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Decolonising Curriculum in an African university: The Case study of Development Studies at the University of South Africa.

A Research Report submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master of Education (M.Ed) Degree

January 2019

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Statement

I declare that *Decolonising Curriculum in an African university: The case study of Development Studies at the University of South Africa* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

…….

Morgan Ndlovu

Date: 25 January 2019

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents,

Mr and Mrs Simenyeziwe kwa Mehlo kaZulu Jeremiah Ndlovu,

and to my daughters,

Busisiwe and Nonkululeko Ntombifuthi Ndlovu

Acknowledgements

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Dr Alfred Masinire for his excellent and consistent support and guidance during the writing of this dissertation. I would like to thank the Wits School of Education and its members of staff for their academic and moral support. I am very thankful and grateful for the financial support that I received from the University of South Africa. The Department of Development Studies of the University of South Africa deserves many thanks for granting me the opportunity to pursue this study especially the members of staff and student community who gave their time to express their views during the writing of this dissertation. I am also indebted to various members of my family, particularly my mother Elinor Ndlovu, my brothers, Professor Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Mr Mandlenkosi, my sisters Dr Sibonokuhle and Dr Sifiso Ndlovu for their moral and academic support in times of need. To my daughters, Busisiwe Ndlovu and Nonkululeko Ntombifuthi Ndlovu, I say thank you so much for understanding the nature my work.

Finally, to God be the Glory!

Abstract

This research project is an examination of the meanings of decolonising curricula within an African university using the case study of Development Studies curriculum at the University of South Africa (UNISA). Thus, I deployed the theory of Decoloniality to examine whether the meanings of decolonising curricula at UNISA's Department of Development Studies transcend or reproduce coloniality—a power structure with multiple forms of colonialism that affect the meaning of development within the Development Studies curriculum. Through empirical study, I established that there is no singular and homogenous meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum within the Department of Development Studies of UNISA due to differences in the social and epistemic backgrounds of the department's academic staff and student body. Thus, for instance, there were academic members of staff and students who viewed the current Development Studies curriculum as colonial and not serving the development aspirations, interests and agendas of the marginalised members of the society and those who viewed it as just and uncontaminated by coloniality. In this way, this research project concluded that the meanings of decolonising curriculum at UNISA's Department of Development Studies are bifurcated between those that synchronically reproduce coloniality in the curriculum thereby enabling continuity instead of change and those that have a potential to cause a diachronic effect to the existing status quo. This creates a stasis in the search for a decolonised Development Studies hence this research project recommends a more radical approach to resolving the question of curriculum decolonization at UNISA in particular and the modern university institution in general. This radical approach entails a 'reptilian' epistemic violence against the forces of coloniality—a Fanonian form of temporary violence solely

aimed at tilting the status quo of coloniality as opposed to a permanent form of epistemic violence that reproduces the same power structure of coloniality.

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Chapter One:

Introduction

1.0. Outline

The idea of decolonising university curricula is currently one of the most popular subjects within the university institution in South Africa. Thus, in spite of the long history of the struggle to decolonise curriculum among the universities and schools in the non-Western world, the challenge of coloniality in university curricula came into spotlight during the 2015 Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) and the Fees Must Fall (FMF) student protests in South Africa. The calls for decolonization of the university institution and the education that it offers via its curricula was also made clear in university institution of the global North. Thus, for instance, the Oxford-based Rhodes Must Fall movement demanded a decolonised university curriculum on the 18th of June 2015 thereby making the call for a decolonised curriculum a global phenomenon.

While the idea of decolonising the university curriculum has indeed become one of the most popular subjects among students and scholars within the university institution in South Africa, there is no consensus as to what exactly does the process of decolonising a university curriculum entails. Thus, the question of the meaning of decolonising the curriculum is not only a bone of contention among scholars but has also pitted those scholars who view decolonisation of university curricula as both urgent and realistic against those scholars who dismiss the whole idea of decolonisation as ill-conceived. In this chapter, I present the problem statement of

the thesis, the objective of the study, the rationale for undertaking the study and the research methodology that underpinned the successful completion of the study.

1.1. The background statement

As already stated above, the question of decolonising curricula within the 'Westernised university[1]' institution (Grosfoguel 2013) among the peoples of the non-Western world is currently one of the most popular subjects among students and academics but in spite its popularity, there is not yet a consensus as to what exactly does the decolonisation of the university curriculum mean. Thus, in general, the absence of a clear definition as to what does the decolonisation of the university curriculum mean is quite problematic in that this lack of a clear meaning can justify the continuity of the status quo of coloniality. As it will be seen later in this thesis, the absence of a clear definition of the meaning of decolonising university curriculum rendered it to become an 'empty signifier'—a development that is serving to sustain the status quo instead of leading to the emergence of decolonised university curriculum.

In general, the discourse of decolonising curriculum within the Westernised university institution in spatio-temporalities such as Africa, Asia and Latin America emerged out of a concern about the role of curriculum in perpetuating colonial forms of domination even though juridical-administrative colonialism is no longer in place (Grofoguel 2013; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; 2015). This, therefore, means that the call for decolonisation of curricula within Westernised university institution among the people of the non-Western world is part and parcel of the broader struggle for the decolonisation of the university institution as a whole. Thus, as le Grange (2016:1)

[1] The idea of a 'Westernized university' is premised on the notion that the epistemic foundation on which the university institution in the non-Western world is located is a Western one. Thus, though the university institution can be physically found in Africa, Asia and Latin America, its epistemic location and theoretical foundation is Western in that it depends primarily on Western theories and canons of thought.

has argued, it was the renewed interest in the decolonisation of the university in South Africa that brought about a renewed interest in decolonising the university curriculum. In other words, the call for decolonisation of the university curriculum is just but a means by which a decolonised university institution can become possible.

As it will be explained later in the thesis, the interest in the decolonisation of university curriculum is rooted in the realization that the Westernized university institution among the peoples of the non-Western world uses curriculum as its ideological apparatus for sustaining global coloniality; a power structure that serves the interests of those on the 'brighter side of Western modernity' at the expense of those on the 'darker side', also called coloniality.. Thus, it was this idea that the university curriculum is biased towards serving the interests of those on the dominant side of 'colonial power difference' (Mignolo 2005) than those on the dominated side that propelled student movements such as #RhodeMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements in South Africa to make demands for decolonisation of the university curriculum.

While, indeed, the demand for the decolonisation of curriculum within the university institution among the peoples of non-Western world such as those in Africa is a noble one, the question that needs urgent attention is the question of: what, fundamentally, does the process of decolonising the curriculum entail? As already stated, this question is of great significance mainly because the quest for a decolonised university cannot be realised without coherence on the meaning of decolonising curriculum.

In general, what is of crucial significance in the call for decolonisation of the university curriculum, like that of any other call for decolonisation, is that its

meaning is bound to vary across people, place and time. This is a development that makes it important to specify the meaning of decolonising university curriculum based on understanding the specific context under which the call is made by a particular social group at specific time and place. In this thesis, the meaning of decolonising university curriculum is examined with due recognition that the participants involve are differential located within the power structure that regulated the colonial difference of power. Thus, though I have considered a multiplicity of diverse voices on the question of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA, I deliberately privileged of the voices of the participant on the dominated side of the colonial power difference in South Africa; a people whose experience of the modern university institution can be characterised in terms of exclusion and subordination.

Though the idea of decolonising curricula has been raised in a number of universities in Africa, the calls for decolonising curriculum has recently been vocal in South Africa. This makes the South African call for decolonising university curricula the most prominent voice in Africa. As a 'late de-coloniser' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009) that achieved democracy in 1994, South Africa is a spatio-historical temporality whose national identity formation remains directly reflecting the global 'colonial power matrix' (Quijano 2000)—a power matrix that divides the world's population according to those who exist on the brighter side of modernity/coloniality and those on the darker side. In South Africa, the white population is widely seen as existing on the brighter side of the modernity/coloniality power structure and the black community as predominantly located on the darker side of the power structure. Thus, as it is explained later in the thesis, the majority of the students who protested against coloniality within the university institution of South Africa are students from black communities that continue to experience different forms of colonial subordination

including the exclusion of their knowledges and ways of knowing in many of the South African universities.

Among a number of universities in South Africa that have faced the demand for the decolonisation of the curriculum is the University of South Africa (UNISA) in Pretoria. UNISA, like many other universities in South Africa such as the Universities of Cape Town (UCT), Witwatersrand (Wits), Free State (UFS), KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and Johannesburg (UJ), among others, faced violent student protests which, among other issues, were mobilised around the theme of decolonisation of the curriculum. At UNISA, the student protests were likely to have been inspired by organisations such as the Africa Decolonial Research Network (ADERN) whose mission is to decolonise knowledge, power and being within the South African university system as well as in other spaces where the power structure of coloniality remains sustaining multiple forms of colonialisms beyond the demise of a visible juridical-administrative colonialism.

One of the interesting curricula that is currently undergoing decolonisation at UNISA is the Development Studies curriculum. This is not only because the discourse of 'development' has often been criticised for being a new version of the 'civilization mission' (Biccum 2005; Corbridge 2007) but also because the discipline of Development Studies is widely seen as prone to orientalist and universalising tendencies of Western domination in knowledge production. This therefore means that the idea of decolonising a curriculum such as that of the discipline of Development Studies at UNISA cannot be understood outside the question of colonial domination in articulating the meaning of development itself. Thus, as the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA is currently undergoing decolonisation the question that has become problematic is the question of whose values and interests are privileged to inform a 'decolonised' Development Studies curriculum?

This question is even more problematic when taking into consideration that what tends to be re-contextualised into the curriculum are the quotidian experiences of specific members of the society—experiences that Bernstein (1991) viewed as enabling powerful groups with the society to exert their influence on the content of the curriculum. This is a development that makes some critics of the curriculum to argue that it is just but a means of reproducing power and inequalities within a society. Thus, despite the fact that Bernstein (1991) was pre-occupied by the question of reproduction of class inequalities, his analysis of the role of curriculum in reproducing power within the context of class is applicable to the context of the reproduction of colonial power differentials among subjects who exist within a colonial context including the context of coloniality that survived the demise of classical colonialism.

