The Organic Crisis and Epistemic Disobedience in South African Higher Education Curricula: Making Political Science Relevant

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Abstract

Post the 2015-2016 student movement calling for higher education transformation and decolonisation, institutions of higher learning in South Africa have continued to grapple with how to respond to these ethical and imperative demands. These challenges include the need to decolonise and Africanise curricula; diversity; foregrounding knowledge as an object of study. Further, responding to what Keet (2014) terms as the 'plastic knowledges' in the transformations and stagnations in the Humanities; challenging and deconstructing alienating institutional culture(s) – particularly in historically white higher education institutions; the often forgotten and marginalised experiences of queer, transgendered, students and staff. One of the disciplines that has come under intensive scrutiny has been Political Science, being accused of being 'irrelevant' and teaching 'dead white men' with no epistemic connection to our local context. In this article, I attempt to respond to the above- mentioned critiques. I rely on Gramsci's notion of the organic crisis and Quijano's epistemic disobedience to bring them together in firstly, making sense of the nature of the crisis in South African higher education curriculum in general and Political Science in particular. And secondly, as both theoretical and empirical tools of de-linking the Political Science curriculum from coloniality and making curricula more transformative, socially just and inclusive. I argue that for Political Science to reclaim its relevance in an increasingly transdisciplinary world, it is necessary for us to not only know and understand the disciplinary crisis that confronts the discipline, but it is also necessary for us to begin to propose some of the epistemic solutions that can

respond to the crisis that Political Science is facing. I employ epistemic disobedience to re-claim and re-centre African Philosophy, in particular, ethnophilosophy and nationalist-ideological philosophy – as an attempt at making Political Science relevant to both the African experience(s) and to the broader global community.

Keywords: Political Science, organic crisis, epistemic disobedience, student movements, higher education curriculum, knowledge, African Philosophy

Introduction
In the beginning of 2015, the then unknown #RhodesMustFall activist Chumani Maxwele and a small group of students from the University of Cape Town (hereafter referred to as UCT), poured faeces at the statue of the arch imperialist Cecil John Rhodes, calling for institutional transformation and decolonisation at UCT (Maxwele 2016). What was powerful and interesting about this ultimate act of defiance was the symbolic link between imperial and the real in Maxwele looking at the Rhodes statue as a totality of the lack of institutional transformation and decolonisation at UCT. Provoked by the actions of Maxwele and others at UCT, widespread protests emerged in institutions of higher learning across South Africa. These protests focused on the need for transformation; the cultural alienation that Black students experienced, particularly in historically white universities; an unresponsive curriculum, among others. I should emphasise that for historically Black universities in South Africa, protest action never stopped post-apartheid (see for example Badat 2017). At the center of the Fallist movement has been the critique that curriculum in South African higher education is untransformed, alienating and marginalising (see Badat 2016; Heleta 2018; Mbembe 2016). This is seen in how western thought remains dominant and central at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems, local intellectual scholars and others from the Global South (see Badat 2017; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2017; 2018).Although the post-apartheid democratic government in 1994 envisioned that we would have an epistemological transformation, one that would entail a 'reorientation away from the [colonial and] apartheid knowledge system, in which curriculum was used as a tool of exclusion, to a democratic curriculum that is inclusive of all human thought' (Department of Education 2008: 89), this has not come to fruition.

One of the disciplines that has come under sustained and intensive scrutiny has been the discipline of Political Science, which has been accused of facing an existential crisis because of its irrelevance and refusing to teach local, indigenous knowledge systems (Matthews 2018; Mngomezulu & Hadebe 2018; Tselapedi 2016). In this article, I first begin my outlining my conceptual and theoretical tools of 'organic crisis' and 'epistemic disobedience' in how they were understood and analysed in this article. Thereafter, I map the nature of the organic crisis within the discipline of Political Science. I then turn to the heart of the article, formulating some theoretical and empirical solutions, through the use of epistemic disobedience on how to respond to the crisis confronting Political Science. I end the article with some thoughts and recommendations for South African higher education in general and Political Science in particular in ensuring that the discipline remains relevant and context-specific both in its philosophy and in curricula.

