

"Africanization in Tuition": African National Education?

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In June 2007, the Council for the Development of Social Sciences Research in Africa (CODESRIA) convened its annual Conference of Deans under the title of "African Social Research and Training in Transition: Challenges and Opportunities." The inaugural session highlighted the problems besetting African universities: marketization and privatization, casualization of academic labor, massification, the consultancy syndrome, the erosion of a research culture, trade in educational services, notions of students as private clients, problems in accessing student grants, sales of course handouts as prerequisite for success in examinations, and sexual harassment understood as in-kind-payment for academic success.¹

The list of complaints appears as an echo of those from universities the world over, and of the disquiet expressed by academics responding to these developments. But a puzzling turn in this particular discussion in Dakar is evident in the attempt to formulate remedies to this malaise. Among the responses to the concerns expressed about the disintegration of higher education under the impact of marketization and privatization, great scope is given, in the Report on the Conference, to Africanization – here equated with "indigenization":

[D]iscussions on this issue emphasized ... the Africanisation (or indigenization) of the social science [*sic*] in a manner that is responsive to the realities on the continent. In calling for the indigeneity of the social sciences and humanities in Africa, the proliferation of satellite campuses of European or American pedigree was examined in relation to the relevance of curricula which is [*sic*] developed elsewhere and used for teaching on the continent.... A call for the

unity and re-configuration of the social sciences, humanities and arts was emphasized as critical for sustaining relevance.²

The relationship between marketization, commercialization and privatization of teaching and research at African universities, and the rationale for the call for Africanization-as-indigenization is not immediately apparent in all its implications. It only becomes clear from a wider ambit of contributions to the *CODESRIA Bulletin*.

An article reflecting on the positioning of Africa's scientific communities in international research circles, for instance, calls attention to the fact that research commissioned by organizations and funding agencies in the global North and West tends to tie African researchers to the agendas set by those organizations and agencies, making them instruments and accomplices of their own marginalization.³ The organizations providing or channeling the funding "come up with a concept and look for a partner from the South."⁴ When asked about his research and his involvement in the activities of the West African university centre where he had been studying and working for the past twenty years, a professional researcher in Geography responded:

In the university centre, yes, everything is going on smoothly, I am still there.... As far as activities are concerned, no, everything is dead and everyone is concerned with his little contracts. Personally, I have a few of them with British organizations ... which also enables me to travel widely in the subregion ... and from time to time, in Europe.⁵

This phenomenon would make the calls for addressing the question of relevance and for linking the local, regional, and global dimensions of this question, explicit and explicable.

However, I would like to caution against launching "Africanization" as unqualified and unquestioned antidote to the commercialization of the university and the erosion of a research culture, and certainly against adducing "Africanization" as a panacea addressing the parlous state of higher education in Africa. I will argue that "Africanization" understood as "indigenization" has become mired in the very market-orientation that its promoters on CODESRIA platforms have decried: in the very commercialization, privatization, and racketeering against which its promoters pitch their developmentalist goals; in the very mainstreaming that ostensibly realizes its goals and that yet constructs universities as fortresses guarding socio-political inclusions and exclusions; and in the very nationalism, racism and xenophobia against which its advocates invoke their liberationist ideals.⁶ This should motivate us to take a closer look at

Africanization agendas, "stakeholders," manifestos, programs, policies, and curricula.

The current rhetoric of "Africanization" ostensibly refers back to Pan-African or national-liberationist ideals. Participants of the CODESRIA Workshop on Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility and the State of Academia in Dar es Salaam in February 2005 invoked the debates of the 1960s and 1970s, recalling the names of Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Amilcar Cabral, and Julius Nyerere as sources of inspiration for developing a new "Eastern African Discourse."⁷ Issa Shivji, a legal theorist teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam, captures the mood at East African universities – notably those of Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda – in the 1960s, carried, as it was, by liberationist ideals associated with "radical nationalism":

The University flourished. It became a hotbed of radical nationalism where researches were done to reclaim our history; where debates were conducted to debunk domination; where students demonstrated and protested against injustice and oppression, exploitation and discrimination, imperialism and apartheid. It mattered not whether the victims of injustices and oppression were white, black, brown or yellow. Human liberation and human freedom are indivisible.⁸

Shivji talks of a vibrant intellectual culture that embraced town and countryside, that celebrated the publication of books and encouraged engaged reading and debate, that staged performances, and animated creative writing.

