

the 2006 Uganda National Culture Policy, the Uganda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2006), the Uganda Handicrafts Export Strategy (2006), the 2005 UNESCO convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, or the successful project proposal by the NACCAU and the UTA. All press releases and visual material available online which was produced for the UNESCO *Strengthening the Sustainability of the Creative Industries in Uganda* project was also included into the sample.

Lastly, I conducted 5 follow-up interviews via WhatsApp. Those include 3 audiocall interviews which were not transcribed and 2 written interviews. The WhatsApp interviews were shorter and more focused with the purpose of discussing and validating (preliminary) results of my analysis, closing gaps in the data, or clarifying and situating findings (e.g. on the role of the *kumusoola* tree, see also chapter 7.3).

4.2 Research Paradigm and Epistemological Parameters

Postcolonial Thoughts in Situational Analysis

Knowledge is never impartial, removed, or objective, but always **situated**, produced by actors who are positioned in specific locations and shaped by numerous cultural and other influences. (McEwan, 2019: 47, emphasis as in original)

Postcolonial theorists argue that contemporary realities are a palimpsest of the colonial era, with relationalities between and among collective actors, organizations, or human-environment-interaction being shaped by the colonial experience of all involved. Empirical inquiry informed by postcolonial thoughts seeks to decode this palimpsest to understand the underpinning structures of the contemporary, postcolonial realities, and specifically address mechanisms that reproduce structural inequalities. Through its analytical focus on power dynamics, situated relationalities as well as discursively negotiated knowledge production, Situational Analysis proposes various methodological avenues to pursue qualitative research from postcolonial perspectives (Clarke et al., 2018; Neureither and Klages, 2023).

Postcolonial theory is not a clear-cut theoretical concept. Rather, it is a construct of numerous, at times conflicting positions and theoretical assumptions. Unlike other theories, postcolonial theory has no clear origin – contrary to the name's suggestion – and there is no consensus on whether postcolonial theory should be referred to in the singular or the plural, either (Castro Varela and Dhawan, 2020). Many scholars trace its origins back to the critical work of the *Subaltern Studies Group*

in South Asia. Building on Gramsci's notion of subalternity and cultural preparation², they aim to (re-)write history from below. In this sense, postcolonial theory(s) emerged "out of the study of fiction written in the ex-colonial countries (McEwan, 2019: 46). Others argue that the works of Edward Said (1994 [1978]), Homi Bhabha (2011 [1994]), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) are foundational for the establishment of postcolonial studies and theorization (Neureither and Klages, 2023). However, others find that the origins lay in the anticolonial movements and their critical articulation about colonization and imperialism and as such are much older than the works of Said, for example, or than the *Subaltern Studies Group*. For them, the origin of postcolonial theorization dates back to the *Négritude Movement* and hence to the 1930s (Rabaka, 2015).

I refer to postcolonial theories, because their origins are multiple and situated in the particularities of diverse colonial experiences. And while there may be parallels in the colonial experience among formerly colonized countries, this experience varies greatly depending on the time of colonization, the natural resources of the colonized region, and the colonizing country as well as on the local social, political, and cultural infrastructures (see also chapters 2.2 and 3.3). What postcolonial theories have in common, then, is that they conceptualize history as a process of entangled relationalities between formerly colonized countries and formerly colonizing countries (Castro Varela and Dhawan, 2020). In this sense, considering postcolonial perspectives in empirical inquiry means taking up the challenge to study colonialism and imperialism as phenomena that significantly impacted historical processes transnationally and to trace their continuities into the contemporary.

Central Aspects of Postcolonial Theories

Postcolonialism does not simply refer to the post-independence era of formally colonized countries. According to María do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan (2020: 24, my translation), it "must be considered as a form of resistance against the colonial rule and its consequences" that began before independence and continues to impact all aspects of life and living until this day.

2 Antonio Gramsci used the term *subaltern* in the letters he wrote while being a political prisoner in fascist Italy (1926–1935). During his imprisonment he wrote the widely received prison notebooks in which he developed important theoretical fragments around the notions of (cultural) hegemony, civil society as well as the role of organic and traditional intellectuals in maintaining and altering the prevailing social order (Gramsci, 2011 [1992]; 2011 [1996]; 2011 [2007]; 2015 [1926]). Alongside the concept of *cultural preparation*, they were important sensitizing concepts during my research and for the development of my understandings of civil society as political space embedded into power relations (Hickey, 2005), whereby it is both: the site of resistance and of the established order.

