

The academy, development, and modernity's 'other'

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Abstract

Epistemological preferences in Western academies over the centuries became the measuring rod for what is to count as valid knowledge in thinking about development. The genealogy of the sciences of law and economics can be traced back to the Roman and British empires. The problem is posed in this paper as to the question of how remnants of these genealogies continue to influence development models and to what extent the academy may be in need of transformation by the inclusion of epistemologies and ethics found in modernity's 'other', i.e. in cultures that continue to exist outside modernity. This transformation of the academy by enlargement, it is argued, would become more feasible by scientific methodologies inspired by forms of transdisciplinarity, trilateral science, and *praxis*.

Keywords: transdisciplinarity, praxis, indigenous knowledge systems, human development, trilateral science

Introduction

The population in Africa was close to 800 million (of about 6 billion in the world) in the year 2000, and the UN prediction is that it will reach its maximum in the year 2100 with more than 2 billion people. In the year 2100 close to 8 of the 9 billion persons in the world will be living in Asia (about 5 billion), Africa (about 2 billion), and in Latin America and the Caribbean (733 million). The prediction for Europe and North America is about 1 billion in total by the year 2100. It may be important to bear these demographic trends in mind when thinking about history and official knowledge, considering that eight European countries colonized large parts of the lands where eight-ninths of the world's population will be living in 2100.

Considering the inheritance of colonial and neocolonial subjugation of indigenous knowledge systems, it is argued that the academies in newly independent countries

of the South have not adapted to their own context in terms of not giving enough attention to that environment's epistemological and cultural history, resulting in cognitive injustice on a massive scale (Odora Hoppers and Richards, 2012). In spite of independence and liberation from colonial rule, that history of subjugation does not easily disappear, and the question of whether it has found a new form in formal systems of knowledge, such as the academy and consequently lower levels of education, remains (Quijano, 2010). The memory of how outsiders arrived over the centuries and overran cultures in the most brutal ways has not receded, and necessitates dealing with the effects of the suffering from that period, which in most former colonies in the South ended only a few decades ago. And even though colonialism ended and political liberation was formally established, the task of transforming cultures from subservience to democratic freedoms poses new challenges to post-colonial relations between the former colonizers and new independent countries.

Catherine Odora Hoppers and Howard Richards (2012) remind us of how epistemological preferences in Western academies over the centuries became the measuring rod for what is to count as valid knowledge and how those standards continue to be embedded in the academy even today as part of a global order that can be described as neocolonialism. The episteme of modernity has many masks and whichever filters through neocolonial relations in the end has the greatest impact on educational policies in the new states of the South. The authors relay to us that the dominant mask of colonization was inspired by a combination of constitutive rules in two disciplines, law and economics – with roots in the elites of the Roman and British empires respectively. This double-barrelled gun of the sciences of law and economy was very useful in the conquering of other peoples. Colonial and academic histories are therefore tightly intertwined. Authorities had a hand in steering scientific development, as has been demonstrated in reference to how law was designed according to the needs of Roman imperial elites, which again 'was the law that most shaped European civil law, also known as the *lex fori*, the law of the marketplace' (Odora Hoppers and Richards, 2012: 74, citing Durkheim, 1902). Adam Smith found this law to be the ideal after studying alternative conceptions of law among non-European peoples, and found it appropriate to divide the world into the civilized and the non-civilized, where savages acted according to quite other rules. Smith was an advocate of '... an emerging consensus among the upper classes of Great Britain in the 18th century' (Odora Hoppers and Richards, 2012: 65). To be civilized meant to adopt this metaphysics of individualism as opposed to collectivism, written contracts as opposed to handshakes and keeping one's word. These roots grown in former empires have found new and modern homes according to recent studies on present world-systems (Harvey, 2005; Wallerstein, 2000).

How the academy thinks and relates to this previously brutalized world is of the utmost importance in dealing with past humiliation, and in order to avoid continuing it in new and different forms. This intellectual healing is marked both by a respect for the metaphysics of others and a realization that metaphysics is the matrix of both epistemology and ethics. So the challenge made in this book by Odora Hoppers and Richards (2012) to the African academy is relevant for any academy considering its relation to the contextual conditions in which it is situated. History is an important part of those contextual conditions as the present continues to be embedded in it.

