

# Under new management; the ambiguities of 'transformation' in higher education<sup>1</sup>

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The academic institution in which I work makes of me – unintentionally on my part – a sociographic observer. The first thing to be noted in this sociography concerns the changing definition of the role of the university that is given effect by this institution. Here, the sense of wonder that sustains the desire to know turns into amazement at how a university can function on the basis of systematic and continuous intellectual sacrifice. This creative destruction is ritualistically celebrated with song and dance, red carpets and opulent spreads, glossy colourful group photo-illustrated annunciations heralding the arrival of the African *Renaissance*—the Renaissance baby—in a range of styles and postures commanding acclamation. This performativity pulls the rug from under the feet of an independent sociographic observer. It converts its roles and rules into institutional facts that confront me in numerous directives on who is racially and nationality-wise to be considered appointable in academic positions, and who is not; on whom I may, racially speaking, invite as a visiting lecturer and whom not; on how many additional percent graduate students I have to recruit this year; on how many publications I must produce, and in what kind of journals; on how many students I must rake in to make my courses viable, in abstraction from all other criteria; and on how I must 'align' my research and teaching with acronymic formulae posing as strategic plans, while maintaining the requisite levels of 'research fun'.<sup>2</sup>

In trying to find events fitting the bill of the Key Performance Areas (KPA) that serve as criteria for quarterly performance assessments, I try to select the more academic ones. Those officially endorsed and prodigiously resourced come with denunciations of the deprivations, depredations, and deprivations wrought by colonialism and announcements of refreshments. Framed by opening and closing ceremonials, *laudatios*, praise poetry, choral renditions and standing ovations, these stagings pose no greater challenge than that of repressing an uncontrollably encroaching cringing sensation in those seeking the more distant pleasures of critical inquiry and debate.

This is 'the African university in the service of humanity',<sup>3</sup> sectionalised into tribes in the Latin inscription *pro gentibus sapientia* under the neo-traditional 'authentic fake' (see Chidester 2004: 70; also Chidester 2005:172–189)<sup>4</sup> coat of arms prominently displayed as part of the brand, the launch and promotion of which University of South Africa (UNISA) decision makers considered worth R17 million. It is the place of choice for study for some, the place of only option in the otherwise priced-out-of-reach promised land of higher education for numerous others – in fact, for over one third of South Africa's students. UNISA prides itself on having over-fulfilled the racial-national quota in some faculties' academic appointments, having Africanised course offerings, and on giving prominence to 'African leadership'.

In this blend combining Africanisation, employment equity and black empowerment, notions of 'transformation', 'equity', and 'redress' have acquired a plethora of meanings, interpretations, and performative styles. So malleable have they proved in servicing particular interests or interest groups that they have now come under the critical spotlight even from within the ruling party itself.

Recognising such malleability, and hinting at 'abuse', Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe addressed the inaugural meeting of the President's Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Council with the following remarks:

We ... have to admit that the 'broad-based' part of BEE has seemed elusive. In the main, the story of black economic empowerment in the last 15 years has been a story dominated by a few individuals benefiting a lot. The vast majority of those who are truly marginalised: women, the rural poor, workers, the unemployed, and the youth have often stood at the sidelines. Only a few benefit again and again from the bounty of black economic empowerment. This is a state of affairs that can no longer be tolerated. ... This may mean that we look at black economic empowerment beyond business deals and shareholding companies. ... what we are proposing is prosperity for all rather than for a few.

(4 February 2010; see <http://busrep.co.za/index.php?fArticleId=5340048>)

Statements to the effect of the self-enrichment of a small stratum of entrepreneurs benefitting parasitically (Nzimande 2006) from brokering tenders and contracts, procurement and licensing deals in the state and public sectors have become more vociferous ever since. Talk of 'the 1996 class project' captures this growing divide, with new class formation and upward mobility, independently and often devoid of any corresponding professional skills development (see Nzimande 2006). Distantly echoing Frantz Fanon's lament over the rise and the excesses of postcolonial comprador bourgeoisies,<sup>5</sup> Nzimande deplores the effects of BEE:

The current model of BEE is fostering a 'get-rich-quick' mentality, and a focus on enriching a small upward [sic] elite. ... We may be creating highly indebted, job-hopping and, in between, 'deal-negotiating', black middle classes which cannot even adequately focus on their managerial and professional responsibilities. How often are the managerial styles of this stratum distracted or guided by seeking big BEE deals? ... For a significant layer ... of our public sector professionals, their public sector jobs are no more than a waiting station for the next 'BEE train'. (Nzimande 2006)

The centralisation of power in the presidency, the evisceration of parliament, and the demobilisation of organised strata of workers, have left the state vulnerable to 'undue influence by established and newly enriched capital' (Nzimande 2006).