Though apartheid formally came to an end in 1994, the post-apartheid dispensation has so far failed to transcend the vertical power relations in the social, political, economic, cultural and epistemic spheres of life among the peoples that make up the present South African population. This vertical power structure led even the former president, Thabo Mbeki in 1998 to argue that South Africa consist of 'two nations' in one country (Nattrass & Seekings 2001)—a comment that is still valid up to the present. This leaves one with the questions: From which position of power structure within the colonial power structure of inequality in the post-apartheid South Africa is the decolonisation of the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA thought and conceptualised? Is it from the social and epistemic position of the marginalised communities who endure the consequences of existing on the dominated side of the scheme of the colonial power differential or is it from the epistemic position of the subjects who happen to exist on the dominant side of the South African colonial power differential? Such questions, though important, cannot be answered outside

the premise that curriculum by its very nature is not a neutral endeavour but a product of dynamic processes such as domination, subordination, resistance, transformation, negotiation, conflict, dialogue as well as continuity and change; all which makes curriculum construction a complex project within an environment of unequal power relations.

In this thesis, the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA is deliberately examined from a decolonial epistemic standpoint. This decolonial epistemic standpoint is an anti-Cartesian position that judges the depth of any decolonial project using the criteria of how serious does it take the experiences of racialized, gendered and sexualised bodies, to name but a few of the categories of marginalisation. Thus, the decolonial epistemic standpoint has the capability of making sense of the seemingly senseless calls for decolonisation of the curriculum within a context such as post-apartheid South Africa where an uncritical observer can easily dismiss the idea of decolonization as absurd in the absence of an easily discernible or noticeable juridical-administrative apartheid colonialism.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to examine the meaning of decolonising the curriculum at an African university using the case study of Development Studies at UNISA. The discourse of decolonising curriculum is currently popular among students and academics within the university institution in South Africa but in spite of its popularity, there is not yet a consensus as to what does the decolonisation of university curriculum mean. In this study, I therefore, sought to examine the meanings of decolonising university using the case study of the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA. This was an important exercise because different

interpretations of the meaning of decolonising curriculum have different implications for the project decolonising curriculum within universities.

The case study of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at the University of South Africa (UNISA) was found to be an ideal case study not only because UNISA was one of the institutions that was affected by student protests but also because the UNISA's Department of Development Studies has already started with the process of decolonising its curriculum.

The proposed study was accomplished through posing and seeking answers to the following questions:

(a) Whose voice, worldview and historical experience does the decolonisation of the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA privilege?
(b) Who participate in the decolonisation process of the Development Studies at UNISA and why?
(c) To what extent did the decolonised curriculum transform the pre-existing meaning of 'development' within the discipline of Development Studies?

The answers to the above question were used to judge whether the meaning of decolonisation of curriculum in the decolonisation process of Development Studies curriculum at UNISA produces diachronic or synchronic effect to the pre-existing colonised curriculum.

1.3. Motivation of the Study

This study was motivated by the quest to contribute to the production of knowledge on the subject of decolonising curriculum within the university institution in South Africa. Thus, despite the fact that the university institution has heeded the call for decolonization of the curricula throughout the country, there is not yet adequate

academic resources on what does it mean to decolonise curriculum. Therefore, this study is not only a timely contribution because the idea of decolonising curriculum within the university institution in South Africa is fairly new leading to the scarcity of academic resources on the subject but also provides a practical solution to the question of decolonising university curricula. Thus, it outlines key steps that can be followed in order to achieve a decolonised curricula at a time where the call for decolonising university is confronted with the crisis of stasis.

Chapter Two:

The Theoretical Framework

2.0. Outline

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter is informed by the theory of decoloniality. In the chapter I explain what is decoloniality, why is it relevant in this study and how was it useful for achieving the objectives of the study. In other words, the chapter is an application of the theory of decoloniality in the study of the meaning of decolonizing university curricula with specific reference to decolonization of Development Studies at UNISA.

2.1. Making Sense of the Theory of Decoloniality

By and large, Decoloniality was found useful in examining the meaning of decolonising curriculum within the Department of Development Studies of UNISA. By Decoloniality I mean the thinking and the energy among the oppressed peoples of the modern/colonial world 'that does not allow the operation of the logic of coloniality nor believes the fairy tales of the rhetoric of modernity' (Mignolo 2011: 46). This definition of what Decoloniality or decolonisation entails was found useful for understanding the meaning decolonising curriculum within the context of Development Studies at UNISA because it enabled me to make a difference between 'authentic' decolonisation and 'superficial' decolonisation.

The concept of decoloniality is a critique of the modernity/coloniality mainly because coloniality cannot be thought of as separate from its opposite—'modernity'.

Thus, since decolonial thinking and energy is a product of the logic of coloniality that, in the eyes of those who oppose it merely masquerades as modernity, it is possible to define decoloniality by explaining its opposite, which is 'modernity'. The term 'modernity/coloniality' was, therefore, deliberately constructed by decolonial scholars such as Grosfoguel (2007) and Mignolo (2007) to denote that the colonial project that decoloniality seeks to deconstruct and dismantle is double-sided. It is double-sided precisely because it divides human population in terms of its beneficiaries who are enchanted with it as representing the state of being modern and its victims who are disenchanted with it thereby conceiving of it as representing various form of colonialism or coloniality. In other words, coloniality and modernity in the modernity/coloniality project are constitutive of one another and entangled in such a way that one cannot conceive of one aspect of the project without thinking of the other.

In the context of examining the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA, the concept of decoloniality as a thought and energy of people disenchanted with the project of modernity/coloniality was found useful because it provoked me to think about which side of the modernity/coloniality project does the decolonisation of curriculum get articulated? Such a question was important because the project of modernity/coloniality tends to divide the world's population not only in terms of social experiences but also in terms of epistemic locations and worldviews. In this way, the episteme location of the subject that partake in the decolonisation of curriculum mattered since the relationship between modernity and coloniality also means that the Development Studies cannot be without interested subjects who will benefit in either change or continuity in the status quo.

2.2. The Genealogy and Phenomenology of the Modernity/Coloniality Project

By and large, the meaning of decoloniality can also be revealed by explicating both the genealogy and phenomenology of the modernity/coloniality project. This is important because a combination of genealogical and phenomenological approaches to the meaning of decoloniality address the reductionisms of either naked historicism or ahistorical presentism. Thus, for instance, the genealogical approach to the concept of decoloniality exposes the historicity of the modernity/coloniality project in ways that reveals its hypocrisy when pretending that its unequal vertical articulation of power between human beings is pre-given than historical. The phenomenological approach on the other hand reveals that though the power structure of the modernity/coloniality is historically-rooted, its consequences are an enduring presence than a past hence one is justified to speak of meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA even in this moment where juridical-administrative colonialism and apartheid is no longer in place.

Genealogically, the modernity/coloniality project is traceable to what Grosfoguel (2013) characterised as 'the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century' when referring to the genocide of the people that was accompanied by the destructions of their knowledges. This is an important glimmer of why an understanding of the history of the modernity/coloniality project was found relevant to understanding the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA simply because this was a foundational moment where knowledge became subject to colonisation. Thus, one could not have comprehended the meaning of decolonising curriculum without first having the knowledge of how knowledge became a subject of colonization and colonial domination.

In general, the identity category of the people whose bodies were subjected to genocidal killings and knowledges to epistemicidal decimation such as black people and women during the long *duree* of the genocides/epistemicides of the 16th century

are today the same category of people whose being and knowledges are either inferiorised, exterminated, peripherised and/or their validity subjected to radical doubt. In other words, the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century explain the birth of epistemic racism/sexism where people of particular race, gender and sexual-orientation dominate the production of knowledge in the present while the rest are passive consumers of that knowledge. Within the context of South Africa, the history of genocide/epistemicide can be trace to the arrival of the Dutch East India Company at what became the Cape Colony and then unfolding through the colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid era. The quest to decolonise a curriculum such as that of Development Studies at UNISA must, therefore, be motivated by the desire to witness different knowledges by different people who make up the present world's population contributing to the content of the curriculum. This will in turn bring about a cognitive justice as diversified forms of knowledge about what 'development' mean will inform the content of the curriculum as opposed to a singular perspective by male subject of particular racial category being imposed on all other perspectives.

The genocides/epistemicides of the 16th century encompass the colonial conquest of the Andalusian territory and finally, the Muslim sultanate of Granada in southern Spain by the Catholic Monarchy from the north, the conquest of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, the genocide/epistemicide against women in Europe and the enslavement of Africans for cheap labour in America. The colonial conquest of Al-Andalus in the late 15th century is quite important to understand not only because it preceded all other genocides/epistemicides that laid the foundation of the modern world system through activities that took place within Europe but also because the conquest took place under the slogan of 'purity of blood' (Grosfoguel 2013)—a development that marked the beginning of racism as culture that would affect human relations throughout the history of Western-centred modernity. Thus, the war which

was waged by the Catholic Monarchy in Spain to destroy the sultanate of Granada which remained as the last Muslim political authority in the Iberian Peninsula can be understood as the foundation to the practice of ethnic cleansing through physical and cultural genocide since the Jews and Muslims that occupied the Andalusian territory were either killed or forcefully converted to a Christian religion. The cultural conversion, according to Grosfoguel (2013: 78) took the form of 'massive destruction of Islamic and Judaic spirituality and knowledge' through 'turning Muslims into Moriscos (converted Muslims) and Jews into Marranos (Converted Jews)'. What, therefore, is important to note with the genocides/epistemicides of the 16th century within Europe is that coloniality was founded on the premise of not only 'othering' and conquering people but also their knowledges. The above articulation of the history of how knowledge was colonized became important for understanding the meaning of decolonization of curriculum during this research project mainly because it led me to ask the question of whose knowledge is privileged by the current curriculum.