Modernity's 'other' as seen from outside and above

Before we consider how the academy could transform its thinking about development by enlargement and inclusivity (Odora Hoppers and Richards, 2012), we shall have a closer look at how modernity's other has been mistreated in development thought. Approaches to the study of 'the underside of history', as Elise Boulding (1976) entitled her book on the invisibility of women, have also been developed in subaltern studies (history from below) in Asia and Latin America (Chaturvedi, 2000; Mignolo, 2000; Verdesio, 2005). Here we shall search for how colonialism and apartheid of the past is understood in recently published novels in South Africa, suggesting continuous relevance of this heritage for human development even today.

Adam Smith's economic science was distributed to the world through the British empire. For an example of one such messenger of this science/metaphysics, let us listen to what the well-known South African author Zakes Mda wrote in a recent narrative. Sir George Grey had arrived as the British Governor of the Cape Colony to repeat his success in Australia and New Zealand where he had taken the land from the people in return for his civilizing mission. Sir George was different from an earlier British governor who talked of exterminating the natives. Instead his 'humane' and 'peaceful' assimilation policies were to 'civilize' the natives so that they could reach 'the supreme levels of the English' (Mda, 2000: 143). Rumour had it that he had been very successful with this in Australia and New Zealand, where he had even given civilized names to rivers he had 'discovered.' Therefore, he came to be known in the Cape Colony as 'The Man Who Named Ten Rivers.' His belief was that civilization implies leaving old beliefs and accepting new beliefs. With his long and successful educational experience in Australia and New Zealand, The Man Who Named Ten Rivers decided that formal schooling would be a great addition to his more informal 'educational' projects:

... I plan to open a school in Cape Town for the sons of chiefs, where they will grow up in the bosom of British civilization. They will learn to appreciate the might of the British Empire and will acquire new modes of behaviour. They will give up their barbaric culture and heathen habits, and when they take over in their chiefdoms

they will be good chiefs. I want all the chiefs to undertake to send their sons to this school.

(Mda, 2000: 145).

It may be that Africa is one of the most transparent cases where the quest for a modernity tailored in Western countries and spearheaded by some of the most powerful among those countries continues to the present day by disrespecting their ways of life. If so, such modern forms of subjugation need to be understood in relation to the historical roots of centuries-old subjugation. An illustration of a recent attempt at designing educational policies from primary to higher education for a whole continent by an outside institution was the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in the 1980s by the World Bank (Haavelsrud, 2010: 115–33). What was highly interesting was that the World Bank had calculated that primary education would produce the most economic benefits according to neoliberal constitutive rules and that higher education would have to take a back seat. This recent 'development' idea has roots in a genealogy that was imported to the colonies from the time of Adam Smith and reinforced by President Truman in 1949 when he asserted that the majority of the world's peoples were 'underdeveloped' and therefore needed 'development'. This 'attitude' remained until recently – and maybe it still exists in how some people think – but officially it may be an attitude that has no legitimacy because of its condescending ethos in conflict with social, economic, and civic human rights and other global standards now recognized in human development. On this background, it is highly relevant to rethink how the genealogy of modernity has found a home in the academy (Mignolo, 2000). It is argued that vestiges of that epistemic genealogy of modernity are still a foundation of academic knowledge in economics, law, and education, and that the university has not sufficiently recognized the existence of the variety of alternative metaphysics and their corresponding epistemologies and ethics, which are evident in communitarian law and livelihoods that are in harmony with indigenous knowledge systems.

When 2 billion people were declared to be underdeveloped in 1949 by the President of the United States, they were in their diversity:

... transmogrified into an inverted mirror of others' reality. It was a mirror that belittled them and sent them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defined their new identity from that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority; it jaundiced their identity simply in terms of a homogenizing minority.