Recently, the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) endorsed COSATU's call for a 'lifestyle audit' of prominent figures within the Tripartite Alliance to control "the continuing feeding frenzy for tenders and concessions as the parasitic black bourgeoisie continues its strategy of buying political influence to build personal fortunes"(February 20, 2010).

The allegations contained in these calls are supported by independent studies. Black professionals, and among them, those organised into professional organisations, have been

shown to be those who stand to gain the most from a politicised equity policy. Small wonder, 'that these have been the most active and vocal on matters of discrimination and employment equity. Through their networks and organisations, they exert the most powerful influence on policy' (Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu and Lewins 2008: 6). These analyses amount to a call for a 'transformation of transformation'.

Beyond the divisions spawned by renewed contestations around 'the 1996 class project', the Charter dispute over alignment with BEE Codes of Good Practice, has since late 2008 caused further rifts, against which a notion of 'the progressive developmental state' is pitted, with postulates of state-led interventions in the economy, and forms of direct democracy (see Nzimande 2009). It is interesting to note that the fault-lines that are opening up *within* the BEE project as a whole in the state, public, and financial sectors, have hardly been registered in public pronouncements on, within, and across the universities.<sup>6</sup> Why is it that EE and Affirmative Action continue to be proclaimed as prime sites of 'university transformation' despite the challenges to BEE and 'Africanisation'<sup>7</sup> in other domains of the public sector, and in the business and financial sectors? Why is this agenda vigorously pursued, often at the expense of academic criteria, even where some South African universities and faculties (notably UKZN and UNISA) have made EE and 'Africanisation of the curriculum' their central missions, and are boasting about the fact that they have reached their EE 'targets', and in some cases, even 'exceeded' their targets?

In the following, I would like to outline some of the reasons for this glaring blind-spot, and proceed towards a way of addressing it – initially in theory. Generally speaking, university 'transformation' analysts continue to cast their findings in binary oppositional terms that fail to take cognisance of microstructural institutional processes – viz in terms of 'transformation' vs. 'restoration', 'substantive transformation' vs 'lip service to transformation'; black and white, embrace of 'transformation' vs. resistance to 'transformation', with neat correlations between these pairs of opposites.

Academic 'transformation' monitor Kezia Lewins, for instance, finds much lip service being paid to the formalities and proceduralities of transformation requirements, which she exposes as a screen for an effective conservative restoration. Unlike the party-politically aligned critics of transformation quoted above, she casts the oppositional pair 'transformation' and 'conservative restoration' in black and white terms, respectively. She pronounces the predictable (as predictable as it is circular) finding that the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Cape Town (UCT) continue to have an institutional culture that is white and masculine, with hierarchical, network-bound power relations indicating social closure, structural and cultural exclusions, amounting to lack of substantive change (Lewins 2007:171). In a 'typology of transformation processes', resistance is monolithically cast as 'resistance to transformation', divided into 'passive resistance' ('policy compliance without transformative drive or responsibility') and 'active resistance' ('intentional action to stall transformation') (Lewins 2007:178).

Having registered the absence of race-based transformation, she looks at possibilities of class-based transformation. This requires some transformation of the analysis itself. Sharing the unease of some Marxist analysts looking at the university as a site of class struggle, she can chart possibilities of class-based transformation only by turning academics into workers (Lewins 2007: 1) or into agents in a historically segmented academic labour market (Lewins 2007:188; see also Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu and Lewins 2008:14) and by declaring the work of administrative, managerial, library, laboratory, service staff to be core to the

overall functioning of universities. The field of contestation that she designates as class struggle in academia holds some hope of 'real change' for her.

The resultant contradictions within this analysis bear some comment. On the one hand, Lewins decries the growing inequality on the grounds of class – ie against the working poor, in this case the service workers – at South African universities. However, while recognising that it is 'the working class people ... that [sic] the current prescription of transformation and employment equity has failed with its preoccupation with the professional and managerial occupational categories and levels' (Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu and Lewins 2008:39), thereby drawing attention to negative discrimination (see also Lewins 2010), she neglects to look at positive discrimination as an important site of class formation and as a factor in the growing inequality: the emerging black elite that finds its avatars within the university, state, and public sectors.

