Introduction: Towards Decolonising the Future Academy in Africa and Beyond

Karim Zafer, Michaela Pelican and Michael Bollig

What does it mean to decolonise the academy in Africa? Is this a project of the future? Or are there forerunners in the history of anthropology at African universities? This book brings together authors from different parts of Africa and Germany who participated in a series of workshops and panels dedicated to these questions. Their contributions show that there are no easy answers. There have been different trajectories of anthropology as a discipline and of decolonising the academy across the continent. Similarly, the authors' assessment of the future academy diverges: While some are hopeful and take inspiration from earlier experiences of disciplinary and methodological developments, others remain critical and call for more radical attempts at decolonising the academy, not only in Africa but also in Germany.

A major theme running through the book is institutional and disciplinary developments at African universities, with our contributors focusing mostly on the trajectories of anthropology in Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, South Africa and Sudan. We argue that these institutional developments – mostly fuelled by political-economic transformations – have engendered early pathways of decolonising the academy on which current initiatives can draw. A second and key theme of the book is collaboration between African and German scholars, with examples in the fields of research, teaching, institutional development and professional networks. We believe such North-South collaborative efforts signal the way forward in decolonising the academy both in Africa and Europe.

Since the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement, which ignited at the University of Cape Town in 2015 and then gained momentum across South Africa and beyond, African scholars have been vital voices in current debates on decoloniality and on decolonising the academy (Becker in this volume). African scholars, such as Rosabell Boswell (Boswell and Nyamnjoh 2018), Achille Mbembe (2021), Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018, 2020), Francis Nyamnjoh (2016),

Ciraj Rassool (Rassool et al. 2022) and many others, have tackled the question of how to decolonise the academy from various angles, including on a conceptual level, in research, in the classroom, in university administration, in the museum, or as public intellectuals. They all emphasise their building on the work of earlier well-known African and Afro-Caribbean scholars, statesmen and writers, such as Franz Fanon, Jomo Kenyatta, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, and many more. In this volume, we ask what is the role of anthropology in these ongoing debates and processes of decolonising the academy in Africa? What can we learn from the historical trajectories of anthropology as a discipline in different parts of the continent? Are there practical examples from which we can take inspiration for the future academy in Africa?

To address these and other questions, the editors of this volume organised a series of three workshops and panels in 2019 (at the University of Cologne, the European Conference of African Studies, and the conference of the German Anthropological Association) that brought together anthropologists and Africanist scholars from universities in Africa and Germany (Jacobs and Pelican 2019). They jointly discussed the relevance, challenges and potentials of anthropology as a discipline at African universities, teaching and research collaborations within and beyond the continent, and the production of actionable knowledge and job opportunities. The workshop and panels' primary aim was to share experiences and visions of how to decolonise the academy and to learn from each other's practices and collaborations. The participants included: Munzoul Assal, Heike Becker, David Bogopa, Pierre Boizette, Michael Bollig, Rosabelle Boswell, Daniele Cantini, Yntiso Deko Gebre, Ayodele Jegede, Erik Mutisya Kioko, Thomas Kirsch, Patience Mutopo, Romie Nghitevelekwa, Isaac K. Nyamongo, Sung-Joon Park, Michaela Pelican, Ciraj Rassool, Claudia Rauhut, Nikolaus Schareika, Kira Schmidt, Antoine Socpa, Cordula Weißköppel, Ulrike Wesch and Karim Zafer. This edited volume is the result of these ongoing conversations.

The volume is structured in two parts: the first assembles contributions focusing on the trajectories of anthropology as a discipline at universities in different parts of the African continent; the second tackles the question of decolonising anthropology from methodological and practical perspectives.

Historical trajectories of anthropology at African universities

In the social sciences and humanities – and maybe to a lesser degree in the natural sciences – the dominance of the Eurocentric epistemic model has been challenged by different actors in Africa and other parts of the world (e.g. Bhambra 2014; Falola 2023; Gu 2023; Maldonaldo Torres 2016; Mignolo and Walsh 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1986; Nyamnjoh 2016; Parashar and Schulz 2021; Quijano 2000; Tangwa 1992). Students and academics have decried the colonial legacy of African universities. They have demanded a break with the past so as to develop curricula that are meaningful to the African context, and to reach out for knowledge production beyond the academy.

Generations of anthropologists have been faced with the following questions: What makes anthropology different from sociology, for example? What methods and theories do anthropologists employ that other social scientists do not habitually make use of? What social, ecological, or political dilemmas does anthropology address specifically? And how do the discipline's methods and theories contribute to an understanding of these challenges? How can graduates from anthropology Bachelor's, Honours and Master's degree courses be suitably employed, and where are future job markets? How can academics at African universities fruitfully reconcile the quest for basic research with the demand for short-term consultancy work?