By and large, the methods of colonization and domination that were used during the conquest of Al-Andalus in Southern Spain are important to note because these methods were extrapolated to achieve the conquest of the Americas and enslavement of Africans. Thus, for instance, in both the conquest of Al-Alandus and the Americas, genocide of the people went together with epistemicides that included not only the process of conversion to Christian religion but also the burning of libraries as well as the erasure of memory and knowledge (Grosfoguel 2013). However, even though there are similarities in the methods of colonization that were deployed to conquer Al-Andalus and the Americas, Grosfoguel (2013: 81) further notes that another dimension to the discourse of 'people without religion' was added not within the context of having a 'wrong god' or a 'wrong religion' but within the context of

lacking humanity since not having a religion in the Christian imaginary of the time was equivalent to not having a soul. This is an important foundation to note because the denial of other perspectives by the Western canon is based on doubting the very humanity of the subjects whose knowledges are denied. In a situation where the humanity of people is denied at epistemic level, one would therefore expect the process of decolonization to affirm the humanity of the dehumanized subjects.

Indeed, the fourth genodice/epistemicide that laid the foundation of the modern/colonial world system is the conquest of Indo-European women. Though not related to the history of the three genocides/epistemicides, the conquest of Indo-European women in the 16th century contributed to the emergence and development of a Christian patriarchy as part of the global power structure of the modern/colonial world-system. Thus, the attack against women who were burnt alive between 1550 and 1650 (Federici 2004) was undertaken not only to destroy the indigenous knowledges that they have mastered from ancient times but also to consolidate a Christian-centric patriarchal system. In general, the consequences of all the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century gave birth to what Grosfoguel (2007) in his description of the modern world system characterized as an 'entanglement' of multiple and heterogeneous global hierarchies of sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploitation where the racial/ethnic hierarchy of the European/non-European divide transversally reconfigures all of the global power structures. This structure of the modern world system that emerged out of the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century is important to understand because it means that the problem with the modernity/coloniality project is actually a problem of fundamentalism of European civilization that imposes itself on other civilization as though it is the only one with a right to exist. Thus, the tale of the modernity/coloniality project is a tale

of how the indigenous peoples of the non-Western world, women, queer people, black subjects and their knowledges came to be the 'colonial subaltern' as a result of Europe's usurpation of world history. In this way, a decolonized curriculum must be expected to address the worldviews of all the subalternised subjects whose positionalities were constructed by the power structure of coloniality. You may bring down my above comment here….

2.3. Is coloniality the same as colonialism?

While it is now clear that the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century culminated in the formation of a racist/sexist/patriarchal/capitalist/Christian-centric modern/colonial world system characterised by 'multiple and heterogenous global hierarchies (heterarchies) of sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploitation (Grosfoguel 2007: 217), the question that remains unanswered is that of why then is the discourse of decolonisation still relevant within a world order dubbed 'postcolonial'. The answer is that we now live in a world that Spivak (1990:166) rightly described as 'post-colonial neo-colonized world'. This is a world that for those who exist on the 'darker side of Western modernity' (Mignolo 2011) represents coloniality—a power structure of multiple form of colonialisms that survive the demise of 'classical colonialism'. Thus, in his description of how coloniality survives colonialism, Grosfoguel (2007: 217) argues that:

> One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world. This led to the myth of a 'postcolonial' world. The heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450years did not evaporate with the juridical-political decolonization of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same 'colonial power matrix'.

This clearly shows that while 'classical colonialism' in the form of white settler governments in the non-Western world have now collapsed, colonial conditions and

power relations still remain in place through instruments such as knowledge, curriculum and pedagogy.

The idea that coloniality survives classical colonialism is further supported by the decolonial philosopher, Nelson Maldonado-Torress. Thus, according to Maldonado-Torres (2007: 243):

> Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to a long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day.

What Maldonado-Torres meant in his analysis of coloniality is that it is an invisible power structure whose effect and presence is 'epochal' than just 'episodic' hence it lives longer that formal colonialism. In this research project the meanings of decolonizing curriculum were evaluated using the criteria of transcending coloniality that is embedded within the content of the curriculum.

The epic school about colonialism in Africa underscored that it amounted to 'a revolution of epic propositions' because 'What Africa knows about itself, what different parts of Africa know about each other, have been profoundly influenced by the West' (Mazrui 1986: 12—13). This long-term endurance of coloniality instead of a single event that was called 'colonialism' led scholars such as Cesaire (2000: 32) to ask the question: 'what, *fundamentally*, is colonialism?' This question is quite significant to any agent of change that seeks to escape the entrapment of colonial structures because it questions the meaning of colonialism beyond the simplistic vision of a juridical-administrative colonialism. In other words, Cesaire (2000)

sought to understand colonialism through the epistemic lens of the epic school—a lens that visualizes a global power structure of 'multiple colonialisms' that are disruptive, 'de-civilising,' de-humanising, exploitative, racist, violent, brutal, covetous, and 'thingfying'. Thus, as multifaceted power structure, coloniality must be understood as a project that affects various aspects of lives of colonized subjects including their ways of knowing, seeing and imagining the world. This holistic approach to the problem of colonial domination allows us to visualise other dynamics of the colonial process which include among them 'colonization of imagination' (Quijano, 2007:168-178), 'colonization of the mind' (Dascal, 2009:308) and colonisation of knowledge and power.

The idea of the colonisation of power and knowledge is quite crucial in that it explicates why, despite the advent of post-apartheid South Africa, knowledge production in subjects such as history and development studies, among others, the views and voices of the formerly colonised peoples are marginalised in historical narratives. The concept of coloniality of power enables us to understand coloniality in ways that go beyond the Foucauldian concept of 'disciplinary power' because through the idea of the colonial matrix of power, the concept of coloniality of power views the modern world as a network of relations of exploitation and domination through technologies that affects all dimensions of social existence including knowledge production. According to Castro-Gomez (2002:276):

> The concept of the 'coloniality of power' broadens and corrects the Foucauldian concept of 'disciplinary power' by demonstrating that the panoptic constructions erected by the modern state are inscribed in a wider structure of power/knowledge. This global structure is configured by the colonial relation between centre and periphery that is at the root of European expansion.

The significance of the concept of coloniality of power, therefore, is that it enables the peoples of the Third World to understand the relationship between the power

structure of colonial domination and knowledge production. Thus, the concept of coloniality of power is inseparably intertwined with that of knowledge which speaks directly to epistemological colonisation of the non-Western peoples through the processes of displacement, discipline and destruction of their knowledges.

In the case of South Africa, where the former colonisers and the formerly colonised have resolved to reconcile and live together after the demise of juridical administrative apartheid, the question that emerges out of understanding how coloniality permeates knowledge production is that of whether this peaceful co-existence in the day-to-day relationships is extended to peaceful co-existence of 'ecologies of knowledges' about development in the field of knowledge production. This question is quite significant because epistemic inequalities in knowledge production sustain social inequalities in the quotidian experiences of the people. In this research project the meaning of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum was examined according to the extent to which the decolonized modules promoted the co-existence of different knowledges.

2.4. Decoloniality as an Anti-Cartesian Meditation

Decoloniality can also be conceived of as a form of anti-Cartesian mediations by theorists from the non-Western world. Thus, the question of the ontological dualism between the mind and the body that came with the Cartesian philosophy of Rene Descartes in the 17th century has been a subject of contestation among philosophers and psychologists with interest in knowledge production at large and theories of curriculum in particular. In general, the challenges brought about by the Cartesian dualism of the mind and the body to the curriculum discourse cannot be fully understood without examining what Rene Descartes expressed in his second meditation:

> At last I have discovered it—thought; this alone is inseparable from me. I am, I exist—that is certain. But for how long? For as long as I am thinking. For it could be that were I totally cease from thinking, I should totally cease to exist. At present I am not admitting anything except what is necessarily true. I am, then, in the strict sense, only a thing that thinks; that is, I am a mind, or intelligence or intellect, or reason—words whose meaning I have been ignorant of until now. But for all that I am a thing which is real and which truly exists. But what kind of thing? As I have just said—a thinking thing (Descartes 1986: 18)

The above statement by Descartes who is considered to be the father of Western philosophy captures in detail what is generally referred to as the 'cogito ego sum' or 'I think therefore I am', a philosophical notion that is widely thought to have inaugurated 'a new era of epistemological thinking, wherein everything is thought to be determined or made intelligible by the workings of the mind' (Burns 1982: 63). This, however, does not mean that what Descartes expressed have merely been accepted as the only basis on which we can understand the nature of a human being as a living organism but his statement that conflated being and the working of some kind of an essential object that he referred to as the 'mind' has been challenged particularly by those philosophers and psychologists who view bodily experiences as constitutive of what makes up a human being.

Perhaps, the most important question that needs to be answered is what exactly, did Rene Descartes, mean by his Cartesian philosophy of 'I think therefore I am'. There are, indeed, many interpretations of the statement but the common one is that Descartes was exercising a Cartesian quest for a secular foundationalism, self-consciousness and truth where he concluded that the mind is far more reliable when it comes to the question establishing 'trustworthy foundations' and 'states of conviction' (Philips 1995). This development reduced the significance of the body and its experiences in matters of thought, knowledge and truth mainly because the 'mind object' became what Philips (1995: 230) described as a 'perverse theorist of the body'. Thus, by reducing the body to a 'quantity' than a 'substantiality of the

'soul' (*res cogitans*) (Dussel 2008), which to him was the same as the mind, Descartes established the bodily experiences of the material world, its sensations and sense perceptions as the enemies of the truth. The implication of such a conception of the 'body mind compound' became problematic to a number of scholars such as Dussel (2008) and Grosfoguel (2013) who view such a thinking as having inaugurated a situation where it became possible to develop universal social scientific theories that are insensitive to varying socio-historical circumstances that determine human behaviour and thought across time and space. This has led to different forms of 'anti-Cartesian mediations' whose objective have been to challenge the 'epistemic solipsism' that was enabled by the Cartesian dualism of the *ego cogito* which privileged the mind over the bodily experiences of the material world—experiences that were to lead to genuine intercultural dialogue during the development of social scientific theories had it been that both the body and the mind were equally privileged as the foundations of knowledge and truth.