Theoretical and Conceptual Lenses

According to Gramsci, an organic crisis involves the totality of the 'historical bloc' - that is, the structure of society and its superstructure (Adamson 1983; Cox 1983; Simon 2015). In explaining what he meant by the notion of "organic crisis", Gramsci suggests that:

> In any country the process is different, although the content is the same. And the content is the crisis of the ruling class's hegemony, which occurs either because the ruling class has failed in some major political undertaking for which it has requested, or forcibly imposed, the consent of the broad masses (war, for example), or because huge masses (especially of peasants and petit-bourgeois intellectuals) have passed suddenly from a state of political passivity to a certain activity, and put forward demands which in their disorganic whole constitute revolution (Gramsci 1975: 1603).

This is a crisis of the hegemony in which people generally cease to believe the words of their national leaders, and begin to move beyond and abandon their political parties. Put differently, an organic crisis results from the internal contradictions within a state. This means that an organic crisis is no an

immediate crisis, it is a result of what often is an incurable structural and ideological contradictions prevalent within the state. This often results from the legitimacy crisis that confronts government/state/country, where the ruling/political class no longer commands the respect and authority of the population. The idea of the organic crisis as suggested by Hall (2017), comes from Gramsci's warning that a 'crisis is not an immediate event but a process: it can last for a long time, and can be very differently resolved" this is seen in how an organic crisis erupts not only in the political domain and the traditional areas of industrial and economic life, not simply in the class struggle, in the old sense; but in a wide series of polemics, debates about fundamental sexual, moral and intellectual questions, in a crisis in the relations of political representation and the parties' (Hall 2017:4-5). In this article, I use the notion of the organic crisis to explore the inherent tensions and structural challenges that confront South African higher education curriculum in general and the discipline of Political Sciences in particular. I now turn to the second conceptual lenses of this study, that is, the notion of epistemic disobedience (Mignolo 2013; Mignolo & Walsh 2018; Mignolo 2009).

In order for us to understand epistemic disobedience, it is important that we understand it and locate it within the broader decolonial school of thought, one that is preoccupied with thinking counter-hegemonically against western modernity and Euro-American thought. Decolonial thinking, as suggested by Latin American scholars such as Quijano (2007), Mignolo and Walsh (2018) and Grosfoguel (2007), and theoretically understood in South Africa by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), is premised on the fundamental assumption that *colonialism* denotes a historical period characterised by military occupation and the exploitation of the mineral resources of a country by another. *Coloniality* on the other hand, refers to the hierarchy within global knowledge production in how western knowledge is considered universal, rational[e] and superior compared to the local knowledges as inferior, unscientific and illogical. Decolonial scholars thus argue that modernity is underpinned by coloniality and has resulted in the social construction of what Mignolo (2011) has termed the "colonial matrix of power". This matrix of power is constitutive of interrelated forms of control such as capitalism, racism, sexism, patriarchy, and others as characterised by western civilisation. Thus while colonialism could be said to be gone, the colonial matrix of power could still be said to be felt, lived, experienced and seen in contemporary society (Morreira 2017).

Mignolo (2013) uses the concept of the colonial matrix of power to suggest that 'such a system of knowledge serves not all humanity but a small portion of it that benefits from the belief that in terms of epistemology there is only one game in town'. This "one game in town", Said (1978) argues, resulted in the social construction of the Oriental Other in the colonial imagination as a simplistic, uncultured, uncivilised being who needed to be dominated, owned and controlled – both physically through the body and epistemologically at the level of knowledge. Universities and traditional disciplines in general were historically formed in response to the need to reinforce coloniality and understand the colonial subject, their behaviour, culture, economies and religions (see Grosfoguel 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2017; Said 1978). According to Quijano (2007), epistemic disobedience leads us to different kinds of projects that all share the common experience of being colonised through the economy (that is, the appropriation of land and mineral resources), authority (that is, historical management through the monarch, state or the church), colonial control through the police and military enforcement (that is, coloniality of power), colonising knowledge (that is, through languages, categories and classification of thought, belief systems) and the colonising of beings (subjective Othering). Thus, de-linking refers to moving away from western thought and beginning to re-centre the *Other* ways of looking at the world without foregrounding Euro-American lenses as central signifiers. In this article, I de-link from the western thought by calling for Political Science to begin to re-centre African ways of being, seeing and thinking through the re-presentation and re-introduction of African philosophy in the South African higher education curriculum. I suggest that adopting African Philosophy in the Political Science curriculum, in particular, the intellectual work from the ethnophilosophy and the liberation-nationalist philosophy will enable us not only to de-link and provincialize Euro-American thought from the discipline of Political Science, but will allow us to centre knowledges from the global South as valid, legitimate and rational. I now turn to foregrounding the discipline of Political Science, mapping in particular the critiques that have been levelled at the discipline and some of the epistemic solutions necessary to responding to the crisis of relevance.