While these and similar questions unite anthropologists across the continent and beyond, the discipline's trajectories have differed profoundly between various African countries. In many regions, anthropology has only recently been instituted as an academic discipline and has had to negotiate its status amidst other social sciences. In other contexts, though, anthropology has a pedigree at African universities that goes back to the 1920s (e.g. South Africa), 1930s (e.g. Egypt), 1950s (e.g. Sudan) and 1960s (e.g. Cameroon, Kenya). The discipline's relevance for addressing questions of social well-being, societal transformation or the valorisation of local and indigenous knowledge has been reflected upon profusely in African academia over many decades as well as more recently (e.g. Nkwi 2015; 2021; Ntarangwi et al. 2006; Nyamnjoh 2016).

Beyond these practical questions pertaining to anthropology's place in academia, the discipline has been faced with generalising allegations that anthropologists of the past directly contributed to colonial rule and that the discipline has never emancipated itself from the hegemony of Northern institutions of knowledge production (Asad 1979; Mafeje 1998; Nyamnjoh 2012a, 2012b). For reasons that demand further exploration, these allegations have

been formulated against anthropology more vociferously than against other disciplines, for example the agricultural sciences (Beinart et al. 2009; Bonneuil 2000) or the engineering sciences (Eichhorn 2019; Muller 2018). Diane Lewis (1973) and Talal Asad (1979) denounced anthropology's leaning towards colonial administrations and its effort to become a useful science within the colonial context. Other critics depicted how anthropologists and anthropological accounts were shaped by colonial contexts, exploring patronage and funding by colonial administrations (Moore 1994; Ntarangwi et al. 2006). These authors not only highlighted the impact of colonial rule and colonial ideologies on the discipline, but also traced the influence of anthropological teaching on colonial administrators. In his presentation at one of the workshops leading up to this volume, Kenyan anthropologist Isaac Nyamongo highlighted the extent to which anthropological knowledge became essential for the training of future colonial administrators (see also Nyamongo 2007). As a consequence of this debate, in the first decades of postcolonial academia, many anthropologically educated scholars camouflaged themselves in departments of social sciences to navigate an academic environment hostile to anthropology. Some scholars, such as Mwenda Ntarangwi and colleagues (2006), argue against the oversimplified assumption of anthropology's collusion with colonial agendas. They highlight the diverse perspectives within the discipline during the colonial era, ranging from complicity to active critique and resistance against colonial ideologies.

Indeed, anthropology did not feature importantly at African universities during the first decades of post-independence (Assal 2024 for Sudan; Gebre 2024 for Ethiopia; Nyamongo 2007 for Kenya; Socpa and Nkwi in this volume for Cameroon). It was the 1980s that marked a pivotal period in African development as economic crises prompted a re-evaluation of existing paradigms, ushering in a search for alternative models. This shift created an opportune moment for anthropology to assert its relevance, with African anthropologists increasingly sought after as consultants by governments and development agencies (Nkwi 2015, 2021; Ntarangwi et al. 2006). As the focus turned towards restructuring African economies in the 1990s, anthropology found itself at the forefront of shaping developmental agendas.

In their contribution, **Dynamics of Anthropology Teaching and Practice in Cameroonian Universities (1962–2023)**, Antoine Socpa and Paul Nkwi describe how the academic discipline of anthropology has evolved in Cameroon since the early 1960s when it was first taught as an integral part of sociology and subsequently instituted as an independent discipline after nation-wide

university reforms in the early 1990s. With the expansion of the Cameroonian university network, the discipline of anthropology became firmly established in several universities. With an initial enrolment of about 50 students during the 1993–1994 academic year, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Yaoundé I – the oldest and largest in the country – currently has about 750 students regularly enrolled in the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate cycles. These figures alone underline that anthropology is highly attractive to Cameroonian students. As the authors show, the anthropology taught and practiced in Cameroon has fostered a distinct decolonial approach that foregrounds the practical relevance of anthropological knowledge for meaningful development and social change. With the creation of new and applied sub-disciplinary specialisations, such as development anthropology and medical anthropology, the discipline responded to broader political and societal needs and has become an integral part of social science training in public and private universities and professional schools. Anthropology training curricula in Cameroonian universities emphasise applied issues. Practical training aims to provide professional skills that transform students into cultural brokers for development and consultants for organisations seeking their expertise.