The process of colonization, its hegemonic structures, and mechanisms as well as the consequences thereof are complex and multifold – as is the process of decolonization. Since, for postcolonial thinkers, colonialism did not end with the independence of formerly colonized countries, postcolonial theories analytically search for and seek to render visible the mechanisms that support the maintenance of hegemonic power relations which prevent actual decolonization (Mignolo, 2002; Quijano, 2000). The process of decolonization is considered ongoing but not necessarily as linear and advancing. It is a process of constant negotiation and contestation that centralizes the struggle for epistemic independence of formerly colonized countries as much as it considers the neo-colonial interests of formerly colonizing countries that seek to keep their privileges of access to (natural) resources (Botha et al., 2021; do Mar Castro Varela and Dhawan, 2020).

One central aim of postcolonial research is the (self-)critical investigation of latent and explicit manifestations of hegemony in all dimensions of life and living. In qualitative inquiry, postcolonial thoughts question the legitimacy of knowledge claims of Anglo-American conceptualization, inclusive of notions of art, civil society, development, and progress:

In the context of a solidifying colonial expansion (late eighteenth century to World War I), the Europeans' story about themselves became a story about Man's climb from a low and tribal existence to his culmination in European civilization. The idea of progress was a brilliant solution to the problem of the Other; this narrative located artifacts, and the people who produced them, at the bottom of the scheme. (Errington, 1998: 14)

Following Sherry Errington, the idea of progress tells the story of historicization from a European perspective, with sciences and technology forming the high end of development. However, had Europeans not exported their ideas about progress across the globe, other definitions of the notion might have prevailed. Had the idea of progress not been a European invention but the idea of Australian Aboriginals, Errington argues, the parameters that measure progress surely would have looked differently:

If Australian Aboriginals had invented the idea of progress, complexity in kinship might have been at the top of the evolutionary ladder, while the impoverished and pathetically simple bilateral kinship systems of Euro-America would have been at the bottom. [...] But Europeans invented the idea of progress, hence technological power and the ability to extract resources were put at the top, while Australian Aboriginals became nineteenth-century writers' favorite example of the primitive. (ibid, 1998: 20)

Errington's observations are not only relevant regarding concepts such as progress or civil society (see also chapter 3). The term *Eurocentrism* and the ideas it stands for are prime examples of how one singular dominant strand of thinking, equipped with sufficient coercive and hegemonic power, can determine what knowledge is and what it is not. While Eurocentrism has never been not criticized, it did establish a set of normative standards in academic research that are so deeply embedded into its structures that they are particularly challenging to overcome (Brunner, 2020).

Yet, more and more scholars, especially also from the Global South, do find avenues to break with the status quo. They propose different approaches to research from their particular situatedness and promote epistemic diversity across disciplines in research (Denzin et al., 2008; Denzin and Giardina, 2019). While some emphasize decolonized, pluriversal approaches to inquiry (Reiter, 2018), scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2008 [1999]) and Bagele Chilisa (2012) have proposed indigenous approaches to research that emphasize the positionality of a particular people. These methodological approaches are informed by local understandings of reality, knowledge, and value beyond the dominating conceptual frameworks that are often considered Eurocentric. Rather than primarily gathering scholastic knowledge and advancing the academic discourse, they look at research from a local perspective to deliver added value, especially to those participating in the research. Indigenous methodologies understand the research subjects as co-researchers and as experts (Chilisa, 2012) and favor participatory action research or arts-based methods with transformative potential over more conventional methods (Denzin and Giardina, 2019).

The lesson of Bagele Chilisa's *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (2012) in particular deeply influenced my thinking about conducting empirical research in post-colonial societies and raised my awareness of structural power imbalances between me and the people who agreed to participate in and support me with my research. However, considering my own positionality as a rather privileged, non-indigenous researcher as well as the aims of my research, it did not seem appropriate to use an indigenous research paradigm for my own study. My indigeneity, so to say, lays elsewhere. Reading Chilisa sensitized me on my epistemic boundaries and simultaneously on the importance of particularly considering power imbalances, situated complexities, and constituting elements that co-determine possibilities and limits for everyone involved.

