Sixth Annual Julius Nyerere Memorial Lecture
Presented by Catherine A. Odora Hoppers in 2009

Biography of Catherine A. Odora Hoppers

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Engaging Critically with Tradition, Culture, and Patriarchy through Lifelong Learning: What would Julius Nyerere say?

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First of all I would like to thank the Vice Chancellor of the University of the western Cape Professor Brian O'Connell for inviting me to join a long trail of distinguished voices that have stood here and addressed you in the name of Julius Nyerere.

Brian, **my brother, a leader, a pathfinder**… **always restless, always joyful, a joy he shares abundantly even when it is raining around him, even when it is raining in his own heart**.

At these times when **the skills to accumulate money and wealth are exalted but that to cumulatively cope with the imperatives of co-existence, of solidarity and of human dignity is in such short supply,** the stakes for humanity are high.

Lawrence Blum has argued that an agent **may reason well in moral situations, uphold the strictest standards of impartiality for testing maxims and principles, and even be adept at deliberation**.

Yet, unless he/she perceives **moral situations** as **moral situations** and unless he/she perceives **their moral character accurately, their skills at deliberation will be for nought**, and may even lead them astray.

One of the most important moral differences between people is between **those who miss**, and **those who see various moral features of situations** confronting them. **Perception** is the setting for action, and **salience** – i.e. **the adequacy of agent's consciousness** concerning the situation, or **ability to grasp the contours of a problem** prior to being called upon **to exercise that agency** -- is **key** in this.

So you see, when I got the call that Professor Shirley Walters, **a warrior for justice and human rights in her own right** -- was coming up to Pretoria to discuss with me some matter relating to the University of the Western Cape, I felt mmmmm, **this is good, very good**.

But after our meeting, in which she outlined the purpose of the visit, and that she was sent to make this enquiry in the capacity of **an emissary of Prof O'Connell...in relation to this lecture**... I just knew it... I **was COMING**... **I was coming to join this pathfinder**, this **son of the soil** as he steers a ship in sometimes unsteady and unclear waters... **this relentless wounded healer** as he shares the best of his life even when times are hard and echoes are hard to find.

But most of all, I was coming to take up a relay baton on behalf of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Baba wa Taifa, and bring to this day a **robust response to his dreams and visions**...

But what was Nyerere all about?

Clearly this is a question that cannot be fully answered in one or several lectures. My task here is to highlight a few aspects that are pertinent here.

Key to Nyerere's philosophy was the commitment to building **a just society in which all skills, talents and capabilities are harnessed.**

Dignity, honesty and integrity were non-negotiable tenets in his life and philosophy. But the notion of dignity was directed in particular towards the **peasant in the rural areas**. Nyerere saw them as being **holders of knowledge and capabilities**, and **recognized that frugal subsistence was not the same as poverty.**

Mwalimu was livid about the manner in which education taught African children to turn their backs on the livelihood potentials represented by the peasants.

Education had to be decolonized, and such a process required **intimate guidance from a cadre of rural leaders who lived with those rural peasants and shared**

their lives. The story of education clearly, was the story of **betrayal of African villages**.

Education for self-reliance therefore was aimed to **make education less hostile to the rural environments; compel through immersion, the recognition of the vale and dignity of rural life, the meaning of extended families and mutual aid systems that guaranteed cohesion and co-existence as well as wellbeing.**

He once remarked, " I would be more than happy to see true heroism among the African elite, but few of them have exhibited any talent for it"…

Indifference and avarice that had sunk their claws so deep with the advent of modernity via colonialism needed to be confronted by **garnering the political strength of the peasants and holders of the other knowledge and values of sharing and reciprocity that are found in abundance in African philosophies and lived worlds.**

The torch of light according to Nyerere **was to shine on the poor and the unfree, and ownership and leadership of development reverted to them.**

What does this say about culture, knowledge and human agency?

My core message in this lecture is to tell him IT IS OK… and to tell him…rest easy Papa **you have not died in vain**.

We are **right there on the spot**… But only that **this time… this time**, we are not developing **sterile critiques of colonialism and the subsystems it left to eternally paralyse this continent.**

**

Right up-front, let me make it quite clear, that **I do not do debates**. Those who would like to hang out and engage in that **Anglo-Saxon nonsense**, I say, **take it someplace else and wage your concealed battles there**…. Because for the debater, the **pursuit is eloquence that leads to someone losing and someone winning… not the quality of what wins in the end**.

Neither do I do polemics...for… the polemist is a desperate person who clings onto his rights to wage war. The person the polemist confronts is **not a partner in search for the truth**, but **an adversary**, an **enemy who is wrong, who is harmful**, and whose very existence **constitutes a threat**. For him then, the game does not consist of **recognizing this person as a subject** having the right to speak, **but of abolishing him** as an interlocutor, from any possible dialogue.