A strong emphasis on applied perspectives of anthropology was also portrayed by Isaac Nyamongo for Kenya, Monzoul Assal for the Sudan and Yntiso Deko Gebre for Ethiopia in their oral presentations to the 2019 workshop leading to this volume (see also Assal 2024; Gebre 2024; Nyamongo 2007). Notably, Nyamongo pinpointed that in the Kenyan context, there is acute pressure on anthropology to produce actionable knowledge. A similar assessment is shared by Remadji Hoinathy and colleagues for Chad (in this volume). Recent calls for decolonising the academy have highlighted not only the relevance of epistemic freedom, but also the vital role and expertise of African scholars in both questioning and defining the meaning and future of development in Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2020; Olukoshi 2006). Ntarangwi et al. (2006) certainly have a valid point when arguing that consultancies run the risk of confining intellectual production to routine reports, hence sacrificing scholarly creativity to survival necessities. However, the widespread acknowledgement of anthropological knowledge as a meaningful contribution to development projects across the continent has brought about broad academic and political acceptance, opened up new venues for job-seeking young anthropologists and, in many countries, led to the inauguration of new anthropology departments (Hoinathy et al. in this volume; Socpa and Nkwi in this volume; Nyamongo 2007).

Regarding Egyptian anthropology, Daniele Cantini critically reflects upon the problematic aspects of undue government impact on the contents of anthropological research and anthropological teaching. Cantini's contribution, **Notes on the Institutional Development of Anthropology in Egypt and toward its Decolonisation** depicts the development of the discipline in Egypt and its contemporary attempts to adapt to quests for a national Egyptian identity in the context of contradictory trends towards globalisation and Islamisation, and the socio-economic transformation and readjustments of academic institutions after the 2011 revolution and its aftermath. As in South Africa (Becker in this volume), anthropology entered the academic syllabus in Egypt early on in the 20th century. Unlike South Africa, however, the discipline did not become well established at Egyptian universities; neither during colonial times, nor through the times of socialist Nasserite nationalism, nor in the post-Nasser period. Prominent Egyptian anthropologists obtained their training abroad, particularly in Europe, and subsequently worked in Egypt in various roles. The country's first anthropology department was established at the University of Alexandria in the 1970s. The department produced a small number of graduates and PhD holders who were instrumental in setting up anthropology departments at a couple of other Egyptian universities (Cairo University, Ain Shams University). The staff were joined by further PhD holders returning from various European universities. However, anthropology did not flourish. In fact, it was further marginalised, and over the past two decades, the number of graduates emerging from anthropology departments has reduced significantly. Cantini surmises that the development of anthropology in Egypt has suffered from a number of contradictory demands on the discipline: following the events of 2011, how could anthropology meaningfully contribute to the social and cultural development of a country which has been shaped by so many polarising debates about possible futures? If there was an anthropological contribution to this end, was this reflexive and critical, or rather, a social-engineering endeavour?

While nationalist agendas can play a crucial role in shaping the discipline, international connections – often rooted in colonial legacies – are equally important. These dynamics yield both positive and negative outcomes for the discipline. On the one hand, African anthropology has flourished through interactions with British, French, American and other European anthropologies. These exchanges encompass various forms, such as scholarships, sabbaticals, workshops, conferences and joint research projects. Such engagements have shielded African anthropology from provincialism, enriching it with diverse

perspectives and methodologies (Ntarangwi et al. 2006). On the other hand, this international focus has come at the expense of fostering similar connections among African anthropologists, even within the confines of a single country. It is striking to note that communication and collaboration across national boundaries among African anthropologists are often less frequent than those with colleagues in Europe and North America. This disconnect is particularly pronounced between Anglophone and Francophone African academics, where language acts as a significant barrier (ibid.). Several of the contributions to this volume attest to African universities' vibrant national and international networks and their vital role in promoting disciplinary development (Becker for South Africa; Hoinathy et al. for Chad; Pelican and Ngeh and Socpa and Nkwi for Cameroon). Yet besides such university-to-university collaborations, the establishment of professional organisations and networks on the continent, such as the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), have been key steps toward strengthening the visibility and epistemic freedom of African scholarship (Olukoshi and Nyamnjoh 2006; Nkwi 2018).

In their contribution, **Thoughts on "Coloniality" and Africanity: Scholarship in African Universities and African Studies in Germany,** Abimbola Adesoji and Hans Peter Hahn critically reflect upon the foundations of Northern social science and humanities thought within African academia. They argue that framing research on Africa and Africans and the rise of scientific disciplines elaborating knowledge on the continent and its inhabitants was invariably embedded in epistemological traditions of Europe established during the 16th to 18th centuries. In the 19th century, imperialism and colonial expansion used these frameworks as a justification for political subjugation and exploitation. A cornerstone of decolonial efforts is the exposure of the historical foundations and gross power imbalances of disciplinary thought and practices. Epistemological violence and flagrant disregard for alternative non-European perspectives were essential building blocks during the laying of disciplinary foundations. Adesoji and Hahn delineate what the efforts that undermine such academic foundations framed by coloniality might look like. Systematic consultation with African humanities scholars – for example, in the fields of history, philosophy and social and cultural anthropology – and the integration of alternative theories and scientific practices into the canon of disciplines are essential for advancing the emerging decolonial project. Adesoji and Hahn single out the German African Studies Association (VAD) as a case study and establish both its historical foundations and its original framing through a coloniality