(Odora Hoppers and Richards, 2012: 18)

This nomenclature of underdevelopment, coupled up with a singular focus on economic growth as a major aim in how to proceed in the bipolar world during the Cold War, led to a development discourse in academic circles of the West with

great variety ranging from Rostow's stage theory and human capital theory to theories of dependency and even imperialism (Galtung, 1971). Political authorities, however, listened mainly to the former and development agencies were directed to development theories that saw the route taken by Western capitalist development as the template rather than as part of the problem. This was in harmony with the idea of underdevelopment, which could then be dealt with by encouraging educational policies based on the theories of the Chicago school, which emphasized cost-benefit analysis of how human capital could be increased through a socialization into modernity that excluded traditional knowledges and behaviours. This socialization is then seen as a tool for the production of human capital, which in turn is seen as a contributor to economic development and the transformation of the 'underdeveloped' to 'less developed' – or 'developing' – or maybe even 'developed'.

It has been a bumpy road in development thought from 1949 to the present. It is now understood that all countries need a development that does not lead us to ecological disaster and that development relates to more than economics. Some of the former so-called developed countries may actually need more development attention than some of the former 'underdeveloped' countries. It is a word overlapping with other words reflecting a goal or a vision such as civic, social, and economic human rights, sustainability, peace, and ecology. And it is a word for all levels of human society, reflecting the fact that micro and macro processes and structures are in constant interplay. It is a word that defies being framed by any single academic discipline, but which points us in the direction of transdisciplinary methodologies and holism, in which science is not seen as only the product of the mind, but also as enacted knowledge in transformations towards more human development. In this line of thought we are again confronted with the question of how the academy can and should be transformed in order to contribute to *human* development.

Modernity's other as seen from inside and below

Wallerstein (2000) found that Frantz Fanon represented the voices of those who were disenfranchised by the modern world-system, expressing their vision and claim to intellectual valuation and justice. Fanon has shown that alongside the official knowledge preferences of hegemonic powers, another knowledge thrived informally in communities where for centuries that knowledge had not only been the basis of identity and meaning – but had also been the source of survival in and resistance to the murderous project of the colonizers. This informal community knowledge was of course to some extent influenced and transformed according to the colonizers' aims, but still it is to this day present in the midst of a modern and globalized world. Its roots are deep and alive, channelling nourishment to identities in the everyday lives of billions. This knowledge has unfortunately been declared the enemy of modern development, but it has survived this hostility and has still not been domesticated

to the kind of modernity that has influenced countries even after independence and liberation from colonial status. Subjugated peoples have not lost their identities, cultures, belief systems, and governance traditions, as is evident in both the present realities of everyday life and the narratives mirroring the present socialization into a world divided between modernity and modernity's other (Haavelsrud, 2015).

Growing up as a country boy in the Eastern Cape, Nelson Mandela's primary socialization was firmly rooted in the Xhosa culture founded in ubuntu philosophy, in which an individual is seen as a person in relation to other persons – an Africanness that has survived to this day in spite of colonization and apartheid – impacting his long walk to freedom. Modernity's other might be hidden, neglected, and subjugated in many ways – including by media and school practices – by portraying the human being as a Cartesian individual defined only as a detached and separate individual thinker. But this hiding, subjugation, and neglect of modernity's other has not been totally successful, because some of those who suffer and suffered from this attempt resist and join forces with others. This means that the human being has not been reduced to an individual strategic actor lacking in empathy and focusing on competition with others in climbing the ladder of social mobility in a system rewarding exactly that. Such reductionist views of the human being may be more in harmony with some versions of both capitalist and Marxist systems.

It is therefore important to keep in mind the importance of the contributions of past spokespersons for modernity's other in the struggle against apartheid and in building democracy after liberation. One of them is Ezekiel Mphahlele – the doyen of African literature – as Achebe calls him (2009). In his book *Down Second Avenue* (1959), he writes about his experiences as a black teacher in Pretoria in the 1940s and what 'knowledge' the Department of Education required African children to learn. He had to teach the black children what the textbook said:

... a history book with several distortions meant to glorify white colonization, frontier wars, the defeat of African tribes, and white rule; Afrikaans grammar books which abound with examples like: the Kaffir has stolen a knife; that is a lazy Kaffir; Afrikaans literature that teems with offensive words like aia – for non-white women, outa for non-white men, and a literature that teems with non-white characters who are savages or blundering idiots to be despised and laughed at; characters who are inevitably frustrated creatures of city life and decide to return 'home' – to the reserves.