Among a number of earliest theorists in Europe who have challenged Descartes's rejection of 'senses' as forming a reliable basis for knowledge were the English philosopher, John Locke (1632—1704), the Scottish philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776) and the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724—1804). Thus, in contrast to Descartes's innate and rational mind, the empiricism of philosophers such as Locke and Hume stressed that experience plays a primary role 'in all human understanding and knowledge' (Sedgwick 2001: 12). Thus, for instance, in his essay entitled: *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Locke argued that all our ideas are derived ultimately from our experiences which means that ideas are a result of the qualities of our bodies as they sense the world within which we exist. That Locke was an empiricist can be seen in his metaphor when he compared a human mind to an 'empty Cabinet' when stressing that human beings are not born

with any ideas or knowledge already present within their minds. Thus, to him ideas originate from the senses or bodily experiences of conscious beings.

The Lockean approach to the question of the body and the mind was followed by Hume in his thesis on how 'impressions' give rise to 'ideas', Thus, according to Sedgwick (2001: 17), Hume argued that: 'All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS'. By impressions, Hume meant perceptions that are a direct consequence of sense experience while ideas are 'the faint images of these [impressions and perceptions] in thinking and reasoning'. What this means is that Hume, unlike Descartes, developed a causal hypothesis where experience precedes our thinking or reasoning. In general, though the empiricism of Locke and Hume was affirmed by Kant when he argued that, 'There can be no doubt that all out knowledge begins with experience…' it can be noted that Kant did not take the primacy of experience for granted as evident in his articulation that 'though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience' (Sedgwick 2001: 27). Thus, in contrast to Locke and Hume, Kant divided knowledge into a *posteriori* judgement that is based on our empirical experiences and a *priori* judgement that is independent of any experience. In other words, the Kantian approach to the question of the body and the mind sought to depart from the Lockean notion of human beings as empty cabinets that are mere passive recipients of sense impressions of the world to reconstitute the objectivity and universality of knowledge that is enabled by a '*pure intuition'* of the human mind. In general, the above anti-Cartesian meditations by Locke, Hume and Kant are a clear indication that Cartesianism has not been only a challenge to the theorists of the non-Western world but also to those of the West. This, however, does not mean that these two categories of theorists engaged the subject of Cartesian thinking in similar terms but as it will explained below, the anti-

Cartesian meditations of the non-Western theorists have tended to focus on the role of Cartesian thinking in sustaining and perpetuating colonial power relations.

In general, while the anti-Cartesian mediations ensured both in the West by thinkers such as Locke, Hume, Kant and Merleau-Ponty where Rene Descartes was considered to be the father of Western philosophy and in the non-Western world by scholars such as Frantz Fanon (1967), what is interesting about the anti-Cartesian meditations by theorists from the non-Western world is that apart from viewing Cartesianism as distorting what it means to be a human being, they also view the problem of ontological dualism between the body and the mind in terms of enabling the perpetuation of colonial domination of the peoples of the non-Western world and their knowledges. This position is not without context that justifies it but as already indicated in the section of the genealogy and phenomenology of modernity/coloniality, this context is justifiable historically, in terms of the genealogy of colonial domination and phenomenologically, in terms of what is being experienced in the present.

Historically, the colonial domination of the people of the non-Western subject was based on denialism of the humanity of the non-Western 'other' thereby making it possible to oppress and exploit them with clear conscience. Thus, for instance, when Christopher Columbus stepped out of the ship in the Americas in October 1492—the foundational year in the history of colonial domination of the peoples on non-Western world—he expressed radical doubt on the humanity of the indigenous peoples of the 'New World' by questioning whether these people have souls (Grosfoguel 2013). This foundational question inaugurated a discourse of a 'people without a souls—a question that has ever since the 16th century justified the dehumanizing processes such as enslavement and colonial domination since in the Christian imaginary of the Western subject it became not a sin to exercise dominion

and exploitation over non-beings who are animals. Since the idea of a 'soul' in the Cartesian philosophy of Rene Descartes is the same the 'mind', 'a people without a soul' are a people without a rational mind and, therefore, who cannot think. This foundational history to the exclusion of the indigenous peoples of the non-Western world from the human family is important to our understanding Decoloniality as a form of anti-Cartesian meditation by a non-Western subject simply because when Descartes proclaimed the *cogito ego sum* in the 17th century, the colonized peoples of the non-Western world were already no longer part of his definition of a human being since the question of their humanity was long been settled as non-existent in the 16th century. What this, therefore, means is that the anti-Cartesian meditation of the non-Western subject can be understood within the context of seeking to gain the lost humanity by a people who were pushed out of the realm of the human at the very dawn of the re-definition of what it means to be a human being by the Western subject who have positioned himself as an 'imperial being' over those he denied the same humanity. In the context of examining the meaning of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum, I deployed the anti-Cartesian standpoint to question whether the new curriculum re-humanizes the dehumanized subjects by taking serious their knowledges.

The declaration of the non-Western subjects as lacking 'the substantiality of the soul', therefore, as mere 'quantity' that cannot produce reliable knowledge or knowledge worth of universality and objectivity equal to that of the imperial being have solicited different response of anti-Cartesian nature among the peoples of the non-Western world and those who speak from their subject position. Thus, one of the most important anti-Cartesian mediation of the non-Western subject whose knowledge and thinking has been de-legitimized by the Cartesian philosophy is the quest to legitimize the body as the site of authentic thinking thereby turning

Descartes on his head. This anti-Cartesian strategy is evident in Fanon's (1952) expression: 'Oh, my body makes me always someone who questions'—a expression that can be interpreted in terms of seeking to privilege the racialized body as the source of consciousness and knowledge within the environment of racial and colonial domination. There are, indeed, a number of advantages of privileging the bodily experience as an authentic root of thinking among the colonized peoples of the non-Western world. One of them is that by privileging 'experience' as the primary source of reliable knowledge, the Western domination in knowledge production can be reversed since it will not be justifiable for those whose thoughts are produced by a particular experience to universalize them on other socio-historical experiences. Thus, as the imperial subject invented a floating mind to project the false notions of objectivity and universal truths that justified colonial domination in knowledge production, the colonially oppressed and dominated non-Western subject can provincialize the false universalism of Western thought by privileging the subjective experiences of human beings in matters of thought. In the context of examining the meaning of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA, the question that became important was that of how did the constructors of the new curriculum deal with the notions of universality, objective and unmediated conception of truth that were produced by the Cartesian philosophy to sustain colonial domination in knowledge production.

Chapter Three:

Literature Review

3.0. Outline

The question of decolonising university curricula after the demise of juridical-administrative colonialism is a long-standing one but, in spite of its long history, this question has so far remained a subject of fierce contestations. In this chapter, I sought to map-out the history of the discourse and/or practice of decolonising university curricula, that of decolonising the discipline of Development Studies in general and the decolonisation of Development Studies with specific reference to South Africa and UNISA. This is important to articulate simply because the discourses of decolonization university curricula and/or that of the discipline of Development Studies are not new but has been taking place for quite a considerable period.

3.1. The Idea of Curriculum and the Quest for its Decolonization

The discourse of decolonising university curricula cannot be understood without first examining the meaning of curriculum. Thus, there are, indeed, a number of scholarly articulations about the meaning of curriculum but one of the most important definitions of curriculum is that by Bernstein (1975:85) which states that a curriculum is 'what counts as valid knowledge'. This definition of curriculum is quite important to a study as this one which seeks to examining the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA mainly because it leads us to the question of whose knowledge counts as valid in the curriculum and whose knowledge is excluded.

The history of curriculum studies can be traced to scholars such as Bobbitt (1918) who considered curriculum as 'science' that involves determining aims, objectives,

the needs of students and their learning experiences. This definition of curriculum later influenced scholars such as Tyler (1949) who produced what is popularly known as Tyler's rationale, which he articulated through his book: *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction.* Thus, according Tyler's rationale the following questions are crucial to the curriculum development: (1) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? (2) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? (3) How can these educational experiences be effectively organised? (4) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? The above technicist approaches to the meaning of curriculum were repeated and refined by other scholars such as Taba (1962) who wrote a book: *Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice* but the major problem with this modernist-scientific approach is that they treat students and communities as though they are homogenous. Thus, such theories about curriculum were developed without thinking about colonial societies where the priorities and aspirations of the colonisers do not correspond with those that they have colonised.

Within the present colonial system of education, which has prompted student protests in South Africa, it is now common knowledge that the knowledges of the oppressed subjects such as those of the colonised indigenous peoples of the non-Western world, women and queer subjects are either excluded or subaltenized by the official colonial that privileges the worldviews of the coloniser. Thus, for instance, Johnson (2002) wrote on the need for the decolonisation of history curriculum in the Anglophone Caribbean simply because the settler colonial syllabi of that part of the world did not consider the local experiences of the indigenous people of the Caribbean as worth of any historical value in its educational system. In other words, the question of whose knowledge is regarded as valid knowledge is central in

characterising curriculum as either colonial or decolonised simply because the colonisers have always used curriculum as an instrument of colonial domination.

A number of critical scholars have approached the idea of a curriculum through the lenses of social and cognitive justice. This approach to the subject of curriculum has less interest in what curriculum is than what curriculum does especially with regard to the question of production and reproduction inequalities among human beings. Thus, like Bernstein's (1975:85) definition of curriculum in terms of 'what counts as valid knowledge', some of the critical curriculum scholars such as Thaman (1993: 250) have conceptualised curriculum in terms of transmission of what is selected from culture—a selection that often reflects the experiences and ideologies of those involved in the selection process. It is such instrumentalist articulations of curriculum that produce and reproduce inequalities within societies mainly because curriculum become a power retention instrument of the powerful while the views, experiences and perspectives of the powerless remain subordinated. This, however, does not mean that curriculum has not been a site of contestation but as has been with the case of South African universities, the colonial curriculum has been a subject of fierce contestation between bearers of dominant knowledge and those whose knowledges are marginalised.