mindset. But did emancipatory efforts made by the organisation in the second half of the 20th century help to replace such earlier frames? Adesoji and Hahn are sceptical and show that despite considerable effort to engage with decolonial perspectives, the organisation retains some of its former frames. They argue that it is the task of the contemporary generation of social scientists to further the project of decoloniality and to give it a face; that is, to translate a critical and reflexive mindset into meaningful institutional solutions that can truly transform the epistemic foundations of the social sciences and humanities.

Decolonising the academy – practical examples

Part two of the edited volume discusses strategies concerned with addressing the challenge of decolonising anthropology in practical terms. Three approaches are taken up: changing the curriculum, international collaboration at par, and the establishment of a decolonised "native" anthropology.

African anthropologists' development of meaningful intellectual agendas, working practices and international collaborations have progressively contributed to attracting increasing numbers of students (Ntarangwi et al. 2006; Nyamnjoh 2016). Despite these obvious successes, forging an identity for anthropology in Africa remains a complex task since many of its proponents have been trained in traditions of scholarship at institutions in the Global North. As in other academic disciplines (Chaya and Chika 2018; Molla et al. 2016), many African early career scholars earn their doctorate at universities in Europe and North America, while the number of PhD graduates from Indian and Chinese universities has been increasing in recent decades. Until now, PhD studies financed at universities of the Global North have provided for more financial stability and more research funding than universities in Africa can habitually supply. At the same time, African anthropologists seek to escape the academic treadmill of engaging with theoretical debates mainly taking place in Europe and North America, and actively contribute to decolonising the discipline and its curricula (Becker in this volume; Jegede 2015).

Heike Becker's contribution, **"Because Rhodes Fell": Historical development, institutional contexts, and the challenges of decolonisation of South African anthropology,** opens with reflections on the state of anthropology in South Africa and the discipline's attempt to consider aspirations towards decolonisation in its teaching and research practices during the 2010s. While

the quest for decolonisation currently prevails in discourses at and around many anthropology departments in South Africa, the target of change is a moving one: What exactly needs to be decolonised? How is this to be done best and who are the actors of decolonisation? There is no shortcut to decolonisation, no blueprint on how to go about it, and no single formula on what to address first. Becker describes in great detail what single anthropology departments do to experiment in order to approach the needs and wants of decolonisation adequately. It is especially this part of Becker's contribution that is of broader interest. The first part of the chapter provides a concise overview of the discipline's institutional development spanning the colonial, apartheid and early post-apartheid eras. As Becker rightly points out, anthropology as a discipline has a long history in South Africa dating back to the 1920s. It has produced many influential and critical thinkers, including White and Black South African anthropologists, who in their work have been driven by the country's particular political-economic context and its radical transformation. Becker provides an insightful account of early Black anthropologists, many of whom were forced to leave the country in the course of their careers. Black anthropologists gained prominence again in the post-apartheid era and, importantly, in the 21st century with student protests and the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement which explicitly urged the decolonisation of South African academia and society. The second part of Becker's contribution sketches a number of approaches to instil decolonisation into the syllabus and the staffing structure of departments. The challenge arises from the fact that there is no single meaning of decolonisation. Consequently, numerous critiques and strategies have emerged, including calls for curriculum reform, reassessment of research subjects and objectives, and embracing new forms of knowledge and anthropological writing genres. Giving detailed accounts of different departments and colleagues' initiatives, Becker outlines approaches towards readjustment of the discipline's curriculum and pedagogical practice that enable it to address the broader challenges of social transformation. She ends with the conscious remark that decolonisation is a truly transnational endeavour, thus echoing the call of Adesoji and Hahn (in this volume) to decolonise the academy not only in Africa but also in Germany.

With regard to decolonising the curricula, we can also draw on the experiences of different national traditions, for example Cameroon and Kenya, that long have gone their own way of "Africanising" their anthropology curricula, particularly in regard to their applied strands of development and medical anthropology. Yet, as Socpa and Nkwi (in this volume) emphasise, it is key to re-

tain also "pure"/classical anthropology and an international corpus of key readings as part of the general training in order to produce high quality research, which is also the basis for good applied research.