Deviating from the familiar narrative that charts colonialism-decolonization- liberation on a historical-progressivist continuum with an ongoing imperative for "transformation" to "purge" higher education from the last vestiges of colonialism, Shivji's account inserts some traditions of African universities occluded in national triumphalism: the fight for academic freedom in conjunction with the right to self-determination, undermined by neoliberalism and globalization, which brought the return of the "colonized mind":

Imperialism and capitalism masquerading as globalization and free market set the rules of the game. Universities were dubbed white elephants. We did not need thinkers, asserted our erstwhile benefactors. We only needed store keepers and bank tellers and computer operators and marketing managers, who could be trained in vocational schools. Universities are not cost-effective, decreed the World Bank. ... The university was condemned.⁹

The "transformation" in higher education is unmasked as commercialization and corporatization.¹⁰ The transformation of African universities is effectively one "from sites of knowledge production to sites of hotel construction: from building lecture halls to pre-fabricating shopping malls"; "from the culture of collegiality" to "the thick of corporate vultures." Academic concerns are now centering on manipulation of mark sheets to show passes.¹¹

In Shivji's account, the winds of this kind of "change" came from outside of the university, along the inroads made by policies, goals, and orientations of "neo-liberalism" and the World Bank. However, the processes described by him clearly point to an internal reorganization of knowledge production and university structures. The distinction drawn by Mahmood Mamdani between privatization concerning the external relationship between the market and the university, and commercialization concerning the internal processes of knowledge production in the university, is instructive here:

Privatization was an external relationship between the market and the university, whereby the university opened up its gates to fee-paying students but did not change its curriculum to suit the demands of the market. Commercialization, however, led to a deep-seated transformation, involving not only the external relation between the university and the market but also the internal process of knowledge production in the university and internal relations between different academic units.¹²

In the analysis that I want to mount here, I would like to focus largely on the internal processes of reorganization of academic labor under the directives of an Africanizing and commercializing "transformation."

What facilitates the apparently smooth transition or easy sliding, in the blueprints of Africanization and "transformation," between a liberationist discourse, particular notions of modernization, and the commercialization of higher education; between an external and an internal impetus for the marketizing reorganization of higher education, we may ask. I would argue that this is possible because the rhetoric of "transformation" and "Africanization" can ride the waves of conflicting approaches to and understandings of the role of higher education from the immediate postcolonial period onwards – notions of developmentalism, redress, equity, and education for active citizenship, open debate, tolerance, and democracy on the one hand; and notions of bridging the skills gap for improved productivity, labor market responsiveness, competitiveness, entrepreneurialism, efficiency and effectiveness, financial sustainability and innovation, on the other.¹³

The blueprints of Africanization and "transformation" can similarly easily negotiate the binary opposites of the dominant ideologemes in which "Africa" has been inscribed: the supposedly "traditional African environment" and the "modern Western sector."¹⁴ This binary code simultaneously provides the rationale for Africanization. So-called "traditional Africa" receives a boost with the assertion that local knowledges, values, and identities have been suppressed by colonialism and apartheid. They need to be freed from these shackles, it is argued or implied, to be fully rehabilitated, reconstituted, and recognized as aspects of "African epistemology" and "African identity." In tandem with such "reconstitution," more African students and staff need to be brought into universities. It is assumed that this will have a democratizing effect and enhance a transformative vision.

Key to the functioning of this transmission belt circulating between a liberationist notion of "transformation" and the restructuring of academic teaching and research in line with market demands, are "indigenous knowledge systems" which are attaining academic respectability under general "indigenization" programs. "Local relevance," or the reclamation and production of "African knowledge" is considered important in imparting "specific knowledge and skills," through "specific curricula."¹⁵ This harbors a contradiction in terms. Insofar as the possibility of creating and transmitting an "African" or "indigenous" knowledge is contemplated, this could pertain only to practical, skills-based know-how but not to propositional knowledge. In so far as the possibility of propositional knowledge is entertained, it cannot be "indigenous" or "African" knowledge, as propositional knowledge is *epistemologically* context-dependent – that is, context-dependent in its formal requirements only.¹⁶ Thus,

"Africanisation of knowledge" makes a certain, limited sense when applied to skills and to acquaintance-type knowledge. When applied to factual or propositional knowledge, either the term "Africanisation" is redundant or what is at issue would more correctly be called the "Africanisation of belief."¹⁷

However, the conflation of "knowledge by acquaintance," "knowledge how," and "knowledge that," contradictory as it is on logical grounds, is still discursively, ideologically and academically-entrepreneurially instrumental.

"Indigenous knowledge" is immediately linked to "skills" and "knowledge products." Preparations for the introduction of the study of "indigenous knowledge systems" – replete with re-inscriptions of tribalism – into higher education curricula in 2010 are underway in South Africa at certain historically disadvantaged universities that formed the heartlands of

some of the former Bantustan or neo-traditional governance structures: the Universities of North-West, Limpopo, Venda, and Zululand.¹⁸ Without reflecting on particular orders and domains of application of particular knowledge systems, and their respective differential normative frameworks, "Western knowledge" is simplistically pitched against "African, indigenous knowledge," with the former being backpedaled on the assumption that "Afrocentric knowledge" is more "empowering."¹⁹

