

NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

in partnership with



Emancipatory Imaginations
Advancing Critical University Studies
Winter School
15-20 August 2019
Nelson Mandela University, Port Elizabeth





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Introduction

From the 15th to the 20th of August 2019, the Nelson Mandela University in collaboration with Queen's University Belfast, hosted a Winter School titled *Emancipatory Imaginations: Advancing Critical University Studies*. This event was partially funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund. Over 6 days, scholars, activists and policy-makers from across the globe discussed the university and how it might be studied from a multitude of perspectives.

The programme for the Winter School was divided into two parts. The first part ran from the 15th to the 17th of August and consisted of a number of roundtable discussions on key themes and entanglements in relation to Critical University Studies. It was complemented by two book launches of works that ask pressing questions related to the academic project and offer new theories and paradigms for the South African context in particular, and Critical Studies in general. In the second part of the programme,

contributors workshoped potential modes and mechanisms for advancing African Critical University Studies, the building of networks and solidarities, the sharing of resources, the shaping of strategies, policies and partnerships, and the identification of strategic projects. Initially scheduled for the 19th and first half of the 20th of August, it ended up being possible to conclude the workshop sessions on the 19th.

This report is a summarised account of the Winter School, and is intended as historic record, critical resource and guiding map for the way forward in imagining the emancipated university. For the full record of this event, please visit the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation's (CriSHET's) YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqrs1OAnz_Fxm10-hAoTukQ





Programme

Part 1: Roundtables

15 August 2019

Welcome (08h45–09h10) – Sibongile Muthwa

The Idea (09h10–09h30) – Dina Zoe Belluigi and André Keet

Mapping Critical University Studies (09h30–10h00) – CriSHET Team

Umrhabulo (10h00–11h00) – Contributors' introductions

Roundtable 1 (11h30–12h30) – Reimagining the University
Moderator – Nobubele Phuza
Key Contributors – Ahmed Bawa, Chris Brink and Xoliswa Mtose

Roundtable 2 (13h30–14h45) – The SDGs, African Universities and 'Emancipatory Imaginations'
Moderator – Ihron Rensburg
Key Contributors – Su-Ming Khoo, Benedict Mtasiwa and Winnie Mitullah

Roundtable 3 (15h00–16h15) – What might be the shape of Critical University Studies in the Global North? Can it produce 'emancipatory imaginations' of use for its own social justice project and that of the Global South?
Moderator – Michael Cross
Key Contributors – Tony Gallagher, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Shirley Anne Tate and Michalinos Zembylas

Book Launch (17h00–19h00) – *Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience* (in collaboration with Nelson Mandela University's Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy)
Facilitator: Allan Zinn
Key Contributors: Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela, Edith Phaswana and Katijah Khoza-Shangase

16 August 2019

Reflections (08h45–09h00)

Roundtable 4 (09h00–10h30) – In what ways do the dominant discursive fields of higher education constrain the renewal and transformation of the academy?
Moderator – Kopano Ratele
Key Contributors – Qawekazi Maqabuka and Sioux McKenna

Roundtable 5 (11h00–12h30) – Emancipatory Imaginations: Beyond Higher Education as we know it
Moderator – Tshepo Madlingozi
Key Contributors – Relebohile Moletsane, Crain Soudien and Sharon Stein

Roundtable 6 (13h30–15h00) – What is the meaning of 'African' in the 'African University'? Does/can it facilitate an African emancipatory imagination?
Moderator – Christi van der Westhuizen
Key Contributors – Vivienne Bozalek, Amos Njuguna and Michael Okyerefo

Umrhabulo (15h15–16h15) – Reflection

Book Launch (17h00–19h00) – *The World Looks Like This From Here*
Facilitator: Zilondiwe Goge
Key Contributor: Kopano Ratele

17 August 2019

Reflections (08h45–09h00)

Roundtable 7 (09h00–10h30) – 'Gender, Race ...' and the limits of university transformation/critical university studies
Moderator – Jenny du Preez
Key Contributors – Jason Arday, Aslam Fataar and Nancy Morkel

Umrhabulo (11h00–12h30) – Responses to part 1 of the Winter School



Part 2: Workshops

19 August 2019

Session 1 (9h00 – 10h30) – Advancing Critical University Studies
Facilitator: André Keet
09h00-09h30: Mutinda Nzioki
reflections on implications of Winter School roundtable
for study and transformation of the University in Africa
09h30-10h30: Workshop-style discussion in groups on
modes and mechanisms for advancing ACUS

Session 2 (11h00 – 12h30) – Building CUS Networks and
Solidarities Across Continents
Facilitator: Dina Zoe Belluigi
11h00-11h30: Nandita Dhawan and Satish Kumar
reflections on implications of the Winter School
roundtables for study and transformation of the
University in India
11h30-12h30: Workshop-style discussion in groups on
building CUS collaborations in the 'global South'

Session 3 (13h30 – 15h00) – Impact of Policy, Practice Guidelines
and other Regulations for the Transformation of Higher Education
Facilitator: Luzuko Buku
13h30-14h00: Chief Mabizela, Brightness Mangolotho
and Shervani Pillay reflections on impact of
government regulation on transformation of higher
education in South Africa
14h00-15h00: Workshop-style discussion in groups on
impact of regulations and potential methodologies for
mapping this impact

Session 4 (15h30 – 16h00) – Umrhabulo-style discussion of
possibilities and problematics of 'pathways to impact'

20 August 2019

Session 5 (9h00 – 11h00) – Pathways for impact for ACUS
Facilitator: Dina Zoe Belluigi
09h00-09h30: Vivienne Bozalek, Winnie Mitullah and
Michael Okyerefo reflections on pathways to impact of
CUS for academic practice(s)
09h30-10h30: Workshop-style discussion in groups on
potential pathways to impact for ACUS

Session 6 (11h30 – 12h30) – Consolidation of discussions and
establishment of working groups



Winter School Concept Note

André Keet (NMU) and Dina Zoe Belluigi (QUB) – 17 May 2019

1. The discursive fields that produce and frame the meaning of higher education transformation globally and locally seem to have discharged its social justice content and intent. These meanings are not only enslaved by a neoliberal social imaginary, they also actively contribute to the reproduction of the current university system and its discriminatory and exclusionary discourses and practices. Moreover, they steer what we come to accept as the purpose of the university; and how the pursuit of such purpose is pragmatically expressed.

2. Stein (2018, p.1)¹ argues that at present the possible futures of university have been 'significantly narrowed' and that the options on offer 'also appear increasingly unsustainable and unethical'. Such options, which undercut the radical transformation of universities, are encoded within higher education policy and practice, and programmed within the philosophies, orientations and praxes of agencies such as government departments, research councils, university associations, foundations and statutory councils responsible for funding, oversight and quality assurance. This is the case in South Africa, and elsewhere. In other words, the system is locked into discursive fields that produce particular meanings of the principles of transformation: simulating change on the one hand, and justifying and legitimising systemically anchored discriminatory outcomes on the other.

3. Deeply linked to the ways in which we 'see' universities, the production of imaginaries are associated with the policy, 'epistemological and ontological frames within which most imaginaries and institutions of higher education are embedded' (ibid). That is, the discursive fields – constituted by ways of meaning making and narration; as well as discourses, practices and action – are perhaps unescapable because they are omnipresent. Thus, we struggle to imagine differently. Or, our range of imagined options is narrow (Barnett 2013)².

4. This Winter School will invite scholars and practitioners from Ghana, the UK, India, Kenya, Ireland, South Africa, Uganda and other countries, with an interest in the critical study of higher education, to come together to challenge and 'denaturalize the dominant higher education imaginary' (Stein 2018, p.1). Key to the 'ideas' of the Winter School is the prospect of 'other' ways to study universities that are meaningfully different from the various strands of conventional higher education studies; and to explore a flexible configuration of a Critical University Studies programme that is capable of thinking plural forms of emancipatory higher education imaginations and futures.

¹ Stein, S. (2018). Beyond higher education as we know it: Gesturing towards decolonial horizons of possibility. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-018-9622-7>

² Barnett, R. (2013). *Imagining the University*. Routledge.



Umrhabulo Concept Note

Melathisi Ncityana and Nobubele Phuza

Rhabulo – Sip

Ukurhabulo – The act of taking a sip

Umrhabulo – The practice of knowledge sharing

Umrhabulo in pre-colonial traditional settings

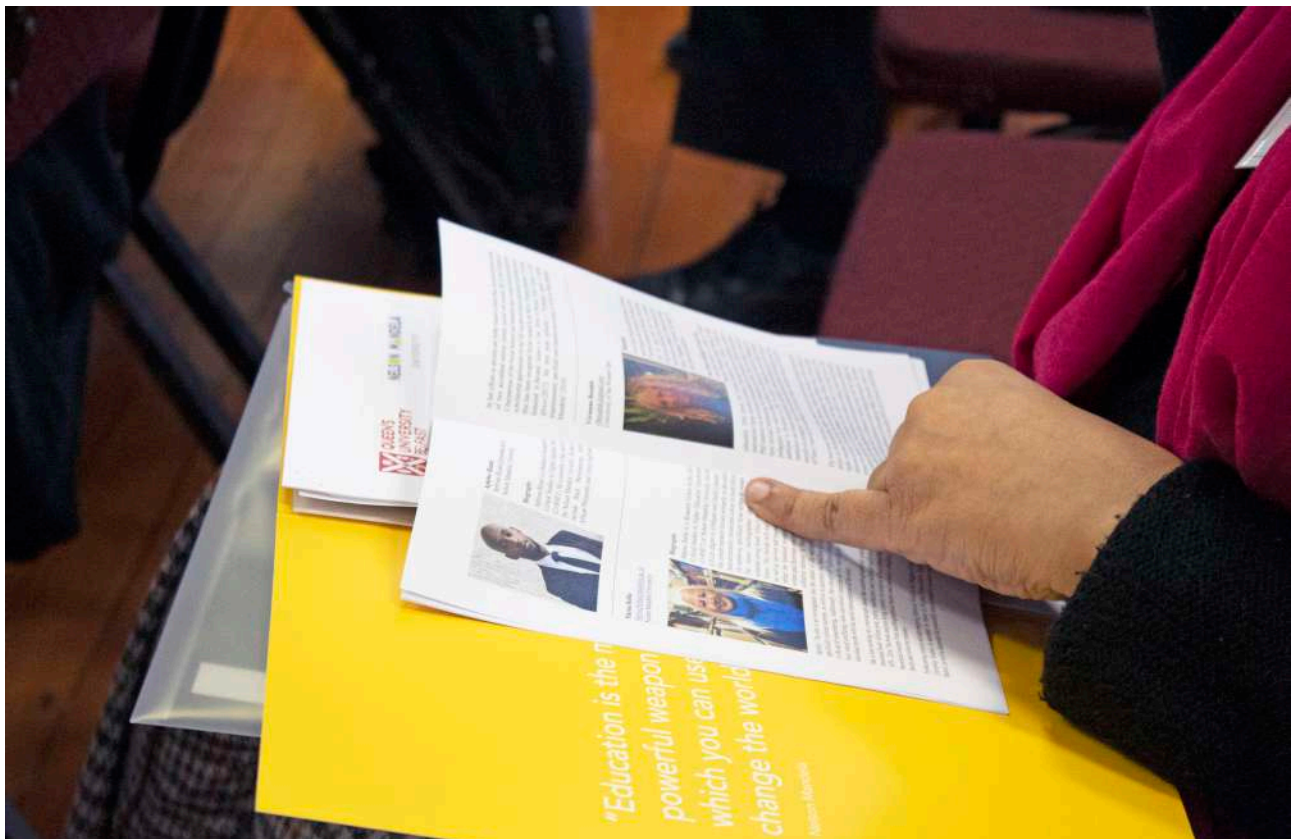
In the past, one would find people seated in circles, at times by the kraal, sipping *Umqgombothi* (traditional beer) or *amarhewu* (fermented porridge) while talking about issues affecting the community. Important to note, *umqgombothi* or *amarhewu* was not meant for a ceremony or any spiritual gathering. The people knew they could not drink a lot, instead they must sip, conscious of everyone. The rule also applied to the conversation. Time was limited as one had to attend to many other issues so one could not talk for too long, thereby depriving others of *ukurhabula*. This was a symbol of equality in sharing.

Umrhabulo in politics of the liberation struggle

In Apartheid South Africa, shared consciousness was a key radicalisation and recruitment tool for Black South Africans. *Umrhabulo* morphed into a gathering, mostly of men, to sharpen political consciousness. The setting remained intimate, robust and yet respectful of people's time and positionality.

Umrhabulo in the era of decolonisation and intellectualisation of African languages

We now appropriate this concept or, more meaningfully, invite its ontological referrals to knowledge sharing at the *CriSHET* Winter School. With the intention of challenging and denaturalizing the Higher Education imaginary, *umrhabulo*, serves as method and practice for equal and comprehensive sharing of knowledge.





Welcome Address

Vice-Chancellor Prof Sibongile Muthwa

Staff and Students of our University
Colleagues from other universities in South Africa
Friends and co-travellers from our continent; and other parts of the globe
Present and former Vice-chancellors
USAf CEO, Prof Bawa
Research associates and honorary and visiting professors of our university
Dr Dina Belluigi from Queens University, Belfast – a key partner in this project
Honoured Guests

Five months ago I stood in this building, delivering the opening address for the *Dalibhunga: This Time? That Mandela?* Colloquium. I started my address by acknowledging the relational nature of the colloquium and the collective and collaborative pursuit underlying it. I quote: "This is a gathering of friends, collaborators, colleagues, co-travellers and critical interlocutors to make sense, if this is at all possible, of Mandela".

Today I welcome each and every one to this Winter School in a similar manner, for this is indeed a gathering of friends, collaborators, colleagues, co-travellers and critical interlocutors to make sense, if this is at all possible, of the University.