In his contribution, **(Re)Building Epistemology or (Re)Shaping Societal Outlook: A critique of the Sudan's Islamisation of knowledge paradigm,** Bakheit Mohammed Nur deals with another more radical approach to decolonisation. In Sudan, not only were the curricula of some social science disciplines transformed, but, through a programme that aimed at the "Islamisation of knowledge", decolonisation envisioned a radical rejection of a scientific paradigm that was framed as "Euro-American" in favour of Islamic epistemologies. This politically motivated programme aspired to tie academic excellence to an Islamisation of all scientific disciplines. Islamic sciences, Islamic educational institutions, publication houses and academic journals were thus intended to contribute to well-being, political unity and sustainability. On the basis of fieldwork in Khartoum State, which is the home of three major Islamic universities – Omdurman Islamic University, the University of Holy Qur'an and Islamic Sciences, and the International University of Africa – Nur reflects upon the dilemmas of a wholesale decolonisation via Islamisation. Will the formulation of Islamic concepts for all disciplinary specialisations and a thorough scrutiny of Euro-American concepts suffice? Or is there a need to reorganise disciplines altogether and opt for a new division of labour among the social sciences and, in the end, establish new disciplines based on Islamic epistemologies? Nur shows that the "Islamisation of knowledge" project is politically motivated and that its contents and procedures are also contested amongst Islamic researchers. Some argue that the basic scientific structures are fundamentally shaped by the thinking of enlightenment and modernisation. To cut oneself off from this fundamental disciplinary organisation of academia is tantamount to self-inflicted marginalisation. Others argue that the "Islamisation of knowledge" project favours one version of Islam over a diversity of Islamic beliefs and approaches to knowledge and, hence, disregards the breadth and multitude of Islamic civilisations.

While the transformation of teaching syllabi or of entire disciplines are possible trajectories for decolonising the future academy, other approaches tackle the question of how to decolonise research methods and collaboration (Guma et al. 2024; Mogstad and Lee-Shan 2018). For example, Francis Nyamnjoh (2012b) advocates for a paradigm shift in anthropology's approach to studying Africa, emphasising the importance of embracing and reflecting the continent's creative diversity. He argues that anthropologists studying Africa should

incorporate this diversity into every aspect of their research projects, from conceptualisation to implementation, and in their collaboration with "native" and "at-home" anthropologists across disciplines. Using the metaphor of the three blind men and the elephant, he also rejects the idea of replacing one perspective with another, such as that of the European anthropologists (blind men), with that of the "natives" (the elephant). Instead, he advocates for facilitating conversations that embrace diverse viewpoints and acknowledge the limitations inherent in each perspective. This requires a critical interrogation of anthropologists' assumptions that our ways of knowing are superior to the ways of knowing of fellow academics, or of those we study.

Central to Nyamnjoh's proposal is the concept of co-production, which goes beyond conventional professional collaboration to prioritise teamwork and inclusivity. He calls for multi- and transdisciplinary endeavours that actively involve the communities being studied in shaping the research process. This approach aims to create a more equitable platform for dialogue among multiple perspectives, moving away from the hierarchical dynamics of earlier anthropological research.

The contribution of Michaela Pelican and Jonathan Ngeh, **Towards Joint Production of Knowledge in the Third Space – lessons learned,** critically reflects on the challenges and benefits of collaboration as a possible pathway toward decolonising anthropological research. How can students and scientists from different contexts work together despite power asymmetries? Pelican and Ngeh discuss efforts towards joint and cooperative knowledge production in a student research programme that was co-organised by the Cameroonian Universities of Yaoundé, Dschang and Bamenda, and the German University of Cologne. Six Cameroonian students and six German students accompanied by five established academics set out to research the future-oriented aspirations of urban youth in Yaoundé, Cameroon's capital. The authors take Homi Bhabha's (2004) concept of Third Space as a lead concept. Do cultures mix and is hybridisation possible as "a double process of decontextualization and recontextualization, first reaching out to appropriate something alien and then domesticating it" (Burke and Hsia 2007: 10)? Such translation work is intended to open up options for something new. Pelican and Ngeh share this optimistic assessment of hybridity and engage the reader in a detailed, engaged and well reflected ethnography of cooperation. Both authors reflect upon their (different) perspectives and engagements with the collaborative project. Ngeh joined the project as a non-tenured lecturer at a late stage, while Pelican was a full professor as well as being in charge of the programme's budget which came

from the German University entirely. Their contribution is innovative as it does not fuse these different perspectives in one text, but presents two different accounts of the same process. In this way, they each reflect separately upon the preparation process, the fieldwork period and the final data analysis before coming to a joint conclusion. Pelican and Ngeh show that such collaboration is possible if asymmetries of power are made visible and are reflected upon. Academic cooperation across borders is certainly one important instrument of decolonising the social sciences in general and anthropology in particular. Hence, the auto-ethnographic approach adopted here makes problematic constellations visible and does not deny them in a superficial discourse on collaboration. Power asymmetries, of course, do not collapse if we only want them to disappear. Pelican and Ngeh show that a consciousness for, and a critique of, such power imbalances is essential; but beyond that, only intense social work – communication and practical collaboration – can lead towards joint knowledge production in a social space.