With Situational Analysis (SitA), Adele E. Clarke proposed a theory/methods package that methodologically reflects on epistemic violence in a research situation and introduces strategies to visibilize moments of silencing actors and positions in empirical inquiry (Clarke, 2005). SitA purposefully considers the activist potential

of empirical inquiry (Gaedicke and Schwertel, 2023). As a feminist³ sociologist, Clarke considers the struggle for more social justice as a central aim for which she strives in her work (Clarke et al., 2018). To her, research practices are political practices per se, as through them it is decided whose positions matter and are worthy to be articulated in results chapters or journal articles. Furthermore, Clarke recognizes how research methods carry a set of assumptions about the world, values, and truth. Therefore, methods relevant to critical research must be reflective and “relentlessly empirical,” rather than “inherently preconfiguring what matters” (Clarke et al., 2018: 358).

Over the course of years, SitA has been successfully used in indigenous research projects as well as in studies using a postcolonial approach (Clarke et al., 2022; Genat, 2009; Kleibl, 2017; Salazar Pérez and Canella, 2015; Santoro, 2013). It is not a distinctively defined post- or decolonial methodology but a methodology compatible with indigenous interests in empirical research and thus is a suitable research approach that facilitates the consideration of my positionality as a non-indigenous researcher and the situatedness of my research in (post)colonial Ugandan realities.

Before I turn to the eight dimensions of SitA that make it particularly relevant for postcolonial approaches to inquiry I already introduced in the previous sub-chapter, I will now turn towards some of the theoretical and epistemological underpinnings of SitA first. For Clarke et al., “accountability in research [...] is of signal importance” (Clarke et al., 2018: 70). Accountability includes transparency also regarding the epistemological assumptions embedded into the research methods I used for gathering data as well as for the analysis.

Situational Analysis. Power, Complexity, and Relationalities

SitA, as understood by its developers, is not only a method for data analysis but comes as a methodological package that extends to the research design and combines several social theories that ground Situational Analysis theoretically and epistemologically. In what follows, I will first introduce the theoretical framework that informs SitA and then elaborate how they were relevant for my research.

Derived from Straussian Grounded Theory (GT), Clarke positions SitA as gaining its foundational theoretical resources from (1) interactionist sociology and American pragmatist philosophy (Clarke, 2005). Next, (2) Anselm Strauss' theory of social worlds and arenas with their focus on the conditions of social interaction on non-fungible grounds is of high importance. Alongside its explicitly (3) feminist perspec-

3 For Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, feminisms are considered in plural. Being deeply influenced by Donna Haraway's feminist theory paper on 'Situated Knowledges', they understand that “nothing comes without its world, so trying to know those worlds is crucial” (Haraway, 1997: 37, as cited in Clarke et al., 2018: 70).

tive, Clarke added new theoretical perspectives drawn largely from post-structural and postmodern theories strongly connected to the works of (4) Michel Foucault and of (5) Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. After having initially positioned SitA as Grounded Theory after the Postmodern (2005) and then the Interpretive Turn (2018), Clarke, Friese, and Washburn now conceptualize SitA as methodologically independent from but epistemologically rooted in GT (Clarke et al., 2022; Washburn et al., 2023). For SitA's theoretical underpinnings, Clarke et al. find the analytic centrality of (6) nonhuman actors and actants in Science and Technology Studies (STS) highly relevant extensions to the epistemological roots of GT.

(1) Straussian GT is epistemologically grounded in symbolic interactionism which has its origins in the Chicago School of the 1920s and 1930s and has its roots in American pragmatism. In broad lines, already pragmatism perceives reality as “fluid and somewhat indeterminate, and as open to multiple interpretations” (Charmaz, 2014: 263). It is considered a theory of knowledge that links facts and values and positions scientific truth as changeable, not terminated, and relative. Thereby, it judges its truth through an assessment of the practicality in empirical practice and acknowledges the partiality of human knowledge (Almeder, 1986; Charmaz, 2014).

Symbolic interactionism views human actions, both individual and collective, as a construction of self with the environment, meaning situation and society. It builds on the widely recognized and astoundingly pragmatic Thomas Theorem “[i]f men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas and Thomas, 1928: 572). Accordingly, symbolic interactionists assume that individual and collective actors constantly interpret actions that provoke re-actions. Reciprocity between interpretation and action then affect and constitute one another (Charmaz, 2014). The reciprocal processes make it a dynamic theoretical perspective that understands people as active beings. A perspective that emphasizes the way activities are accomplished and offers a “framework of premises and concepts for viewing social realities” (ibid: 262).