**

Rather, our task in this generation as I see and practice it, is that of **renegotiation of human agency** in which social justice is seen as that condition in which **all members of a society have the same basic rights, security, opportunities, obligations and social benefits**. It is based on the idea of a society which gives individuals and groups **fair treatment and a just share** of the benefits of society. Social justice cannot anymore be **defined by whatever the strong decide**.

Our task is to **corrode and exhaust the narrative of colonialism in its numerous guises and technologies and ruses…including its alibis that are couched in the recesses of the academy.**

We know that colonialism is wheezing and running out of breath as **history that is taking place on the outer limits of the subject/object**, is now giving rise to **new moments of defiance that rips** through the **sly civility of that grand old narrative, exposing its violence**.

Subaltern agency now emerges as a process of **reversing, displacing and seizing the apparatus of value coding** which had been monopolized by the **colonial default drive**. It is the **contestation of the "given" symbols of authority** that is shifting the terrain of antagonism.

THIS is the moment of **renegotiation of agency**. It is the voice of an **interrogative, calculative agency**, the moment when we **lose resemblance with the colonizer**, the moment of (in Toni Morrison's words), "rememoration" that **turns the narrative of enunciation into a haunting memorial of what has been excluded, excised, evicted** (Bhaba 1995).

Baba wa Taifa, we are no longer content with **documenting the histories of resistance of the colonized to colonialism**, rather, we are turning those accounts into **theoretical events that not only make those struggles relevant for their moment in time, but also relevant for other moments in times to come**.

The "people without history" then not only get back their central place in history, finally away from the dingy "ethnography corner" to which colonial discourse would want them to remain cast for eternity, but **also become full agents and makers of history current and future.**

We are changing the very direction of the citizen's gaze…directly on to **an emperor that is now naked – a mere hapless object….**

Hence the light that began by being cast on colonialism and the legacy of domination and abuse is changed to **vigilant analysis of its failures, silences, and a systematic spotting of transformative nodes that were not recognizable before, but which are now released into public spaces**.

This casting of **generative** light at last onto subjugated peoples, knowledges, histories and ways of living **unsettles the toxic pond and transforms passive analysis into a generative force that valorises and recreates life for those previously museumised** (Odora Hoppers 2008b, Prakash 1995), **throwing open for realignment** the **conflictual, discrepant and even violent processes** that formed the precipitous basis of colonialism.

Ours now Papa, is a process of **engaging with colonialism in a manner that produces a program for its dislocation** (Prakash 1995:6)… a dislocation that is made possible not only by **permitting subalterns direct space for engaging with the structures and manifestations of colonialism**, but also by inserting into the discourse arena **totally different, meanings and registers from other traditions**.

It is here that **subaltern and heterogeneous forms of knowledge** such as indigenous knowledge systems and related forms of agency that had no place in the fields of knowledge that grew in compact with colonialism and science at last have a place. And **by their stirring presence, they become revolutionary heuristics in a post colonial transformation agenda** (Rahnema 1997).

When we spell concepts such as cognitive justice for instance, it is no longer about the pros and cons, but it is directly about the **right of different forms of knowledge to survive – and survive creatively and sustainably… turning the toxic hierarchy left behind by colonialism into a circle**… in which the cry for self determination meets the outer voice of co-determination.

Out of this, is born a **method for exploring difference that rejects hierarchization and the attendant humiliation, and providing for reciprocity and empathy**.

This, Papa…Baba wa Taifa, is where we are. So… **rest easy**… we at it…are moving the mountain… one inch at a time.

Let me now dig into some of the concepts, and see how we are working our way through their reconstitution.

1. Culture as the taken-for-granted

Although the lecture title spells out a number of concepts… tradition, culture and patriarchy, I am choosing for this lecture the central concept of Culture… and within that it will be possible to bring in traditions and the more specific aspect of traditions – patriarchy.

Culture is best understood as the **totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and all other products of human work and thought**. After Clifford Geertz (1973) and Clyde Kluckhohn (1949), culture is that spectrum encompassing the **total way of life of a people, the social legacy** the individual acquires from his group, **a way of thinking, feeling, and believing, a storehouse of pooled learning, a mechanism for the normative regulation of behaviour, and a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other people.**

It is a **precipitate of history, a behavioural map, sieve or matrix**. Put simply, it is the everyday… the taken-for-granted: **the food you cook, the music you learn, the religion, the festival and the ritual** (Visvanathan, 2001a).

Culture is public because, as a system of meaning, it is the collective property of a group. When we say we do not understand the actions of people from a culture other than our own, we are acknowledging our '**lack of familiarity with the imaginative universe within which their acts are signs**' (Kluckhohn, 1949:12-13).