Fittingly, this gathering takes place immediately after the university's Mandela Centenary Celebrations. As the celebrations formed a space for recognition and reflection of a century of '*all things Mandela*', we now enter the next ... It is a beginning, as I stated last month at the opening of the Mandela lecture that closed out our centenary celebration. This beginning must include the active re-imagination of the university.

This imperative was recognised in my inaugural speech as Vice-Chancellor in 2018, where I argued for Nelson Mandela University to "go boldly into the future in service of society". In doing so, I echoed Premesh Lalu's (2015) question: "What is the university for?" According to Lalu, when asking this question, "we need to admit to two ways we hear the parsing "for". On the one hand, we

hear a question about what the university is supposed to be doing now, and on the other, we hear a question about the university's standpoint".

Complicating this thinking further, Chris Brink (2018), who is here with us at this Winter School, poses two more questions in relation to the contemporary university. The questions "what are we good at?" and "what are we good for?" point to two subtle, yet paradigmatic differences which can guide us towards reconceptualising the soul of the University. The answer to the first question, "what are we good at?", points to the historic-present position of the university, whilst the answer to the second question, "what are we good for?", paves the way for a reflection on the purpose of the university – its future.

We need to acknowledge that the historic-present of the university – the answer to the "what are we good at?" question – is intrinsically entangled with the received understanding of the university as linked to knowledge and excellence. As I (2019c) have argued before, "[i]t is [of course] essential that the University should prioritise excellence and merit, but it is not sufficient [on its own, nor unto itself]". If fact, there is a case for us to rethink the very meaning of these notions.

The future of the university therefore lies in the remaining three questions: the first "what is the university for?", relating to what the university is supposed to be doing now; the second "what is the university for?", relating to what the university's position, posture and standpoint is; and lastly "what are we, the university, good for?", relating to what we should be in service of. The collective answer to these questions might "frame [the University's] posture and its tenure in the ethos in service to society and the improvement of the human condition" (Muthwa 2019c).

In our search for, and active becoming towards, the engaged University in service of society, we can centre our thinking on three premises: the university as plastic; the university as porous; the university as placed. By plastic I do not refer to "an imitation of the real thing", but André Keet's (2018) formulation of the



plastic university “imagined as a self-transforming machine, with infinite possibilities for doing just, and doing right”. Inscribed in the university is the potential for meaningful change, the emancipation of knowledge and transformative social justice work. Thinking-plastic is therefore thinking “mutability, change, exchange, morphing, metamorphosis, transformation” (Galloway 2012). Reading the university as plastic, is reading the potential for change.

The second premise is that the university is porous. Julia Preece (2017: 15) argues for “exploring how universities might position themselves as porous, rather than ivory towers for community engagement”. The porous university is not one where it is pitted against the community, or somehow regarded as abstract extraction thereof. It is not “a detached site for critical enquiry” (Goddard & Puukka 2008:17), but rather the enactment of a relationship “whereby both university and community gain new understanding for change and interact fluidly as neighbours” (Preece 2017: 44). To regard the university as porous is to work towards “a university without boundaries, which is metaphorically porous and neighbourly to its surroundings and other organisations. The process of co-creating knowledge in these engagement relationships also means the university is intellectually porous in allowing knowledge to be socially defined” (ibid. 168).

“I personally place [a great emphasis] on knowledges that are not necessarily led by scientists” (Muthwa 2019b). I believe “[t]he University lacks sufficient and appropriate proximity to deprivation. It lacks proximity to stories of resilience, [and] that is why the University needs to work with other publics. The University is unfamiliar with the principles of ordinariness and non-competition. The University is unfamiliar with that. So, to make a difference, the University must make a difference with ordinariness and non-competition. The University, historically, is sceptical of the native intelligence and discernment and survivalist tactics in what of we call in social policy, ‘the weapons of the weak’. The University has for too long [had] a social distance between the tested methods, tactics, practices, wisdoms of resilient communities and therefore, the University lacks the language and the lexicon as to how it can translate its scholarly work to serve society, better” (Muthwa 2019c).

The third premise is the university as ‘placed’. At the historic name change of our institution in 2017, then-Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa provided a sober account of the responsibility weighing on the shoulders of an institution named after the face

of social justice, Nelson Mandela:

Such a university “must remain rooted in answering the challenges that confront our society in a global economy. [It] must be an African university that serves the continent and her people[,] recognising that [it is] situated in a society and on a continent that is ravaged by poverty, inequality and unemployment. It means [its] curriculum will, in content and character, seek to answer the social and economic challenges that confront our country and continent” (Ramaphosa 2017).

In this extract the importance of the university as placed institution cannot be ignored. Nelson Mandela University, as any other university the world over, has to acknowledge this place, and ask itself what this place acknowledges about the university. It is only through reading “universities as place-based” that place allows us to re-articulate the university.

My conception of the university sketched at the Hubs of Convergence discussion earlier this year can be read against the backdrop of the three questions raised by Lalu and Brink, together with the premises of the university as plastic, as porous and as placed. Allow me to quote this outline:

[1] It is extremely important for the University to frame its posture and its tenure in the ethos in service to society and the improvement of the human condition; the human condition framed from all angles – from scientific and scholarly endeavours – but the University should [2 – also] be concerned about the persistent inequality of access to it as a University, unequal access to opportunities to information. [3] The University should be concerned about uneven validation of what is considered as knowledge – we should be concerned about the narrow manner in the way in which we validate knowledge. [4] I feel a public University should always position itself on the side of justice, it should position itself on the side of the indivisibility of the right to human dignity; the University cannot be quiet regarding such matters. It should affirm and talk about the fact that human rights are not divisible; human dignity is for everyone. [5] I feel a public University should always be seized with what it is not and what it cannot do, so that the parameters of its validation of its work are always limited by its strengths because it cannot be everything to everyone. [Nevertheless, the



public university can achieve itself] through engagement and collaboration with other knowledge workers and practitioners who are not universities. I believe the public University as it is currently known in history, perhaps has undeserved prominence[,] but having said that, we should use that platform to position other voices, other practices, other theories, and other [praxes] (Muthwa 2019c).

The three questions are intrinsically linked to the theme of this Winter School; 'emancipatory imaginations: advancing critical university studies'. I have an affinity for this subject ... because I think that universities in general have not yet found a social imagination that allows them to 'engage' in equalizing ways. Such imagination, of necessity, must advance social freedom to respond to the key social justice questions of our times. These questions converge around the challenge of global and local inequalities. Without a radical re-imagination of the very basis upon which we have to approach this task, we may inevitably reproduce its patterns. This Winter School is therefore an expression of the

duty of this university, and *the university* in general. That is, an emancipatory imagination should have, as its starting point, a dexterity that can think the 'university as society'; to unshackle itself from its 'ingrained' character of aloofness.

I hope that I, through invoking these three questions, and emphasising these three premises, have stirred your interest into imagining, and importantly re-imagining, how intellectually exciting and challenging, as well as socially pragmatic and politically productive, a Critical University Studies programme can be.

Enjoy your time here at our university; I wish you an impactful winter school. I am looking forward to receiving the report as a 'guide' on how, where and through what pathways we can live up to our ambition of, in the words of Nelson Mandela, acknowledging, re-imagining and re-vitalising "education as the most powerful weapon to change the world".



The Idea



Dr Dina Zoe Belluigi thanked those present at that moment, and that time, in the context of the Winter School. As she explained, it was precisely the *moment* which framed so much of her and Prof André Keet's thinking in terms of Critical University Studies, and how to reimagine emancipation in relation to it. She argued, however, that this *moment* is not delinked – it is predicated on the saturation of linkages that had entered the Winter School, and those that would be created through the establishing of networks. The Winter School's aim is subsequently to create conditions for discussion and appreciation. It is focussed both on what might come from this moment, whilst acknowledging what has led to its present. As part of the Winter School's ethos, there is a conscious emphasis on doing-differently, which finds its expression through umrhabulo and roundtable discussions, rather than aged and institutionalised academic practices. This follows the Winter School's desire to do impactful, meaningful work beyond all else.

Prof André Keet foregrounded the current unease in the Higher Education sector, tying this to a general lack of responsiveness. This context continues to be underpinned by a discursive frame



which is steering, inhibiting and limiting thought. For Prof Keet, what is perhaps most worrisome, is that this frame has been emptied of any social justice imperative, which leads to the enslavement of the imaginary. This leaves scholars entangled in problematic reproductive processes of the university. Therefore, he argued, it is a time to rethink – with South Africa perhaps offering a prime space from which to do this – particularly because it is not yet as caught up in the neoliberal clutches stifling the Global North. He further argued that the *Critical* in Critical University Studies has to lead to opening up of categories which are closed, revealing the contradictions and antagonisms within them and thereby exposing current crises. *Critical* is therefore also creative, pragmatic and innovative in imagining the new, denying the given and coping with constraints. The *Critical* should not fall prey to its dogma, but rather remain vigilant and critical of itself in order to serve its goal of dislodging ways of seeing the university. CUS must, therefore, offer a new way of studying the university – an approach that is not antagonistic to other approaches and disciplines, but which could bring them into conversation.



Mapping Critical University Studies

Mr Luan Staphorst provided an overview of the field of Critical University Studies (CUS). He traced the term to Jeffrey Williams in 2012, who dates CUS to the 1990s as a response to various socio-economic changes impacting the university. He outlined the various ways in which CUS has found expression, particularly through three book series: *Palgrave Critical University Studies*, *Johns Hopkins Critical University Studies* and *Berghahn Critical University Studies*. These publications have been complemented by three special editions of two journals in the mid-2010s, *Workplace* and *Radical Teacher*. Beyond these publications, a number of academic programmes, research networks and academic centres exist which further CUS. These include an early career research network established in 2018, Roskilde University's Unit for Critical University Studies and the City University of New York's Research Track in CUS.

From these publications, manifestos and concept notes in circulation, he summarised the seven dominant themes of CUS which could be gleaned from these texts:

1. *Privatization and the University*: Here, the ties between the global neoliberal project and universities are investigated, analysed and critiqued. This privatization is not only reflected in existing universities, but the formation of new for-profit institutions that build on and towards the neoliberal order.
2. *Labour and the University*: Directly linked to the process and effects of privatization, labour relations within university spaces have drastically changed. Part-time work, contract work and outsourcing are all labour practices which are critiqued within CUS. This theme, therefore, broadly addresses the problematic nature of the capitalization of academic labour.
3. *Pedagogy and the University*: As the labour relations within the university change, the for-profit drive of universities intensifies, and change for its teaching and learning space is inevitable. Critique of the pedagogies in universities is perhaps the most active form of critique, as it searches for new praxes, rather than simply arguing against existing frameworks.
4. *Funding and the University*: Another direct link to the neoliberal order is the question of funding, especially regarding access to the university through enrolment fees. As the mechanics of privatization kick in, the market-driven desire for profit leads to an increased burden on those wanting entry into institutions of higher learning. This happens as public-funding is simultaneously slashed, which further increases the burden of debt and the resultant inequalities.
5. *Globalization and the University*: The deregulation of markets through neoliberal policies have not only led to increased privatization, but the expansion of existing universities through satellite campuses across the globe. The rise of such "global universities" are read as an extension of Western hegemony.
6. *Innovation and the University*: The emphasis on generation of capital through the university has incentivized a form of academic mechanization. The university, and those associated with it, are encouraged to strengthen ties with business, and use their position to further profit-making enterprises through patents, business models and other forms of capital.
7. *Function and the University*: All these themes feed into a fundamental question: what is the function of the university? CUS engages with this question through all forms of critique – even when this question is only implied. It is this question that drives critique in the first place. Ought students to be treated as "job seekers rather than as citizens"? Ought the university to be a place of profit-making, or an institution in service of the public good?



Mr Staphorst also argued that an alternative tradition of scholarship beyond Williams' CUS exists which could, and should, be regarded as CUS. He pointed to the work of Paulo Freire and Adrienne Rich as examples, and referenced the blog, *Remaking the University*, together with the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences' online CUS reading list, which point to literature delving deeper into questions of social justice, decolonisation and transformation in relation to the university. He subsequently

argued that CUS is currently split in two – the officialised, institutionalised and sanctioned world of CUS which is lowercase critical, and a marginal world of CUS which is ironically uppercase Critical. Through the recentring of the marginal, he argued, CUS could be reimagined and reconstituted as a field of, and force for, social justice.



Part 1: Roundtables

At the heart of the Winter School was the necessity for emancipatory alternatives to dominant ways of imagining and studying the University. Therefore, the Winter School aimed to provide a flexible, iterative and creative space to facilitate such imaginations. The spirit of the School was intended to be that of umrhabulo, a practice of equality in sharing:

This is a South African approach to discussing important issues affecting the community. The practice of umrhabulo is embodied in the passing of a shared drink between those gathered, who sip from the vessel, conscious of everyone's consumption. The same rule applies to the conversation, as there is limited time and many issues to discuss. One does not talk for too long, to avoid depriving others of ukurhabula.

The contributors were thus asked to participate in the roundtables in the spirit of umrhabulo:

- Each roundtable had a moderator, who kept the conversation flowing, but who also contributed to the conversation.
- Each key contributor was asked to prepare a concise, 5-minute response to the topic of their roundtable and to open the conversation.
- The contributors were asked to respond, contest and build on ideas presented by other contributors in the interest of co-creating new imaginations.
- The moderator allowed for as much dialogue as possible between the key contributors and other participants during the roundtables.

Roundtable 1 – Reimagining the University

Moderator: Nobubele Phuza

Key Contributors: Xoliswa Mtose, Chris Brink and Ahmed Bawa

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

The Winter School is bringing together scholars, practitioners and policy makers to challenge and 'denaturalize the dominant higher education imaginary' (Stein 2018: 1). Key to the 'ideas' of the Winter School is the prospect of 'other' ways to study

universities that are meaningfully different from the various strands of conventional higher education studies; and to open up the possibilities of thinking plural forms of emancipatory higher education imaginations and futures.

Ms Nobubele Phuza opened the session by broadly framing it within the concerns she had noted in the opening of the School: namely the uncertainties of the university and how to critique it in meaningful ways.