One of the central aims of this study, which focuses on the question of the situatedness of artistic handicraft production, is to understand and reconstruct how individuals in their social worlds and in competition or coalition with other social worlds negotiate the meanings of artistic handicraft production and products (sub-question 1). Here, I focus on the relationalities between perceptions and their consequences for action, on social and symbolic interaction. To do so, the following premises about reality construction on micro level introduced by Herbert Blumer (1969) and extended by Cathy Charmaz (1980) were used as sensitizing concepts in my research:

The first premise is that humans act towards things based on the meanings that things have for them. Charmaz specifies that those meanings are interpreted through shared language and communication. As such, they are frequently sub-

jectively observed and objectively given. Second, the derived meaning is a result of social interaction among individuals that is mediated by a “continually emerging processual nature” (Charmaz, 2014: 25). Third, the meanings themselves are constantly manipulated through an interpretative process by the individual in response to his/her/their encounters with human and non-human things. According to Charmaz, this process becomes *explicit* when conditions change or when an individual’s behavior is coded as problematic in a given situation.

However, power sensitive perspectives, including postcolonial scholarship, argue that focusing on social and symbolic interaction without considering conditional factors may limit the depth of the analysis, as they facilitate possibilities and limitations of individual and collective articulation (Spivak, 1988). For the development of SitA, Clarke considered *conditions* are pivotal and co-constitutive elements for social interaction. Therefore, she adapted the symbolic interactionist conditional matrix (Strauss, 1978) to a situational matrix and integrated Strauss’ social worlds/arenas theory (Clarke et al., 2018) which helped me address structural conditions analytically.

(2) The influence of social worlds/arenas theory in SitA manifests visibly in the social worlds/arenas maps – one of the four analytical maps Clarke developed (Clarke, 2005; Clarke et al., 2022). With social worlds/arenas maps, the way social worlds and their sub-worlds negotiate meaning and discourses in a shared arena of interest, their sites of encounter and contestation are analyzed (Clarke, 1991, see also chapter 4.4.1). However, while the analysis of social worlds “focuses on meaning-making amongst groups of actors – collectives of various sorts – and on collective action – people ‘doing things together’ (Becker, 1986)” (Clarke and Star, 2008: 113), it also considers how these

worlds work[] with shared objects. [...] The framework is relentlessly ecological, seeking to understand the nature of relations and action across the arrays of people **and things** in the arena, representation (narrative, visual, historical, rhetorical), processes of work [...] and many sorts of interwoven discourses. The social worlds framework is particularly attentive to situatedness and contingency, history and fluidity, and commitment and change. (ibid: 113, emphasis as in original)

The social worlds/arenas theory positions individuals and their actions into a “human ecology” (ibid: 114) which carefully considers how groups interact with one another in and with the natural environment based on the particular conditions of the environment. This is co-determined by the available infrastructure (virtual, offline, textual, or technical). Infrastructure is understood as “frozen discourses⁴ that

4 Discourses here refer to George Herbert Mead’s concept of universes of discourse as “commitments that stem from work and material contingencies” (Clarke and Star, 2008: 116) which Anselm Strauss translated into social worlds (Strauss, 1978), not to the concept of discourse

form avenues between social worlds and into arenas and larger structures” (ibid.: 115). Social worlds/arenas theory thus urges to consider not only the contemporary but also the history as informing present-day interactions and dynamics. It focuses on the processuality of relations and on the agency of things non-human, structures, and elements that co-constitute action and interaction (Clarke, 1991; Clarke and Star, 2008; Strauss, 1978). Considering the history vis-à-vis the contemporary understandings of as well as the analysis of the relationship actors form with artistic handicraft products and production was pivotal for the analysis of discourses that impact the meaning making processes, the second sub-question that guided my research process.

(3) The social worlds/arenas theory and its consideration of structure and things non-human that are co-constitutional works well with Clarke’s feminist, anti-racist perspective and her understanding of research as political activism (Clarke et al., 2022). SitA seeks to visibilize social injustices, particularly through promoting complexity and epistemic diversity as well as local epistemologies (ibid.). Feminisms pay particular attention to the execution of power and hegemony that suppress women and people considered female, disregard their perspectives, and invisibilize their political and social agency through patriarchy (Beauvoir, 2011 [1949]; Butler, 2015 [1990]). By pluralizing feminisms, Clarke acknowledges how female experiences are far from universal, too. For her, it is immanent that all universality claims – in reference to Antonio Gramsci – are to be considered “as hegemonic strategies seeking to silence or erase other perspectives” (Clarke et al., 2018: 10).