Political Science: A Discipline in an Organic Crisis

Although the organic crisis within the Political Science curriculum pre-dates

the 2015-2016 South African higher education student movement's clarion calls for transformation and curriculum inclusivity (see for example Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam 2018), the focus on the discipline has increasingly exacerbated. Arguing about the epistemic disconnection in how the discipline refuses to draw from African lived experience and continues to re-centre Euro-American thought and lives, Mngomezulu & Hadebe (2018) argue that it is possible to transform the discipline without necessarily 'weakening the discipline's stature'. What this stature looks like or its underlying mechanisms and principles are not interrogated and explained. For Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018), the colonial history of universities in South African is that of byproducts of imperial and colonial contact which tended to privilege western thought in the curriculum, which continues to manifest itself in contemporary times. One way of responding to this coloniality within Political Science is their call for de-linking western thought and re-introducing African knowledge systems in the curriculum. In other words, Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018)'s argument for transforming and decolonizing the discipline of Political Studies is the inclusion in curricula, of African knowledge systems and re-centering indigenous knowledge that responds to local contexts.

Unlike Mngomezulu and Hadebe's (2018) argument for the inclusion of African knowledge systems within higher education curricula as a decolonial ethic, Matthews (2018) calls us to critically reflect upon, and problematize colonial texts, knowledge, assumptions, and values that have developed as part of the 'colonial encounter and how it is rooted in an attempt by the colonial powers to assert themselves through delineating an 'other' which can be unfavourably contrasted with the coloniser'. Matthews suggests that rather than proposing the inclusion of African indigenous knowledge system within an untransformed curriculum, as suggested by Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018), and to some extent, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018), we need to recognize the epistemological entanglement in the colonial library, and how advancing a decolonial project in Political Science would demand drawing *both* from the colonial library and local intellectual contributions, in fashioning a different intellectual trajectory, rather than committing to an Africana essentialist conception of knowledge. In this argument, Matthews responds to the critique offered by Makgoba (1997), Msila and Gumbo (2016), and others who proposed Africanisation as an alternative framework to decolonization, in the processappealing to the precolonial stereotype of an African individual who is outside of globalization and multinational/multicultural contact (see for

example Samuel 2017). In this article, I echo both Said (1978) and Matthews (2018)'s argument on the need to rather focus on the colonial 'entanglements' within decolonial work and in this context, African philosophy as an epistemic response to the crisis of relevance grappling Political Science. This will allow us to fashion a much more inclusive, transnational and transdisciplinary curriculum, one that rejects the narrow, essentialist lenses.

Perhaps the most scathing in their critique of the slow pace of transformation in the discipline of Political Science in South African higher education, Gouws *et al*. (2013) argue that the discipline is confronted with two challenges: firstly; the need for more transformation within the discipline itself, and secondly; the need to generate what they deem as 'relevant knowledge.' For Gouws *et al*. (2013), the discipline of Political Studies has been reluctant to be at the forefront of South African politics in responding to the challenges that plague the post-apartheid state. What is interesting in the assessment of Gouws *et al*. (2013), of the discipline, is that rather than locating the lack of transformation and inclusive knowledge within Political Science on [in?] the *kinds* of knowledge that are produced, reproduced and legitimated in our curriculum (that is, colonial knowledge), the blame seems to lie at the altar of pedagogy. This for me, seems to be a misrecognition of the crisis that confronts the discipline, as coming up with new and creative ways of teaching coloniality and Eurocentricity [Eurocentric?] thought does not help in interrupting curriculum knowledge or re-centering marginalized knowledges. In this article, I argue that the organic crisis that confronts Political Science could also be understood as a 'disciplinary decadence' (Gordon 2015). This is seen in how the discipline has retreated to being inward looking and largely focusing on 'methodological fetishism' rather than coming up with creative and transdisciplinary ways of constructing knowledge and transforming society (see Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam 2018). Political Science has turned away from 'living thought' and has at times being obsessed with what we have termed in another article 'methodological fetishism' (Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam 2018). This methodological fetishism manifests itself in different ways in how the discipline struggles to adjust to new thought, resulting in people, society, research and the production of knowledge not pushing any of the disciplinary boundaries but rather being forced to conform to the discipline itself. Thus in this article, I re-center African philosophy in attempting to not only de-link Euro-American thought from the Political Science curriculum, but I also begin to explore the new and creative ways that African philosophy offers in offering

us relevant, transformative and inclusive knowledges outside of coloniality. I have thus far only re-conceptualized Political Science as a discipline in an organic and decadent crisis. I now turn to exploring the epistemic solutions from African Philosophy that can respond to the above challenges.