Prof Xoliswa Mtose framed her discussion in relation to two themes: the first being the reimagination of the university today, and the second being constructively engaging with marginality. Under the first theme, Prof Mtose made five points:

1. We have to think about the notion and element of freedom, particularly as it exists in relation to emancipation. What may freedom mean? Whose freedom would it be? How can it be found in the emancipation of the university?
2. To have freedom is to question data and scientific paradigms whilst constructively engaging with communities and society.
3. In a postcolonial and decolonising postmodern world, the notion of freedom ought to empower science.
4. Is there such a thing as a best model for a university? Who determines what such a "best" model is? Is it one rooted in science, teaching and learning, or engagement? And what does such a model look like in context?
5. Lastly, in order to reimagine the university today, African discourses and African thinkers must be foregrounded.

These five points were further entangled with the three points underpinning the second theme:

1. Science always has marginal voices, and as such could be expanded to address marginality.
2. There exists a wealth of African intellectual traditions, cosmologies and seeming non-sciences (including arts and culture) which ought to be acknowledged.



3. Through acknowledgement of the marginal voices always present in science, together with the extant traditions in existence, African knowledge production ought to be centred.

Prof Chris Brink contested the assumption that the current crisis manifesting itself in (South) African universities is exceptional. He argued that there is a crisis permeating Western rationalist thought, the dominant paradigm of logic and reasoning underpinning most, if not all, universities the world over. He suggested that this crisis is visible through the turn towards other ways of doing things. He provided three examples of this:

1. The Civic University: The Civic University positions itself as a part of society, instead of apart from it. This model therefore critiques the notions of detached objectivity which seems to be at the heart of the university as an institution.
2. The Research Assessment Exercise in Hong Kong: This mechanism, which provides a rating of a university as a whole, rather than individual researchers, has undergone a revolution in terms of its measurements. In the "classical" evaluation, the mechanism would simply rate the university based on number of outputs. In the "new" evaluation, the emphasis is placed on the quality of the research in relation to its impact on society. Rather than simply analysing the academic and scholarly impact, the mechanism rates the correlation between research and its context.
3. Reimagining the function and form of the university in Europe: *The Bologna Process* is a continental exchange program allowing university students the opportunity to complete their studies through many and varied university institutions. The genesis of the *Bologna Process*, the *Magna Charta Universitatum* of 1988, is currently being revised in line with a search for a definition of the university in the 21st Century.

All of this, argued Prof Brink, is a manifestation of an existential angst in the university. There is a crisis of, and in, the dominant European paradigm, which is itself part of a broader international soul-searching. He therefore concluded that there is not one best model for the university, but many, and that the "best" will be dictated by context.

Prof Ahmed Bawa foregrounded the process of grappling with questions, which is the norm in the contemporary moment. He sketched three central challenges facing the university:

1. Best Design: Finding the best design for the university and how to frame it so as to meet the challenge of providing the best possible outcome for its students – what Prof Bawa argued is the university's central task. Driving this outcome

is student development in a holistic sense – the intellectual, civic and emotional development of each and every student.

2. Production of Social Forms: Since the university plays a central role in the reproduction of social forms, the question must be asked what type of social form is being produced, and how the university could provide a different form.
3. Social Ownership: Who owns the university? Sketching the events of the #feesmustfall protests, Prof Bawa argued that no defence was made in the name of the university by government, civil and broader society. This raises the question, and challenge, of social ownership.

Although not offering solutions, he argued that our thinking through of these questions and challenges must be underpinned by three suppositions:

1. Complexity of thinking
2. Interrogation of knowledge production
3. The multiple functionalities of the university

Discussion

In response to these three provocations, Prof Shervani Pillay highlighted the problematic relationship between social ownership of the university, and state regulation. Prof Winnie Mitullah raised the question of the "university outside of the university" – civil society, think tanks and other organisations which sometimes do more than sanctioned universities. She asked what this might mean for the university going forward.

Prof Michael Cross critiqued the assumption of Critical Studies to provide the answer to the questions posed and challenges identified. He argued for the incorporation of African intellectuals in Critical Studies, as this field provides an important epistemology for thinking critically, but does not necessarily contain the content necessary for the African context. Critical Studies ought to be contextualised to "escape the nightmare of silence".

Dr Satish Kumar raised three concerns when addressing these questions and challenges: firstly, the limit of consciousness in teaching and learning; secondly, the apparent trade-off between teaching and learning; and thirdly, the relationship between intersectionality and complexity.

Mr Pedro Mzileni provided a final comment on the state of contemporary South African society. He argued that pervasive state dependency coupled with a worrisome lack of participation by the public sector, leads to frustration amongst South African



citizens – particularly black youth. In such a context, he asked, how is a social compact between the university and the society it is situated in possible?

In response the first round of interjections, Prof Mtose specifically addressed the concern raised by Prof Pillay. She positioned the South African state as guilty of being double-tongued – speaking publicly, but doing nothing. This double-tonguedness is supported through a particular framing of universities and their challenges. In relation to historically white institutions, she argued, challenges would be regarded as national crises for which the society at large is responsible. In contrast, when it comes to historically black universities, challenges are placed squarely in front of the university management.

Prof Brink responded by highlighting the cliché of the knowledge economy. This cliché, which is regarded as a solution to everything, does not acknowledge the notion of supply and demand underpinning it. Once one asks who the suppliers are, one realises it is academics, but one never asks what the knowledge supplied is *for*. Such supply-and-demand logic drives the current, problematic notion of engagement. Prof Brink argued one ought rather to think in terms of responsiveness, with the university rooted in society.

In response to Prof Pillay's comment, Prof Bawa asked whether or not academic freedom exists. If it does, it must guide academics in the struggle against state bureaucracy. He further noted, in response to Prof Mitullah's comment, that institutions producing knowledge exist everywhere, and that it is a social justice imperative to work with such institutions and acknowledge them.

Prof Keet interjected and argued CUS, as currently framed in the North, has the self-interest driven wellbeing of the academic at its centre, rather than that of social justice demands within broader society. He outlined how the current discursive formations in policy-speak are framed in terms of trade-offs: transformation versus excellence, equity versus quality, etc. It is seldom framed as transformation and excellence. This discourse leads to the reracialisation of the distribution of worth across the university sector. The post-1994 period has deepened the racialisation of the system.

Dr Claire Kelly called the conference itself into question when highlighting the disjuncture between theory and practice. She argued that no meaningful translation is occurring between the

theoretical spaces of transformation and change, and the systems which are in place.

Dr Nandita Dhawan mentioned the presence of caste in India in particular, but class in general, and how such formations tie in with notions of excellence, policies of affirmative action and the prevalence of violence.

Prof Aslam Fataar argued that the university in its current form is dislodged from the nation-state, yet has realigned itself with transnational capital. The South African university is subsequently in ruin, as it is supercharged by notions of change, transformation and decolonisation, whilst it has no specificity.

Prof Tshepo Madlingozi highlighted the subtext of Prof Bawa's framing of the 2015-2016 student protests in South Africa. In opposition to Prof Bawa's assertion that no one came to the universities' defence, Prof Madlingozi argued that the protests themselves were acts of defence, and in opposition to what could be regarded as the erosion of the university.

As a final comment, Prof Brink emphasised the problematic nature of the false dichotomies Prof Keet mentioned. He argued that this is a manifestation of a deeper problem rooted in the Western rationalist tradition. Rather than A or B, we ought to argue A *and* B.

Prof Bawa's final comment echoed this argument, mentioning the false nature of the tension of poles. He argued for an integrative approach to knowledge rather than pure reductionism.





Roundtable 2 – The SDGs, African Universities and ‘Emancipatory Imaginations’

Moderator: Ihron Rensburg

Key Contributors: Su-ming Khoo and Winnie Mitullah [Benedict Matiswa was unable to attend]

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

The United Nations Development Programme’s Sustainable Development Goals are a call to ‘end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity’. They offer a possible external referent that has the ‘common good’ in mind that is not about commodification, much as humanitarian and human rights agendas have offered. Currently, there is a renewed call for higher education institutions to be drivers of the SDGs, with related funding opportunities. However, in what ways do the SDGs envisage/construct a role for universities to drive social change? Is this ‘common’ developmental agenda a radical or domesticating impulse, and whose interests does it serve? How might it impact knowledge and social production in ‘developing’ countries?

Prof Ihron Rensburg opened the roundtable by reiterating the need to avoid polarities, and invoking Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s notion of the “triple-heritage” of the African university. This heritage includes, firstly, precolonial, Nilotic, Arabic, Muslim history; secondly, a Western imperial colonial modernity; and, thirdly, an anticolonial and liberatory legacy. Thus, for Prof Rensburg, this triple-heritage involves both struggle and unity. Drawing from Ndlovu-Gatsheni, he also made four points about what he sees as the main tasks of the African University:

1. Re-establish Africa as a legitimate epistemic base from which Africans can view the world, by excavating and critically engaging with precolonial traditions.
2. Assert the fact that knowledge cascades from Africa to the world, not just from the world to Africa.
3. Explore the ongoing, detailed and complex decolonial, decentring and recentring process at personal, academic, student and institutional levels.
4. Critically engage with the excellence-meritocracy-elite participation orthodoxy.

Prof Rensburg noted that all this would have to be done at the same time, while engaging with the multiple other challenges facing Africa and the globe. He also introduced the idea of the SDGs, noting how they have become increasingly incentivised through

both financial aid and a new form of ranking through assessing institutional impact via the SDGs. Thus, he framed the discussion which was to follow as reflections on the interconnections of the emerging concepts about an African University, the SDGs as an epiphenomenon, and the idea of emancipatory imaginations.

Dr Su-ming Khoo framed her provocation in terms of emancipation as rebellion or repair, and focused her discussion on SDGs 4 (quality education) and 10 (reducing inequalities – cognitive, distributive and political). She rejected what she called ‘SDG-isation’ through two anti-starting points: firstly, the idea that SDGs could simply be mixed into the “African pot” to season the metaphorical stew, and secondly, the nostalgia for modern, mass education. From these two anti-starting points, Dr Khoo argued for crises to be seen not only as negative, but also as opportunities for laying bare the normative foundations of a subject.

She focused in on the idea of emancipatory imaginations by asking what type of emancipation we might be looking for. To explore this, she presented two pieces of art. Firstly, the provocative art piece “Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn” (1995) in which artist Ai Weiwei drops an ancient urn as a means to question what China is and where it is going. Secondly, the Japanese art of Kintsugi, where broken pots are lovingly repaired to create something new. This repair is to be enjoyed, hence why it is done in gold. Furthermore, the repaired object is more beautiful than it was when it was broken. In this way, Dr Khoo illustrated the ideas of rebellion (destruction of the university as we know it) and repair (putting together the shards of a broken university in a new way).

In relation to this, she also raised the question about what might be drawn from the non-Occidental realm that could help to repair the brokenness of Western universities. As a starting point for this consideration, she referred to a number of ancient universities outside of the Occident that might offer alternative starting points for thinking about knowledge, education and the university today.

Prof Winnie Mitullah began by situating her discussion within the development context. She noted that the SDGs are the last in a long line of lenses used in development, which have shifted from the basic needs approach, to the social dimensions of development approach, to Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS), to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to the SDGs.

She was mainly concerned with the role of academics in relation to development and the SDGs. This came in the form of a question



about the mandate of the African University and emerged in two main ways: 1) whether the University's role should be limited to imparting pedagogy and critical thinking, and 2), if not, whether the University should engage with development through civil society organisations or directly. Her argument was that the African University should have a clear mandate and strategy for its engagement with development in order to perfect this role and thus have significant impact. She noted the importance of this in Africa where resources are scarce and must be mobilised efficiently. She emphasised the importance of the University's training function and that it would need to produce students who would be able to engage with what is 'happening on the ground', be innovative and have the right technologies to effect change. The challenge here that she observed was the way neoliberal demands link students to markets.

Prof Mitullah regarded the SDGs as an opportunity – one which the African university could tap into. She also saw the SDGs as distinct from previous frameworks in that the process of developing them had made significant space for scholarly input. Within the frame of Critical Studies, she argued for a strategic manoeuvring towards addressing pressing challenges. For her, the major challenge of the SDG's is its indicators, as indicators are not global or universal, yet are framed as such. She therefore argued for a localisation of concepts and measurements. She also observed that there are many 'intersections' between the various SDGs and that these connections should be engaged with, rather than treating each SDG in isolation.

Discussion

Mr Luzuko Buku responded in favour of the rebellion approach in terms of transformation. He argued that transformation discourses are currently hampered by formalism, in the form of SDGs, rights paradigms and policy structures, whilst problematic practices continue. Therefore, a shift at a fundamental level is required, with the idea of fracturing being ideal in his view.

Dr Satish Kumar stressed a bottom-up rather than top-down approach when dealing with questions of the SDGs. He outlined his own research work and spoke about how he often turns to communities themselves for answers, rather than imposing theories and ideas from elsewhere. He argued that political commitment to the SDGs is necessary, but that they could be interpreted and utilised against existing structures, frameworks and practices.

Prof Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez raised the question of the curriculum, and whether or not curricula reflect the differentiated histories of the university or incorporate decolonisation – particularly in the German (European) context. SDGs, and their relevance, are similarly absent in the curriculum in German (European) contexts.

Prof Michael Cross offered a critical comment on the relationship between SDGs and academia – arguing that academia was good at creating instruments such as SDGs, but not good at critiquing them. He argued that this is due to an absence of leadership and no normative framework.

Dr Dina Belluigi argued that SDGs are a supposed resource, but reproduce certain forms of colonialism. Similarly to Prof Cross, she framed Higher Education as an important driver of SDGs, but warned that if this work is not done critically, it will lead to increased inequalities. She further asked whether or not Higher Education could, or rather should, drive initiatives such as the SDGs when it does not necessarily embody the values thereof.

Dr Claire Kelly stressed the importance of understanding the interests underpinning the contemporary university, and how these interests hamper meaningful transformation.