For example, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) demonstrates how multiple forms of marginalization make it impossible for the *subaltern others* – again, in reference to Gramsci – to participate in public debate and articulate themselves in society. In her essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, this *other* is a woman in India who is subject to othering processes through racism established by colonial rule and subject to patriarchal suppression based on gender within the local social order. Kimberlé Crenshaw coined these forms of multiple discrimination intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), which has become increasingly important in postcolonial thinking and analysis. Intersectionality acknowledges that multiple forms of marginalization based on gender, class, race, religion, age, and ability manifest in very particular ways that are more than the sum of their components (Crenshaw, 2022). Epistemic diversity and inclusivity are thus crucial for Clarke, which translates into the methodical requirement to map “**all** actors and discourses in the situation regardless of their power in that situation [...] [b]y **not** analytically recapitulating the power relations of domination” and to move “beyond what could be called the ‘master discourses’ (Hughes, 1971)” (Clarke, 2015a: 138, emphasis as in original).

analysis which prevails in European (especially French) phenomenology and in post-structuralism.

Considering the discourses that make it (im-)possible for particular social groups to articulate themselves publicly and make their positions heard in the civil society discourse on the functions and meanings of artistic handicraft fits very well with my third sub-question: What are the articulation possibilities of artistic handicraft artists in Ugandan civil society?, and hence was an important sensitizing concept for the analysis of my empirical data.

(4) Much like Anselm Strauss departed from centering the knowing subject and moved towards social worlds and hence the conditions that co-constitute social interaction, Michel Foucault, as argued by Clarke et al., focused on “the social’ as constituted through discursive practices and on discourses as constitutive of subjectivities” (Clarke, 2015b: 90). Foucault’s main research focus was the analysis of power – neither as a theory nor as a methodology, albeit his work directly influenced both theorization of power and the development of methodological strategies in inquiry. Yet, his main interest in studying power came from the idea “to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects” (Foucault, 1982: 777). According to Foucault, discourses and the *gaze* are particularly important for what he calls subjectification or, put simply, for becoming subjects (Foucault, 2020 [1979]). “Discipline ‘makes’ individuals,” he writes and explains how

it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise. It is not a triumphant power, which because of its own excess can pride itself on its omnipotence; it is a modest, suspicious power, which functions as a calculated, but permanent economy. [...] The success of disciplinary power derives no doubt from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation normalizing judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination. (ibid: 164)

Although it may not have been his objective, Foucault did develop a power theory whereby the *gaze* and dominant discourses mutually reinforce each other and “produce subjects/ subjectivity through surveillance, examination, and various other technologies of the self – ways of producing ourselves as proper disciplinary/disciplines subjects” (ibid: 80). SitA is thus particularly careful to examine the ways through which subjectivity can be achieved in the situation of inquiry – a process that, with Foucault, always occurs by *submitting* to the dominant discourses. However, because of its strong feminist, anti-racist, and social justice-oriented understanding of inquiry, SitA purposefully does not rest there, but demands researchers to find and “turn [] up the volume on minor[itized] discourses” (ibid: 225) in the situation of inquiry instead.

Clarke et al. (2018: 209) propose that a write-up of a SitA project may include “some aspects of ‘the big news’ about the project and some carefully selected and curated ‘close-up shots’ of the [...] analytic stories”. My experimentation with the so-

cial worlds/arenas map and the positional maps in which I decisively mapped minoritized social worlds and minoritized positions as well as the theoretical sampling with regard to the choice of the case studies in rural Eastern Uganda were highly influenced by the request to move beyond dominant discourses (see also chapter 7).

(5) Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987) describe the rhizome as a system that is a-centered, non-hierarchical, and defined by relations rather than an organizing structure. Hence, the concepts of rhizomes are of particular importance when analyzing the relations of all human and non-human actors and actants in the situation of inquiry. In SitA, this occurs especially in the form of (*messy*) situational and relational maps (see chapter 4.4.1).