(Mphahlele, 1959: 167)

Mphahlele did not only stop teaching under such conditions. He also stopped going to church in 1947 and later diagnosed that institution as a symbol of the dishonesty of the West because of its silence about the oppression, humiliation, and injustices

in all spheres of society at the same time as it was preaching to love your neighbour (Mphahlele, 1959: 221).

Violence accumulated over many centuries has become a powerful part of history even after liberation from apartheid. Experiences similar or worse to Mphahlele's experiences were definitely over when democracy was established in 1994. In spite of this, the arts contribute a bridge for understanding how violence accumulated over many centuries has become a powerful part of history even after liberation from apartheid. How the generation born after the beginning of democracy (the 'born free' generation) will relate to the history of the struggle against apartheid, the colonization before that, and to the old beliefs and traditions, is problematized in a book by Mongane Wally Serote entitled *Revelations* (2010). A recent reminder that present-day conflicts between modernity and modernity's other are rooted in colonial repression a long time ago is the novel *The Heart of Redness* (Mda, 2000). In the 1850s, a 16-year-old girl prophet brought a message from the ancestors to the Xhosa people that they should kill all their cattle and destroy their crops, adding that when the time is ripe the dead will arise and new cattle will appear. The European colonialists and others who did not believe in this prophecy would be swept into the sea. The book tells the story of a family divided into believers and unbelievers and the contextual conditions they encounter from this prophecy in the 1850s until the present day, culminating in a conflict over development (including a casino) of a Xhosa village in the 1990s, i.e. after liberation and the establishment of democracy. Serote and Mda have described present-day problems and issues in view of the historical experiences rooted in a culture that has experienced centuries of violence. In spite of a new democratic political system, they describe how cultural roots tend to influence present life, and some of these roots have obviously been nourished by past violence. The existence of these roots of violent experience is not only present – but I would say prevalent – in recent fiction written by young authors in the country – to which I now turn.

In an ongoing research project, I have read novels by young authors – so far from Japan, Norway, Germany, and South Africa. Some of the novels from South Africa give thorough descriptions of how traditional cultures are still with us at present. Children and young people in the novels are carriers of what has been learned in families and communities and it seems almost as though this informal experiential learning is more important than what has been learned in school (Haavelsrud, 2015). These novels describe young people's experiential learning in the context of the transition from apartheid to liberation, and the foundation of democracy. Protagonists' interests, problems, issues, and challenges are voiced rendering insights into what is seen as positive and also problematic. It is obvious that indigenous and traditional knowledge, customs, and identities are well represented in everyday life.

The novels describe contextual conditions in modernity's other at present and early-childhood experiences, with humiliation during apartheid still a vivid background of life at present as viewed by these young authors (Duiker, 2000; Duiker, 2006; Mahala, 2007; Mahala, 2011; Matlwa, 2007; Mgqolozana, 2009; and Tlhabi, 2012). Some of the problems described relate to racism, broken families, physical violence, sexuality and sexual abuse, gender, good and bad witchcraft, and children's and youngsters' bad experiences with adults in general.

Transformation by enlargement

How then would an academy approach a transformation of research towards enlargement in rethinking development? As discussed, a most common meaning of the word 'development' has been limiting because a central part of its meaning has been economic growth and in promoting that, it has led to subjecting culturally determined behaviour to a process of 'modernization' that is supposed to create the institutional conditions favourable to economic growth. Discussing enlargement and taking a larger view means to include and not exclude modernity's other. The framework for and strategy towards this aim in the South African Research Chair (SARChI) in Development Education was launched six years ago and has by now produced not only unique postgraduate studies, but also consistently included community members and community elders in knowledge production, in harmony with the belief that new knowledge will come out of interactions among parties that have previously been kept apart (Odora Hoppers, 2009).

The methodology of the incumbent of the SARChI in Development Education has in my view been inspired by participatory forms of enacted transdisciplinarity, trilateral science, and *praxis*. Common to these three concepts is that they are problem focused and aim at transformative human development by reducing the negative impact of problems experienced.