What makes it "empowering" is its link to economic opportunities held out by the highly socially mobile and globally networked domain of "indigenous peoples and cultures," and by the South African government's Department of Arts, Science and Technology (DACST), which was mandated to draft a policy on Indigenous Knowledge Systems. In a workshop on Protecting Indigenous Knowledge Systems in 2006, the then Minister of Science and Technology, Mr. M. Mangena, listed the tenets of the African Renaissance as humanism, heritage, and Afro-centrism. He proceeded to outline the role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Africa's reconstruction, creativity, sustainable development, and improvement of lives. Before long, he got to the crux of the matter, postulating the development and management of Indigenous Knowledge Systems as "growth engine" for a "new dawn," realizing the "competitive advantage" of the knowledge of individuals and collectives and the "human capital ... for economic development." "Valuable IK products" are listed as "medicines and healing modalities, jewelry and different articles of adornment and decoration, art, literature, music, entrepreneurship, food security, methods of investigation." IK practitioners, it is decreed, need to be apprised of the commercial value of their knowledge.²⁰ In short, in the words of a physicist formerly from the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal (UKZN) offering his definition of "Africanization," "we can be internationally competitive and uniquely African at the same time."²¹

The introduction of branches of such "skills-based applied knowledge" goes hand in hand with larger-scale restructuring of the curriculum to the effect of introducing more applied sciences and vocational programs at the expense of basic sciences – which has the effect of eroding the disciplinary basis, starting with the humanities.²²

Against the structural adjustment of higher education at the behest of international financial institutions, Shivji posits "nationalism" as an oppositional force worth reclaiming. Indeed, anti-colonial, modernizing nationalism was the seedbed of "developmentalist" universities in Africa in the immediate post-independence period in some African countries, and this is a clear reference point in Shivji's analysis of higher education in postcolonial Africa. Shivji registers the changed parameters transforming

"transformation" agendas.²³ What he and his South African counterparts do not seem to reflect on, though, is the crisis of postcolonial states as heirs of the anti-colonial movements, and with it the multiple refraction of a developmentalist project, which fails to frame and sustain "Africanization" as an emancipatory program.

While this would be the place to unpack political orientations, programs, and contestatory histories of African anti-colonial, anti-apartheid and national liberation movements in their particular articulations relevant for the trajectories of higher education, this paper cannot broach the enormity of this task. What I can do within the scope of this article, is to highlight some general tendencies, at the risk of oversimplifying generalizations. Bearing this limitation in mind, I would like to approach some of the aspects of national liberationist traditions that sit uncomfortably with present-day notions of civil and political rights.

The retrospective interpretations of the nationalism that had animated anti-colonial movements and the establishment of higher education institutions in Africa, point to their hostility towards constitutional-democratic structures and processes, and towards critical voices.²⁴ In a tradition that pitched individual rights as a screen for perpetuating racial privilege and nationalism against social justice as contestation for state power that could alone guarantee social justice and redress,²⁵ democratic and human rights principles, castigated for being derived from "bourgeois liberal democracy" and "elitism," were and still are often labeled as "foreign ideas."²⁶ Intellectuals initiating debates and unveiling ideological constructions "were ... perceived as divisive and thus inimical to the new nation-state" that was tasked with "development."²⁷ Inasmuch as universities were seen as training facilities for intellectuals who envisaged themselves – potentially or actually – in positions in the new post-independence developmental states, the demand for university autonomy seemed misplaced. Instead, the state was considered as having legitimate grounds to intervene in university structures, governance, staff appointments, and curricula.²⁸ In the context of notions of the developmental state, socialism was turned into a strategy for economic development, with the state, whose power was to be seized, as instrument of that development.

These broadly outlined tendencies of national liberation movements have left their imprints as they, through their respective parties, acceded to postcolonial governments. Programs of "indigenization" notwithstanding, state and university authorities, claims Joseph Ki-Zerbo, have no ears for local debates, "except when they threaten ... state authority."²⁹ Disciplinary action has been taken or threatened in recent years, against academics at South African universities – notably University of KwaZulu-Natal,

University of Fort Hare, and University of South Africa – for a number of alleged misconducts, including speaking to the media.³⁰ At the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg, “students were being charged for bringing the institution into disrepute for criticizing the lack of freedom of expression on campus, in the media.”³¹ Disciplinary action gets stepped up where channels for debate are either closed down or managerially organized and centralized, leading Jane Duncan to talk of “The Rise of the Disciplinary University” (2007). There seems to be an inverse relationship between Africanization and academic freedom: those universities most emphatically promoting Africanization appear to be those most insistently foreclosing upon or clamping down on freedom of expression, inquiry, and critique.³² The erstwhile self-proclaimed role of the African intellectual as “organic intellectual” has fallen apart under postcolonial national regimes: many chose to remain silent, “since one could only be ‘organic’ by not being intellectual.”³³

In South Africa, such anti-democratic tendencies have hardly been challenged in the immediate post-apartheid period. In West and East Africa, likewise, there were relatively early indications to the effect that the space for critical engagement and debate was circumscribed and curtailed. Yet, most academics writing on the “transformation” of the African academy make no secret of a certain sense of nostalgia for the “old style” anti-colonial nationalism on whose wings African universities and networks among intellectuals were established – notably in West and East Africa – and even call for forging a new (Pan-African) nationalism.³⁴ There is a sense of loss in contemplating the present African university in ruins from the perspective of the emancipatory ideals of anti-colonial or decolonizing movements. The expression of such a sense of loss initially seems puzzling, seeing that the new generation of Africanizers and African *renais* go to great lengths in establishing virtual connections with the erstwhile African models, statesmen, programmatic pronouncements, landmark conferences, and diasporic networks in an attempt to create an “unbroken string” of African communalism, solidarity, and liberation. In the following, I would like to give just a few examples of a burgeoning productivity in this field in particular South African higher education institutions and research organizations.