Ms Brightness Mangolothi elaborated on Dr Kelly's comment, arguing that the institutional cultures of universities are not driven nor defined by its management, but rather by its "stomach", the bulk of its employees. She argued that it was such employees who hampered transformation, leading to a disjuncture between official reports of transformation (which appear to be good) and lived experience (which points to the opposite).

Prof Michael Okyerefo brought the conversation back to the SDGs, asking who determined them, who implements them, and who measures them. He argued that, at least in the African context, it was politicians and that this needs to change. He asked how academics could influence and engage with this issue.

Prof Sioux McKenna highlighted that SDGs are not wrong or bad, nor that anyone in the Winter School would dismiss them out of hand, but noted that they are nevertheless problematic when situated in and entangled with global structures, and subsequently becomes a mere ranking mechanism.





Roundtable 3 – What might be the shape of Critical University Studies in the Global North? Can it produce ‘emancipatory imaginations’ of use for its own social justice project and that of the Global South?

Moderator: Michael Cross

Key Contributors: Tony Gallagher, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Shirley Anne Tate and Michalinos Zembylas

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

The global imaginary of higher education is, to a large extent, a colonial/modern imaginary. A dominant version of CUS emerging within the ‘Global North’ is premised on the idea of a ‘good’ University that once existed in the past; and that is in the main being eroded by neoliberalism’s managerialism. It seems to displace questions of a broader social justice import, such as to racism, classism and sexism within the academy, amongst other challenges of exclusion and misrecognition that it ‘ignores’. Further, it appears to be silent on the need for a ‘decolonial’ project within higher education in the ‘Global North’. How can these apparent blind spots be addressed, and in what ways can it articulate with the higher education transformation project in the ‘Global South’?

Prof Michael Cross introduced the session by noting that the world is experiencing a crisis – a global epistemological crisis. He argued that problems once deemed to be of the Global South, such as racism, corruption and crime, are now very much part of the Global North. These problems do not, however, seem solvable by the intellectual legacy of modernity – neither in the South, nor the North. Hence, we need new ways to think.

Prof Tony Gallagher opened his discussion by referring to Prof Keet’s criticism of the sense of nostalgia permeating CUS in the North. He offered criticism of this idea, through reference to his context of Ireland. He argued that the Irish, with their peculiar relationship of being England’s first colony, and simultaneously an important part of Britain’s imperial power, do not necessarily regard anything of the past as inherently good. He argued that there is rather a looking towards the future, which goes against a nostalgia for the past. However, he also noted that some ideas of the past, specifically of the enlightenment, are indeed very good and in service of social justice. He further offered a critique of the discourse of neoliberalism at the Winter School, arguing that neoliberalism, although used as one term, refers to a plurality of socio-economic positions. The real danger, he argued, is

populism; for populism carries within it a disdain for knowledge – the very thing which all academics presuppose without question. Academics, therefore, have to acknowledge their agency, and use it in their fight against such dangers.

Prof Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez quoted at length from the 1993 Nobel Prize lecture of Toni Morrison, who had passed away just a week earlier. In this quote, Morrison speaks of discrimination through language, and the violence resulting from it. Prof Gutiérrez Rodríguez framed her duty as an academic as being about pointing out this kind of violent language and forms of discrimination. She noted how this constitutes a continued crisis, and how modernity is itself a result of this crisis – the crisis of colonisation. She noted how discussions of modernity, colonialism and violence are on the margins of the German (European) university. Theories relating to them are incorporated, but stripped of their political dimension. Subsequently, no vocabulary exists to address the continued discrimination resulting from colonialism. She discussed the work being done to establish formal associations and trade unions for academics, which had not existed in the past in Germany. She argued that these kinds of organisation amongst academics are necessary to combat backlashes experienced by those working on decolonisation, and to combat forms of authoritarian capitalism working together with racial capitalism. Under authoritarian academic capitalism, the academic becomes a civil servant, which makes political and social justice work problematic. She called for academics, through curriculum reform and political organising, to challenge the institutions in which they work.

Prof Shirley Anne Tate raised the question about how to build the anti-racist university – an institution that she argues refuses to be built, for people always stand in its way. She critiqued the manner in which certain concepts and ideas, such as decoloniality, are taken up within the university as buzzwords. In contrast, the lived experiences, the continued existences, of coloniality are not taken up. Her discussion then focussed on the black attainment gap as it manifests in the UK, and the importance of the discursive framing surrounding it. She argued that thinking around the black attainment gap is divorced from the university as an institution, with research rather framed in relation to a problem with black peoples. Prof Tate argued that this type of thinking simply reaffirms racialised systems and institutions, and is subsequently a cornerstone of keeping the anti-racist university from being built.

Prof Michalinos Zembylas’s contribution worked to answer the two questions of the roundtable provocation: 1) What might be



the shape of Critical University Studies in the Global North? and 2) Can it produce 'emancipatory imaginations' of use for its own social justice project and that of the Global South? He gave two indirect answers to these questions. The first was that if within the colonising university there also exists a decolonising education then there is always room for emancipatory imaginations in universities in the Global North. The second was that the project of developing and deploying critical knowledges and intellectual practices always has within itself the possibility of its own end, because it is extremely difficult to remain cognisant of its own limitations. He argued that, through Critical University Studies, scholars in the Global North could raise issues about corporatization, privatisation and student debt, but that this field would also allow for the debunking of fantasies that the university is necessarily the site of social mobility, racial equality and self-transformation for the disenfranchised. In making his argument, he drew from the 2018 article by Boggs and Mitchell on "Critical University Studies and the Crisis Consensus".

Discussion

In response, Prof Aslam Fataar suggested that the theory of agency and change was missing from the discussion. He argued that if we locate agency semi-autonomously in the university, we miss the way the university is linked to larger societal structures.

Prof Michael Okyerefor asked Prof Tate how the impact of class on education has changed over time in the UK, in comparison to the impact of race, and Dr Jason Arday asked her whether she thought there were any examples of places who had made more progress on building the anti-racist university than the UK.

Mr Luzuko Buku raised the question to the panel of how the weaknesses of colonial logics have impacted the universities in the Global North, and not just their relationships to previously colonised countries. Dr Satish Kumar raised the question of tokenism and ethics within these discussions. He also commented on the question of attainment when it comes to international students in UK institutions.

Prof Tate responded by emphasising the injustices regarding the UK's use of international students – using them to fund the system and thus reproduce this system and its racist hierarchies. She answered Dr Arday's question by noting that, for her, the pertinent question is that of interest and self-interest – who gains from the change in a system and who does not. These entanglements of

interest make the question of the anti-racist university an extremely complicated one. She made an example of the University of the West Indies as one which has made more progress in creating an anti-racist institution, in that the students there are able to speak about their work with confidence in a way that black students from the UK do not feel empowered to do.

Prof Gutiérrez Rodríguez responded on the question of colonisation and how it is also the production of the coloniser, which she saw as linked to the 'crisis of whiteness'. Again, she reinforced the links between authoritarian capitalism and racism, and in doing so highlighted the importance of class in the discussion, in alignment with Prof Okyerefor's question. In terms of alternative models, she saw South Africa as an example because discussions of transformation and inequality of the education system are not happening in Europe.

Prof Gallagher clarified his comment on neoliberalism, emphasising that it was an important concept, but often used in a Manichean, ill-defined way. He argued that there was a huge range of models under neoliberalism and that these needed to be clearly defined and understood.

Prof Zembylas agreed that the theory of agency was extremely important and that academics have both collective and individual responsibilities to society. He argued that to make meaningful change it is necessary to theorise CUS in ways that are particular to context rather than pursuing a universal theory.

Roundtable 4 – In what ways do the dominant discursive fields of higher education constrain the renewal and transformation of the academy?

Moderator: Kopano Ratele

Key Contributors: Qawekazi Maqabuka and Sioux McKenna

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

Stein (2018, p.1) argues that at present the possible futures of University have been 'significantly narrowed' and that the options on offer 'also appear increasingly unsustainable and unethical'. Such options, which undercut the radical transformation of universities, are encoded within higher education policy and practice, and programmed within the philosophies, orientations and praxes of agencies such as government departments, research councils, university associations, foundations and statutory councils responsible for funding, oversight and quality assurance.



This is the case in South Africa, and elsewhere. In other words, the system is locked into discursive fields that produce particular meanings of the principles of transformation: simulating change on the one hand, and justifying and legitimising systemically-anchored discriminatory outcomes on the other. How does this 'state of affairs' thwart the renewal of the academy?

Prof Kopano Ratele opened the session on an optimistic note, arguing that the left (despite or because of the global swing towards the right) has never had such amazing possibilities. He framed the unethical and unsustainable options for the university as an opportunity. He also highlighted a few things he was interested in seeing come out of the discussion: 1) a focus not only on discourse, but on materiality; 2) consideration not only of the University, but also of particular universities; and 3) examples of 'decolonising experiments' that might be held up as potential options.

Ms Qawekazi Maqabuka highlighted the visibility and invisibility of black women in academia – their position as “space invaders”. She argued that this precarious position is one tied to paradoxical ontological recognition, as a result of the imperative of transformation. It is the entanglement of transformation (in) visibility, that leads to a state of hypervisibility. In relation to this theory, Ms Maqabuka provided an auto-ethnographic account of being-black and being-woman in the South African academy, and tied the entanglements of hypervisibility to surveillance. This surveillance of the black woman academic is rooted in doubt about black women academics' capabilities, and the positioning of black women in the state of perpetual development. She asked: How is it possible to reimagine within such a context? Her answer: communities of coping. New communities need to be imagined and created wherein questions of performance, tokenism and hypervisibility can be done away with in favour of care.

Prof Sioux McKenna focussed her discussion on the responsibility of the white professorship, arguing that what is needed is an inversed surveillance. Academics are complicit in many of the problems and issues facing the university. Too easily, a discourse of “the university” and “they” distances academics, and particularly white academics, from their responsibility and complicity. She highlighted how change has, historically, come from outside the university space. The university has never, therefore, truly been the primary driver of change, and there is subsequently a culture of non-confrontation within Higher Education. She further discussed the correlation between the idea of the university and

the notion of success, considering how meritocracy has become a dominant discourse. This is further fed through myths of the decontextualized student, with the university as absent – all of which is further entangled with myths of the knowledge economy and a dominant human capital theory. She also argued that class cuts across other inequalities in higher education when it comes to attainment.

Discussion

Prof Kopano Ratele, before opening the floor for questions and comments, highlighted – in response to Ms Maqabuka and in solidarity with Prof McKenna's call for responsibility on the part of the white professorship – the importance of safety work, and called on the black male professorship to take up such work.

Prof Chris Brink commented on the origin and meaning of the term meritocracy, illustrating the irony in its use today as relating to something positive, when in actual fact it was formulated as a critique of notions of merit and success which so dominate contemporary discourses.

Prof Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez mentioned the importance of affective labour which is so often overlooked and wholly undervalued. This labour, linked to care and domesticity, is often invisibilized labour, and therefore also silenced. All this making-invisible and making-silence, however, ignores and contradicts the very nature of the university as a place of affect.

Prof Shervani Pillay pointed to the unspoken discourse of white supremacy which still permeates academia and broader society, and highlighted the importance of questioning especially in relation to the continuation of racism.

Dr Jason Arday pointed to the intersection of class and victimhood, noting that intersectionality is often devalued. As a result of race being underrepresented, class is often experienced differently dependant upon race, and that class must subsequently always be treated as an intersectional phenomenon never divorced from race.

Prof Michael Cross asked how it would be possible to shape a counter discourse. He noted that we remain stuck in and with dominant discourses, and lamented that no new discourses are offered.



Prof Su-ming Khoo highlighted the shared assumption of transformation permeating all discussions. A subsequent question, of which the answers might not be based on such shared assumptions, are linked to the practices which would be part of such transformation – practices such as grading and the issuing of credentials.

Roundtable 5 – Emancipatory Imaginations: Beyond higher education as we know it

Moderator: Tshepo Madlingozi

Key Contributors: Sharon Stein, Relebohile Moletsane and Crain Soudien

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

Discursive fields and social imaginaries set the limits of our interpretive horizons. With reference to the concept above, how can we unshackle our imagination to think alternative possibilities?

As introduction to the panel, **Prof Tshepo Madlingozi** noted that Higher Education is not just universities, and called for a more expansive focus to include, for example, TVET and other colleges. He asked what an emancipatory university could be, arguing that decolonisation of the university is impossible, but that it can be transformed. If one looks at the post-2015 HE landscape, it is clear that there is a drive towards inclusion, integration and epistemological diversity – a sense of epistemological populism. The result, however, is but the ‘seasoning of a Western dish through black thought and black scholars’. In working towards the emancipatory university, he noted three problematic present realities:

1. Emancipation is used as a cannibalising discourse for the legitimisation and renewal of existing problematic power structures.
2. Decolonisation leads to traps of colonialist thinking.
3. The redirection away from Western Scholarship tends to involve parachuting in thinkers from other contexts, such as Latin-America.

In relation to this last point, he suggested that we ask Said’s question: Can theory travel?.

He also highlighted the main concerns raised during the first meeting of Nelson Mandela University’s decolonial reading group, which had its first meeting the day prior. In this group, four concerns were raised:

1. Where are students in debates about decolonisation? Although they were the ones who led the campaign for change and transformation, they were not present at the discussions taking place about the nature of change and transformation. This results in the perception of academics as cultural imperialists in relation to students’ concerns.
2. There exists, amongst students, a struggle with hunger. This hunger is both metaphysical – in terms of transformative knowledge – and physical. What would an emancipatory university look like which addresses both these hungers?
3. Can there exist a decolonial university in the context of a neo-colonial society?
4. What are the limits of the ‘adjectivising game’, in coining phrases such as the decolonial university, the transformed university and the women-centred university, in relation to a context of no structural change.