(Some) Epistemic Solutions: Re-Centering African Philosophy

African philosophy emerges from the history of colonialism in attempting to dialectally understand its own epistemic logic against the dominance of western intellectual thought. African scholars attempt to draw the connection between biography, reason and social location in suggesting that knowledge and the production of knowledge, cannot be analytically separated from each other (see for example Mudimbe 1988; Wiredu 1980). This racialized inequality within the global production of knowledge has resulted in the emergence of ethnophilosophy and nationalist-liberation philosophy as intellectual alternatives designed to de-centre and provincialize Euro-modernity and western thought (Chakrabarty 2009).

The term, 'ethnophilosophy' was coined by the Beninese philosopher Paulin Hountondji to characterise and to some extent, chastise the intellectual work of scholars such as Placide Tempels, Alexis Kagame, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Marcel Griaule and Germain Dieterlen to demarcate that strand of African philosophy that looked at communitarian ethics and thought (Hountondji 1970; 1995 1997). This refers to the Bantu philosophy, Dogon philosophy, Yoruba philosophy and others, whose scope often looks at the African cultures, their world views, traditional beliefs and others in describing African lived experiences prior, during and post the colonial contact (Hallen 1995; Houtondji 1995; Wiredu 1980). Ethnophilosophy scholars argue that the different African worldviews and their diversity properly constitutes what could be referred to as the an African philosophy (Kanu 2016). They argue that the different African worldviews and their perspectives, myths, proverbs and others collectively constitutes what may be regarded as an African philosophy, particular to those communities, societies and villages. For instance, Amadiume (2015)'s classical text, 'Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society', offers a detailed ethnophilosophical inquiry into the life of Nnobi people, an Igbo community in south-eastern Nigeria. In the book, Amadiume (2015) offers both ethnographical and intellectual history in looking at the institutional and ideological power of the

Nnobi women and the decline in their power, economic livelihood and gender subjugation with the increasing entrenchment of the colonial project. The intricate and complex manner in which Nnobi traditional society was able to transcend gender and sexual identities, particularly in how an elite, wealthy Nnobi man could name their daughter ('male daughter') to function politically and economically as a *man* in owning and controlling property and taking part in the broader political structures of the community – is illuminating from an ethnophilosophical perspective. This not only begins to show for us in Political Science that fixed gender and sexual identities could be said to have been introduced with colonial contact in some African communities, but also that gender and sexual diversity was at least, pre-colonially present in African communities and is not a new phenomenon.

For pre-colonial Nnobi society, *biological* women can be [?] in essence, *become* fathers and have wives. The history of the Igbo institution, similar with other African ethnic communities who found a way to powerfully destabilise our conceptual understanding of biologically determined gender identities and marriage and sex, is illuminating for the discipline of Political Science that is grappling to re-centre African indigenous knowledge systems, social structure, beliefs and cultural practices in opening up the curriculum to different *kinds* of knowledges. Commenting on the broader Igbo society and the balance between communitarian ethics and individual autonomy, Ike and Edozien (2001) write that:

> The Igbo social structure consists of many small local communities. Within the village itself, power is held by various groups, and social balance is maintained by a system of checks and balances. Igbo society was such that even though there existed a strong community consciousness, the individual's rights and existence as an entity were not neglected. Free speech, free movement and free action in Igbo society were guaranteed (Ike & Edozien 2001: 155).