African heritage and indigenous knowledge systems re-invent an African pre-coloniality, purportedly in an attempt to remedy the psychological, economic, environmental, and cultural ravages of colonialism and apartheid.³⁵ The theme of “Indigenous Knowledge Systems” features prominently as one of the research focus areas of the South African National Research Foundation. It comprises “indigenous technologies,” “traditional

medicine and health,” “indigenous food systems,” “socio-cultural systems,” “arts, crafts, and materials,” and “cross-cutting and supportive in IK, IKS, and IT” as subcategories.

At the University of South Africa, a tertiary distance learning institution with the highest student enrollment figures in South Africa, “Africanization” is writ large. The institutional calendar is dotted with events organized by “executive management” to celebrate and panel-debate “Africanization.” “Africanization” initiatives are rewarded by allocation of funding from institutional coffers, if not on the basis of putative financial viability, then for selectively decreed “strategic importance.”³⁶ Prolific and highly rated and prize-awarded research is being carried out by educationists. Exploring “the capacity to think (from an African perspective) in the process of knowledge production,” we learn that “knowledge can have various meanings.” To explore some of those meanings, further issues are broached by way of a “fundamental question”: “What do Africans mean and understand when they say they know something?” We find out about “how the African thinks”:

The African operates with the logic of aesthetics, which holds that the whole is real.... He sees, feels, imagines, reasons or thinks and intuits all at the same time. The African makes use of concepts by inspection, imagination and intuition, but all these have aesthetic qualities.... An African perspective on thinking, therefore, suggests that an African sees, feels, imagines, reasons or thinks and intuits all at the same time.... Knowledge production within an African discourse should, therefore, contribute towards the social, cultural, economic and political upliftment of Africa’s people.

The authors conclude,

Africentric [*sic*] thought is epistemologically distinctive from the Eurocentric ideal. An African perspective on thinking suggests that an African sees, feels, imagines, reasons or thinks and intuits all at the same time. Moreover, Africans do not only think about such concepts; they live and feel their realities.³⁷

A landmark Humanities faculty-wide gathering took place at UNISA in March 2005, for which a document was compiled from individual schools’ submissions on commitments and curricular contributions to “Africanization in Tuition.” The document, presented and presided over by the then Executive Dean was framed by definitions of “Africanization” and a list of mandatory “Reorientations.” The definition provided is closely aligned with

Thabo Mbeki's version of the "African Renaissance" as presented in his "I am an African" speech, highlighting a "connectedness to Africa":

Africanization is the re-orientation of persons, institutions, structures, products, processes and ideas towards a fresh, creative and constructive imaging of Africa and African contexts which take past, present and future African reality and African potential seriously, consciously and deliberately.³⁸

Notwithstanding the fact that the heyday of Mbeki's African Renaissance had come and gone by 1999 amid subsiding ground for "Afro-optimism," its shelf life could be extended beyond its sell-by date in the context of assertions of a democratic and market-friendly Africa accompanying aggressive neoliberal economic restructuring.³⁹

The transformation envisaged in the "Africanization in Tuition" document centers around the word "re-orientation," here used as a transitive verb: "reorienting persons/staff/individuals"; "re-orienting institutions and structures"; "re-orienting processes and ideas," culminating in the mandatory "taking Africa seriously." The directives, formulated in passive voice, have the perlocutionary force of commands. A new division is being created between "the Africanized" and the "Un-" or "anti-Africanized," implying a call for the policing of this division:

The Africanization of tuition is predicated on the condition that staff would themselves be Africanized. Un-Africanized and even anti-Africanization staff cannot drive the process of tuition Africanization.⁴⁰

Ways and means are announced to enlist UNISA staff participation in and support for Africanization. Preferably, staff should support this initiative "freely and voluntarily," failing which "it may become necessary to develop some specific instruments." One of such instruments would be a manual with "guidelines on how to ensure that the study material is specifically oriented towards African contexts and realities." A second one would be a check-list to "encourage the writer to ensure that Africa and the African context has [*sic*] been taken into account in the content of the course."⁴¹