Dr Sharon Stein opened her discussion by noting the imperative to define and delimit what exactly the discussion is about. She mentioned that discussions are often rendered meaningless as a result of a perception of shared understandings, when those understandings are in actual fact contradictory. She posited that all theories of change consist of two parts – a diagnosis and a proposition. The proposition often follows the diagnosis; however, it is sometimes contradictory, particularly when the proposition that follows logically is uncomfortable. She subsequently mapped three theories of change:

1. Soft reform: soft reform is similar to the notion of mixing or adding into the extant “pot”, which Prof Khoo referred to. It offers a subtle methodological change, which is part of a larger single narrative of progress and development. The methodological changes are, however, not linked to any new epistemologies, leaving basic knowledge-paradigms intact.
2. Radical reform: this is predicated on trying to centre new voices and bodies, realizing that epistemological, not just methodological, change is necessary.
3. Beyond reform: this theory takes as its starting point the argument that the very ontology of the university as it exists today is unsustainable, and that neither rebellion nor repair is truly the answer. The pot is already broken and it is not feasible or desirable to repair it in any way. This theory thus argues for a position that tries to understand the world beyond. It acknowledges that one has to learn from what is dying, without trying to assist it in its dying – all that can be done is let it die with dignity, whilst trying to learn as much



as possible from it in order not to make the same mistakes in future.

Prof Relebohile Moletsane based her discussion on two premises. Firstly, disillusionment with decolonisation in its current expression, for she argued that decolonisation must not simply be used as a metaphor. Secondly, the African university resembles those of the Empire. From these premises, she discussed the importance of language, and critiqued our love-affair with certain discourses. This love-affair, she argued, hinders and ultimately limits our imaginations of what is possible. Black, disadvantaged, woman ... these are all discourses she critiqued, for they are intricately linked to the “table of whiteness”, and thereby to global neoliberal demands, and lead to pedagogies of disadvantage. Our desire to access the table has, therefore, nothing to do with social justice. She subsequently proposed that we do away with the table, and its entangled ways of relating to one another. Rather – look towards indigenous African ways of relating, and use that as basis and standard. She invoked the concept and practice of the *lekgotla* – a meeting dependent on the literal “flattening of hierarchies” through demanding that everyone present sit on the floor. This practice inculcates equality, and she asked what effect this might have if used as point of reference in the academy. As a third point, she argued for the need to address the silences and silencing of voices and spaces in the academy – without which no true change will be possible.

Prof Crain Soudien disclaimed that there is an inherent difficulty in reconstituting the imaginary, but that this is the task of the moment. He highlighted that it is important to note that the university has never been a homogenous whole. There have, rather, always been contradictory processes and different rhythms present. Insider-ness and outsider-ness are positions which have always been present, which many in different contexts have grappled with, and which will continue to be a reality for many. He acknowledges that this is heightened in the context of highly racialised South Africa, but that it is nevertheless present the world over. This is the case, he argues, as a result of master signifiers. Master signifiers, which tend to be masculine and white, are always present and dominant, but are at the same time highly seductive. They are encased in desire. The only way to counter these master signifiers is, therefore, to understand how they function – to study Foucault deeply, for example – and to offer practices and concepts which challenge them and ultimately construct new objects of desire.

Discussion

Dr Babalwa Magoqwana responded by emphasising the problematic reality of the co-optation of resistance movements in universities – both in 1975 and 2016 – after a historic rupture.

Prof Xoliswa Mtose stated her disagreement with Prof Moletsane regarding the love-affair with discourses. She affirmed that the language (and discourses) of woman, black and historically disadvantaged, form an important part of history, and ought not to be changed or removed.

Ms Nancy Morkel disagreed with Prof Soudien’s proposal that in order to understand master signifiers the Western canon ought to be understood and known. She argued her immersion in literature, and the basic concepts underpinning it, did not come through Shakespeare or other institutionalised literary forms and genres, but rather through rap. She further highlighted that Foucault has never inspired any true emotion or response in her, whilst forms of popular culture have forced her to confront certain realities and realizations.

Dr Satish Kumar raised two questions: what are the principles of emancipation; and what are the true differences between universities in a globalized HE space where the language of the corporatized university seem to be the same?

Prof Soudien responded to the questions and comments by noting the need to multiply the alternatives. He argued for a pluriversity in motion. In this kind of space we would need to be liberated across and within many cultural forms and expressions, so as to increase the “abundance on the table”.

Prof Moletsane agreed with Prof Mtose’s argument, and stated that her position is not one calling for the removal of names and changing of discourses, but rather a warning against the danger of such discourses becoming self-fulfilling prophesies.

Prof Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez asked whether any collective organizing in service of change and dismantling was occurring in South Africa and, if not, whether it would be possible.



Prof Moletsane said no collective organization is apparent, nor would it be possible within the current discursive structures. Rather than co-operation, she argued that the current HE landscape promotes competition and individualism.

Ms Morkel highlighted the tension between perceptions of high and low culture, and the danger of falling into this kind of colonial dichotomy.

Prof Soudien, as a final comment, mentioned the need to acknowledge complexity, and continue to work within it.





Roundtable 6 – What is the meaning of 'African' in the 'African University'? Does/ can it facilitate an African emancipatory imagination?

Moderator: Christi van der Westhuizen

Key Contributors: Vivienne Bozalek, Amos Njuguna and Michael Okyerefo

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

The appellation of 'African' is a contested one. These contestations revolve around the meaning of 'African' in light of the heterogeneity of the continent and its discursive homogenization in the colonial imaginary. At the same time, 'African' has been used to mark resistance and solidarity in the face of colonization and the continued global inequalities today. Like with terms such as 'African literature' and the 'African writer', the phrase 'African University' raises questions about what is meant by such a term. Does it indicate solidarity, resistance and a reclamation of a denigrated identity? Is it a simple statement of geographical position or a geopolitical assertion? Does the appellation of 'African' reinforce problematic distinctions between 'the University' (normalized as white, Western, originary and excellent) and its 'copies' or other/s.

Prof Christi van der Westhuizen opened the discussion by noting the tension between a narrow definition of 'African', and a more expansive one. This term is particularly fraught in the South African context, being a settler society. For example, it is used as a racial classification under the broader notion of black, whilst there are also white Afrikaner nationalists who claim the identity. Furthermore, the term is problematic when South Africa's often parochial relation to the rest of Africa is considered (according to Mamdani), and the provincialism of the South African university (according to Mbembe) is acknowledged.

Prof Vivienne Bozalek invoked Mahmoud Mamdani in her discussion, tracing his argument about the problematic model of the university in Africa. This model can be termed the Humboldtian university – one which claims to produce knowledge and scholars that are universal and free from context. In contrast to this model, there exists a competing tradition in a few universities in Africa – those which produce the committed intellectual – scholars rooted within their specific space and time. Mamdani argues that the first type of university is mostly a result of colonial influences, whilst the second is rooted within nationalist anti-colonial struggle. Whilst mapping these different traditions, Mamdani questions

whether there truly is a unique African mode of thinking.

Prof Amos Njuguna asked two central questions: Why does the university exist? And where does it exist? These led him to ask whether it would be possible to have an African University in the USA or the UK, and what it would look like in such a context. He argued that the notion of 'African' ought not to be bound by race, language, religion or ethnicity, but should rather be a philosophy. However, he cautioned that although a shared philosophy might be what constitutes the African university, this ought not necessarily translate into similar approaches and characters. Within the shared philosophy constituting the African university, there ought to be a multiplicity of methodologies which could be followed in service of the same goal.

Prof Michael Okyerefo framed his contribution around the global knowledge hegemony and the historical university. He argued that it is the dominant epistemologies of a university that define whether or not it is African. With the use of an anecdote, he introduced the notion of the 'University of Life' as a way of challenging the idea of the university as an enclosed space. He argued that curiosity transcends boundaries, and is a universal act of living. As such, curiosity should be considered as African as it is universal and that this could be a starting point for debunking the idea that knowledge somehow belongs to the West. He mentioned the importance of remembering the ancient, pre-colonial universities such as of Timbuktu, as well as acknowledging scholars from Africa or African descent who have contributed to the disciplines that we know today, such as sociology.

Discussion

Prof Tshepo Madlingozi responded by questioning the claim that universities started in Africa – he questioned whether those institutions of learning would have described themselves as a university, considering that the concept and model has a particular origin. He further highlighted that the ancient university at Timbuktu would best be described as being creole, since it was not wholly African, and was rather strongly influenced by Islam and the Arabic world. He lastly questioned whether the notion and idea of 'African' ought to be remembered and revered at all – arguing it to be an imposed construct (invoking Mudimbe), he framed the notion as being colonial and therefore the result of violence.



Prof André Keet asked whether there was, in the work of Mahmoud Mamdani, any mention of the need to move away from disciplines as understood in the Western framework. Prof Keet critiqued the current architecture of the university as it manifests in knowledge, mentioning his and Prof Tate's work in critiquing the entanglement of knowledge, racism and the act of disciplining. He asked whether any disciplining could therefore take place without appropriation and racism, specifically citing the problematic position of African Studies, a field which has been appropriated by the West to such an extent that it is no longer a field truly of and for Africa.

Prof Winnie Mitullah stated that we need to understand how African universities have been contributing, rather than assuming that they are not contributing to knowledge. She agreed with Prof Njuguna that geography is not that important. No matter where a university is located, as long as it is producing knowledge relevant to the African context it should be considered African. Furthermore, she addressed the problematic form of extractivism of partnerships and projects with the West that position the African scholar as mere assistant in feeding the European academy.

Prof Okyerefo noted the importance of acknowledging that no one discipline will be able to solve and even address the various questions and challenges facing the African university.

He also noted the importance of remembering the value added to those who visit African universities for study or fellowship. He mentioned the positive learning experience such scholars note, and that there is therefore something definitively present in the African university.

Prof Bozalek noted that Mamdani favours the committed intellectual in his work, and would therefore also advocate for moving received intellectual and disciplinary boundaries.

Prof Shirley Anne Tate argued that Prof Njuguna's question about whether there could be an African university outside of the continent was an incredibly important one. She also critiqued the emphasis on credentials, which is part of the West's heritage, and how such credentials keep certain power structures intact through popular discourses. These tied into the issue of how African universities and the degrees they offer are not valued in the global university system.

Prof Bozalek subsequently argued that there is an imperative in the African university to do academia differently – both in terms of approach to academic labour, but also in terms of relating to each other as academics and on a broader scale as institutions.





Roundtable 7 – ‘Gender, Race ...’ and the limits of university transformation/critical university studies

Moderator: Jenny du Preez

Key Contributors: Aslam Fataar, Nancy Morkel and Jason Arday

Roundtable Provocation and Framing

Universities are shaped along gendered, racialized, classist, heteronormative, ableist and other lines. It is essential that these kinds of exclusions are critiqued. The multidisciplinary and polyphonic perspectives on the problematics of access, equality and legitimacy are appropriate for questioning the interpretative frames of the university and knowledge in this age of uncertainty. The work that emerges from these perspectives is a major area of scholarship that can help to decenter CUS, on the levels of conceptualization, methodology and praxis.

Dr Jenny du Preez opened the roundtable by noting that the ellipses in the title of the provocation of the session stood in for a multitude of categories of dehumanisation. She suggested it might be worth thinking through which of these categories had come up consistently throughout the Winter School, and which ones had been elided. In terms of the limits of transformation, she mentioned the contradictions inherent in the theory of intersectionality, where an attempt to think about inequality in more complex terms can paradoxically lead to thinking with categories, which can become emptied out of their meaning for those who experience discrimination. She proposed that the creative arts might offer ways of addressing these imaginative limitations.

Prof Aslam Fataar titled his discussion, “The psychic life of race in institutional cultures in the university”. He framed this in relation to the question about why the Winter School was constituted, and argued that there is a need for the development of a methodology in CUS. For him, concepts are central. Although not the fundamental driver of academic investigation (questions are), concepts shape our thought. In searching for concepts, he asked the following question: what is the archive of the unwritten slave? As part of the answer, he postulated the psychic life as a metaphor – an image which ties in with notions and ideas of archives, bones, spectres and shrouds. All of these conceptual metaphors, he argued, could be used to analyse situations within the university context. It is within the university, he argued, where he experiences moments of psychic madness: the historic reality of Stellenbosch University is one of racial mobilization and the spectral afterlife of

Apartheid. Offering sociological and descriptive readings leads to the question – where is the archive? Prof Fataar argued that it lies in ethnography and autoethnography, in autobiographies. Here, the ontologies of conquest can be read in relation to ontologies of dispossession, together with the mobilization of silence in establishing these ontologies. From here, hopefully, one could announce, and enunciate, the imaginary archive.

Ms Nancy Morkel offered an autoethnographic account of her experience as a black woman within the academy. She framed her discussion within the tension between practice, performance, and practice as performance. She critiqued the various assumptions which stick to race and gender, and how these assumptions are fed and sustained through narratives, such as the manager-narrative. Students, and staff, are emboldened through the narrative of the manager who can be invoked to achieve certain ends. The entanglement of assumption and narrative leads to complex positions where validation is always required. Through narrating her interview for her current position, she further highlighted the spectacle that is the academic performance, and specifically the heightened spectacle that is expected on the part of the black woman. She finally commented on the problematic position within this performance of the black female academic, noting that English is always a bedfellow of power.

Dr Jason Arday highlighted the presence of humour throughout the Winter School, and its use in alleviating the physical and visceral impact of racism. He noted the tension caused by the stigma of laughter and crying, and how this leads to the performativity of the academic. He discussed the stereotypes of the black man in the UK, and how these stereotypes – although discriminatory – heighten their position in society in relation to black women, for whom there is a singular narrative. This is a residual effect of carrying racism across generations, resulting in a double violence: a violence of lived experience, and a violence of continued explanation of that violent experience. This violence visited upon black bodies leads to definitive mental health challenges, whilst health care is either wholly unavailable to, or simply inadequate to address the problems facing black people.

Discussion

Mr Aphwie Bizani echoed Ms Morkel in noting the burden of English on black South Africans, a burden exacerbated by universities. Whilst black South Africans struggle in English, he argued that white South Africans live in ignorance.