It is a system of meaning, i.e. a set of relationships between one group of variables (like words, behaviours, physical symbols) and the meanings which are attached to them. When a society agrees upon certain relationships between a certain class of variables and their meanings, a system of meaning is established. Language is perhaps the most formal aspect of the human meaning-systems.

As a precipitate, culture is best understood as in the phrase '**a precipitate of history**'. The word is used to make an analogy between the chemical process by which a **solid substance is recovered from a liquid solution** (during which it falls to the bottom of the test tube) and the process by which **culture** (analogous to the solid) is formed **within and from** the material of history (the liquid).

The noun 'precipitation' is most commonly used to refer to rain or snowfall; the verb 'to precipitate' means to **cause something to occur** (Geertz, 1973, citing Kluckhohn, 1949). Unlike qualities of human life that are transmitted genetically, **culture is learned**. Thus culture can be seen as that body of **learned behaviours common to a given human society**. It is the **template shaping values, behaviour and consciousness within a human society from generation to generation**.

'Cultural rights' means the right to preserve and enjoy one's cultural identity and development.

When African people cry out that the education system throughout the continent **lacks familiarity with the context and culture of its learners,** what they are saying is that it is carrying another default drive altogether, a process which **disenfranchises and disadvantages the children epistemologically**.

In fact it can be said that in Africa, social cohesion does not depend on **state sovereignty, liberal democracy, the advance of modernity or the global economy,** but upon the millions of African people **willing to sacrifice what they 'take for granted' – their cultural script and default drive** -- by **bearing the**

uncomfortable burden of speaking and acting in unfamiliar cultural idioms within all areas of everyday life.

Africans are not passive victims of cultural imperialism although they have been subject to **coercive interventions, but active agents in negotiating unfamiliar, strange and alien cultural terrain.**

Social cohesion especially in the southern part of Africa would easily collapse if Africans as the **natural majority were not willing to suspend 'that which is taken for granted' and bear the burden of unfamiliar cultural transformations.**

Cultural justice therefore requires at minimum, that this burden of the unfamiliar **needs to be shared more equitably by people from different cultural backgrounds across society** (Kwenda 2003).

In other words, cultural justice takes us from **tolerance** to **respect in cultural politics**, arguing that what is needed is **functional respectful co-existence**. By respectful is meant **mutuality in paying attention**, according regard and recognition as well as taking seriously what the other regards as important.

By functional is meant that coexistence is **predicated on a degree of interaction that invokes the cultural worlds of the players**, in essence – what they, in their distinctive ways, take for granted.

In other words, **cultural injustice** occurs when people are **forced by coercion or persuasion to submit to the burdensome condition of suspending – or permanently surrendering – what they naturally take for granted**.

This means that in reality, **the subjugated person has no linguistic or cultural 'default drive' – that critical minimum of ways, customs, manners, gestures and postures that facilitate uninhibited, un-self-conscious action** (Kwenda 2003, p:70).

By its converse, **cultural justice** is meant that the burden of **constant self-consciousness is shared** or at the very least recognized, and where possible rewarded. The sharing part is very important because it is only in the **mutual**

vulnerability that this entails that the **meaning of intimacy and reciprocity in community** can be discovered.

It is in this sharing that on the one hand, **cultural difference is transcended**, and on the other, **cultural arrogance**, by which is meant that disposition to see in other cultures not simply difference, but deficiency, **is overcome**.

The **cultural work** that is entailed in constructing functional tolerance therefore goes beyond providing equal opportunities in say, education, to **unclogging of hearts filled with resentment** (Odora Hoppers 2005, 2007).

2. Culture as knowledge – the challenge of indigenous knowledge systems

The notion of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) has been defined as the sum total of the **knowledge and skills which people in a particular geographic area possess, and which enables them to get the most out of their natural environment** (Grenier, 1998).

Most of this knowledge and these skills have **been passed down from earlier generations, but individual men and women in each new generation adapt and add to this in a constant adjustment to changing circumstances and environmental conditions.** They in turn pass on the body of knowledge to the next generation, in an effort to provide survival strategies.

Introducing history and a **time dimension** to the definition, **indigenous knowledge** is described as:

> **that knowledge that is held and used by a people who identify themselves as indigenous of a place based on a combination of cultural distinctiveness and prior territorial occupancy relative to a more recently arrived population with its own distinct and subsequently dominant culture** (ILO, 1989: Article 1).

Traditional knowledge is thus the totality of all knowledges and practices, whether **explicit or implicit, used in the management of socio-economic, spiritual and ecological facets of life**. In that sense, many aspects of it can be

contrasted with 'cosmopolitan knowledge' that is culturally anchored in Western cosmology, scientific discoveries, economic preferences and philosophies.