Curriculum has also been discussed in terms of how it differs and/or does not differ with pedagogy. In general, there are those who view curriculum as different from pedagogy, there are scholars such as Hyun (2006) and Alexander (2009) who view the two either as inseparable or constitutive of one another. Thus, according to Hyun (2006: 136) there an organic relationship between curriculum and pedagogy especially when pedagogy is not just an instruction but also involves power sharing and/or negotiation of meaning between teachers and the students. In other words, Hyun (2006) is of the view that there is a difference between instruction-based

teaching and pedagogy-based teaching because in the latter, teachers and learners transgress one another's boundaries thereby engaging in a shared, democratic and dialectical learning experience. The above articulation of the relationship between curriculum and pedagogy is quite important to understand within the context of decolonising curriculum because it leads us to develop another meaning of curriculum whereby it becomes something that is always in the process of bottom-up construction than fixed. Curriculum becomes an instrument that empowers both the teacher and learner, transforming their identities in such a manner that makes the teacher to adapt in accordance with the values, experiences and interests of the learners

3.2. The call for the Decolonization of Curricula in South Africa

In South Africa, the question of decolonising the curriculum can be traced to recent student protests by the Rhodes Must Fall (RMF) movement at the University of Cape Town and the Fees Must Fall (FMF) movement whereby the protesting students demanded, among other things, the decolonisation of the curriculum. Thus, according to Luckett (2016: 416), the RMF expressed its demand to the universities in the following terms:

> Implement a curriculum that critically centres Africa and the subaltern. By this we mean treating African discourses as the point of departure—through addressing not only content but languages and methodologies of education and learning—and only examining western traditions in so far as they are relevant to our experience.
>
> Introduce a curriculum and research scholarship linked to social justice and the experiences of black people.
>
> Meaningfully interrogate why black students are most often at the brunt of academic exclusion.
>
> Improve academic support programmes.

What one can discern from the above expression by student protestors in the RMF movement is that the students viewed the curriculum as conduit of coloniality that perpetuates the marginalisation of their experiences, voices and perspectives.

3.3. The history of decolonising university curriculum at UNISA

The history of the discourse of decolonising university curriculum at UNISA can be traced back to the formation of the Africa Decolonial Research Network (ADERN) in 2011 by the then newly appointed Professor Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and other academics who were positioned in different departments of the College of Human Sciences. ADERN was formed as a research network of academics and students who were concerned about the prevalence of coloniality within a post-colonial world order in general and in the university institution in particular. The main subscribers to this research network were mainly female and male black academics and students who felt alienated by both the university system and the Eurocentric knowledge that dominated the university curriculum. In general, although the formation of ADERN attracted many students and academics from disadvantaged communities, it also caused discomfort among academics and students who had many reasons why the language of colonialism must not be entertained.

Indeed, among many of the reasons against the formation of ADERN was that the network is fuelling racial tensions; that the discourse of colonialism is out-dated as this is an event that happened in the past without a bearing in the present and future; that the network is formation of failed academics and students who seek to lower academic standards for their own self-interests and that it is an anti-white racist movement. It was until other movements such as the Rhodes Must Fall and the Fees Must Fall movements came into the picture in 2015 that the concerns of the ADERN

began to be taken serious by the management of UNISA hence the beginning of the decolonisation of the university curriculum in different department of the university. In this way, the discourse of decolonising curriculum at UNISA can be considered as initiated from below before it was initiated from above. It is now the official position of UNISA to implement the decolonisation of curriculum but even though it is the position of the university, there is not yet consensus among academics on what does the decolonisation process entail and whether the curriculum is colonial in the first place.

3.4. The Question of Coloniality in Development Studies

While the decolonisation discourses are, in general, critical of the whole practice of epistemic dependency on Western canon, some of decolonial discourses are specifically designed for individual disciplines and subjects within the universities and schools. Among the disciples and subjects that have been criticised for serving as conduit of coloniality within the discourse of decolonising curriculum is that of Development Studies. Development Studies, according to Langdon (2013: 385) as a discipline was framed largely as a "Southern Focused" field…' however 'Development Studies does not, in fact, do very well at listening to the voices, or to really incorporate the views of those "Southern" voices most affected by development'. There are quite a number of reasons as to why Langdon (2013) reached such a conclusion about the discipline of Development Studies and the most important one is that the development theories on which the discipline of Development Studies is based are just but essentially self-serving Eurocentric ideologies. Thus, what critical scholars of development such as Langdon (2013), Tandon (2015) and Andreasson (2005) have sought to unmask about the discipline of Development Studies is the inherent 'orientalist politics' within this discipline. It

is the orientalist politics of the discipline that makes it to articulate the idea of 'development' or progress in terms of the worldview, interests and biases of the Western subject hence Development Studies can be seen as an imperial project taking over from the now discredited 'civilising mission'.

That Development Studies is a discipline that is heavily influenced by the dominant Eurocentric paradigm about progress and development is something that has been expressed by a number of scholars within and outside the discipline. Thus, according to Langdon (2009), Development Studies reflect a Eurocentric colonisation of terms such as progress and development and as such, we cannot subvert this fixity without asking questions about what Development Studies actual mean, what its core organising principles and what knowledge is legitimately part of Development Studies. The above reflection about the Eurocentric framing of the discipline of Development Studies is also upheld by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012: 48) when he argues that 'Development Studies is……a product of global imperial designs and technology of subjectivation, which masquerades as emancipatory while in reality serving the perpetuation of coloniality'. This, according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012) is a result of the mere fact that Development Studies, like its mother-body—coloniality—serves to ensure the perpetual subalternity of the Global South using colonial matrices of power. The above view by Ndlovu-Gatshen (2012) is reinforced by Tandon (2015) who argued that the economic theories that drove development in the West and became the universal knowledge about what development mean, did not apply to Africa. Instead they produced a racist dichotomy that became 'emancipatory when it came to Europe, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and *apartheid* South Africa, and imperialist when it came to the rest of the world' (Tandon 2015: 143). In other words, the development discourse of the discipline of Development Studies is reflective of the Janus-face of the modernity/coloniality

project in that it has a brighter side that is emancipatory to the Western subject and a darker side that is imperial, exploitative and oppressive to the non-Western 'Other'.

What has, indeed, become a major contention with the discipline of Development Studies is its origins within the project of modernity/coloniality as well as its purpose. Thus, for instance, the discipline of Development Studies is seen as rooted in Eurocentric enlightenment notions of scientific progress, civilising mission and universal prescription (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012: 50). In other word, Development Studies is entrapped within what Pieterse (1991) described as 'developmentalism'—a teleological, ahistorical, linear, universalist theory of progress that relate with different epochs of Western hegemony taking several forms such as evolutionism, modernization theory and development thinking. This developmentalism is not just an imperial vision about progress but also projects a false notion of a universal truth—a truth that must be adhered to by everyone. This is challenge that has compelled critical scholars and practitioners of development to seek alternative meanings of the idea of development—meanings that can capture the plights and interest of all the people who constitute the population of the world and not only the plights or developmental aspirations of the West subject.

In South Africa, the study of development under the discipline of Development Studies is a relatively new with its origins traceable to as recent as the 1980s and 1990s. Thus, according de Beer (2003), the period between 1980s and 1990s saw some of the university departments in South Africa such as the departments of development administration at the universities of Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg), Venda and Zululand, to but a few, evolving into Departments of Development Studies. At the UNISA, the origins of Development Studies is traceable to as recent as January 2002 when the Department of Development changed into the Department of Development Studies. Though

relatively new, the discipline of Development Studies in South Africa faces a similar accusation with the discipline of Development Studies in general as it is predicated on the same Western-centric development discourse that predominates the study of development throughout the world.

Chapter Four:

The Research Methodology

4.0. Outline

The data generation process for this study took place at the Department of Development Studies of UNISA in Pretoria. In order to achieve the objective of the study, I utilised a number of methodological strategies, techniques and tools that were useful not only generating data but also useful making sense of its meaning vis-à-vis the question of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA. Thus, even though I adopted a number of appropriate methods of data collection such as participant observation, in-depth interviews and document analysis which I used within a qualitative case study design, I did not lose the sense that I broadly operated within a decolonial interpretive paradigm. In terms of the time-frame, the process of data collection took about three months thereby enabling me to achieve what one can describe as a thick descriptive analysis of the phenomenon under study—the process of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA.

4.1. Decolonial Paradigm and Decolonial Consciousness in Research Matters

In order to successfully decode the meanings of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA, it became necessary to adopt a decolonial attitude and consciousness throughout the whole process research process. Thus, despite the fact that data collection entailed the utilization of normative research methodologies, decolonial consciousness became useful in guiding my interpretation of data on the

meanings of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA. This was necessary because the conventional methodologies of conducting research are designed for studying normal situations and not abnormal situations such as the existence of colonial tendencies and structures within a post-apartheid South Africa—a spatio-historical temporality where colonialism and/or apartheid is no longer visible to the unsuspecting eye. Thus, the current normative and conventional research methodologies were developed by subjects who, in the Fanonian characterization of the structure of modern/colonial world, existed in the 'zone of being' (Fanon 1968) as opposed to those who existed or continue to exist in the 'zone of non-being'. This made the normative research methodologies to be ill-equipped for adequately examining the experiences of the oppressed subjects as they were developed for satisfying the academic desires of the people who were on dominant side of the colonial power difference hence the need for decolonial consciousness in a study of this nature.

As it has already been discussed in the earlier part of this research report, the call for the decolonisation of Development Studies curriculum is a call for reflection of the plights, aspirations and interests of the people on hellish 'zone of non-being'—a people whose voices and worldviews are often marginalized by the modern/colonial academic research practice. This is why it was important for a research project of this nature to develop a strategy of adapting the conventional normative research methodologies in such a way that at the end of the research process, the researcher was in a position to produce a decolonial perspective on the meaning of decolonising curricula within a 'Westernised' university.

Since the quest for decolonisation of the curriculum has a revolutionary agenda, it was important for a research project of this nature to advance such an agenda by deploying what DuBois (quoted in Gordon 2000) characterised as the progressive

and revolutionary research methodologies. These are liberatory research methodologies that are not only sensitive to ways of knowing that come from the specific experiences of oppression but are also useful for linking research practice with some form of activism with a transformative social agenda. Thus, as a subject who also comes from the dominated side of the colonial differential, I had an interest in the decolonisation of the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA hence the adoption of a decolonial consciousness was to ultimately bring about a solution to the curriculum that sustain coloniality—a power structure within which I view myself as a victim. I was, therefore, an interested part in the question of decolonising the curriculum hence became a 'living part of the study' and a 'living instrument of data collection' (Lincoln and Gonzalez y Gonzalez 2008:794-795).