Afrocentrism, the valorization of things African, Afro-dynamism and Afro-optimism are central to the Africanizing restructuring mission. These directions and directives ostensibly indicate the "mainstreaming" of "African" issues, histories, and approaches. The thread of a long history, allegedly ruptured by colonialism, is mended through re-connections with pre-coloniality, particularly through heritage studies and practices, and through the

rehabilitation of indigenous knowledge systems. African histories, cultures, knowledge, and philosophy are directed to become the cores of new curricula. In South Africa, a nationalist renewal articulated neoliberal restructuring with governmentally refracted developmentalism. Here, "Africanisation" coincided with the structural adjustment of universities and the rise of a new managerialism. On all these levels, we can thus find continuities – historical and/or recently (re-)constructed. The question remains as to what it is – in the midst of this plenitude and among all the plenipotentiaries of "Africanization" by decree or policy or strategic plans – that evokes the sense of "loss" in the process of this "transformation" that is increasingly articulated by African intellectuals. In the following, I would like to give serious consideration to this sense of loss, insofar as I do not believe it to be a matter of an "imaginary" loss, just as I do not believe its registrations to be a matter of "melancholia."⁴²

Capacities that are never singled out for "building," and that are conspicuous by their absence in postcolonial Africanization blueprints, are those of interrogating, searching, investigating, critical thinking and judging, debating and public-intellectual engagement. The very definition of an intellectual culture is excoriated from postcolonial Africanization agendas from the start, and possibly by design. However, no amount of mainstreaming and policy formulation, no force of law or decrees, no quota regulations governing hiring of staff, no strategic importance, and certainly no marketing of "knowledge products" could ever hope to establish Africanization as a legitimate intellectual project. Universals in knowledge are not generated from power and control over the means of "knowledge production."

To the extent that African intellectuals transcended the idea of a "national culture" to embrace a pan-African vision as a form of universalism and inclusive citizenship, they had their hopes dashed by the national chauvinism of postcolonial elites, which was inimical to expressions of independent critical thought. Ali Mazrui's point is instructive in this respect: "The decline of intellectualism and the decline of pan-Africanism unfolded almost simultaneously."⁴³ Fanon describes this "Africanity" as a "universal standpoint" and understands it as a necessary counterpoint to "national culture." The "heart-breaking return to chauvinism in its most bitter and detestable form" is identified as one of the greatest "pitfalls of national consciousness."⁴⁴

To the extent that African intellectuals expected their visions for political and social transformation to be taken over by the postcolonial developmental state, their hopes were dashed by the recession of the state and the tightening grip of repression. Having been led to believe that a national liberation

movement or party acceding to state power would dispense social and economic goods, “delivery” or withholding of “delivery” became issues of social mobilization. It becomes increasingly clear, though, that charges of “non-delivery,” echoed across the spectrum of the social movements on the margins or outside of the African National Congress/Congress of South African Trade Unions/South African Communist Party Alliance in South Africa, fail to find an addressee in the state. With respect to higher education, it is not a matter of national liberationism turning into a state project annexing the university to that state project and clamping down on independent critical thought in the process of implementing a state-determined agenda – as Mamdani claims it is.⁴⁵ Rather, I would argue the reverse case: that it is a matter of the recession of the state, and the absorption of some of its important political functions into the ruling party riding on the waves of a popular movement and demanding “unity” – of and between “the people,” “the movement,” and “the party” – as a disciplining mechanism.

Defensively guarding the institutional base for power, high incomes, status, and prestige that come with a new form of cultural capital closely associated with “transformation,” managers at some universities vociferously promoting “Africanization” are increasingly nervously hedging their proclamations and agendas, as people hailing from other African countries, not confined to closely delimited labor recruitment and labor migration, come to South Africa and knock on the doors of culture and learning.⁴⁶ Immigration policies, nationalist-populist mobilizations and official pronouncements on the racial-xenophobic violence in South Africa have relegated migrants and refugees from marginalized areas in South Africa and from other African countries to precarious spaces or to the bottom of the internal hierarchies as domains of selective and systematically arbitrary inclusion. These policies and statements, recent research suggests, are happily supported by the elites, including the political leadership and management structures of some universities, notably those without traditions of relative academic autonomy.⁴⁷ Higher education opportunities are opening up for increasing numbers of South African students, and there is a frenzy of market competition for international student recruitment, particularly on the part of tertiary institutions offering distance learning programs. Yet intellectuals from other African countries face increasingly tight visa regulations, restricting access to employment at South African universities.⁴⁸ Some universities embrace the spirit of South African immigration policies, and add their own internal restrictions. They tend to rigidly apply the regulations that debar black scholars from other African countries from appointments to positions at South African universities.⁴⁹ Black Economic

Empowerment regulations impose another constraint: “non-national” employees are not counted in the quantitative determination of employment equity targets. In this context, “Africanization” amounts to empty sloganeering, unless it is translated into a challenge to the dominant nationalist legal and political framework.

The criterion of “indigeneity” associated with “Africanization” in South Africa makes of “Africanization” a program of “South-Africanization.” The threat of being labeled “non-indigenous” carries enormous consequences for one’s hold on citizenship rights. “Indigenization” is openly flaunted in the UNISA Research Development Plan’s provisions for postgraduate student assistantships under the “growing your own timber” program, which is reserved for young black South African researchers only. The University of the Free State also boasts a “Grow our own timber (GOOT) Programme of Staff Development and Performance Management.”