A development that Lewins finds conducive to 'real transformation', is UCT's relative 'multiculturalism' that 'has opened up a space for alternative identities' (Lewins 2007:183). Such initiatives and tendencies, helped along by new post-apartheid governments, are allegedly being crushed at Wits by managerialism, which she equates with 'white men' resisting change (Lewins 2007:186) through gate-keeping and exclusive networks as forms of social capital, as opposed to members of the Black Caucus at UCT, who are lauded as 'committed agents for change'. Exclusionist, racist, and conservative residues are strongly embedded, so the argument goes, in 'institutional culture' – a catch phrase denoting a thicket of values, gatekeepers, and networks that are alluded to but not further analysed and interrogated.<sup>8</sup>

Thus apart from a class analysis that is being made applicable to academic institutions only on the basis of some classificatory modifications, reference to the thicket of 'institutional culture' makes sure that the struggle for transformation becomes permanent, with permanently elusive goals at best, promoting permanent purge-like drives at worst. In this form, 'institutional culture' can tell us very little if anything. It can 'refer to any and every aspect of experience at university, from parking to policing, from the sites and names of buildings to any and every joke told on campus' (Steyn and van Zyl 2001:27,28,42–in Higgins 2007:107). Furthermore, the notion of 'institutional culture', in the way in which it is deployed to explain racism in academic institutions, can be shown to be circular, presupposing the underlying 'whiteness' that it pronounces as its quintessential conclusion (Higgins 2007: 108,109). Yet it bears some scrutiny, to find out what it obfuscates, and to critically analyse the racialising presuppositions that it harbours. It is also instructive to analyse the collocation at work in its contradictory deployment – 'either to denote the key to the successful transformation, or the main obstacle in the way of the successful transformation of South Africa's higher education system' (Higgins 2007:97).

Underlying this contradiction, I would argue, are the ambiguities entailed in the very notion of 'transformation' itself. Left unexamined, one term of such ambiguity can easily be displaced onto or conflated with the other one. For along with the EE quota regulations came 'the rise of managerialism' (eg Johnson 2006) in South African higher education, which involved organisational change and restructuring with vast implications for institutional structures and processes, imposing a shift 'from academic self-rule to academic managerialism' (Gibbon and Kabaki 2002:217), an increasing salary gap developing between senior management and senior academics (from a ratio of 2:1 during the late 1980s to a ratio of 4,5:1 in the late 1990s) (Gibbon and Kabaki 2002:218). At UNISA, the ratio approximated

5,5:1 on average in 2008).<sup>9</sup> Moreover, UNISA has seen a doubling in the number of senior managerial positions between 2001 and 2006. This is consistent with a broader trend in the public sector, where the average annual mobility rate is 32 per cent in national departments and 38 per cent in provincial departments (Naidoo 2008: 124). Along with this mobility rate and a new performance management regime goes 'a culture of moving onwards and upwards', encouraging an 'attitude of "facing upwards" towards the next job prospect' (von Holdt 2010:11) or towards scoring on the KPAs of performance assessments promising bonuses and more lucrative career paths, rather than promoting downward accountability.

Positions offering such new career paths tend to be created within the most indeterminate of sectors that, in Bourdieu's words, 'require no more than a rationalised form of competence in a class culture' (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:153). (At UNISA, it would probably be accurate to say, a rationalised form of aspiration suffices.) Yet they contribute to the widening gap between academic and managerial strata, with corresponding changes in structures of command and the demise of academic collegiality. In the bigger picture, these developments occurred in the context of changes in the composition of cultural capital and new class formation (here deployed in a Bourdieuan sense). To the extent that a 'transformation' in terms of employment equity became mandatory – equity indicators trumping academic indicators -, it found a catalyst in an institutional restructuring involving a shift towards managerialism and the entrenchment of new layers of administration and management. Special programmes and projects have facilitated fast-tracking, both in promoting candidates by setting them on a non-academic managerial path, and in partly or wholly dispensing with traditional discipline-specific requirements attainable only over a long period of systematically graduated scholarship, nurtured by academic socialisation, tutelage, apprenticeship, experience, and collegiality. Such fast-tracking and even the retrospectively instituted 'mentoring' operations, are bound to come into conflict with traditional notions of 'mastery of a discipline' associated with cultural legitimacy.<sup>10</sup> The nature of the relationship to legitimate culture, and the manner of its acquisition, Bourdieu points out, is what is at stake in a permanent struggle (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:69,87) which expresses or betrays class (1984: 70).

Within this struggle, the promise of upward mobility, and the threat of de-classing are pitched against each other. These two tendencies running counter to each other do no longer concern different strata – an upwardly mobile one on the one hand, and one threatened by declassing on the other – but they have become systemic within higher education, holding promise and threat simultaneously, at the same sites, including those of the limited contract appointments of senior 'managers'. The practices of fast-tracking, and of mandatory increases in the 'throughput rate' have resulted in an overproduction of certificated diplomas, degrees and titles and a corresponding devaluation of skill and qualification.