Transdisciplinarity

It may be that those eight European countries that colonized 86 countries would not only have a responsibility to recognize offences of the past, but also excuse them (which has been done in some cases) and help prevent new forms of superior policies causing new forms of subjugation in the colonies of the past – now independent countries. More importantly, however, might be to ensure that the academy in former colonial powers learn from epistemologies and ethics existing in modernity's other, in which memories of the brutal past are also still present, coupled with a need for healing from that suffering incurred in the past. One way to approach this would be for the academy to relate to modernity's other by enlargement. Such a development programme would see an academy where *praxis* would be valued in a science that

considered its mandate to include not only guidelines for a transformation of society based on ethics, but also ways and means of doing so.

In a recent article on transdisciplinary research methodologies, Christian Pohl discusses a form of transdisciplinarity in which non-academic actors are participants in the production of knowledge (2011). They participate with the researchers in selecting, formulating, and analysing the problem(s) to be dealt with as well as searching for solutions to be implemented in change processes. Participation as discussed in this form of transdisciplinary research methodology is an imperative in the search for adequate analysis of contextual conditions, because subjective opinions about these conditions are also to be recognized as a condition for transformation. Subjective perceptions and opinions rooted in experiential knowledge give access to the metaphysics of the life form in question, and consequently the epistemological and ethical standards in that culture. Participation in this form of transdisciplinary research enables the researched to have a say in the selection, formulation, and analysis of problem(s) to be dealt with, and most importantly, not only in staking out ways of acting, but also in participating in directing those ways towards transformative human development.

Contextual conditions span from micro conditions in everyday life to contemporary global affairs that are related to historical facts as well as future potential reality. Contextual conditions include nothing less than the interrelations between micro and macro in past, present, and future time. When both diachronic and synchronic dimensions are activated in researching such interrelations, confronting and clarifying the great variations in terms of social, political, cultural, and economic realities and how these realities are embedded in given natural conditions, is inevitable.

Trilateral science

Johan Galtung developed his view of science as a trilateral activity in response to the limiting methodology of positivism and the need for the inclusion of a normative dimension as part of the construction of the field of peace and development research (1977: 59–65). Central to his concept of trilateral science is the relationship between three worlds: the world as it is (the data or facts positively given), the world as it will be (the world as predicted or theorized), and the world as it ought to be (values). He argues that all three can be changed and adapted to each other through scientific work, implying that the gaps and differences between the three worlds (the empirical, the foreseen, and the ideal) are reduced through transformations in all three. The three worlds may become more similar with the contribution of this kind of transformative scientific knowledge production. So science aims at *consonance*

among the three. The world as it is can be changed, and if so the foreseen world will also be changed. Values may be modified.

Trilateral science requires the scientist to become involved in what Galtung calls *criticism* when comparing values with data and facts. What is positively given in the actual world needs to be subjected to the torchlight of values. A weakness in Galtung's argument may be that the scientist's chosen values are not specified in relation to any particular epistemic system, implying that trilateral science may evolve from any such system as long as it is transparent. This may also be seen as part of cognitive justice because it would recognize all indigenous knowledge systems as value sources. Criticism is similar to what happens in a court where the police and the prosecutor provide the facts or data sentences and the law the value sentences. When the law is compared with the facts in the case, the judge, prosecutor, and defence team struggle over the validity of facts and interpretation of the law. But in the end the value sentences of the law as decided by the judge are applied in the criticism of the facts in the case. Similarly, according to this view of science, the value sentence is stronger than the empirical data, implying that the world as it is needs transformation. This change in the world according to values brings about greater consonance between the world as it is and the world as it ought to be. This greater consonance between 'is' and 'ought to be' will in turn have consequences for the comparison of the world as it is and the foreseen world (the theory). Thus, consonance between the 'is' and 'will be' is produced by adjusting the theory to the data and facts. This is in the tradition of *empiricism*.

Constructivism is a third type of scientific activity in which the value requirement is changed in relation to the theorized world of the foreseen. Here the theory sentences:

... are compared with value sentences, to see to what extent the foreseen world is also the preferred world. Neither refers to the observed world. The theory says that if so and so is done then this and that would result; the values tell what is preferred. The typical example would be what an architect does when he compares the client's demand with what he foresees that the house will be like. This comparison can be facilitated by means of a model where the degree of adequacy can, at least to some degree, be tested. Basically, the result is proposal-making, a blueprint as it is called in architecture. The conclusion is in terms of Adequate and Inadequate, depending on whether the foreseen is preferred (or the preferred foreseen) or not.