Categories of these traditional knowledges include agricultural, meteorological, ecological, governance, social welfare, peace building and conflict resolution, medicinal and pharmaceutical, legal and jurisprudential, music, architecture, sculpture, textile manufacture, metallurgy and food technology.

There is a cultural context surrounding the practice of these knowledges, including songs, rituals, dances and fashion; it also includes technologies that range from garment weaving and design, medicinal knowledge (pharmacology, obstetrics), food preservation and conservation, and agricultural practices – including animal husbandry, farming and irrigation – to fisheries, metallurgy and astronomy. A large component of these technologies **was specifically designated, owned, managed and controlled by women.**

The concept of indigenous knowledge systems also delineates **a cognitive structure in which theories and perceptions of nature and culture are conceptualised**. Thus it includes definitions, classifications and concepts of the physical, natural, social, economic and ideational environments.

People own, manage and manipulate the knowledges **according to their level of expertise in the particular domain**. Thus **not all women are obstetricians or pharmacologists**. **Neither are all men metallurgists.**

When African people cry out that the **modern legal system is alienating**, it is not because they are illiterate. It is because the legal system based on the system of jurisprudence derived from Roman law **was not intended to deal with the sociology of conflicts**.

African traditions of jurisprudence use **restorative justice** that is directly related to the context of the livelihood of the people, and which takes into account the post offence period... not just prosecution until jail that the western system believes is **part of God's own script**.

3. **Investing in building the right kind of capital: Trust**

Even though we are wired for stability, and the search for ultimate joy and peace, in a land full of milk and honey, human existence continually challenges us to rethink the taken-for-granteds in our life.

Globalization, whatever we love or hate in it, is bringing tour doorsteps new, pungent, and ambivalence-filled human situations we can no longer escape (Ayton Schenker 2005). With society becoming more varied and culturally diverse, the challenge is especially intensified by **the irreversible reality of physical, civic, cultural, religious and political proximity.**

The practicalities of this global interdependence and the growing interaction among diverse peoples pose major challenges to old ways of thinking and acting. We are today challenged to come to terms with the **inhuman faces of humanism that has no ambition to transformation -- and of how the reclamation of the reality of humanity in their diversity is what offers to humanity the prospect of a human future.**

As societies reel from the impact of a homogeneizing globalization **totally unequipped to handle the consequences of its actions**, we see daily, what is amounting to a groundswell of reactions and responses – "counterforce" that is coming back to haunt globalization in its tracks!

It is not just the collapse of the global economy and its modus operandi which we have witnessed with cold horror in the past year, but it is also that **culture, diversity, context and difference, those concepts previously looked at like little useless things, all promise to give globalization its money's worth in sleeplessness.**

The challenge before us lies not in the fact that this counterforce is emerging, but rather, that we need to work it out such that **this time, we are not transfixed or eternally locked into the gaze of the subjugating or dehumanizing force**, but that we rise from it, and, in spite of the bruises, dare to show a way forward.

We also live in a world that appears to be caught in a "social trap" i.e. a negative cycle of **distrust and negative cooperation owing to mutual distrust and lack of**

social capital, even where cooperation would benefit all – reflecting a real tragedy of the commons.

In fact, it is not that there is no trust at all, but the problem is that the trust and loyalty **extends only to fellow members of the particular grouping**; and **distrust and hostility mark our relations with non members**. We therefore need to draw a distinction between **bridging social capital** and **bonding social capital**, in which **'bridging social capital'** is a broader concept and encompasses people across diverse social cleavages, whereas **'bonding social capital'** is more restrictive and tends to reinforce exclusive identities within homogeneous groups and to exclude people from other groups.

Since the existing education system and processes has made it a prime goal to fragment, individualize, and valorize competitiveness as supreme ideals, **the education of the future needs to invest in the building of bridging, or generalized trust which can enable us to embrace the "stranger", and people who are not personally known to us in the first instance.**

It was this, that the Delors segment on **learning to live together implied**. Because trust is infectious, **a person with generalized trust believes that most people can be trusted**, and is therefore an asset to the sustenance of democracy, and of the futures we are seeking.

How far, in the interceding years, have we gone with this. How do we assess our performance when conflicts rack our continent and everywhere, there is a crisis of values?

Today, we stand forewarned by Hele Beji, that our resort to **the vague idea of culture** as the response to this problem may not be that adequate. Beji warned us that the real hazard with using culture as the point of ultimate respite is that culture, having supplanted every race, can become an apology for itself that is not amenable to **rational criticism since culture invokes its own rationality, fixing its own rules of the game; and rights in line with its own convictions, irrespective of what others think, or feel.... undermining completely the possibility of neutral arbitration.**

It becomes clear that **belonging to the same culture or religion is no longer a guarantee for tolerance or political contentment.** Therefore, in calling culture, democracy, human rights etc into the picture, we need to be **very alert to instrumentalist and self serving potentialities of these concepts**.