In general, the fact that I am an academic who was pursuing a post-graduate qualification meant that was more privileged than some research participants that I shared with a sense of common belonging within the very colonial power matrix that I was interested in its transformation. This social position together with the fact that I am product of colonial education, who have been socialised into thinking and knowing the world from the perspective of those on the dominant side of the colonial power, meant that I had to shift the 'geography of reason' (Gordon 2011) and interpret phenomena from the positioned of an oppressed subject. Thus, it was my level of consciousness about the influence of the invisible colonial matrices of power on my ways of knowing, imagination and subjectivity that enabled me to think *with* and *from* the social position and/or experience of those research participants whose worldviews and interests are marginalised by the current curriculum, particularly the students from disadvantaged communities.

Though, I strongly identified with those who exist and subsist on the dominated side of the colonial differential, it may be helpful to admit that I may have drawn myself

to a marginal level of alienation by attaining Western education, which I have so far experienced mainly as indoctrination. This means that in order for me to reason from the position of those located on the dominated side of the colonial power differential, it could have been not enough for me to rely only on my comprehension of the hidden colonial structures and their effect on the colonized. I also needed to adopt what Grosfoguel (2007:213) refers to as the appropriate 'locus of enunciation'. Thus, to understand what it is like to be on the dominated side of the scheme of the colonial power differential, a researcher is required to shift his or her epistemic location and reason from the position of being an oppressed subject. This, however, does not mean that all oppressed subject think and see the world from their social positions as colonial knowledge produces epistemic dislocation among the colonised subject making the to think from the side of their oppressors.

Scholars such as Haraway (1988), Mignolo (2000) and Grosfoguel (2007), among others, have argued that our knowledges are always situated, and hence, we always speak from a particular location in the existing power structures. This implies that 'nobody escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the modern/colonial/capitalist/patriarchal world-system' (Grosfoguel 2007:213). Therefore, it was important for me as a researcher to reveal my epistemic and/or social location within the 'geo-politics', 'ego-politics', 'body-politics' and 'theo-politics of knowledge' when interpreting social phenomena, rather than hide my position, since all knowledges are perspectives and, therefore, partial.

In Western philosophy and the natural sciences, it is common for the subjects who speak or articulate social phenomena to pretend as though they are un-situated. The un-situatedness of the speaker in Western knowledge serves as a 'point zero' (Castro-Gomez 2003:n.p) strategy that promotes myths of objectivity and universal

truths that lead to a colonization of knowledge on the part of a non-Western subject. Thus by concealing the subject that speaks with regard to issues such as the gender, racial, ethnic, sexual and epistemic location of the speaking subject, Western philosophy and Western sciences have for a long time been able to produce abstract universalisms that are a 'god's-eye view'; a point of view that represent itself as being without a point of view. In this study, I did not pretend to be objective, but I examined the discourse on decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA from a position that is sympathetic to the plight of those who exist on the subaltern side of the colonial differential.

It was, indeed, my awareness about that there is no automatic relationship between epistemic location and social location that made me to privilege the content of the conversation than the identity of the speaking subject in some of the instances. The skewed relationship between the epistemic and social location of the subjects that speak on the part of the non-Western subject is a common problem that also affected me during this research. This is mainly because, in light of the long history of colonial situations that have affected the being and becoming of non-Western subjects, it is possible and, indeed, expected of subjects who are socially located on the oppressed side of colonial difference to think epistemically like those on the dominant side of the colonial power difference. However, the fact that I am conscious of this problem was itself a step forward in developing a sense of meta-lucidity, which helped me to become sensitive to my own insensitivities about the plight of the oppressed.

It is also important to recognize that being must precede thinking, because, in contrast to Descartes's famous dictum, '*cogito, ergo sum*' (I think, therefore, I am) which assumes that thinking (as an act) comes before being, it is the racially marked body in a geo-historical marked space that feels the urge or gets the call to speak

(Mignolo 2009:160). Thus, a shifting of the geography and biography of reason requires an answer to the problematic question of whose interests are served by a particular understanding of social phenomena, and by a particular approach to knowledge production. Finding an answer to this question eliminates the problem of speaking against oneself in the research process, even in the case of subjects who have long suffered colonial indoctrination. In other words, the ability to shift the geography and biography of reason in a situation where the dominated subject is accustomed to thinking from the position of a dominant subject can open the door for what Mignolo (2009:159) refers to as 'epistemic disobedience'. This means being disobedient to colonial ways of knowing that sustain instead of negating the power structure of coloniality. In the case of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA, where I saw myself as part of the communities on the dominated side of colonial difference, revealing the hidden matrices of colonial power became a moral duty than a simple academic endeavour.

4.2. Research Design and Methods of Data Collection

To operationalize my proposed decolonial approach to the use of normative research methodologies in a research project of this nature, I deployed the standard conventional research methods but in a manner that is consistent with the project of decolonizing knowledge. Thus, even though my object of study was meaning of decolonising curriculum using the case study of Development Studies curriculum at UNISA, my broader vision remained as seeking to contribute to the discourse of decolonization of knowledge—a discourse that involves decolonization of university and curricula.

The research methods that I deployed for generating data, while standing on decolonial epistemic platform, are participant observation, in-depth interviews and

document analysis hence my research design became a qualitative case study design. The case study design was quite useful for this study simply because it allowed me to examine a complex phenomenon (ie decolonisation of curriculum) within its own unique context (Baxter & Jack 2008). Thus, it was suitable for studying a phenomenon that is occurring within what Miles and Huberman (1994:25) described as a 'bounded context' in the form of the UNISA Department of Development Studies. There are, indeed, a number of ways in which one can bind a case in order to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon and these include binding in terms of time and place (Creswell 2003), time and activity (Stake 1995) as well as in terms of definition and context (Miles & Huberman 1994). In the case of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA, I bounded the case of decolonising the curriculum in terms of time-frame, place and context. Thus, l engaged the decolonization of Development Studies at UNISA as it unfolded between 2016 and 2017.

For Strauss and Corbin (1998), qualitative research involves a non-statistical approach in linking concepts and relationships obtained through fieldwork-based evidence. Though qualitative research does not allow for generalization, in any strong statistical sense (Bricki and Green 2007), it does provide insights into social conditions and processes which have a broader relevance beyond the case being studied. Qualitative research facilitates an understanding of the lived experiences of research subjects (Strauss and Corbin 1998) based on 'thick descriptions' of their world (a kind of insider's perspective consistent with decolonial methodology). Thus, in order for me as a researcher to fully understand the experience of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA, I participated in the day-to-day activities and discussion about decolonising curriculum at UNISA's Department of Development Studies. This process required that I establish 'rapport'

with the members of the department and then 'immerse' myself in the daily activities of the members of staff and students. This became an easy task as I was already a member of staff in the Department of Development Studies since 2011 and therefore, familiar with the research participants.

Scholars like Bryman (2012:432) prefer to use the term 'ethnography' than 'participant observation' as he argues that the former entails 'a method of social research and the finished product of ethnographic research' while the later refers to 'simply observing'. I prefer to use both terms interchangeably as I believe they both speak to the significance of ongoing and intense interaction with research subjects. Bernard (2006:342) says that participant observation is 'both a humanistic method and a scientific method', as it is a 'craft' (or art) which comes through 'practice' based on rigorous controls pertaining to evidence collection. Through this method, I integrated myself into the community of staff members who design and teach the Development Studies curriculum as well as students who engage it to obtain a qualification. What I observed in relation to the making of the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA was the process that is followed during curriculum design, who participated in the process and why. I then complemented this observation process with in-depth interviews with the key participants in the design and development of the Development Studies curriculum such as the Head of Department, the students and the senior academic staff within the department. This enabled me to speak authoritatively about the perspectives and positions of the subjects who participated and continue to participate in the decolonisation of the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA.

At the time of writing this mini-dissertation, the Department of Development Studies had 27 academic members of staff. Among them were 24 black academics and 4

white academics; all who were professors as opposed to 3 male black professor in the whole department. In terms of gender, there were 12 male academics and 13 female academics. The above background is quite important to understanding the nature of the discourse about decolonising of the curriculum in the Department of Development Studies because the articulations of what decolonising curriculum meant tended to be influenced by either the social backgrounds of the subjects that speak, their level of consciousness or their level of exposure to the discourse of decolonization. Thus, for instance, through the process of participant observation, I have noted that white academics always took a defensive stand when the current Development Studies curriculum was criticised for being colonial in its articulation of the development discourse. This is a position that was adopted by some black academics whom seemed not be well-versed with the decolonial discourse or were deliberately ingratiating themselves with the 'white power' with the department.

In general, among the radical group that pushed for the decolonisation of the curriculum were black academics who had exposure to the theory of decoloniality through such platforms as the UNISA annual Decoloniality Summer School that has been taking place in the month of January since 2014. In addition to this group, there were also academic members who were exposed to the theory of Afrocentricity who advocated for the repositioning of Africa and African voices as the centre of articulating what is development for the people of Africa. Thus, despite the fact that there is confusion about whether decolonising and Africanising curriculum mean one and the same thing or they mean different things, there is a consensus between the two schools of thought that their agenda and aim is to mitigate and/or reverse the damages caused by the dominance Eurocentric worldviews in the Development Studies curriculum.

In general, I conducted in-depth interviews about the meanings of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum within the Department of Development Studies through soliciting the views of the academic staff and some few postgraduate students who were interested in participating in the research project. Among the postgraduate students that I engaged were those who have shown interests in the discourse of decolonising curriculum through their chosen research topics for their post-graduate qualifications at doctoral and masters level. In total, they were 15 research participants who volunteered to participate in this research project and were delighted by the opportunity to express their views about the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum at UNISA. Among the research participants, they were 6 black male and female post-graduate students, 8 black female and male academics and 1 white academic whose gender cannot be revealed for the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality.