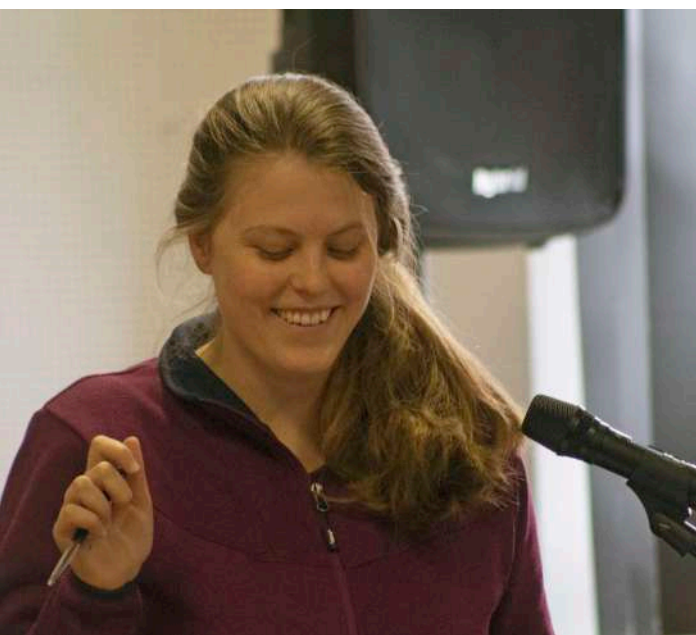


Prof Michael Okyerefo mentioned what he saw a missing voice in the panel, which is the voice of those who do not experience racism, and asked the panel how they thought the inclusion of such a voice might have influenced the discussion. He was also interested in ideas about how universities, like his own, might respond to the problems identified by CUS as institutions.

Ms Nobubele Phuza responded to Prof Okyerefo, arguing that the “missing voice” of white people is not necessary. Although it would perhaps offer an alternative viewpoint, for her the panel was “complete”. She put forward that it is dangerous to think that the conversation would be advanced or improved by the presence of a white person in discussions of race, or a man in discussions

of gender. She argued that people must always question their positionality, and whether or not they can truly make a meaningful contribution from that specific position.

Prof Christi van der Westhuizen highlighted the absence of sexual others in the discussion, and problematized the critique offered against Foucault-as-representative-of-White-European-discourse throughout various discussions, particularly considering he was a gay man who tried to commit suicide a number of times; an experience which highly influenced his work. For her, heteronormative patriarchy is very real and dangerous discourse which is not named or critiqued simply by invoking the concept of gender.





Part 2: Workshops

Aim:

The workshops were envisaged as spaces to explore potential modes and mechanisms for advancing African Critical University Studies; build solidarities, networks and collaborations; shape strategies and partnerships for 'better' impact; collate resources; and identify strategic areas for multi-stakeholder projects and funding applications.

Session 1 – Advancing African Critical University Studies

Facilitator: André Keet

Key Contributor: Mutinda Nzioki

Workshop Provocation

The aim of this workshop is to explore a flexible configuration of a Critical University Studies programme, specifically in Africa, that is capable of thinking plural forms of emancipatory higher education imaginations and futures. It is also intended to create space for developing strategic proposals for ways in which to advance African Critical University Studies, in terms of networks across the continent, identifying and accessing funding and other resources, and creating spaces, publications and capacity for the formulation and dissemination of innovative scholarship in this emerging field.

Workshop Presentations

Dr Mutinda Nzioki opened the workshop by centring three questions:

1. What are we to do with philosophy? Framing this question in relation to the 2015-2016 #feesmustfall movement, he questioned the relevance and form philosophy ought to take in relation to such changes in the South African higher education landscape.
2. What to do with knowledge? Closely following from the first, this question needs to be posed to create a critical space where the notion of knowledge can be interrogated.
3. What could be a transformative African University?

In thinking through these questions, Dr Nzioki reminded the workshop that there are three situational contexts which cannot be ignored:

1. Education in Africa has been, and continues to be, framed in relation to employability.
2. There is a heightened global awareness of the relationship between the 4th industrial revolution and learning, whilst basic and fundamental needs remain unaddressed on the African continent.
3. The commodification of university education is a rampant reality, particularly as it relates to the framing and furthering of perceptions which shape certain disciplines and careers (and which are linked to the very entrenching of commodification, such as business and economics).

Discussion

In response, Prof Winnie Mitullah highlighted the importance of philosophy as a field of inquiry, but, more importantly, how philosophy transcends its own boundaries. She lamented that philosophy seldom, if ever, moves beyond its discipline in assisting with shaping others. This links to a key idea for her, both in terms of disciplines as well as academia as a whole – the role of partnerships.

Prof Michael Okyerefo pointed to the importance of looking at good practices on the continent, and how those good practices can be regarded as models from which to learn and develop the African university. In accord with Prof Mitullah, he highlighted the change in thinking as it pertains to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Where these four fields have been regarded as a fixed entity of enquiry, he argued that the addition of Arts, the change from STEM to STEAM, is an important move which must be driven further in the African university.



Workshop Suggestions

1. Provide opportunities/mentorships for young woman and black academics, and solution-directed scholarly contributions for research and teaching possibilities in partnership with Research chairs, with funding from government and business, and an online library/blog which maps themes and ideas. (Jason Arday, Shirley Tate, Satish Kumar and Pedro Mzileni are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
2. Publish a series according to the particular themes from inter- and intra-university ACUS committees, together with developing student consciousness communities. The book series and committee establishment would be done in partnership with an array of universities, particularly those present at the Winter School, and with funding from the SA NRF and joint (partnership) funding proposals. (Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Marisa Botha, Amos Njuguna, Mahlubi Mabizela, Shirley Tate and Sharon Stein are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
3. Create local thinktanks that strive to bring together diverse voices in partnership with universities from diverse locations, and with funding from the SA NRF, governments and other research funding bodies. (Brightness Mangolothi, Amos Njuguna, Mahlubi Mabizela, Jason Arday and Sharon Stein are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
4. Establish the philosophical foundations of what higher education should seek to fulfil in societies and therefore what universities ought to focus on, in partnership with scholars and staff from universities from across the world ensuring diversity of contexts, with funding from governments and university donors. New methodologies need to be created to underpin these new philosophies. (Su-ming Khoo, Tony Gallagher, Beata Mtyingizana-Buhlungu, Luan Staphorst and Michael Cross are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
5. Map the contemporary problem-spaces of HE in Africa and determine how this differs from previous problem-spaces in order to understand what has shifted and what might be strategic responses as well as possible limitations (Amos Njuguna, Mahlubi Mabizela, Jason Arday, Luan Staphorst and Sharon Stein are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
6. Publish key position papers from the Global South in partnership with NMU as lead and UK – QUB. (Christi van der Westhuizen, Luan Staphorst, Sharon Stein and Satish Kumar are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
7. Strategically advance Environmental Studies. Africa is known as the Cradle of Humankind; therefore it should pioneer programmes that address climate change and the environmental concerns in partnership with NGOs and government. (Marisa Botha, Vivienne Bozalek, Luan Staphorst, Sharon Stein, and Beata Mtyingizana-Buhlungu, are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
8. Identify the need for the advancement of CUS in terms of power and influence and develop strategies of engagement for each category and stakeholder in partnership with like-minded regional institutions and universities with funding from the African Union or IUCEA, bilateral and multilateral educational development corporations inside and outside of Africa. Stakeholders could also include students and faculty, university administration, and activists, educators and movements outside academia. (Amos Njuguna, Jason Arday and Shervani Pillay are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
9. Collect different perspectives on the transformative project and help clarify the different needs/demands for emancipation, in partnership with movements that emancipatory ideas come from as well as the academics and disciplines, with funding from a new joint/collaborative research council. (Sharon Stein and Su-ming Khoo are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
10. Engage with multidisciplinary research collaborations that specifically speak to the realities of African universities in partnership with other institutions, organisations in the region and around the globe, with funding from the Global North for projects conceptualised by Africans in Africa, and multidisciplinary research collaborations that are specific to African universities. (Amos Njuguna, Shirley Tate, Jason



Arday and Marisa Botha are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).

11. Have seminars in different countries regarding the subject matter. Online webinars in a number of contexts could develop the fundamental understandings of CUS. The seminars could be used as a space of engagement which are inclusive and supportive of the participation of young and energized scholars as part of developing the new generation of academics interested in this field. (Shirley Tate, Shervani Pillay and Marisa Botha are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
12. Bring in and build on the rich intellectual contributions and struggles of feminist, queer, LGBTIQ+ and gender-non-conforming scholars and activists on the African continent, in the Global South and also radical thinkers from the Global North, in collaboration with scholars and activists in these areas. (Christi van der Westhuizen, Beata Mtyingizana-Buhlungu, and Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion.)





Session 2 – Building CUS Networks and Solidarities across continents

Facilitator: Dina Zoe Belluigi

Key Contributors: Satish Kumar and Nandita Dhawan

Workshop Provocation

The aim of this session is to work on developing networks for CUS across continents, particularly in the 'Global South', in order to work against dominant global, neoliberal, racist, sexist and classist pressures on, and constitutive of, the University. This will hopefully build on the nodes of connection present at the Winter School, as well as thinking through the missing links in the current network and how we might productively expand it.

Workshop Presentations

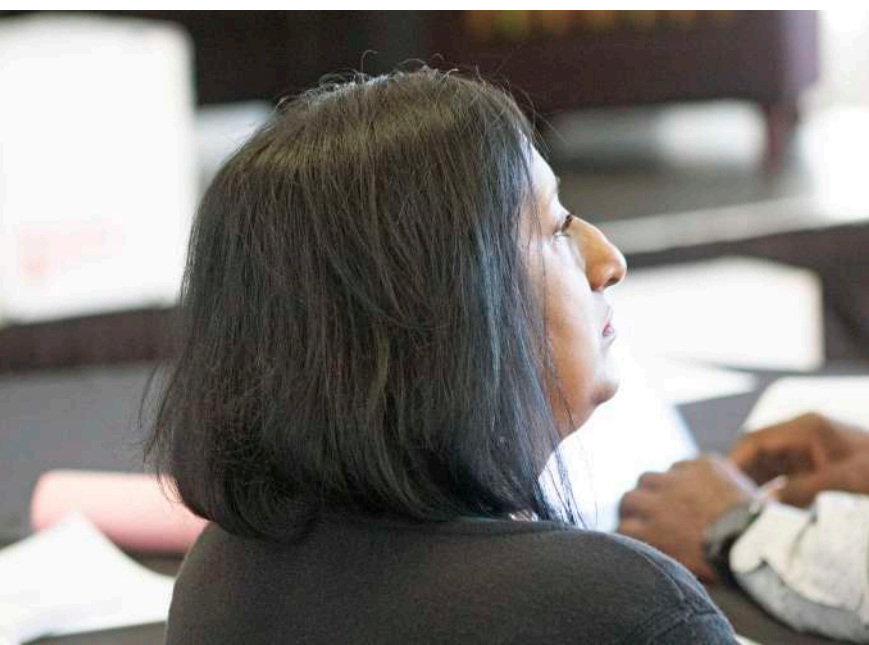
Dr Satish Kumar provided an overview of thinking as it relates to higher education in India. He noted an important concept which could be regarded as imperative to understanding the origins of colonial thinking, namely wabi-sabi – the aesthetic acceptance of imperfection. In colonial thinking, Dr Kumar argued, Indian people were regarded as imperfect, but in need of perfection through education. This led into his discussion of the basis of the modern university system in India, and its relation to notions of English superiority. This gave way to a different perspective formulated in 1947, where the university was framed as something standing for “humanism, for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth”. It was acknowledged that “only through right education can a better order for society be built up”, whilst arguing that “[f]reedom from ignorance is as essential as freedom from hunger”. A new view of the university has emerged in the 21st Century, where indigenisation is regarded as principle, and which has led to an erosion of academic autonomy and quality, according to Dr Kumar. It is here where he argued emancipation must be engaged with and untangled.

Dr Nandita Dhawan opened her contribution by highlighting a number of statistics in Indian higher education: for every 49 female academics there are 100 men; female academics tend to be in lower, junior positions; and 65% of academics come from upper castes, despite being 25-30% of the country's total population. All of this, she argued, is against the backdrop of affirmative action policies which have been in place in India since the 1990s. She subsequently stressed that challenges facing Indian higher education are structural, and argued that CUS, together with intersectionality, which had often been invoked in

the winter school, formed particularly powerful lenses through which to critique the current higher education landscape in India. She noted the prevalence of various discursive and structural erasures of both caste and gender questions and inequalities, and how this adds to renewed marginalities in the academy.

Workshop Suggestions

1. Provide postdoctoral opportunities/mentorships to young woman and black academics to collaborate for transdisciplinary publications, in partnership with multiple universities and resource institutions and with funding from the NRF. (Amos Njuguna and Shirley Tate are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
2. Develop special issue proposals that facilitate geo-political contexts within continents in partnership with universities across the globe. Create collaborations within European institutions that may have a nexus of critical black researchers within the area of CUS. There must be an element of collaborative research. In other words, the network exists for proposal development. (Satish Kumar and Nandita Dhawan are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
3. Create an online publication for occasional papers, peer-reviewed articles on CUS and database. Establish a mentorship network/relationship through an integrated network and a series of special issue journals concerning CUS. (Vivienne Bozalek, Marisa Botha, Luan Staphorst and Michalinos Zembylas are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
4. Have regular gatherings for the exchange of ideas, and exchange information electronically. (Amos Njuguna, Nandita Dhawan, Pedro Mzileni and Shervani Pillay are willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).
5. Intensifying exchanging research fellows/associates and students whose work will be grounded in the local context and understanding which will form the very basis upon which other perspectives are engaged. (Beata Mtyingizana-Buhlungu is willing to be part of initiatives and programmes in support of this suggestion).