(Galtung, 1977: 61)

Trilateral science then is transformative in the sense that it involves the creation of new realities as a result of its mandate to seek consonance between the world as it is, will be, and ought to be.

Praxis

As discussed above, novels written by young authors are relevant in the analysis of contextual conditions as experienced by young people, because authors are also influenced by their own experiential learning. Young people's experiences of modernity's other are relevant because they constitute such a large part of the population in many countries - in South Africa close to half the population is under 24 years of age. As mentioned, the novels describe present-day experiences of young people in a country where indigenous cultures and languages had been subjugated over centuries before healing could begin with the introduction of democracy in 1994.

Inspired by Freire's work, I argue that the problem areas identified in novels describing modernity's other can be seen as generative themes to be followed up in research. When the authors focus on specific problems as mentioned, these problems are *codifications*, which is an initial resource in a dialogical process in the meeting between researchers and non-academic participants in communities. But this is only a beginning in that participants are invited to *de-codify* or critically supplement and correct the author's codifications according to their own experiential learning. The dialectic between codifications and de-codifications would allow community participants in a research project to modify or change elements in the story to fit the reality as they themselves know it through their own experiences in life. This process of constantly improving the understanding of contextual conditions may be a most important part of developing *strategic* knowledge for finding solutions and actions effective in transforming (in some cases even eliminating) perceived contradictions. The action and reflection relation, however, is there all the time, so no actor needs to wait for more analysis of contextual conditions before acting. In fact just by *being and acting* in problematic conditions is of help in developing better understanding of the conditions.

With the help of codifications of generative themes described in the novels, research processes of a transdisciplinary nature can be coupled with conscientization leading to transformative human development or *praxis*. Participants in research are invited to be critical of these initial codifications and improve the analysis of contextual conditions in a constant interplay of lived life and the analysis of it. In this way, a bridge between the inner and the outer, or between the subject and the world, is constructed, realizing that the world is in the subject, who is also in the world.

Conclusion

In a remarkable book on religious studies, Walter Capps emphasizes that the making of that discipline has been Western centred and that it would have taken quite other directions if it had been inspired by thought from non-Western societies (Capps,

1995). The discipline is therefore more a product of the dominant religion within Western culture than a product of the development of comparative religion. He finds no examples of systematic analytical approaches to the subject of religion with extra-Western sponsorship and he sees the discipline as conceived and designed within Western intellectual history at a particular point in that history. Capps argues strongly for an extraparadigmatic conceptual inclusion in the sense that unfamiliar methods and approaches should be welcomed in the further development of the discipline, realizing the limited scope of human existence that has been fathomed by the discipline so far. Capps is asking for transformation by enlargement. This example from religious studies may be seen as part of the larger discussion of the decolonization of science argued in Odora Hoppers and Richards (2012).

This example tells us that knowledge is ever evolving and those who are at the forefront of research sometimes forget that – even though they know a lot and maybe more than many others – there are many things that they do not know. With a superior attitude among scientists coupled with political forces aiming at more power and expansion, knowledge may become dangerous and self-serving in such a way that it inhibits the creation of new knowledge. This is when a *states of knowledge* regime has taken over from *ways of knowing*. Then as Basil Bernstein points out, 'once knowledge is separated from the inwardness, from commitments, from personal dedication, from the deep structure of the self, then people may be moved about, substituted for each other and excluded from the market' (Bernstein, 1996: 87). And he goes on to say that this separation or dislocation of knowledge from the knower is in harmony with the market principles of the new Right. This means that knowledge measured according to criteria of *performance* is preferred and knowledge based on *competence* is disregarded.