As the key objective of the research was to solicit the views of staff members about the meaning of decolonising curriculum with specific reference to the discipline of Development Studies, it was important to allow the research participants to speak at length about this subject, expressing their views about what decolonising a Development Studies curriculum mean to them. In addition to participant observation and in-depth interviews, I deployed the method of document analysis. Document analysis was quite relevant tool for a study of this nature simply because the question of what is meant by decolonizing the Development Studies of UNISA could not have been answered outside a process that critically examined the very documents that carry the content of the curriculum. Thus, according to Atkinson and Coffey (1997) documents contain 'social facts' which organisations produce, share and use in organised ways. In the case of the Development Studies curriculum of UNISA, I examined the documents such as study-guides, tutorial letters and

prescribed readings to ‘elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge’ (Bowen 2009: 27) about the content of the curriculum. I selected one module at undergraduate level to examine its content in relationship to the discourse of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum. Thus, I examined the module: DVA3706: Rural Development simply because this module was, at the time of this research, undergoing a process of decolonisation within the Department of Development Studies at UNISA.

To conclude, though I used conventional research methodologies in researching the meaning of decolonising university curricula using the case study of decolonisation of the Development Studies at UNISA, I used these methodologies with the necessary decolonial critical consciousness that enabled me to interpret their data from a decolonial epistemic standpoint. A singular social phenomenon can yield different meanings to different observers depending on how they locate themselves epistemically in their observation of that particular social phenomenon. Thus, it was crucial that I subject the conventional research methodologies to my own paradigm as a decolonial scholar so that I do not produce colonial interpretations of social phenomena within a decolonial project as a result of the failure to methodically situate myself while deploying the lenses and tools of research.

Chapter Five

Data Analysis

5.0. Outline

The fact that the meanings of decolonising university curriculum vary across people, time and space means that there are versions of decolonising curriculum that are more effective than others when it comes to the objective of achieving the goal of decolonisation. Thus, we can justifiably envisage a situation where some versions and/or interpretations of decolonising curriculum constrain the achievement of the objective of decolonising the university curricula through their synchronic effect to the power structure of coloniality and some that enable the achievement of this objective through producing a diachronic effect to the colonial curriculum that is earmarked for decolonisation. In this part of the study, I present an analysis of the implications of different interpretations of decolonising university curriculum among the staff members and students in the Department of Development Studies of UNISA.

5.1. The Meaning of Decolonising Curriculum in the Department of Development Studies at UNISA

The subject of decolonising curriculum at UNISA is a very popular subject among students and staff members but while popular, this subject has generated intense debates about what does it mean to decolonise curriculum. Within the Department of Development Studies, the subject of decolonising curriculum has pitted those staff members who view the content of the curriculum either as serving the power structure of coloniality or imbued with coloniality in its content against those that view it as not only impartial but also suitable for the developmental aspirations of the major clientele: the students.

In general, the contestations over the significance of decolonising curriculum and/or the meaning of decolonising the curriculum is dependent on many variables which include among them the racial, class, gender and sexual background of the subjects that speak, their ideological orientation and embedded interests. This, therefore, means that one cannot ignore the social and epistemic location of the subjects that speak about decolonising curriculum when seeking to understand their positions and interpretations of the meaning of decolonisation.

In general, the staff members who constitute the Department of Development Studies and, therefore, tacitly and/or overtly participate in the debates about decolonising the Development Studies curriculum are the white and black members of staff and the queer whose personal experiences about development in Africa are different. Thus, the fact that the white members of staff come from a privileged background that was made possible by colonialism and apartheid makes them to be more comfortable with the content of the present Development Studies curriculum while black members of staff tend to agitate for a decolonial change in the content of the present curriculum. This, however, does not mean that all black members of staff are supportive of the call for the decolonisation of the curriculum and all white members of staff are for the status quo. Instead, there are a number of instances where black staff members, who are the supposedly the victims the current global power inequalities, are for the status quo and instances, where white members of staff who are supposedly the beneficiaries of the present state of development are for the decolonization of the curriculum. This is given when taking into consideration that one of the major effects of colonial knowledge on the colonised subject was the decoupling of epistemic location of the subject that speaks from his/her social location thereby making the colonised subject speak against his/her interests. Thus, as Grosfoguel (2007) have argued, this is a development that has

made the colonised subjects that are socially-oppressed think and speak as though they are socially-privileged thereby contributing to their own oppression. In other words, the purpose of colonial education was to socialise colonial subjects in such a way that they will consent, participate and contribute to their own colonisation by thinking from the epistemic location of their colonisers rather than from their position of oppression.

The following were some of the views about the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum:

> Decolonising curriculum means restructuring the curriculum to ensure that African knowledges and voices become integral part of teaching and learning. This is important for ensuring that scholarship in Africa ceases to be dominated by Eurocentric worldview, as is always the case. Thus, the decolonisation of the curriculum will provide the people of Africa with an opportunity to tell their own story, express their meaning of development in line with their own interests and come up with African-centred solutions to developmental challenges that affect Africans (KM: 6 February 2017)

What one can easily discern from the above expression by the research participant is that he/she views decolonisation of the curriculum as necessary for reversing the hegemonic influence of the Eurocentric worldview within the university institution in Africa as well as enabling expression of African voices about what development mean to them. Thus, the research participant is of the view that the current curriculum lacks contextual relevance, as it is Eurocentric within a space that is predominantly African in culture or among students that are not of European descent. This view about the meaning and significance of decolonising curriculum is almost similar to that which was expressed by the research participant XM who stated that:

> Based on my little knowledge [on what decolonisation of the curriculum entails], it could mean the development of a curriculum that speaks to our African students, taking serious their worldviews. This include taking serious the indigenous knowledges that inform the worldviews of students about development and not just

> what the Western theorists think about development. May be a module on indigenous knowledge and development can constitute a decolonised development studies curriculum where there is space for articulate pre-existing knowledges about development before the Eurocentric worldview became the only legitimate view (XM: 1 February 2017)

While the above articulation of the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies is almost similar to that of the previous research participant in condemning the dominance of Eurocentrism in the present curriculum, this articulation goes a step further to suggest an alternative to the present curriculum—an alternative that can project the indigenous knowledges about development. From an anti-Cartesian point of departure, the idea of including the experiences and knowledges of the communities whose voices and perspectives that are currently marginalised and excluded by the Development Studies curriculum can mitigate the 'epistemic violence' of the universalizing tendency of the current development theories.

Apart from the above expressions of the meaning of decolonising curriculum that emphasize the re-centring of the African worldviews that have been displaced and marginalised by the dominant Western worldview, some of the research participants provided what can be described as a benevolent interpretation of decolonising curriculum. Thus, for instance, the research participant BM stated that:

> Decolonising the Development Studies curriculum does not mean replacing Euro-centrism with Afrocentrism. It simply means creating a space for all knowledges to co-exist along each other in a balanced way. We are already a product of Eurocentric world order and we aspire what the Europeans want. At the same-time, we have our own unique cultural values. Colonialism changed us but did not successfully do so hence we need all knowledges that speak to our common and unique experiences of the modern world. We must not seek self-enclosure by discarding the existing dominant worldview about what it means to develop (BM: 7 February 2017)

What the above expression of the meaning of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum sought to articulate was an inclusive approach to the meaning of decolonising curriculum. This inclusive approach is in line with what is advocated

by the decolonial scholarship of scholars such as Santos (2007) who expressed the need for an 'ecology of knowledges' instead of one form of knowledge displacing and dominating others. Grosfoguel (2007) expressed a similar view about the objective of decolonizing knowledge (including curriculum) when he stated that the goal of decoloniality is not to institute another fundamentalism of the people of the Third World upon their colonisers but instead, it is to construct a 'pluriversal world'—a world where the worldviews of all who live in it matter.

While the inclusive approach to the subject of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum is popular within UNISA's Department of Development Studies, it needs to be emphasized that there are those members of staff that view this inclusive approach as a sign of capitulation and naivety on the part of the colonised subject. Thus, as BB has argued against an inclusive and moderate approach to the subject of decolonising the Development Studies curriculum:

> I am not for the apologetic idea of decolonising curriculum. To me decolonising curriculum means doing away with whatever knowledge came with the colonisers. Why must we keep that which we deem to be colonial if colonialism was never good for the colonised? To me Africa is for Africans as much as Europe is for Europeans. In this way, a decolonised Development Studies curriculum must privilege African voices over all others (BB: 2 March 2017.

The above expression of what a decolonised curriculum ought to be is almost similar to what another research participant, XT expressed when commenting on the need to decolonizing the patriarchal content of the Development Studies curriculum. Thus, according to TX:

> The content of the present Development Studies curriculum is not knowledge about development. It is men's worldview of what development mean to them. There is no study material or module designed for articulating women's experiences and their worldviews about what is development. Even the gender module, which seeks to impart knowledge that destabilises the patriarchal system, it is just men's biases masquerading as women's views. To me, the decolonization moment is the moment of privileging women's voices above that of men (TX: 2 March 2017).

While the issue of privileging one voice over another as a way of addressing the negatives that comes with the prevalence of colonial curriculum appears to be 'extreme' or worse to re-invent the wheel by constructing another colonial curriculum, it also needs to be understood that such views are not without merit in transcending the power structure of coloniality. Thus, there is a need of radical rejection of Eurocentrism or patriarchy in the curriculum as a way of pushing back coloniality hence the extreme views of privileging what is currently dominated and excluded is required as long as it will not be a permanent feature of the curriculum. Such an approach has resonance with the Fanonian concept of 'counter-violence' – a concept that Mbembe (2012: 23) described as 'purely responsive- ad hoc, reptilian and epileptic' by a 'hunted man' [or woman] who desperately seeks to repel a violent way of life imposed up him/her.

While the majority of the views were supportive of the decolonization of the curriculum, they were those who saw the call for decolonization as retrogressive and 'taking us once again to the dark ages of racial discrimination' (PS: 5 March 2017). Thus according to PS:

> There is no one who live the so-called black experiences that the decolonial project wants to bring to the academy. Are we not all modern subjects who share similar views about the world that we live in? Are we not all living in the same cities and having similar problems of service delivery? If so, why then should we pretend that we do not share a common idea about development? The point is not where does the knowledge about development comes from about changing our common fate. To be honest, the decolonial project is taking us once again to the dark ages of racial discrimination. It is just a black people's apartheid (PS: 5 March 2017)

The above expression by a member of staff indicates that there are some members of staff that are not only against the spirit of decolonising the curriculum but have a limited understanding of the decolonial discourse. Thus, for instance, the decolonial

discourse does not contest the fact that there are fundamental commonalities among the people who became modern subject but it emphasizes the different socio-historical experiences of these modern subject depending on their different location with the power structure of modernity/coloniality either as modern or colonial subjects.