The African humanism, that is, *Ubuntu*, can also be understood as another strand of ethnophilosophy. This is perhaps one of the most influential philosophical strands in African philosophy that has intellectually survived beyond the colonial period. *Ubuntu* is a philosophical outlook that focuses on the non-individual in attempting to fashion a much more communitarian, collective ethic (Bewaji & Ramose 2003; Praeg 2014; Ramose 2009). In

Mlamuli Nkosingphile Hlatshwayo

Ubuntu, or *Botho,* the community forms an integral part of an African's identity. Mbiti (1969) and Mbigi (2005) both suggest, - in response to Cartesian reason that foregrounded the mind (or reason) at the altar of the body, therefore creating the early epistemic conditions of possibilities for a rugged conception of individualism in society - the focus for us in *Ubuntu* philosophy is on the community, rather than the self. In other words, the self within *Ubuntu* exists as part of the community and not *outside* of it, as some strands of western thought would suggest (see for example Cohen 1977; Nozick 1974; Wolff 2018). As Turaki (2006) argues, 'people are not individuals, living in a state of independence, but part of a community, living in relationships and interdependence'. It should be noted that for *Ubuntu*, this does not mean that the individual does not exist and the self is subordinate to the common good, as is seen with Marxist collectivism (Lutz 2009). Rather, it means that the individual pursues self-interests through a commitment to the common good. Put differently, the self does not die for the common good to emerge. Rather, the self and self-interests are pursued through the common good in society. As Gyekye (1988: 32) puts it:

> 'The clan is like a cluster of trees which, when seen from afar, appear huddled together, but which would be seen to stand individually when closely approached.' … The proverb stresses the social reality of the individual; it expresses the idea that the individual has a separate identity and that, like the tree, some of whose branches may touch other trees, the individual is separately rooted and is not completely absorbed by the cluster. That is, communality does not obliterate or squeeze out individuality.

Similar to Gyekye (1988) above, Nyerere (1987) proposes the philosophical approach of Ujamma, as a communitarian ethic, like *Ubuntu*, that is premised on the community as central and significant to the African self:

> Those of us who talk about the African way of life and, quite rightly, take a pride in maintaining the tradition of hospitality which is so great a part of it, might do well to remember the Swahili saying: 'Mgeni siku mbili; siku ya tatu mpe jembe' –or in English, 'Treat your guest as a guest for two days; on the third day give him a hoe!' In actual fact, the

guest was likely to ask for the hoe even before his host had to give him one–for he knew what was expected of him, and would have been ashamed to remain idle any longer. Thus, working was part and parcel, was indeed the very basis and justification of this socialist achievement of which we are so justly proud (Nyerere 1987: 6).

To seek to suggest that African cultures are communitarian is not to deny their epistemic diversity amongst themselves. This is similar with suggesting that all European cultures are alike. For instance, in their work, Trompenaars *et al.* (1998) have shown how some of the Xhosa ethnic communities in the Eastern Cape are more individualistic than the Zulu, Tsonga and South Sotho ethnic communities in Southern Africa. In the same research, they similarly have shown how the Afrikaner communities and families tend to be more communitarian, than the English which tend to more individualistic and less community-inclined. Nonetheless, it is true to a significant extent, that Africans in general tend to be more communitarian and communal than western communities (Trompenaars *et al.* 1998). In southern Africa, our traditional understanding of community is expressed through the conceptual notion of '*Ubuntu'*, *umuntu*. For Ramose (1998), '*Ubuntu'* is simultaneously 'the foundation and the edifice of African philosophy", with Tambulasi and Kayuni (2005) agreeing that '*Ubuntu* is the basis of African communal cultural life'. *Ubuntu* as a philosophical ethic is important for the Political Science curriculum in ensuring that we begin to move beyond Cartesian rationality within the discipline in showing us that the presupposed Kantian consensus regarding the relationship between the mind and the body, with the self is not yet resolved. This will show how for Africans - the mind, body, soul and spirituality are intertwined collectively with the community to produce the African subject.

Incorporating the philosophical approach of *Ubuntu* in Political Science curricula would ensure that ethnophilosophical approaches that re-center African ways of living and thinking can assist the field in making sure that it remains relevant and context-specific. This translates into Political Science being epistemically inclusive and drawing from the different African communities and their worldviews, perspectives, traditions, myths and spiritualities, in showing how the complex and intricate knowledge system on the continent, all collectively create the African subject. The social construction of the African subject differs fundamentally from Euro-American