A similar kind of vigilance needs to be applied in several other areas. To illustrate, we are today quite lost as we see:
- human rights for all are turned into inhuman codes;
- sovereignty is replaced by supremacy;
- tolerance, which in the first place is the rejection of the intolerable, becomes the right to practice the intolerable; or even
- democracy becomes a slogan in support of hegemony; or
- cultural difference, which was supposed to diversify peacefully, converges instead into a practice of violence;
- antiracism becomes as intolerant as racism; and
- where the rights of the weakest are modelled on the abuses of the rights of the strongest with the result that victims are turning into a new force of cruelty in their own right!!!

These realities impose upon us an obligation to **rethink the content and paradigm of learning itself.**

4. What does this imply for the second generation indigenization?

In this second generation indigenization, the errors of the past are taken as starting points for new directions.

For instance it is recognized that there has been the usual period in a lot of **social change where, to establish recognition and strength prerequisite to an effective presence in dialogue and discourse, there is a polarization or over-reaction against the incumbent** (i.e. defining oneself as 'different from' as being important in the process of claiming space to define oneself through self referencing).

The force it takes against established and resistant hegemony to create this space **is reflected in an exaggerated and confrontatory antithesis** (such as radical feminism, the anti-development lobby of the green movement, and in the white

settler colonies, the anti-white elements of the black power movement – each spawning an equally distorted backlash (Fatnowna & Pickett 2002, Odora Hoppers 2002).

With this new stream, the integrative paradigm shift recognizes that there is **a growing maturity of dialogue that is not the result of a paradigm shift, but is the shift itself.**

Thus, in the area of knowledge, we move from the **ignorance and depreciating ideology** along with social theories that claimed 'terra nullius' as a convenient rationalization for colonization and ill treatment, to a **need for honest recognition of the existence of indigenous knowledge systems; of indigenous cultures, civilizations, and cosmologies.**

In fact it quickly becomes clear, in the light of disappearing landraces, biodiversity, and the depleting reservoirs of peace cultures, that there is **a need for those knowledge systems themselves**, not just **the recognition that they exist** (Knudtson & Suzuki 1992).

As has been stated in the UNESCO World Report on Knowledge Societies, **to remain human and liveable, knowledge societies will have to be societies of shared knowledge** (Binde 2005).

Today, we can say that the **knowledge paradigms of the future are beginning by reaching out to those excluded, epistemologically disenfranchised**, to move together towards a new synthesis.

In this synthesis, it is recognized that **shifting of power** without a **clear shift of paradigms of understanding that makes new propositions about the use of that power in a new dispensation leads to vicarious abuse of power by whoever is holding it – old or new** (Venter 1997).

In this new stream, **modernization proceeds, but without necessarily following Western values** (Huntington 1998) or sequences, but rather with a **re-strengthening of core values from different traditions of knowledge and living.**

It is about equal access as citizens of a nation and of the world into the mainstream society, **with an emphasis on equality – i.e. the right to participate on an equal footing in a negotiating partnership**. This includes **identifying and deconstructing the mechanisms of any form of assimilation or imposition of other cultures on others** (Fatnowna & Pickett 2002).

Where appropriate, it is about indigenous peoples reclaiming the custodianship over their knowledge in public spaces along with the right to speak and **be determining agents of cooperative contemporary change and creative knowledge sharing of these knowledge systems.**

Western modernization, progress and thought is seen as **a temporary epoch in human history** with both advantages and disadvantages which must, and is seeking to re-engage with the **more holistic integrated conceptualizations of sustainable life held by cultures that have, fortunately, not been down the path of 'westernization'.**

In other words, it is a **rapprochement of modern and older cultures, including modern culture's older roots** where each complementing the other opens up **the possibility of a viable future for humankind** (Huntington 1998, Fatnowna & Pickett 2002).

The **generative adult or adults** of the future are seen as standing between **the past and the future to be built, and, looking into the future**, makes that crucial distinction between **producing more offspring**, and **producing offspring that are not crippled.**

5. What does cognitive justice mean?

Here, we are moving forward and advocating **for an ethically sound and ecologically constituted way of thinking, the affirmation of the multiplicity of worlds and forms of life; the creation of a shared paradigm shift, self-reflexive praxis; becoming critical explorers of human and societal possibilities; the establishment of new evaluation and appraisal criteria, and the transformation to new futures** (Odora Hoppers 2001).