In general, the views expressed by the research participants were either pro- or anti-decolonization depending on either the social locations or the epistemic locations. Since the most of the views were more or less similar in their support or rejection of the decolonization of the Development Studies curriculum, it became pointless to capture all of them as would not have changed the conclusion of this project. What we can, therefore, conclude about the meanings of decolonising curriculum as expressed during the interview sessions by academic staff and students of the Development Studies department at UNISA is that there is no singular shared meaning of decolonising curriculum. This is an important finding because it also means that the level of decolonization that is found in those study materials that have undergone the process of decolonization depend on who participated in the process of their revision and/or development.

(1) *A Decolonised DVA3706: Rural Development Module*

There are, indeed, a number of modules that have either undergone the process of decolonisation or were developed with a consciousness to produce a decolonised Development Studies curriculum. One of these modules is the module DVA3706: Rural Development—a new third year undergraduate module designed to teach students about what is supposedly rural development from a decolonial perspective. The development of this module began in 2016 when the urban-bias of Development Studies became a subject of debate within the department thereby prompting the

department to propose a new module with a specific focus on privileging the development aspirations, challenges and agendas of the people living in rural areas.

Though the conceptualization of the module began in 2016, actual writing and development of the module began in January 2017. The process of developing and/or compiling the module followed the guidelines of UNISA's Framework for Team Approach (FTA), which outlines the number of stakeholders that must be involved in the development of new module or the revision of an existing one. Thus, according to the Framework for Team Approach, the development of a new module or the revision of new one requires the participation of academic members of staff, a member of student community, an external reviewer, a language editor and a specialist on National Qualification Framework (NQF). The involvement of these team members is to ensure that the both the module content and the assessment methods and criteria are pitched at the right level of study. In other words, the involvement of different stakeholders is meant to ensure that there are checks and balances during the process of development or revision of the module thereby leading to the production of a quality module.

In general, the question that became a key during the writing of the Studyguide developing methods of assessment and selecting the reading material was the question of what, fundamentally, is rural development. This question became a subject of contestation among the academic members of staff and students that were involved in writing the Studyguide and selecting the study material thereby leading to the development of unit within the module whose purpose is to sensitize the prospective student on the contested-ness of the subject rurality and development. Thus, for instance, the excerpt below forms the introductory part of unit 1 of the Studyguide:

> In this study unit, you will learn about the contested-ness of meanings of the idea and practice rural development. The main objective is to make you understand that meanings of rural development are neither pre-given nor static that we can take them for granted but they all depend on how people at different times and spaces construct them. In other words, the meanings of rural development are not fixed, obvious and natural, but are always subject to social-construction by human beings who are engaged in the process of meaning-making. This means when we engage in the debate about what rural development mean to us, we must not only be cognizant that it may mean different things to different people but we must also understand the meaning-making processes that make it possible for us to even begin conversing about a practice or concept called rural development.

What one can deduce from the above except from the Studyguide on rural development is that a decolonized Development Studies must prepare students to tolerate that there is always a multiplicity of interpretations of a singular phenomenon as long as subjects are differently positioned to it.

The above approach to the subject of rural development is further emphasized in another except within the Studyguide on rural development—an except that can be considered as seeking to raise awareness among students about dangers of universalist conception of development:

> There are indeed a number of reasons why teachers and students of development must be concerned about taking for granted the meaning of a popular concept of development such as that of rural development. One of the obvious reasons is that a misconstrued rural development initiative can cause more damage than 'good' to the communities that reside in those places that we call rural areas as a result of not taking serious what we mean by rural development. Take for instance, the hypothetical example of government initiative that sought to promote rural development through electrifying a rural place where a rural community depended on cattle rearing only to find out this electricity became a developmental setback as it killed the very cows that were the basis of this community's livelihood. The above example clearly shows that development practitioners, policymakers, scholars and students, among other stakeholders in the discourse and practice of development need to be critical about what they mean when referring to rural development

What one can deduce from the statement above is that the crafters of the decolonized Development Studies curriculum have sought to produce a rural development module that dissuade students from taking fundamentalist positions when thinking

about development. Thus, this kind of thinking can be discerned throughout the whole Studyguide where students are guided to ‘think’ themes such as land redistribution, green economy and rural-urban migration from their different positions of social and epistemic locations.

Chapter Six

Conclusion: What, fundamentally, is a decolonized curriculum?

6.0. Outline

The idea of a decolonized curriculum cannot be imagined without a clear understanding of the purpose of its opposite, namely the colonial curriculum. Thus, if the purpose of the colonial curriculum is to normalize colonial power relations between people who are on the dominant side of the colonial power difference and those who are on the dominated side, then a decolonized curriculum is the one that directly or indirectly reverses this dehumanizing status quo of oppression instead of sustaining it. The question that, therefore, confronts the decolonization of the curriculum discourse of the UNISA's Department of Development Studies is that of whether its discourse of decolonizing curriculum can subvert the colonial power relations or it merely sustains them. In terms of the findings of this research, there are those interpretations of decolonizing the Development Studies curriculum whose implications can lead to the continuity of colonial power relations and those whose short-term or long-term implication can subvert colonial power relations.

6.1 A Pluri-versity as the Decolonial Curriculum

As the exclusion of 'other' worldviews, knowledges, perspectives and experiences is the source of the call for decolonization of the university curricula in South Africa, Africa and the non-Western world in general, it means that a decolonized curriculum is that which brings to the fore those peripherised and excluded knowledges and experiences. In other words, a decolonized curriculum is that which brings to the fore a pluriversity of knowledge rather than a universality of one knowledge and its procedures. This idea of a

pluriversal knowledge system is related to that which de Sousa Santos (2015) described in terms an 'ecology of knowledges'—an ecology that takes serious the knowledges of the peoples of the global South.

Within the UNISA Department of Development Studies, there is not yet a study material that include the worldviews, experiences and knowledges of the marginalized communities though a module such as DVA3706: Rural Development is already raising critical consciousness about the legitimacy of the marginalized voices. In this way, the meaning of decolonizing curriculum within UNISA's Development Studies discourse can be characterized as oscillating between change and continuity—a development that is expected when taking into consideration that structure and agency can reproduce one another both diachronically and synchronically thereby leading to the co-existence of change and continuity in a single phenomenon.

6.2. The Necessity of a Decolonial Epistemic Violence

Since decoloniality as whole and the calls for decolonization of curricula are necessitated by the existence of a vertical power structure that vertically reproduce human relations and knowledges within and outside the university institution, the question that becomes problematic then is the question of how can we achieve a genuinely decolonized curricula. This question is important simply because though the decolonial discourses have succeeded in diagnosing the source of a colonial curriculum which is the power structure of coloniality that survive the demise of 'classical colonialism', these discourse have not yet articulated a process by which we can achieve either a decolonized world order or decolonized curriculum.

In this part of the dissertation I suggest a decolonial epistemic violence—a temporary form of violence in the knowledge sphere whose aim is to re-establish an ecology of knowledges as it was the norm prior to the advent of coloniality instead of a permanent

form of violence that leads to what Fanon (1968) characterised as 'repetition without change'. Far seeking to repeat the epistemic violence of the colonizer that brought about the crisis of colonial curriculum, decolonial epistemic violence is a form of what Mbembe described as a 'reptilian violence' whose main purpose is to repel the enemy in order not to reproduce the practice or discourse of enmity but to re-establish an order of peace co-existence. In the sphere of knowledge production, this will be peaceful of existence among knowledges in an ecological system that free of epistemicides and linguicides. Thus, according to Mbembe (2012: 23) reptilian violence is a Fanonian form of 'counter-violence' that is 'purely responsive- ad hoc, reptilian and epilectic' by a 'hunted man' who desperately seeks to repel a violent way of life imposed upon him by a subject who believes that violence is natural way of life. It is a violence that does not believe in violence as a way of life but that seeks to return the normalcy of peaceful co-existence transcending the Nietzschean paradigm of war—paradigm which Nietzsche (1968: 550) described in terms of war as a 'natural state of being'. Thus, the paradigm of peace which decolonial epistemic violence would advocate for is the paradigm that saw humanist such as Nelson Mandela in a violent liberation struggle not as a result of the 'will to power' but pushed by of the 'will to live' (see Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016).

Within the university institution, decolonial epistemic violence requires those tasked and/or concerned with decolonizing curricula to forcefully bring into the mainstream those knowledges that are ignored, marginalized and peripherized. This will cause unease-ness within the Westernized university institution and its body of knowledge but a decolonized curriculum cannot be achieved without a form of epistemic violence that breaks the obstinacy of colonial resistance. In the long-run, this force will tilt the scale into an equilibrium that manifest itself as a pluri-versity instead of a university (which stands for universality) of knowledge.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

List of Interviewees arranged by the dates of interview

XM: 1 February 2017: Interview with the research participant at the University of South Africa on the 1st of February 2017

KM: 6 February 2017: Interview with the research participant at the University of South Africa on the 6th of February 2017

BM: 7 February 2017: Interview with a research participant at the University of South Africa on the 7st of February 2017

BB: 2 March 2017: Interview with a research participant at the University of South Africa on the 2nd of March 2017

TX: 2 March 2017: Interview with a research participant at the University of South Africa on the 2nd of March 2017

PS: 5 March 2017: Interview with a research participant at the University of South Africa on the 5th of March 2017

APPENDIX B

Guiding Question for Interviews

NOTE: These were merely guiding questions. Most of the data were generated through observation and follow-up conversations.

Participants at the Development Studies Department, University of South Africa

1. What is your view about the students' call for the decolonization of the curriculum within the South African universities?
2. Do you think your Development Studies curriculum needs or does need decolonization?
3. To what extent does the Development Studies curriculum represent the aspirations of the people of South Africa in particular and Africa in general?
4. To what extent does a decolonized curriculum advance or negate the meaning of development in South Africa and Africa in general?
5. Is there a reason why you have or have not participated in the decolonization of the Development Studies curriculum?

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