The vision of pan-Africanism that once animated African intellectuals is consistent with notions of an inclusive African citizenship that was asserted in opposition to state oppression and exclusion in the course of anti-colonial struggles, as well as during urban uprisings in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s.⁵⁰ However, citizenship came to be defined, post-apartheid, in terms of descent and indigeneity, with increasingly rigidly drawn distinctions between “citizens” and “foreigners.” While the “indigeneity” view of “Africanization” in higher education in South Africa is indicative of a new nationalism associated with closely guarded class boundaries and exclusive citizenship, it also reveals some assumptions of economic liberalism that had associated an abstractly “free” domestic labor market with (national) democracy, while recruitment of migrant labor was associated with apartheid oppression inimical to democracy. The discourse of the “national democratic revolution,” fed by these associations of apartheid with migrancy, equated “national” democracy with the exclusion of “non-nationals.”⁵¹

The national and “indigeneity” constructions attaching themselves to “Africanization” in higher education have not only defined inclusions and exclusions along the lines of access, entitlements, recognition, and (academic) citizenship. Together with the particular types of “transformation” agendas to which they are closely linked, they have stratified the administrative and managerial levels of higher education, aligned them with structures of corporate enterprises, and separated them from the constituencies grouped around the teaching-learning relationship. From a managerial perspective, all “stakeholders” – intellectuals, academics, students, researchers, and policy makers, managers, entrepreneurs, investors, funders, marketing experts, consultants, auditors, and accountants – celebrate a necessary and happy co-existence at higher education institutions. Perhaps

it is time to acknowledge and give scope to antagonisms from within which questions of the emancipatory role of higher education could be posed and thought anew.

Notes

- ¹ Ecoma Bassey Alaga, "CODESRIA Conference of Deans in Retrospect," *CODESRIA Bulletin* 1&2 (2007): 42-43, and CLS Chachage, "Higher Education Transformation and Academic Extremism," *CODESRIA Bulletin* 1&2 (2001): 3.
- ² Alaga, "CODESRIA Conference" 42.
- ³ See also the report on the Workshop on Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility and the State of Academia, held in Dar es Salaam in February 2005, in which "participants highlighted the need to develop an Eastern African Discourse which can draw inspiration from the debates of the 1960s and 1970s" in the face of "the state of intellectual inertia and marketization of academia that has set in with the invasion of neo-liberal agenda in our universities"; Carlos Cardoso, "Academic Freedom, Social Responsibility and the State of Academia," *CODESRIA Bulletin* 1&2 (2005): 64.
- ⁴ Mahmood Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace: The Dilemmas of Neo-liberal Reform at Makerere University, 1989-2005* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2007) 101.
- ⁵ Alphonse Yapi-Dihaou, "Research and the Challenge of Expertise in Africa," *CODESRIA Bulletin* 3&4 (2005): 15.
- ⁶ See also Eve Bertelsen's argument to the effect that talk of "development" and "relevance to local needs" has been appropriated and assimilated by advocates of the market-led restructuring of higher education; see Eve Bertelsen, "The Real Transformation: The Marketisation of Higher Education" *Social Dynamics* 24.2 (Summer 1998): 138-40.
- ⁷ Cardoso, "Academic Freedom" 65. Mahmood Mamdani would add the name of Cheikh Anta Diop as initiator of debates on the construction of knowledge in Africa, which were path-breaking for postcolonial equatorial and West African academies; see Mahmood Mamdani, "Teaching Africa at the Post-Apartheid University of Cape Town: A Critical View of the 'Introduction to Africa' Core Course in the Social Science and Humanities Faculty's Foundation Semester, 1998," *Social Dynamics* 24.2 (Summer 1998): 8.
- ⁸ Issa Shivji, "Whither University?" *CODESRIA Bulletin*, 1&2 (2005): 3.
- ⁹ Shivji, "Whither University?" 3.
- ¹⁰ Apart from Shivji's critique on this score, see Bertelsen, "The Real Transformation"; Chachage, "Higher Education Transformation"; John Higgins, "Institutional Culture as Key Word," *CHE: Review of Higher Education in South Africa* (2007), <http://www.che.ac.za/documents/d000146/8-Review_HE_SA_2007.pdf>; "Managing Meaning: The Constitutive Contradictions

of Institutional Culture" *Social Dynamics* 33.1 (2007): 107-129 <<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=g901493882~db=all>>; and Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace*.

¹¹ Shivji, "Whither University?" 3.

¹² Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace* 118.

¹³ In the South African context, such conflicting goals were inherent in the South African National Commission on Higher Education's 1996 Framework for Transformation, and then in the Education White Paper 3 of 1997; see Thiven Reddy, *CHE: Higher Education and Social Transformation: South Africa Case Study Report*, February 2004.

¹⁴ See Nico Cloete and Johan Muller, "South African Higher Education Reform: What Comes After Postcolonialism?" Paper prepared for the European Review, June 1998.

