and way of life. This makes lecturers and students in institutions of higher education fail to recognise the importance of IKS and the need to integrate it into the university or faculty curriculum. It was also concluded that with a guiding framework and policy guidelines, the integration of IKS into the curriculum of higher education institutions is possible. The University of Newcastle and Charles Sturt University in Australia managed to successfully integrate IKS into their curriculum under the guidance of the principles of the Cultural Competence Pedagogical Framework of 2009. The Philippines successfully integrated IKS into its schooling system through guidance from the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA). It was also concluded that NWU has taken a good initiative that can be used by other institutions of higher education in the country as an initial benchmark.

It was finally concluded that under the guidance of the South African legal framework already stated in the study and the Madlela and Ngakane Transformative Framework for IKS integration into higher education institutions' curriculum, the country's institutions can successfully integrate IKS into their curriculum, which can result in decolonisation and transformation of education in South Africa's institutions of higher education.

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