The metaphor of a rhizome that spreads out horizontally below the surface, connecting many points to one another without having a main root or a center to speak of, further decentralizes the knowing subject in inquiry in favor of considering relationalities as the main focal point of empirical inquiry. In citing Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Clarke et al. find “it [the rhizome] pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 21, as cited in Clarke et al., e.g., 2022: 60; 2018: 92). Deleuze and Guattari further state how “the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily links to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs and even nonsign states” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 21). The concept of rhizomes and assemblage both embrace complexity and contingency, “messy as life itself!” (Clarke et al., 2015: 78–79).

Unlike rhizomes, the concept of assemblage has never been fully conceptualized, leaving it somewhat “obscured” to this day (Nail, 2017: 21). For Clarke et al., assemblage is a concept that brings together heterogenous entities in loose relations. An assemblage accepts the ever-changing dynamics of things and relations alike, leading the co-developers to conclude that all analyses, too, can only ever be partial and temporary.

(6) The final important theoretical root of SitA is its considerations of *nonhuman* actors and actants (ibid: 85). While it has become clear that this is a compatible element of many epistemological assumptions Clarke included in her theory/methods package, it is particularly emphasized upon in actor-network theory (ANT) (Latour, 1987). While the social worlds/arenas theory, Foucault’s power theory, and the theoretical concept of rhizomes and assemblages all emphasize the significance of things non-human for the analysis of relationalities, ANT affirms that (nonhuman) elements have agency and therefore can be(come) actants, actively co-constituting situations (Clarke et al., 2018). While this may be easy to imagine in STS, wherein machines keep humans alive or algorithms ‘decide’ which results will be shown in a Google search, art history and anthropological research, too, have indicated how

material can convey messages about social status (Erlank, 2014; Nakazibwe, 2005) or facilitate transition into adulthood (Khamalwa, 2012).

The shift towards the inclusion of the nonhuman in inquiries of the social sciences and humanities has been referred to as the *Nonhuman Turn* (Grusin, 2015), which further questions and deconstructs the division of active subjects and passive objects in favor of opening up avenues that enable to analyze the agencies formed by human and nonhuman actors and actants (Bennett, 2015) as well as power relations and networks (Clarke et al., 2018). For the study of the agency (sub-question 4) of artistic handicraft products, it is an important theoretical concept which, in my empirical data, was at times linked with the raw materials used or the expression of affection through the products (see also chapter 6.3 and 7.2).

Although Situational Analysis was not explicitly designed for research from a postcolonial perspective, its acknowledgment of knowledge as always partial, its theoretical underpinnings that break with post-positivistic scientific methodologies and its conceptualization of research being political make it an appropriate approach to address and to answer my main research question which subsumes all sub-question: How is contemporary artistic handicraft production situated in Ugandan civil society?

Making Situational Analysis More Explicitly Postcolonial

While SitA may be implicitly postcolonial, its theoretical underpinnings rest entirely in western academic history. The points of reference and the theoretical spaces it negotiates refer to scholars such as Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, Charles Sanders Peirce, and others. Of course, the names of those men are important points of reference that, in part, help subjectify a scholar who self-positions as belonging to a particular school of thought (e.g., Chicago School of Sociology). The school may be critical to the point of rejecting the status-quo, and yet it remains within the established academic system. Speaking with Foucault, it renders those outside of these norms invisible and unheard until they submit to those positions of authority accepted in the academic discourse. Speaking with Spivak, it does not grant visibility to everyone who submits to the normative frameworks, either. Speaking with Clarke, this is precisely the reason why research should also focus on minored positions and discourses. However, the precondition of “turning up the volume on minor[itized] discourses” (Clarke et al., 2018: 225) is that those positions and discourses rest within the boundaries of the established framework (Minga, 2021).

Thus, despite promoting epistemic diversity, Situational Analysis and its developers cannot overcome epistemic violence because, by needing to establish SitA within the established academic frameworks, the developers – with Foucault – also need to submit to the discourse of academia in order to become a subject (Neure-

ither and Klages, 2023). Through its reflectivity and its turn towards discourses and the nonhuman, SitA makes these processes visible and hence makes epistemic violence debatable (Clarke et al., 2018; Neureither and Klages, 2023). The following eight dimensions presented by Clarke et al. (2018) are particularly relevant for postcolonial research.