¹⁵ See H. W. Vilakazi, "The Problem of Education in Africa," *African Voices in Education*, ed. P. Higgs, N.C.G. Vakalisa, T.V. Mda and N.T. Assie-Lumumba, (Lansdowne: Juta, 2000) 194-212.

¹⁶ See Kai Horsthemke, "Knowledge, Education and the Limits of Africanisation," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 38.4 (2004): 582. Horsthemke outlines the working definition of factual or propositional knowledge:

A person (*S*) knows that something is the case (*p*), if and only if
S believes that *p*,
P is true, and
S has suitable justification for believing that *p* (582).

¹⁷ Horsthemke, "Knowledge, Education and the Limits of Africanisation," 584.

¹⁸ Joe Teffo, "Towards Indigenising South Africa's Higher Education Curriculum," Paper presented to the University of South Africa (UNISA) Colloquium, Africanisation of the Curriculum: Beyond Debate? 26 September 2008.

¹⁹ Joe Teffo explains:

The advantages which the indigenous studies qualification has over present qualifications are: (1) it is afrocentric in focus and (2) it is multi-disciplinary. For instance, a present module dealing with cure for *Depression* deals with psychiatric, psychotherapeutic, and neurotherapeutic treatment. The indigenous studies module however deals with the above-mentioned and also such indigenous cures as herbal, divination, and ritual cures. Clearly, a black African student is likely to find the latter module much more empowering and self-fulfilling. The following are examples underpinning the mentioned degree:

African Ethno Mathematics

African Indigenous Metallurgy
 African Religions and Philosophies
 Culture, Gender, Science and Technology in Africa
 The rights of indigenous People
 Intro to the study of Human Science.

²⁰ M. Mangena, "Opening Speech for the TCI Conference on Indigenous Knowledge System" [sic], 26 July 2006, *South African Government Information* <<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2006/06080212451001.htm>>.

²¹ Nithaya Chetty, "Africanisation – What Does It Mean?" 2006, *Physics at PMB – Physics* <http://physicspmb.ukzn.ac.za/index.php/Africanisation_-_what_does_it_mean%3F>.

²² See Mamdani's examples of the introduction of an ethnobotany program and a Bachelor of Agribusiness Management at Makerere University; Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace* 101.

²³ Shivji, "Whither University?" 4.

²⁴ This is the context that Mamdani outlines in his analysis of the demise of Makerere University in *Scholars in the Marketplace*. Likewise, Ali Mazrui lays the stifling of intellectual life in Kenya at the door of rising political authoritarianism, declining academic freedom, and a one-party system of rule; see Ali Mazrui, "Pan-Africanism and the Intellectuals: Rise, Decline, and Revival," *African Intellectuals: Rethinking Politics, Language, Gender and Development*, ed. Thandika Mkandawire (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2005) 61.

²⁵ Mahmood Mamdani, "The Intelligentsia, the State and Social Movements in Africa," *Academic Freedom in Africa*, ed. Mamadou Diop and Mahmood Mamdani (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1994) 247-61.

²⁶ Thandika Mkandawire, "African Intellectuals and Nationalism," Mkandawire, *African Intellectuals* 26.

²⁷ Mkandawire, "Introduction," *African Intellectuals* 2.

²⁸ Mamdani, "Teaching Africa at the Post-Apartheid University of Cape Town" 3.

²⁹ Qtd. in Mkandawire, "Introduction" 2.

³⁰ See David Macfarlane, "Education Under the Axe," *Mail & Guardian Online*, 13 July 2007, <<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2007-07-13-education-under-the-axe>>, and Jane Duncan, "The Rise of the Disciplinary University," Harold Wolpe Memorial Lecture, University of KwaZulu/Natal, 17 May 2007.

³¹ Duncan, "The Rise of the Disciplinary University."

³² Clamphdowns have drawn public ripple effects, such as those culminating in the UKZN strike in February 2006 and more recently in the outcry over the disciplinary tribunal instituted against professors Nithaya Chetty and John van den Berg for criticizing the response of Vice Chancellor Malegapuru Makgoba to demands for debating issues of academic freedom in Senate. Reported in the media, they have sparked further protest action from academic staff and students, and prompted

solidarity action and declarations from academics and activists both locally and internationally; see, for example, the letter signed by high-profile academics from universities in the UK, the US, and Canada, "All for academic freedom," *Mail & Guardian* 5-11 December 2008.

Foreclosures are more effective from the point of view of the management of a corporatized university seeking to pre-empt debate and the open expression of dissent in advance, through more or less veiled threats, intimidation, or demonising of certain courses of action or deliberation as "improper," "shameful," "unworthy," "negative," "blocking progress," "complaining," "resisting transformation," "destructive," "devoid of thought and meaning," and polarizing the academic community into "us" and "them," depending on which side of this discursively constructed axis of evil they may choose to line up. Such discursive strategies are legion in the addresses and statements to Senate by the Principal, Barney Pityana, at the University of South Africa (UNISA). In the wake of restructuring of job grades and service conditions, and of the progressive marginalization of associations representing academic staff in mid-2007, the Principal addresses "resistance," which he disqualifies as retrogression, as follows:

We are having to deal with some resistance in pockets of the university that, in my view are hankering after a past long gone, and devoid of any critical intellectual thought.