Session 3–Impact of policy, practice guidelines and other regulations for the transformation of higher education

Facilitator: Luzuko Buko

Key Contributors: Mahlubi Mabizela, Shervani Pillay and Brightness Mangolotho

Workshop Provocation

The aim of this session is to begin to create a resource map of current policy, practice guidelines and regulations for the transformation of higher education in the so-called lower-to-middle-income-countries. It will also be to critically consider the impact of such policies, practice guidelines and regulations in shaping this transformation, both in driving positive change and in creating discursive and practical limitations for how this transformation happens. This will require both pragmatic considerations of these limitations, and the development of imaginative possibilities both within and outside of regulation.

Workshop Presentations

Chief Mahlubi Mabizela opened the workshop by highlighting the three intersecting sets of documents that frame higher education in South Africa: the Constitution, HE Policies and HE Plans. Important in relation to all of these documents, is the realisation that transformation is not merely something statistical and quantifiable, but something embedded in culture. In spite of this, he argued that it is important to note and analyse metrics to ascertain some form of change across the higher education landscape.

In terms of statistics, Chief Mabizela discussed race, participation and gender. In the period 2001–2015 there has been a noteworthy increase in the percentage of black students in South African universities. In terms of participation, there has been a steady decrease of white students, whilst students from other race groups increase. The greatest achievement, argued Chief Mabizela, is the increase in the participation of female students, with female students totalling near 60% of the student body across all South African universities. He again noted that transformation cannot simply be read in relation to these statistics, as the 2008 Soudien Report pointed to the continued presence of racism in South African universities, with this sentiment echoed in the 2017 report of the South African Human Sciences Research Council (SAHSRC).

Ms Brightness Mangolotho noted two important, yet problematic, tensions which one should acknowledge when working with policy: firstly, that the formulators of policies are not the implementors thereof; and secondly, the development of policy does not equate with the implementation thereof. She noted the importance of the employment equity act in driving transformation in South Africa, and its emphasis on notions of equality and inclusiveness. Despite this, only 4 out of the 26 universities in South Africa have female Vice-Chancellors, 44% of the academic staff are female, and women make up merely 29% of the professoriate. Part of the challenge facing policy is that it is a living document which must be driven. Academics are often part of the problem, for they do not take part in the active driving or formulation of policy, despite their position, insight and influence. Academics' relationship to policy is more reactive than proactive.

She further highlighted the centrality of institutional culture and climate in universities, and how these cultures and climates, together with structures such as research and ethics committees, inhibit transformation. With the reality being that committees are mostly made up of white male academics in senior positions, she argued transformation is not possible. She also questioned whether there is any real commitment to implementing policy. She further noted the importance of being aware of the unintended consequences of policy. Here she used the labour relations act amendment as an example – an amendment which aims to bring more part-time workers into full-time positions. The reality is, she argued, that the majority of part-time workers in South African universities are white, and that the unintended consequence of this amendment is to impede transformation. Such unintended consequences must be analysed and interrogated.

Prof Shervani Pillay, echoing Chief Mabizela, provided an overview of the main policy documents which frame Higher Education in South Africa. She noted that there are five key pillars underpinning these documents:

1. The need for a single, unified, nationally coordinated system
2. Increased access and participation rates
3. Increased responsiveness to societal and economic needs
4. Differentiation and development of niche areas
5. Planning and coordinating imperatives (national and institutional)



She argued that there is currently a lack of conceptual consensus as to what transformation means, noting that it is an empty, dynamic and floating signifier. However, there is a consensus as to the call for transformation, and this includes Africanization, decolonization, deracialisation, inclusivity and socio-political responsiveness. The result is that the university is currently untransformed. But where would transformation then emerge better? In an African university? Or what we currently have?

Prof Pillay analysed the Revised Higher Education Quality Sub-Framework, with its framing as a driver in creating graduates who work towards the social, cultural, and economic development of South Africa; graduates who are successfully part of a global economy and knowledge society. It aims at providing quality assurance; facilitating access [which she argues is merely formal, and not epistemological]; emerging skills and knowledge needs; ensuring responsiveness; enhancing cohesion, coherence and structure of the Higher Education system; sameness and uniformity; and compliance. She argued that this framework largely quantifies knowledge, frames it in relation to vocational and occupational needs, and relies on specific fields and disciplines. The question is whether or not such a framework allows for the call for transformation for which there is a consensus? Does its implementation lead to, or silence, Africanization, decolonization, deracialization, inclusivity, and socio-political responsiveness?

Here she argued that we ought not to be captured by discourse, but rather enact agency in relation to the parameters. Although noting the constraints of the frameworks she presented, she argued there is still scope for flexibility and contextualization, and as such there is the space for transformation. In approaching the call, and reformulating an approach to curriculum, it is imperative, she argued, to turn to what students have been saying – using the #feesmustfall protests as example. She concluded by emphasising that whilst policies are imperatives, the exact nature of policy regulations is a choice.

Session 4 – Pathways for impact for ACUS

Facilitator: Dina Zoe Belluigi

Key Contributors: Vivienne Bozalek, Michael Okyerefo and Winnie Mitullah

Workshop Provocation

'Pathways to impact' is a phrase prevalent in the UK funding landscape used to describe strategies for the translation of research findings to those who can make a difference or effect

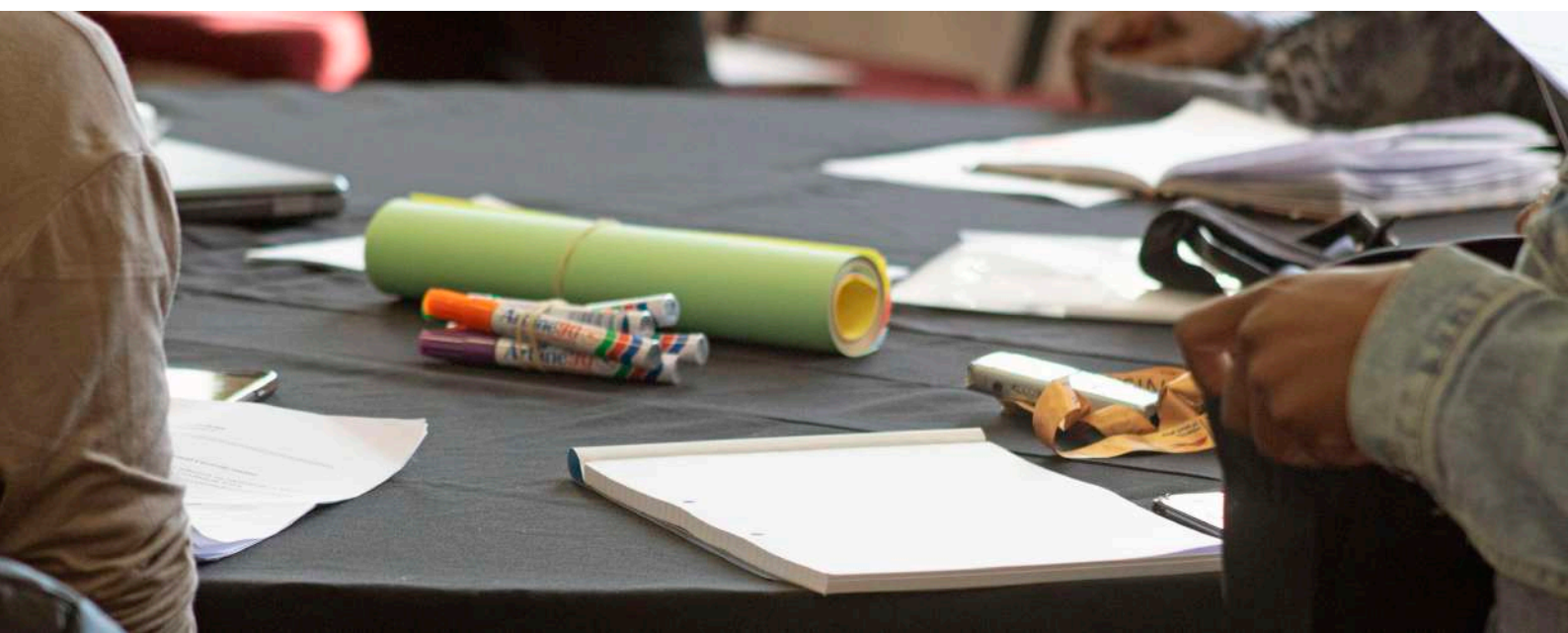
change. It encompasses academic, economic and societal research. 'Pathways to impact' might include informing policy, capacity building, practitioner involvement (including student voices, unions, transformation/diversity officers, community engagement); feeding into curricula and education across the life course; and working in partnership with the media/press and the arts, NGOs and governmental organisations. The problematics of achieving 'pathways to impact' for those in CUS might include institutional/professional risk, researcher precarity, and funding mechanisms which do not support and reward this area of academic activity.

Workshop Presentations

Prof Vivienne Bozalek framed her discussion in relation to teaching, learning and research interventions which could be pursued in order to open pathways for change and transformation. An important idea underpinning her argument, was the notion of accommodating difference. For her, all practices ought to support and further such a goal and ideal. In line with this, she argued for thinking- and doing-academia differently, notably through questioning received disciplinary boundaries, the establishment of reading groups for co-creation of knowledge through renewed critique – both as tool, and critique of the very idea of critique – and through an emphasis on difference in respect to neurotypicality – that different learning styles and approaches exist, and ought to be nurtured.

Prof Winnie Mitullah noted the restrictions of existing policy frameworks, and warned against any uncritical use of such frameworks. She argued that two things are necessary for any possible emancipated future, and this includes agenda-setting (which must be collaborative and not inward), and an emphasis on knowledge for prosperity – beyond any SDG or Agenda '63.

Prof Michael Okyerefo argued that four pathways for impact exist: epistemological, institutional, boundary breaking, and critical partnerships. In actualising these pathways, he argued there is an imperative to strengthen disciplines through contextualized knowledges, an advancing of STEM to STEAM principles, and collaborations between students and staff across varied and diverse contexts.





Sessions 3 and 4: Joint Workshop Suggestions

The joint workshop addressing the questions of sessions 3 and 4 led participants to identify specific challenges – particularly as it relates to policy, practice guidelines and other regulatory structures – and possible solutions, or pathways to impact.

1. The need for an approach to policy which is engaged with think tanks – the cocreation of policies and other frameworks should be highlighted.
2. Engagement with a diverse array of stakeholders, including government, parliament and civil society.
3. The mapping of policies in order to differentiate similarities and tensions.
4. Engagement with funding mechanisms and bodies which are ethical and conducive to the broader social justice goals of the work in question.
5. The formulation of new approaches to policy – both the study and implementation thereof.
6. The creation of platforms and opportunities for the co-creation of knowledge between students, academics and communities.
7. The creation of unions and professional associations, and the infiltration and change of existing networks in alignment with social justice and CUS goals.
8. The creation of spaces where the “not-yet-imaginable” can emerge – spaces where those within these spaces can meet, share experiences and learn from failure.
9. The establishment of consultation mechanisms.
10. The formulation of policies with a clear social justice goal.
11. The establishment of resource-sharing partnerships.

Workshop Conclusions: Working Groups

1. (Online) Platform/Network Development:

Amos Njuguna (Convenor)
Shervani Pillay
Dina Belluigi
Satish Kumar
Brightness Mangolothi
Michael Okyerefo
Su-ming Khoo
Winnie Mitullah
Beata Mtyingizana-Buhlungu
Jason Arday

2. Funding Proposals:

Dina Belluigi (Convenor)
Michael Okyerefo
Michalinos Zembylas
Shervani Pillay
Su-ming Khoo
Satish Kumar
Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez

3. Pathways to Impact:

Michael Okyerefo (Convenor)
Su-ming Khoo
Winnie Mitullah
Amos Njuguna
Dina Belluigi
Brightness Mangolothi
Mahlubi Mabizela

4. Reading Resources:

Jason Arday (Convenor)
Amos Njuguna
Sharon Stein

5. Learning-Through-Failure:

Sharon Stein (Convenor)
André Keet
Vivienne Bozalek



Book Launches

The Winter School hosted two book launches of recently published works containing important perspectives on the critique of the university.

The first, held on the 15th of August, and co-hosted by the Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy and the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation, was a launch for *Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience*. This edited anthology brings together stories of the lived experiences of black academics working in South African universities. Three of the authors, Edith Phaswana, Katijah Khoza-Shangase and Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela, shared excerpts from their chapters, which brought an affective and personal depth to the issues of racism, coloniality, sexism and patriarchy as they are experienced within the university.

The second launch, held on the 16th of August and hosted by the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation, was of Kopano Ratele's new book, *The World Looks Like This From Here: Thoughts on African Psychology*. The author gave a poetic

introduction to the thoughts in the book, including a slide show of thought-provoking art pieces that complemented his creative approach to rethinking the colonial discipline of psychology in the African context. His presentation was thus deeply relevant to the discussion of academic disciplines encompassed by Critical University Studies, as was his way of doing things differently from the conventional modes of launching books in the academic space.

These launches both offered alternative ways of approaching critique of the university and its attendant disciplines to the conventions of academic discourse which values the supposed objectivity of an affect-free empiricism. They also resonated with the many moments within the roundtables of the school when academics turned to personal experiences as ways into critique of the university, and the creative modes of story-telling, humour and song that some used as a means of conveying these critiques and dealing with the visceral and affective impacts of exclusionary practices within academic institutions.



NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY

The Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism & Democracy and
The Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation invite you to the launch of:



Black Academic Voices: The South African Experience

Edited by: Grace Khunou (UJ), Edith Phaswana (Unisa),
Katijah Khoza-Shangase (Wits) and Hugo Canham (Wits)

15 August 2019, Thursday | 17h00

Council Chambers, South Campus

RSVP: [Click here](#)

About the Book

Black Academic Voices captures the personal accounts of lived experiences of black academics at South African universities in the context of the ongoing debate for transformation and decolonization of higher education. This debate has not only raised epistemic, ideological, relational and identity issues in the academy, but also offers possibilities for deconstructing hierarchies of authoritarianism that are racist, sexist, patriarchal and colonial.