In a similar vein the contribution by Remadji Hoinathy, Djimet Deli and Andrea Behrends, **Doing Anthropology at Home, in Chad,** depicts how the collaboration between researchers from Chad and various academic institutions in Europe gave rise to the development of a national anthropology in Chad. The authors convincingly argue that this collaborative effort enabled Chadian anthropology to develop a decolonial perspective and to test-run innovative methods of engaged empirical research. The decolonising impetus is based on the well reflected argument that, in the Chadian context, anthropology must first of all contribute to societal ends, to more justice, to more participation and to more recognition. Chad's young and emergent anthropology must fulfil these aims in the face of governmental mistrust and neglect. Indeed, local political conditions characterised by authoritarianism, clientelism and dependency are described as a major constraint for the development of a national anthropological tradition. In other words, Chadian anthropologists have to cope with an adverse political environment and, at the same time, justify their way of doing anthropology vis á vis international partners and donors who prioritise basic research and are often averse to application-focussed research. Hoinathy and colleagues describe how Chadian anthropology developed on the institutional level as a separate discipline taught at the national university and at the same time successfully established the non-university anthropology centre CRASH (*Centre de Recherches en Anthropologie et Sciences Humaines*). The great number and immense diversity of CRASH's activities give evidence of the country's need for anthropological knowledge and ethnographic method-

ology in numerous societally highly relevant fields, ranging from the social-ecological consequences of Chad's oil boom to the proliferation of violent conflicts. In many such fields a devoted, application-focussed anthropology substantially adds to the understanding of local concerns and local adaptive strategies.

A third approach towards decolonising methodology outlined in this volume is the establishment of a decolonised "native" anthropology. Is doing "anthropology at home" in Africa recognised, accepted and independent? Ntarangwi et al. (2006) believe that African anthropologies currently being carried out "at home" have a real value and are crucial for the future of the discipline. Yet, they argue that amidst the international exchanges that take place, African anthropology finds itself at a crossroads, torn between asserting its own identity and building upon the established traditions of scholarship present in Global North institutions where its practitioners have been trained.

Faced with similar challenges, Souleymane Diallo and Karim Zafer problematise the age-old insider-outsider debate that anthropologists have contemplated for a couple of decades. Adopting a decolonial lens in their contribution, **Decolonising the "Native", Insider and Outsider Categories in Anthropology,** Diallo and Zafer reflect upon their respective fieldwork experiences. Diallo worked with different Tuareg communities in and around refugee camps in Mali, whereas Zafer worked in Germany with male unaccompanied refugee youths from Arabic speaking countries. In both instances, they show that the insider-outsider dichotomy is invalid and misleading. They first look at language competence. Too often, an excellent command of the local language is attributed to anthropologists who work within their own country. Yet, Diallo explains that his Malian identity did not guarantee any competence in Tamashek, the Tuareg language, nor did the Tuareg he interviewed necessarily request that interviews be conducted in their own language. Many were happy and competent enough to converse in French while others preferred to speak in Bamankan, the national language. Diallo and Zafer then iterate other aspects of researcher-researched relations and point to a complexity that the simplistic insider-outsider dichotomy cannot address. Although Diallo and Zafer perhaps had some "insider-advantages" when discussing things with their interlocutors, their alleged position as insiders also brought about some challenges. Zafer, for example, reports that the fact that his respondents automatically linked him with an Arabic mainstream culture made it nearly impossible to discuss things either with young women in general, or with the female partners of his interlocutors in particular. Diallo rapports that low-

caste Tuareg actively tried to prevent him from any engagement with upper-caste Tuareg. The challenge both authors see is that their anthropological fieldwork environment sometimes forces them back to their "insiderhood". They are deemed to be insider experts for their societies. By conclusion this, however, also means that they are fixated on "their societies" for their research. The chapter's authors argue that "this association and ascription has been the easiest and maybe the only open way until now to enter the academic field in the Global North and to prove ourselves as trustworthy anthropologists and scholars."