notions of what constitutes the mind, body or personhood. African philosophy in general and ethnophilosophy in particular, not only challenges the established norms of what subjectivity looks like in theory, but also presents alternative epistemic ways of looking at social reality in Political Science curriculum. The second epistemic solution that I wish to propose in responding to the crisis of relevance that Political Science is grappling with and that attempts to de-centre western knowledge systems from curricula, is the nationalist-ideological philosophy. The nationalist-ideological philosophy emerges from the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid[s] struggles on the African continent in fighting against colonial occupation and imperialism (Letseka 2013). I should emphasise that I use the term "nationalist-ideological" loosely to refer to a broad category and classification of postcolonial African leaders and thinkers who were focusing on what it means to think through decolonisation politically, economically, culturally, intellectually, and linguistically. Thus the term "nationalist" in nationalist-ideology should not be taken to refer to a narrow nation-state conception of African philosophy as the project was largely transnational and mostly pan-Africanist in nature (see for example Legum 1962; Murithi 2017; Walters 1997).

Linking Latin American struggles with what was happening on the African continent, nationalist-ideological philosophy could be seen as an "empirical philosophy" which rather than focusing on formulating conceptual tools to make sense of colonial conquest and its effect on the continent - most of the leading thinkers have largely been postcolonial leaders such as Nkwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Jomo Kenyatta, Léopold Senghor, Kenneth Kaunda and others who were interested responding to the pressing needs of the colonial projects and its looting and socio-economic effects on the (Letseka 2013; Nkrumah 1966; Nyerere 1974). The focus for nationalist-ideological philosophy is on tackling colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism and its effect in leading Africa and Africans as the Cold War playground for the global superpowers. Commenting on the critical rationale for this school of thought, Nkrumah (1966) argues that:

> The neo-colonialism of today represents imperialism in its final and perhaps most dangerous stage. … *The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.*

The methods and form of this direction can take various shapes (e.a) (Nkrumah 1966: 1-2).

In the above quotation, Nkrumah comments on the dialectical shift that has occurred on the African continent in how the military occupation and forced dispossession has now been replaced by the foreign policies that maintain protracted control and influence in 'independent' countries. However it would be misleading to simply assume that nationalist-ideological philosophers are only focusing on state and multinational actors and their attempt at controlling the socio-economic resources of African countries (see for example Rodney 1972). This is seen in how broad and overarching focus areas have been tackled, which include challenges of teaching, speaking and thinking in a foreign language, and to what extent this re-enforces Nkrumah's notion of neocoloniality (see Wa Thiong'o, 1986); the existential crisis that comes with Blackness in a colonial space and the need to re-assert one's dignity (see Biko 2015; Fanon, Sartre & Farrington 1963; Sharpley-Whiting 1997); the pitfalls of national liberation movements in power and their inability to fashion through new forms of democratic governance and social justice (see Fanon *et al*. 1963; Mamdani 2016); responding to the colonial archive and re-asserting the epistemology of Africans in relation with the world (see Matthews 2018a); and others.

Thus, the different kinds of nationalist-ideological philosophy can be categorised in the table below:

Table 1: The different kinds of nationalist-ideological philosophies

Type of philoso-phical strand	Focus areas	Key thinkers
Pan Africanism	A political and cultural movement that focused on ensuring some form of African unity in moving beyond ethnic identities and fostering transna-tional ties on the conti-nent in the diaspora.	Carmichael (2007); Legum (1962); Nkrumah (1966); Nyerere (1974); Rodney (1972); Kaunda and Morris (1966); Kenyatta (2015); Mamdani (2016); Mkandawire (2015)

Negritude	Historical response against French colonialism. Negritude is a literary and artistic movement that sought to encompass the cultural lives of Black people	Senghor (1964); Rabaka (2015); Césaire (2001); Dash (1974)
Afrocentricity	Response to Eurocentricity, a philosophical approach that calls for the re-conceptualisation of theory, history, knowledge systems and others through the perspectives of African people.	Asante (1983); George and Dei (1994); Schiele (1996); Mazama (2002); Cross Jr (1995)
Indigenous/ endogenous knowledge systems	Focuses on the marginalised African knowledge systems/ beliefs/ spirituality/ medicines/ myths/ ontologies that are central to African communities	Hountondji (1997); Agrawal (1995); Gadgil *et al.* (1993); Wilson (2008); Battiste and Youngblood (2000); Makgoba (1997)
Decoloniality	An argument against what is perceived to be the coloniality that still remains within higher education curricula. Argues for epistemic freedom through re-moving Euro-American thought and re-centering intellectual work from the global south	Quijano (2000); Grosfoguel (2007); Gordon (2011); Mbembe (2015); Torres (2007); Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018); Heleta (2018); Mignolo and Walsh (2018);