This is particularly important in this day and age when **craftsmen, tribal elements, traditional experts and women are not seen as part of the citizenship of knowledge**, and especially when it is still assumed that the history of knowledge begins with **one's entry into the university – itself the embodiment and carrier of western cultural heritage and history.**

The imperative to fraternity, therefore, imposes on us the obligation to develop a **fraternity of ecology of knowledges**. Why is this so important?

It is because science tends to hegemonise other forms of knowledge either by **museumising them into ghettoes**, or by **treating them as occult or oriental or primitive superstition.**

The objective would thus be precisely to **return life to these forms of knowledge** and to **restore their place in the livelihood of communities so that they can, without coercion, determine the nature and pace of the development they require.**

From this point of view, the **absence of bicultural experts at the epistemological level** has made it difficult to **create a systems-level dialogue**, to **identify and articulate systems difficulties**, **systems limitations and new possibilities building on combined strategies anchored in multiple knowledge systems.**

The most important criteria of fraternity of knowledge are **cognitive justice and the right of different forms of knowledge to survive – and survive creatively and sustainably.** An experiment in cognitive justice, therefore, can turn the toxic hierarchy inherited from the Western system **into a circle**.

The search becomes **not just one for equality, but for a method of dialogue**, a **method for exploring difference**, and providing for **reciprocity and empathy** (Visvanathan, 2000).

6. What does this imply for intellectual work

Here, I share with you four sets of insights.

The first is from Michel Foucault who took a strong stand on what he saw as one of the hallmarks of western political philosophy – **it's devotion to 'abstractions', 'first principles' – i.e. theory.** In the west, Foucault said, the problem of political order is dealt with by building models of the just social order and **searching for general principles by which to evaluate existing conditions.**

Foucault was totally fed up with this sterile utopic way of doing intellectual work that **never cried or mourned for the consequences of its indifference**. Accordingly, he urged us to cast aside this search for first principles, and ask instead 'how power actually operates in our society'. The real work of intellectuals is to **criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; and to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so we can fight them** (Rabinow 1986: p6).

Foucault urged us **to be alert to that moment in the way institutions evolve, in which it incarnates an ideology that is so simple and fundamental as the notions of good and bad, innocence and guilt**. If we want to change institutions, we have to change the **lived ideology through the dense institutional layers in which it is invested, crystallized and reproduced**.

What this means is that when next time we invoke humanism, we understand clearly what we are doing and what we are not doing.

In **humanism,** we want to **change the ideology without changing the structures**. When we cry **reform**, we want to **change the institution without touching the ideological system**. It is **revolutionary, transformative action** that simultaneously seeks to shake both the **consciousness** and the **institution.**

A second powerful voice is that of Noam Chomsky. For Chomsky, the problem is a political one. We must **struggle against the injustices of our current society in the name of a higher goal – justice** (Rabinow: p6). Chomsky's position is that our job is to try and create a vision of a future just society; that is to create, if you like, a

humanistic social theory that is based, if possible, on some firm and humane concept of the human essence or human nature.

The task of intellectuals is to use the concept of **human nature as a standard against which to judge society'** (Rabinow ibid). This does not mean that we have to achieve a perfect enactment of these standards, but unless we have them, **we will have no way to act or judge.**

A third voice is that of Howard Richards, a professor of philosophy, education and peace; a practicing lawyer and economist. He addresses the question of **changing cultures** and argues that the move from one set of cultures to a different one demands a **change human behaviour, cognition, and emotion – i.e. social norms.**

According to him a norm can be thought of as having three components: A **social norm is an observed regularity in human behaviour.** It is a standard humans use to **think about and guide their behaviour.** It is also a standard humans use in criticizing each other's behaviour, and norm-violation frequently carries with it some form or other of embarrassment, shame, guilt, or punishment. "Norm" is thus a broad term that sometimes replaces or overlaps with "custom," "rule," or "convention."   At other times, it is the umbrella term embracing all three, and usually it also embraces "law" (in the sense in which a legal norm is a kind of social norm, not in the sense of a law of physics or chemistry).

Transformations from warlike and violent cultures, to cultures that "reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation" **can be conceived as norm-change.**

Thus when people come to see themselves as peaceful people who resolve conflicts by dialogue, negotiation, and non-violence, **they change their norms, adopting or strengthening peaceful ones**.

A culture of peace moves away from the norms of machismo and patriarchy, and toward those of gender equality and nurturance. It moves away from social disintegration and towards norms that prescribe solidarity, and the inclusion of all individuals and groups.

These are not innocent questions, guided by no ethics and presupposing no epistemological commitments. A commitment to working for a **culture change implies taking stands on some controversial issues.**

Finding existing norms lending themselves to growth and transformation, and which culture change movements and projects can nurture to create cultures of peace, **is an empirical project**. It is **an inquiry into an historically given culture, as it exists at a time and in a place** (Richards and Swanger 2008).