Their contribution presents a strong argument for debunking the naïve and misleading insider-outsider concept and excluding it from the anthropological canon in order to allow multiple connections between researcher and researched. It also points to the need to decolonise and equalise research choices in the Global South and North and encourage researchers from the Global South to study topics and societies in the Global North. Other authors have argued in a similar direction, problematising the position of insider anthropologists. According to Nyamnjoh (2012b), acknowledging the possibility of "native" anthropology and actually recognising the achievements of "native" anthropologists are two distinct challenges. Even if individuals from marginalised backgrounds hold "residence permits" or "passports" within the anthropological community, they may still find themselves relegated to the margins, perceived as second-class citizens among their peers – figuring as the "outsider within". African anthropologists, in particular, face a unique dilemma as they navigate the desire for integration, interconnection, and interdependence within the global anthropological community.

Ways forward

We opened this introduction by asking whether decolonising the academy is a project of the future. Drawing on the contributions to this volume, we can confidently say that there have been many forerunners in different parts of the African continent, from which we can learn and draw inspiration. In some chapters (e.g. Adesoji and Hahn; Hoinathy et al.; Pelican and Ngeh), collaboration emerges as a common theme on possible ways forward to decolonising research praxis and knowledge production. However, collaboration is an active endeavour whose success is not guaranteed. We believe that decolonising the academy is a two-way process that is not limited to universities in Africa but

is as much a duty and endeavour of universities in the Global North. We thus suggest taking the conversations initiated in these workshops, and continued in this edited volume, as a starting point and stimulus for further debates on decolonising the future academy not only in Africa but at German universities.

Bibliography

Asad, T. (1979): "Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter." In: G. Huizer/B. Mannheim (eds.), The Politics of Anthropology: From Colonialism and Sexism Toward a View from Below, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton, pp. 85–94. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110806458.85.

Assal, M.A.M. (2024): "Sudan, Anthropology in." In: H. Callan (ed.), The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology, https://doi.org/10.1002/978111892 4396.wbiea2101.

Beinart, W./Brown, K./Gilfoyle, D. (2009): "Experts and Expertise in Colonial Africa Reconsidered: Science and the Interpretation of Knowledge." In: African Affairs, 108/432, pp. 413–433. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adp037.

Bhabha, H. K. (2004): The Location of Culture. (2ⁿᵈ ed.), London: Routledge.

Bhambra, G. K. (2014): "Postcolonial and Decolonial Dialogues." In: Postcolonial Studies 17/2, pp. 115–121. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2014.96641 4.

Boswell, R./Nyamnjoh, F. (eds.) (2018): Postcolonial African Anthropologies, HSRC Press.

Bounneuil, Ch. (2000): Development as Experiment: Science and State Building in Late Colonial and Postcolonial Africa, 1930–1970. In: Osiris, 2nd Series 15/1, Nature and Empire: Science and the Colonial Enterprise, pp. 258–281. https://doi.org/10.1086/649330.

Burke, P./Hsia, R. P. (2007). "Introduction." In: P. Burke/ R.P. Hsia (eds.), Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–4.. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511497193.

Chaya, H./Chika S. (2018): Research and PhD Capacities in Sub-Saharan Africa: South Africa Report. https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/h 233_02_south_africa_final_web.pdf.

Eichhorn, S. J. (2019): "How the West Was Won: A Deconstruction of Politicised Colonial Engineering." In: Political Quarterly 91, pp. 204–209. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-923X.12773.

Falola, T. (2023): Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and African Decolonial Studies, London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003449775.

Gebre, Y.D. (2024): "Ethiopia, Anthropology in." In: H. Callan (ed.), The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology, https://doi.org/10.1002/978111892 4396.wbiea1985.

Gordon, R. (2024): South Africa's Dreams. Ethnologists and Apartheid in Namibia, Windhoek: University of Namibia Press.

Gordon, R./Spiegel, A. (1993): "Southern African Revisted." In: Annual Reviews in Anthropology 22, pp. 83–105. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.an.22.10 0193.000503.

Gu, M. D. (2023): "Is Decoloniality a New Turn in Postcolonialism"?" In: Culture as Text 1/1-2, pp. 5–18. https://doi.org/10.1515/cat-2023-1009

Guma, P. K./Akello, G./Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2024): "Forum I: Decolonising Academic Cooperation." In: A. Fleschenberg/K. Kresse/R. C. Castillo (eds.), Thinking with the South: Reframing Research Collaboration amid Decolonial Imperatives and Challenges, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, pp. 63–94.

Jacobs, C. /Pelican, M. (2019): "Workshop der RG Afrika: Towards an Independent Anthropology at African Universities: Possibilities, Challenges and Trajectories." In: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie, Mitteilungen Nr. 52, September 2019, pp. 27–28.

Jegede, A. S. (2015): "From Gateway to Gatekeeper: Anthropology: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." In: P. N. Nkwi (ed.), The Anthropology of Africa: Challenges for the 21st Century, Langaa RPCIG, pp. 3–12. https://doi.org/10.23 07/j.ctvh9vxg1.4.