Modernity's recent development has become a barrier to the transformation towards human development by contributing to the alienation and exclusion of those whose survival is rooted in modernity's other. But in this picture there are also forces that might lead towards more power for the excluded, according to the Dutch sociologist Saskia Sassen. In *Territory, Authority, Rights: From medieval to global assemblages*, she analyses territories in the globalized world beyond the jurisdiction of any state, and points out that in these spaces the powerless may find new ways of gaining power (Sassen, 2006). In an interview, she explains her theories and points out that the free flow of humans, capital, services, and goods has never been greater in the world, and may have created new conditions for new power spaces (Sassen, 2012). Examples of new 'territories' are private and closed networks established in the international world of finance. Stock agents and bankers trade among themselves and develop very complicated tools utilized in transactions involving astronomical amounts. These networks cross the judicial borders of the nation state. She asks if this power

can govern its own power and concludes that the finance sector obviously cannot do so when in six years, beginning in 2001, the finance sector in the USA signed 15 million loans with low liquidity. The primary goal was not to secure housing for people, but pure finance activity, resulting in the loss of homes for several million people.

In the interview she also points out that the complexity in modern society creates a new form of brutality – previously unknown – making victims invisible even though the empty streets are visible enough (Sassen, 2012). This development is contrary to the welfare states after WWII as those states brought people into communities, whereas current systems exclude people by throwing them out of the system. She says that we live in a time that creates brutality and this exclusion happens now to an increasing number of people. She disagrees with those who argue that physical spaces are less important today (de-territorialization) and asserts that globalization has made physical space and places even more important. These ‘territories’ are beyond the control of countries. Mercenaries and private armies are examples. These ‘territories’ erode the power of the state and create new forms of jurisdiction and governance. The global village with such new territories leads to less welfare for all and more inequality. In 1979, 1 per cent of New Yorkers received 12 per cent of income, but in 2009 they received 44 per cent. At the same time as inequality increases, urbanization offers the powerless and marginalized new opportunities for gaining power in order to cause new policies, as exemplified by the Occupy movement, which she believes will take a long time before they make history. She mentions other cases, for example, of how demonstrators met in a Leipzig church every Friday in the 1980s, and finally contributed to building the mentality preparing the fall of the Iron Curtain. She thinks that such informal groups may also create history in the future. These changes at the roots may be invisible, but at a certain point they make a difference. Her understanding of fundamental change is seen as a process that takes a long time, but may then culminate in the unthinkable.

In this paper I have argued that the academy’s contribution to human development needs to be built on transdisciplinarity, trilateral science, and praxis. This approach would make the academy a venue for listening to the voices of the excluded and marginalized, and contribute towards a modernity sensitive to the economic, civic, and social human rights of all. The extent to which this development of the academy for the sake of human development is feasible may be questioned – especially after noting the formation of new assemblages as theorized by Sassen. It is especially important to consider her argument that the conditions for change nowadays are the ascendance of a global civil society coupled with a communication structure that the world has never seen and a development of transnational politics centred on concrete localities and events. She posits that today’s epochal transformations

involve a growing distance between the state and the citizen, which – it seems to me – may create a power vacuum at a time when global civil society and global political authority are still at an embryonic stage. Assuming that she is right in her thesis that the ‘... new normativity of the world of private power installs itself in the public realm where it reappears as public policy’ (Sassen, 2006: 412), it would be of great interest to know how the increasing inequalities in wealth accumulation might trigger political forces from below against this epochal ‘... transformation towards increasing deregulation, privatization and marketization of public functions as part of new forms of corporate economic globalization’ (Sassen, 2006: 410). I view this to be a dangerous trend politically speaking, to continue on a road towards development in which the nation state adopts policies influenced by global capital, and becomes the ‘institutional home for the operation of powerful dynamics constitutive of what we could describe as “global capital” and “global capital markets”’ (Sassen, 2006: 412).

How the academy will situate itself in relation to a development of this kind might become the real test of how the relationship between power and knowledge will develop in the future. If the academy travels the road of at least relative autonomy in a scenario where global capital and markets are at the steering wheel, it would find strength in founding the search for knowledge in a transdisciplinary trilateral science inspired by *praxis* to ensure the inclusion of generative themes in people’s lives. As shown in the discussion of South Africa’s young authors’ works of fiction, colonial and apartheid experiences continue to be a focus of the arts of that country. It is hypothesized that the arts in any country may portray similar characteristics supporting Sassen’s claim that change is ‘... conditional upon capabilities developed in the period that is about to be left behind’ (Sassen, 2006: 402). The past lingers with us in spite of changes in political development – even in radical political change – such as from apartheid to democracy.

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