See Barney Pityana, "From the Vice Chancellor's Desk," *Focus. UNISA Staff Newsletter*, June 2008: 12.

³³ Mkandawire, "Introduction" 3.

³⁴ See Shivji, "Whither University?" 4; Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace* 256, 258, and 259; Joseph Ki-Zerbo, "African Intellectuals, Nationalism and Pan-Africanism: A Testimony," Mkandawire, *African Intellectuals* 89-90, and Mazrui, "Pan-Africanism and the Intellectuals" 61.

³⁵ For a critique of these efforts to "decolonize" the academic curriculum, see Mamdani's contribution in "Teaching Africa at the Post-Apartheid University of Cape Town" and *Scholars in the Marketplace*. Mamdani points out that while there is a claim to reconnect historically across the colonial "rupture," pre-colonial history is not treated as an object of study, and becomes completely vacuous (*Scholars in the Marketplace* 256).

³⁶ While African Languages are being decimated to the point of disappearing from the institutional-academic landscape, the Centre for African Renaissance Studies' profile is shored up by generous funding. More recently, the establishment of another "super-structure" has been announced – viz. the Thabo Mbeki Leadership Institute.

³⁷ Philipp Higgs and Berte van Wyk, "African Philosophy and Knowledge Production in Higher Education," *Journal of Educational Studies* 6.2 (2007): 52 and 54.

³⁸ Tinyiko Maluleke, "Africanization of Tuition at UNISA – A Perspective from the College of Human Sciences," unpublished document, UNISA, 3 March 2005.

³⁹ James Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006) 113-114.

⁴⁰ Maluleke, "Africanization of Tuition at UNISA" 2-3.

⁴¹ Maluleke, "Africanization of Tuition at UNISA" 3.

⁴² See Sigmund Freud's distinction between "mourning" and "melancholia" in "Mourning and Melancholia," *On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey, ed. Angela Richards (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985): 245-268. For extrapolations from this distinction, see Wendy Brown, "Resisting Left Melancholy," *boundary 2* 26.3 (1999): 19-27, and Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005).

⁴³ Mazrui, "Pan-Africanism and the Intellectuals" 61.

⁴⁴ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (1961; London: Penguin, 1990) 218, 232, and 126.

⁴⁵ Mamdani, *Scholars in the Marketplace* 259.

⁴⁶ For the exorbitant salaries, both in absolute and relative terms, of the new managerial stratum at South African universities, see Primarashni Gower and Monako Dibetle, "The vice in VC," *Mail & Guardian Online*, 5 November 2008, <<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2008-11-05-the-vice-in-vc>>.

⁴⁷ Fanon traces the processes unfolding between ruling-class Africanization, racism, nationalism, and class divisions:

[On the morrow of independence, the native bourgeoisie] violently attacks colonial personalities It will fight to the bitter end against these people "who insult our dignity as a nation." It waves aloft the notion of the nationalization and Africanization of the ruling classes. The fact is that such actions will become more and more tinged by racism, until the bourgeoisie bluntly puts the problem to the government by saying "We must have these posts" The working class of the towns, the masses of the unemployed, the small artisans and craftsmen for their part line up behind this nationalist attitude; but in all justice let it be said, they only follow in the steps of their bourgeoisie. If the national bourgeoisie goes into competition with the Europeans, the artisans and craftsmen start a fight against non-national Africans From nationalism we have passed to ultra-nationalism, to chauvinism, and finally to racism. These foreigners are called on to leave; their shops are burned, their street stalls are wrecked, and in fact the government ... commands them to go, thus giving their nationals satisfaction. (*The Wretched of the Earth* 125)

⁴⁸ See Francis B. Nyamnjoh, *Insiders and outsiders. Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa* (Dakar: CODESRIA: Zed, 2006) 33, and John Sharp,

"'Fortress SA': Xenophobic violence in South Africa," *Anthropology Today* 24.4 (August 2008): 2.

⁴⁹ Sharp, "'Fortress SA'" 2.

⁵⁰ In the SADC Draft Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in the SADC Region of June 1995, the influence of pan-Africanism is still clearly visible. Citizens of member states were to be able to cross borders without controls: "... the Draft Protocol calls on member states *inter alia* to confer, promote, and protect in relation to every citizen of a member state:

The right to enter freely and without a visa the territory of another Member State for short visit;
The right to reside in the territory of another Member State;
The right to establish oneself and work in the territory of another Member State (Section 566).

Qtd. in Michael Neocosmos, *From 'Foreign Natives' to 'Native Foreigners': Explaining Xenophobia in Post-apartheid South Africa. Citizenship and Nationalism, Identity and Politics* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006) 84-85.

⁵¹ Neocosmos, *From 'Foreign Natives' to 'Native Foreigners'* 81 and 83.