A fourth voice that kept coming back more forcefully each time was that of a close friend and phenomenal intellectual Shiv Visvanathan. An atrocity, Visvanathan (2002b) has argued, **cannot be understood in the usual opposition of academic sociology between functional and conflict theory**.

To understand an atrocity we should not merely study the **sociology of conflict**, but attempt to **understand evil and a phenomenology of humiliation which standard sociology has so far not captured**. An atrocity as **a victim's narrative** often falls afoul of the expert because the victim's testimony is often in discordance with the expert's assessment.

Calibrating an atrocity with standard sociological tools, Visvanathan argues, often leads to surreal results. In other words, **an atrocity cannot be domesticated as a mere human rights violation**. It has to be **a theory of freedom** where **literature and political theory** combine in a new way.

The integration of knowledge systems and the **development of bicultural expertise is not only a human rights issue, but something which demands a theory of freedom – something more infinite, multi-vocal and inexhaustible.** This is because **freedom comes prior to rights, and goes beyond equality as a measure**. Each new act of freedom is a new beginning (Visvanathan, 2001b).

It is from this moment that we can appreciate Kahane's invocations that we can never address a problem situation from a **comfortable position of uninvolved innocence**. In order to solve tough problems, **we need more than shared ideas**. We also need **shared commitment**. We need a **sense of the whole and what it demands of us.**

What his approach tells us is that there is not **'a' problem out there** that we can react to, then dash and fix. Rather, there is **a "problem situation"** of which each of us is a part – **the way an organ is part of the body**.

We **affect the situation, and it affects us**. The best we can do is to engage with it from **multiple perspectives**, and try, in action-learning mode, to improve it....more like **unfolding a marriage** than it is **fixing a car.**

7. As Africa moves forward...

As Africa moves forward, she confronts the dysfunctions of **modern and European-programmed notions of progress and its off-springs development, progress, rationality** etc, which is fortunately not fully imbibed by nearly 70% of its rural population, it becomes clear that it is Africa that is now in control of the definition of 'time', **lived time that needs to be humanized.**

It is therefore Africa that, in transforming the contours of its struggles from **archaic resistance to domination**, holds the key to the world's future. But to do this, a lot depends on **how she questions her past** (one which still painful) and the kind of future she would like to see unfold, not just for herself, but also for humanity at large.

Much will depend on **how she articulates herself out of the experience of humiliation** suffered in the hands of colonialism, and avoid adding to self-perpetuating cultural cycles of violation and vindication which would seem to say, **"I have the right to be angry and make others suffer forever because someone hurt me in the past".**

How can Africa generate **less humiliation entrepreneurs** like Hitler and more Nelson Mandelas who **interrupt the cycle of humiliation by triggering new cycles of dignity**? How can we, together **cultivate enduring instruments and practices that can disarm this singular weapon of mass destruction – HUMILIATED HEARTS AND MINDS, and turn them into weapons of mass creativity and solidarity**?

In the context of post-colonialism, we have seen how in some instances, **the new cultural pride becomes a new nook for intolerance providing seedbeds for new forms of discrimination**. Traditions **threaten to offer unitary radicalism** in which it is not always evident that tolerance and political commitment to diversity will be guaranteed. Human dignity is easily circumscribed in terms of ethnic, national, or religious identity – in short, allegiance to a deterministic primace (Béji 2004:29).

The illusion of **self expression seems to suplant the faculty of mutual understanding**, while the disinherited of the earth employ the same devices to exist as the privileged do to dominate.

Modern culture has become characterized by the fact that **human rights of all kinds are turned into inhuman codes**. **Sovereignty is replaced by supremacy**, and tolerance, which is the rejection of the intolerable has become the **right to practise the intolerable.**

Many a-times, humanitarian action which professes to be on the side of the weak, comes with superpower backing which quickly turns it into **providential inhumanity**. **Anti-racism becomes as intolerant as racism**, and the **rights of the weakest** are modelled on the **abuses of the rights of the strongest**, with the result that the **rights of the victims are turning into a morality of cruelty** (Béji 2004:31).

Culture no longer offers access to humanity or the foundation for the ethic of recognition. **Ethnic consciousness** has liquidated **ethnic awareness** creating a costly **humanist deficit** in which decolonization fails to live up to the promise inherent in its cultural potential – that of creating a more viable model of civilization.

In other words, because the confrontation between tradition and modernity remains locked in the **suspicion and resentment** that each has of the other, the confrontation and the poverty of heuristics inherent in it threatens to deprive both of inspiration in that it has **stimulated them ideologically, but discredited them morally**. They both **converge in terms of the shadows** -- not of light they cast, and the **destruction, not the creation** that they produce.