Lewis, D. (1973): "Anthropology and Colonialism." In: Current Anthropology 14/5, pp. 581–602. https://doi.org/10.1086/201393.

Mafeje, A. (1998): "Anthropology and Independent Africans: Suicide or End of an Era?" In: African Sociological Review 2/1, pp. 1–43.

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2016): Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality, Frantz Fanon Foundation, https://www.fondation-frantzfanon.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/maldonado-torres_outline_of_ten_theses-10.23.16.pdf.

Mbembe, A. (2021): Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization, New York: Columbia University Press.

Mignolo, W. D./Walsh, C. E. (2018): On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis, Durham, London: Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371779.

Mogstad H./Lee-Shan, T. (2018): "Decolonizing Anthropology: Reflections from Cambridge." In: The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology 36/2, pp. 53–72. https://doi.org/10.3167/cja.2018.360206.

Molla T/Cuthbert D/DJPFiE C (2016): "In Pursuit of the African PHD: a Critical Survey of Emergent Policy Issues in Select Sub-Saharan African Nations, Ethiopia, Ghana and South Africa." In: Policy Futures Educ 14, pp. 635–54.doi:10.1177/1478210316641.

Moore, S. (1994): Anthropology and Africa: Changing Perspectives on a Changing Scene, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Muller, M. (2018): "Decolonising Engineering in South Africa – Experience to Date and Some Emerging Challenges." In: South African Journal of Science 114/5-6, pp. 1–6. https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2018.a0270.

Narayan, K. (1993): "How Native Is a "Native" Anthropologist?" In: American Anthropologist 95/3, pp. 671–686. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1993.95.3.02a00070.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2018): Epistemic Freedom in Africa: Deprovincialization and Decolonization, London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429492204.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2020): Decolonization, Development and Knowledge in Africa Turning Over a New Leaf, London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003030423.

Nkwi, P. N. (2015). "Introduction: The Anthropology of Africa: Challenges for the 21st Century." In: P. N. Nkwi (ed.), The Anthropology of Africa: Challenges for the 21st Century, Langaa RPCIG, pp. ix–xiv. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvh9vxg1.3.

Nkwi, P.N. (2018): "Pan-African Anthropological Association (PAAA)." In: H. Callan (ed.), The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea1823.

Nkwi, P. N. (2021): From Handmaiden of Colonialism to Esteemed Discipline: Professor Paul Nchoji Nkwi on the Reinvention of Anthropology in Africa (In Conversation with Ivoline Kefen Budji), Langaa RPCIG, Bamenda, Cameroon.

Ntarangwi, M./Mills, D./Babiker, M. H. M. (2006): African Anthropologies: History, critique, and practice, London: Zed Books.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986): Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature, Pourtsmuth N. H.: Heinemann.

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2012a): "Potted Plants in Greenhouses: A Critical Reflection on the Resilience of Colonial Education in Africa." In: Journal of Asian and

African Studies, 47/2, pp. 129–154. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909611417240.

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2012b): "Blinded by Sight: Divining the Future of Anthropology in Africa." In: Africa Spectrum, 47/2/3, pp. 63–92. https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971204702-304.

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2016): #RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa, Langaa RPCIG. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvmd84n8.

Nyamongo, I. K. (2007): "Teaching and Training in Anthropology in Kenya: The Past, current Trends and Future Prospects." In: African Anthropologist 14, pp. 19–42. https://doi.org/10.4314/aa.v14i1-2.57726.

Olukoshi, A. (2006): "African Scholars and African Studies." In: Development in Practice 16/6, pp. 533–544. https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520600958116.

Olukoshi, A./Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2006): "CODESRIA: 30 years of Scholarly Publishing." Africa Media Review 14/1-2, pp. 17–26. https://doi.org/10.57054/amr.v14i1-2.5196.

Parashar, S./Schulz, M. (2021): "Colonial Legacies, Postcolonial 'Selfhood' and the (Un)doing of Africa." In: Third World Quarterly 42/5, pp. 867–881. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2021.1903313.

Quijano, A. (2000): "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America." In: Nepantla: Views from South 1/3, pp. 568. https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580900015002005.

Rassool, C./Uzer, E./Hammami, F. (2022): "The Epistemic Work of Decolonization and Restitution: A Critical Conversation." In: F. Hammami/E. Uzer (eds.), Theorizing Heritage through Non-Violent Resistance, Palgrave Studies in Cultural Heritage and Conflict, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77708-1_10.

Tangwa, G.B. (1992): "Colonial Legacy and the Language Situation in Cameroon." In: Quest: Philosophical Discussions 6/2, pp. 24–43.