The first dimension is that SitA is “relentlessly empirical. [...] [F]irst and foremost, the analysis constructs the broad situation of inquiry itself empirically” (Clarke et al., 2018: 358). This important dimension is equally confusing because it understands the situation of inquiry as both a starting and ending point for analysis. Clarke et al. are convinced that we all bring *a priori* knowledge to the research situation, especially the researcher about his/her/their project. When I first embarked on this research trajectory, I had an interest in studying the linkages between artistic articulation and civil society because I had observed, through my work, that many people, projects, and even development agendas ‘spoke’ about it, but somehow, they never specified what exactly they meant and how those linkages manifest (see also chapter 4.4.2). Ideally, and in the inductive GT tradition of ‘going with the data’ (see also Charmaz, 2014), at this early stage of research I would have considered all forms of artistic articulation prior to empirically deciding which one(s) were most relevant. Having a background in and having worked mainly with the visual arts, however, in part pre-determined my later focus on visual and material culture. This is inevitable in any research project, but it demonstrates how important it is to include researchers on the analytical maps, especially on the situational maps (Clarke et al., 2018).

The second dimension builds on and extends the first dimension. It entails the consideration of the situatedness of any phenomenon in research. It asks about the conditions of actors, actants, and elements in the situation and which *a priori* assumptions they ‘bring to the table’. For example, as a researcher, I bring my training, academic discipline(s), norms, and values to the research situation. Thus, it is important to ask who and what is in the situation of inquiry with what interest and under which conditions (Clarke et al., 2018). In addition, Franziska Neureither and I (2023) argue that SitA can only be made explicitly postcolonial if the assessment of the situatedness includes the consideration of coloniality as well. We propose to do so by also asking questions, such as “[w]ho and what is connected to colonial history in the situation? Which elements point towards colonial continuities, and what are their symbolic meanings?” (146).

Considering the situatedness helps to resist the urge to (over)simplify. For Clarke et al. (2018), focusing on complexities and differences is the third dimension that makes SitA suitable for postcolonial inquiry. It asks that researchers overcome binaries, use a range of different data sources for the analysis, and focus on the relations between actors and elements, their conflicts, and passive and active consents.

As such, all four maps are designed to capture messiness and complexity through which differences can be analytically extracted more easily.

The fourth and fifth dimensions are interwoven and emphasize the importance of the third dimension. They are (4) the analysis of power and (5) the consideration of discourses and how they construct subjects and subjectivity. In the first edition of her handbook *Situational Analysis. Grounded Theory After the Postmodern Turn*, Clarke introduces a three-dimensional positional map (see also chapter 4.4.1). Positional maps render the positions frequently taken in the research situation. They demonstrate how issues of major concern are discursively negotiated and further demonstrate which positions are not taken or remain invisible in those ‘major discourses’. Adding a third dimension to this map allows to also visualize ‘minoritized’ positions and discourses which are invisibilized by the prevailing power structures.

The sixth dimension is (self-)reflexivity, which I have already discussed at length at the beginning of this chapter and will continue to do throughout the chapters to come. Reflexivity includes ethical considerations “beyond regulations” (von Unger et al., 2014; von Unger, 2016: 87). It is closely related to the promotion of epistemic diversity in the situation of inquiry, which Clarke et al. consider the seventh dimension (2018), for example, by explicitly turning towards pluriversity (Mignolo, 2002; Reiter, 2018) or by focusing on embodied knowledge as is common among indigenous societies (Chilisa, 2012). The eighth and final dimension turns towards methodical tools that “reveal links between concrete experiences of suffering and social structure, culture, and social practices or policies” (Charmaz 2011: 362, as cited in Clarke et al., 2018: 359), which, according to Clarke et al. have the capacity to uncover colonial legacies which “remain lively [...] in torqued imperial modes of social life” (ibid: 359).

In our paper, Franziska Neureither and I (2023) discuss these eight dimensions at length and propose additional strategies for how to make SitA more explicitly postcolonial. The strategies we propose are in part due to our own work with SitA or the result of a reflection process that considers the limitations of our research projects (see also chapter 4.5). One additional and important dimension, which Clarke et al. (2018) do not elaborate upon, is that SitA is methodologically and methodically sufficiently diverse to be able to also consider visual and material culture in its analytical process. This opens new avenues for interdisciplinary inquiry (Kalenda, 2016), which becomes increasingly important for understanding the complex relationalities between people and artefacts, cultural heritage and visual culture, labor and creative expression, and discourses that enable or limit the possibilities of situated articulation (Wendl, 2012).