All these different philosophical trends still have material relevance for Political Science curriculum in that they continue to re-centre Blackness and Black lived experiences both historically as well as in contemporary society, regarding to what extent, Negritude and Indigenous knowledge can still be relevant and socially responsive in what is often considered a *cosmopolitan* world. Remarking on some of the South African higher education academics' tensions with the calls for decolonising of curricula and what this could look like for her in Political Science, Matthews comments that:

> Recent calls by South African university students for the decoloni-sation of university curricula have caused much consternation, uncertainty and bewilderment among many university academics, including myself. We find ourselves and our courses under very critical scrutiny from our students, some of whom insist that much of what they are being taught is expressive of a colonial mindset and, therefore, that we need to decolonise our curricula. Even where academics have not been resistant to this idea – and many have been – there has been much uncertainty about what decolonising the curricula entails (Matthews 2018: 48).

Supporting Matthews (2018) above, I argue that her work in attempting to employ Mudimbe (1988)'s notion of the 'colonial archive' in exploring the colonial nature of Political Science curriculum and the challenges of constructing a 'decolonised curricula' could be seen as transformative and socially relevant to the current higher education climate. This approach could be implemented in mainstream Political Science curriculum insofar as it enables us to explore in greater detail, how 'our philosophical fathers' and 'founders' have adopted Plato, Cicero, Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu and others at the expense of African indigenous knowledge systems without interrogating the philosophical assumptions regarding what counts as knowledge, truth and reason.

I should emphasize that in table 1, I deliberately locate decolonial thought within the broader focus of national-ideological philosophy as the two are not mutually exclusive of each other, and do relate epistemologically. Decolonial scholars, building from the early work from Nkrumah (1966), Nyerere (1974) and Rodney (1972) in particular, show the dialectical emergence of a new form of neo-colonialism in their work– which they refer

to as 'coloniality', in focusing on the colonial nature of knowledge, knowledge production, curriculum and higher education in Africa (Heleta 2016; Heleta 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018b). One of the most significant books to come out of the post-apartheid South Africa within the broader nationalist-ideological philosophy, has been Wa Azania's *Memoirs of a Born Free* (2014), in which she challenges the fallacy of the "rainbow nation" through a detailed account of the abuse, trauma, poverty, and social dysfunctionality that at times characterises the modern South African life. Wa Azania (2014)'s book needs to be located in the broader critical reflection that have been coming out of South Africa since the late 2014s to early 2015s, as a result of the failure of the Mandelian miracle to live up to the promised 'better life for all' and socio-economic development (see for example Mashele & Qobo 2014). Prescribing this text and others in Political Science, not only responds to the crisis of relevance in the field, but actually offers us an opportunity to reflect on the crisis that confronts South Africa in shining a spotlight on the often forgotten township life in all its potentiality, complexities, contradictions, and trauma.

Conclusion

In this Article, I tried to do two things. I firstly tried to explore in greater detail the crisis that confronts the field of Political Science in being accused of being irrelevant, socially disconnected and not responding to the challenges that confront society. Secondly, I opted to respond to the above crisis by using the theoretical tools from Gramsci and Quijano to not only diagnose the nature of the crisis that confronts Political Science, but to begin to move the field forward to offering (some) possible epistemic solutions to the crisis. I argued that African philosophy in general, and ethnophilosophy and nationalist-ideological philosophy in particular have expansive and socially relevant tools that we can draw from, that can not only make Political Science curriculum relevant, but can also help make sense of the challenges that we are grappling with in Africa. Thus, I make the following recommendations:

- This article has largely been philosophical in nature. Future empirical research still needs to be done such as Matthews (2018) and to a lesser extent, Le Grange (2016), in illuminating and showing us what a decolonising/ transformative Political Science curriculum may look like.

- The intricate relationship between curriculum and pedagogy in thinking through what a transformed Political Science curriculum looks like *and* how it can be taught has not been explored in this research. Future research needs to be done in exploring to what extent a decolonised pedagogy is possible within Political Science, and how it can be experimented with in practice.

- Although I have tried to respond to this in this article, there appears some epistemic conflation in the literature between ethnophilosophy and nationalist-ideological philosophy. More work still needs to be done in order to gain greater analytical clarity about both the philosophical and historical differences between the two.

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