It is here that the perspectives, methodologies and breakthroughs in unpacking these gross shadows that are threatening to overwhelm humanity, must be deployed with urgency – **to precisely reverse this decline and plant new thought experiments in a transversal and transdisciplinary dispensation such as what this Research Chair I have been brought to South Africa to initiate is now doing**.

Some of these include putting **knowledge in the plural**, asserting the right to a multiplicity of times; of citizenship as a hypothesis; placing human development rather than employment at the centre of education, **linking epistemology and democracy**; bringing in robust **theorizations around freedom, innovation, cosmology, constitution, citizenship, community and syllabi; and cognitive justice and the right of traditions of knowledge to co-exist and unfold without duress.**

The core case in my work is that what matters to Africa is not so much the hype around the knowledge economy or information society and some mad rush into it. Rather, that the information revolution that has greater significance for Africa is not a revolution in technology, machinery, techniques, software, or speed, **but a revolution in CONCEPTS, and thus THE WAY WE THINK about issues**.

Central to this contribution is the proposition that we need to move firmly towards acknowledging that **knowledge primarily rests in people** rather than in ICTs, databases or services, and thus that for Africa the challenge has to be that of how to **build on local knowledge that exists in its people as a concomitant to working with global knowledge and information.**

As we survey the wreckage and note the **unprecedented evacuation of billions of people from the arena of substantive innovation essential to their existence**, we need to turn with force to the task of redefining key concepts such as "innovation", **its link with the goals not of profit making for the private sector, but of building sustainable societies and cognitive justice as key to the attainment of long-term, and sustainable development.**

Innovations would then **go beyond the formal systems of innovation done in universities and industrial research and development laboratories,** to innovations *from below,* by which is meant taking into account the full

participation of all producers of knowledge including in informal settings of rural areas.

This not just about respect for the **knowledge system**. Rather, it is an **understanding of the life forms, a livelihood and a way of life**. It is fraternity at the epistemological and ontological level that the university needs, and it is **in this search for cognitive justice as a fraternal act that the future university lies** (Visvanathan, 2000). In other words, fraternity cannot be reduced to **community-level hosted programs or summer visits**.

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

Without this mix of **theory and vision**, the communities of knowledge one is searching for might be stillborn. The university must encompass not merely **dissent and diversity**, but also **the question of violence relating to the Other beyond the fence or border.**

In short, Visvanathan (2000) sketches out the following as a way of breaking the vicious cycle:

- Universities must provide **the heuristics, the methodological discipline, the non-dominative non-fundamentalist space that this reform strategy needs**.
- Universities need to **combine the ethical and the political, a theory of the Other as a thought experiment and as a form of life.**
- Universities must **develop theories of development that do not end in the disaster of serial displacements** that we have seen over the past four decades.
- Universities must remain an **enabling environment in which the Other can articulate its conceptions of an alternative world and its vision of the university in it**.
- Universities need to develop a **theory of the West within the ambit of an alternative vision of the world.**

A knowledge society with "equity" is a society where **all forms of knowledge** get **recognised and valued** especially from where they originate, and also end up benefiting that society. It is a kind of dynamic process where it is not only the people who access information and knowledge, but also how the same finds its way to the probable users (Odora Hoppers 2006).

8. Conclusion: Where does all of this leave Life Long Learning?

As education is the 'pathway to the realization of visions', it is also within the system itself that fundamental transformation should take place.

Lifelong learning stands at crossroads as it seeks to fulfill its role in building skills for life. But with the issues of cultural and cognitive justice I have highlighted in this paper, it is clear that **the skills we need for the future goes beyond the skills to survive in the marketplace.**

Lifelong learning must pay attention to **the corrosion of trust as a key social capital**. At the same time, **cultural diversity, pluralism and democratic citizenship are seen as critical attributes necessary for the survival in a global world that is increasingly interdependent**, but in which billions have suffered from the trauma of large scale psychological, cognitive and cultural abuse and massive displacements in the hands of the colonial and later development projects.

We do not want to wait until the millions, if not **billions of humiliated hearts clogged with resentment finally burst forth, and take national and global systems to task**.

It is precisely by taking pre-emptive and forward looking strategies, using new cognitive tools such as cognitive justice, co-determination, ethical space, and epistemological disenfranchisement that **we can walk WITH humanity, live the empathy we preach, and determine the pathways towards genuine co-existence.**

The incorporation of notions of cultural diversity, multiple identities, as well as a broader understanding of what constitutes "knowledge" for global development,

sustainable human development, and the strengthening of a human rights culture **are invaluable for fostering co-existence in a world in need of healing.**

Lifelong learning of the future, and lifelong learning for all, must embrace humanity **where they are**, and build upon **what they have**, **not reinforce the deficit and toxic formula that has been endemic to our practice for so long.**

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