Panelists

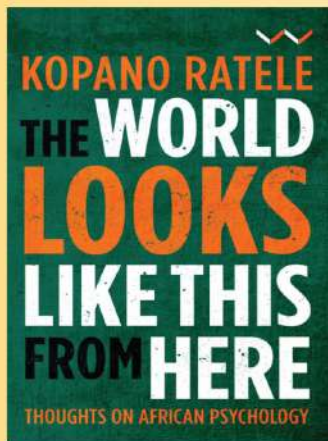
Edith Paswana - Acting Head at the Thabo Mbeki Institute, UNISA

Katija Khoza-Shangase - Associate Professor and former HOD Speech Pathology & Audiology Department, WITS

Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela - Lecturer in the School of Human and Community Development, WITS



The Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation invites you to the launch of:



The World Looks Like This From Here

Thoughts on African Psychology

16 August 2019, Friday | 17h00

Council Chambers, South Campus

RSVP: [Click here](#)

This book builds a case for thinking and doing psychology differently in and for Africa. Its strength lies in the author's arguments on psychology as a colonial discipline and what it does as it is transported to the African continent.

- Floretta Boonzaier, Associate Professor University of Cape Town



Kopano Ratele is a professor in the Institute for Social and Health Sciences at the University of South Africa (Unisa) and a researcher in the South African Medical Research Council's Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit. He is a regular guest on radio and television, co-hosting a radio programme, Cape Talk Dads. His books include *Liberating Masculinities* (2016), *Engaging Youth in Activism, Research and Pedagogical Praxis: Transnational and Intersectional Perspectives on Gender, Sex, and Race* (co-edited with Jeff Hearn, Tammy Shefer, and Floretta Boonzaier, 2018).



Contributors



Dr Jason Arday is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at Durham University in the Department of Sociology, a Visiting Research Fellow at The Ohio State University in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and a Trustee of the Runnymede Trust.



Prof Ahmed Bawa currently holds the position of Chief Executive Officer of Universities South Africa (USAf).



Dr Dina Zoe Belluigi is currently an academic in Higher Education Studies at Queen's University Belfast (Northern Ireland), a Research Associate at CriSHET (Nelson Mandela University) and an Honorary Supervisor on Liverpool University's Higher Education Doctoral Programme (UK).



Aphiwe Bizani is a final year Law student at the Nelson Mandela University and a Research Assistant in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET).



Dr Marisa Botha is a Research Fellow in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) at Nelson Mandela University.



Prof Vivienne Bozalek is a Senior Professor and the Director of Teaching and Learning at the University of the Western Cape.



Prof Chris Brink served as Vice-Chancellor of Newcastle University in the UK from 2007 till 2016.



Luzuko Buku serves on the Council on Higher Education (CHE), is a chairperson of the Monitoring, Evaluation and Advice Committee of the CHE, and works as a Speech Writer and Spokesperson for the Executive Mayor of Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality.



Dr Avivit Cherrington is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET).



Dr Roxana Chiappa is a lecturer at the Center for Higher Education, Research, Teaching and Learning (CHERTL) at Rhodes University, South Africa.



Prof Michael Cross is the founder and Director of the Ali Mazrui Centre for Higher Education Studies at the University of Johannesburg.



Dr Nandita Banerjee Dhawan is at present Joint Director and Assistant Professor of the School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, INDIA.



Siphso Dlamini is currently a PhD candidate with the University of South Africa's Institute for Social and Health Sciences, and the Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit of the South African Medical Research Council-Unisa, where he is also a researcher.



Dr Jenny Bożena du Preez is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) at Nelson Mandela University.



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Dr Claire Kelly is the current Acting Head of Transformation at Stellenbosch University.



Dr Su-ming Khoo is a Lecturer in Political Science and Sociology, and Research Cluster Lead of the Whitaker Institute: Environment, Development and Sustainability and Ryan Institute: Socio-Economic Impact Research Clusters at NUI Galway.



Prof André Keet holds the research chair in Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET) at Nelson Mandela University.



Prof Katijah Khoza-Shangase is an Associate Professor and former HOD in Speech Pathology & Audiology at the University of the Witwatersrand.



Dr M. Satish Kumar is Director for Internationalisation, School of Natural and Built Environment, & Research Fellow, Senator George J Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice, Queen's University Belfast.



Prof Alexandre Lyambabaje is the Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa.



Mahlubi Mabizela is a Chief Director for University Education Policy and Support in the Department of Higher Education and Training, South Africa.



Prof Tshepo Madlingozi is Associate Professor and the Director of the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at WITS University, Research Associate at the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education at Nelson Mandela University (CriSHET) and an Extraordinary Senior Lecturer at the University of Stellenbosch.



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Dr Mutinda Nzioki is currently the director for the Centre for Philosophy in Africa at the Nelson Mandela University.



Prof Michael Okyerefo is currently the Dean of the School of Arts at the University of Ghana; Visiting Professor, Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET), Nelson Mandela University, South Africa; and External Research Fellow at the Global African Diaspora Studies (GADS), Institut für Afrikawissenschaften, University of Vienna.



Dr Edith Phaswana is the Acting Head of the Thabo Mbeki Institute at the University of South Africa; and current President for the South African Development Studies Association.



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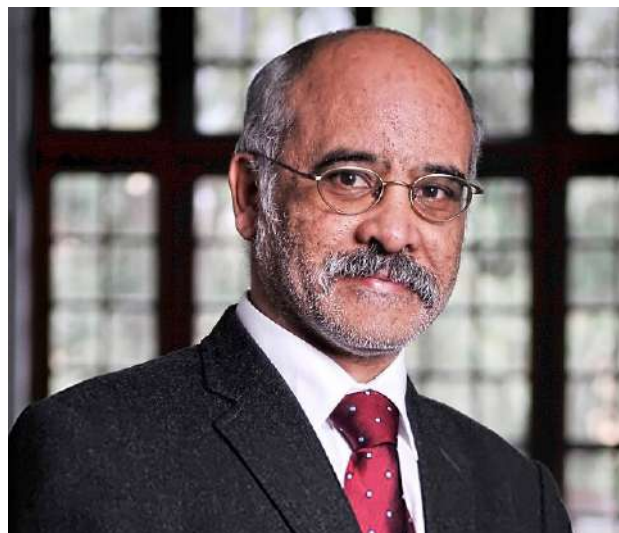
Prof Kopano Ratele is Director of the MRC-Unisa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit and Professor at the University of South Africa where he runs the Research Unit on Men & Masculinities as well as the Transdisciplinary African Psychologies Programme.



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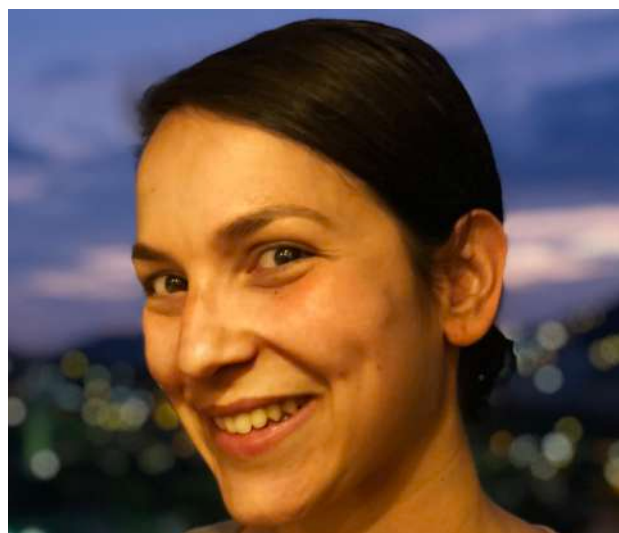
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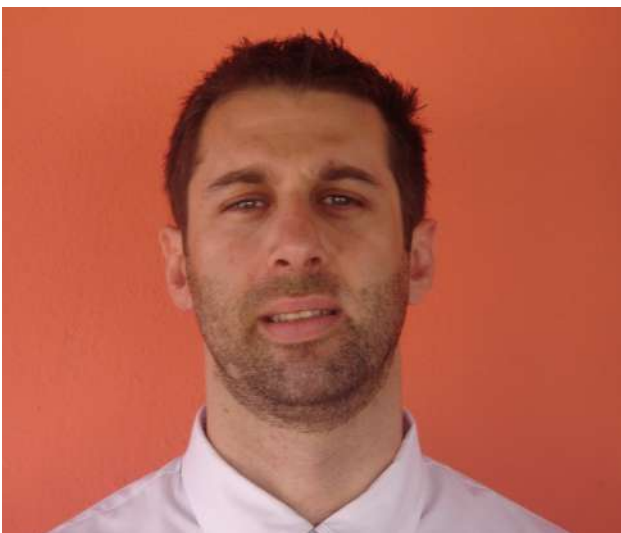
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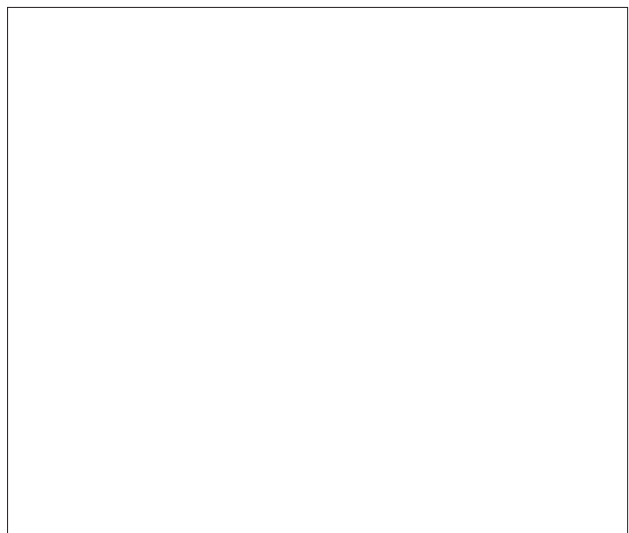
Prof Shirley Anne Tate is Professor in Sociology at the University of Alberta, Canada and founding Director of the Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality.



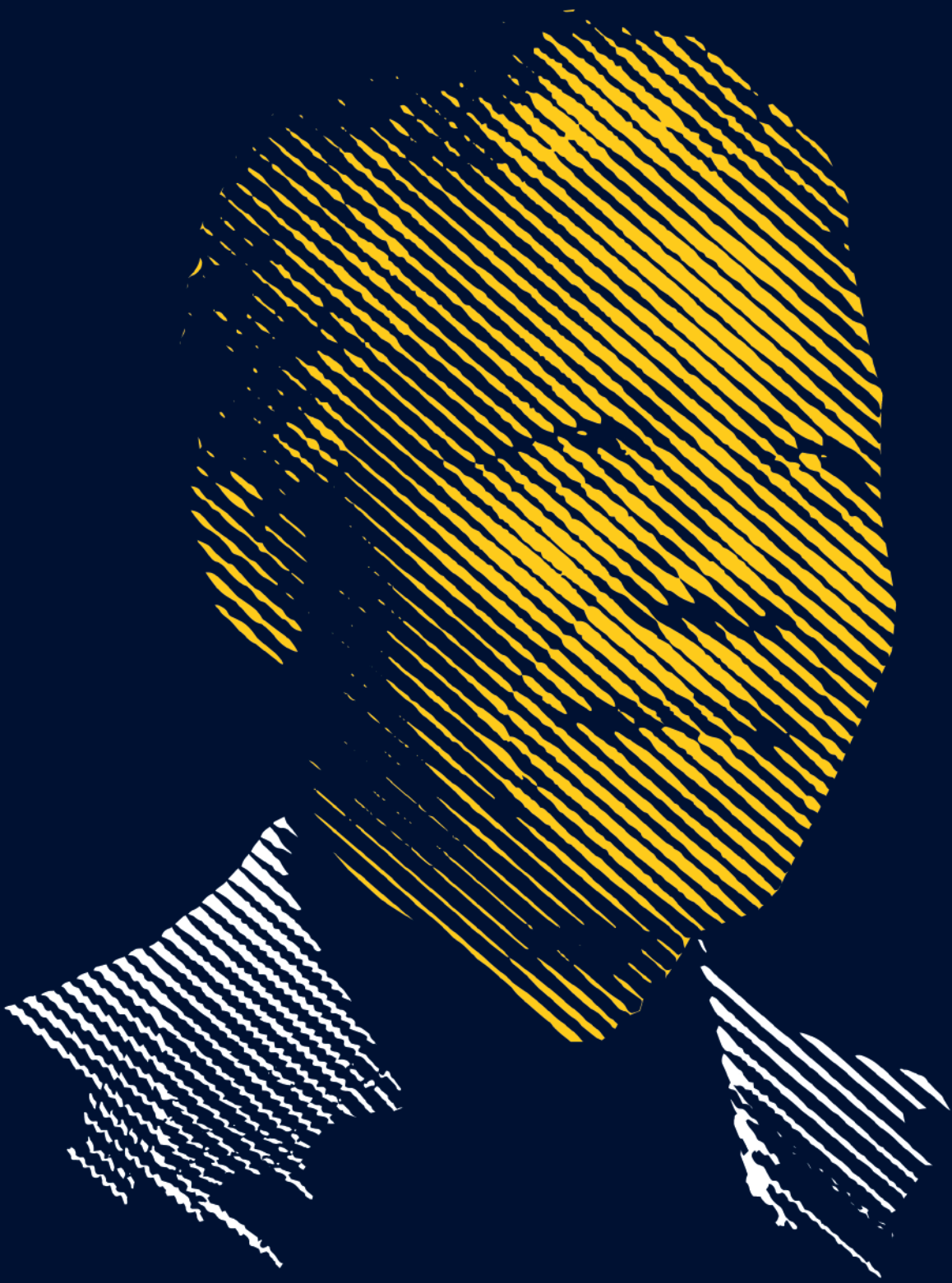
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Prof Michalinos Zembylas is Professor of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies at the Open University of Cyprus and Honorary Professor at Nelson Mandela University in the Chair for Critical Studies in Higher Education Transformation (CriSHET).



Dr Alison Wood directs Homerton Changemakers at the University of Cambridge, a pioneering new programme equipping students to become more effective agents of change in the world.



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