Von Holdt speaks of a 'devaluing of skills and the spreading of incompetency through the bureaucracy' (2010:13), closely related to strategies adopted to 'save face',<sup>11</sup> in the public health sector. Given similar processes operative in the higher education sector, it stands to reason that the crisis of academic leadership is at least in part of the same piece with the crisis documented in the public health sector. Institutional dysfunctionality is analysed by von Holdt in terms of the demand for allowing rapid class formation, rather than expertise, to determine institutional hierarchy.

To the extent that the new elite is tied into 'the racial form of modernity' (see von Holdt 2010: 21) and becomes parasitic upon the state and public sectors, it expresses an ambivalence

towards skill, work-related discipline, and authority; instead, it demands 'keeping face', and insists on hierarchy and budgetary rituals (von Holdt 2010:9, on post-apartheid bureaucracy) – all of which find favourable ground in 'Africanisation' and BEE agendas, under the mantle of 'transformation'. The malleable notion of 'transformation' and the measures taken towards its elusive goal, can hold sway uncontested, as any resistance to any of its facets and effects would be cast as 'resistance to transformation' (see eg Lewins, quoted above).

The two strands that constitute the ambiguous or even contradictory nature of 'transformation', come together to facilitate or shore up the emergence of a new class fraction while simultaneously ideologically masking it. A class-based project piggy-backs on a broadly socially emancipatory one, premised on the recognition of historical disadvantage. This convergence produces powerful ideological and political effects.<sup>12</sup> The University offers a site for these ideological and political effects to be set in motion and played out. An EE-based appointment and promotion policy, bolstered by quota regulations and aligned with the 'Africanisation of the curriculum', promotes the idea of a direct, homologous relation of representation between individual and group 'identities', and the political-programmatic staging of these 'identities', which in turn are assumed to be directly 'reflected' or 'expressed' in texts that are gathered up for curricular reform.

Traditional Marxist class analysis, more (if we look at class strictly on the basis of role within the relations of production and levels of income) or less (if we look at class through supplementary categories of expanded reproduction and distribution, and include the sphere of circulation) reductionist, I would argue, cannot initiate the kind of inquiry that would allow us to tackle the presuppositions and institutional-political effects of the 'transformation' agenda in higher education. If it does dare to go there at all – and mostly, it doesn't, – it will predictably go along one of three routes: it will either twist its categories of analysis (as we have seen in the studies of Lewins) or it will assume that quota-based appointments of individuals categorised as belonging to particular racially defined groups will ensure not only demographic representivity but also political 'representation' or it will refer to an ideological-institutional entanglement called 'institutional culture' that cannot explain anything (as we have seen by reference to Lewins et al's studies, and John Higgins' critique of 'institutional culture' as 'keyword').

Instead, I would propose that we initially look at it through Bourdieu's category of 'cultural capital', to investigate the changing composition of cultural capital.

As I had pointed out, the university becomes a platform of representation – one in which new 'social identities' are envisaged to become represented more adequately than in other political institutions.<sup>13</sup> The institution of the University itself takes on the project of fashioning a linkage, designed to function as a smoothly functioning transmission belt, between disparate demographic, political, and symbolic articulations of representation, mobilising and resourcing a field of 'imaginary' politics (understood as a politics of the image see Guillory 1993:7), that reduces the political to the instance of representation, and representation to the visually displayed construction of racially defined social identities.<sup>14</sup> Representation pivoting on the politics of the image valorises and gives new social salience to phenotypical determinations of 'race', thereby racialising 'transformation'.<sup>15</sup>

In the 'Africanisation of the curriculum', texts are selected on considerations of 'relevance',<sup>16</sup> decided either on the basis of thematic considerations, of contexts or requirements determined to be 'local', or on the basis of the racial or social 'identity' of the respective

authors or protagonists. This is contrary to everything we have learnt in studying 20<sup>th</sup> century psychoanalysis, philosophy, linguistics, anthropology, and critical theory across the humanities: the untenable character of a transcendental subject, of a philosophy of consciousness, of the very possibility of any coherent, fixed, unitary identity (individual, social, collective), and any notion implying the centrality of experience. While the respective arguments for the untenable are not in themselves sacrosanct and beyond question, it is precisely the questions that must be asked, the arguments made, in the process of the revisions stipulated by 'Africanisation' programmes. But those questions are left unaddressed in the processes of 'recurruculation'; they are more often than not conveniently handed over to bureaucrats applying checklists, to the detriment of inquiry and debate. Along with John Guillory, I would want to ask "what political work requires the deferral of theory" (Guillory 1993:11), the suspension of critical inquiry, the sacrifice of intellectual endeavour? And what politicisation celebrates the incurred loss with such joy, pomp, ceremony and ritual? In posing these questions, I would like to come back to my sociographic observations at the outset.

The vehemence with which such politicisation and forced celebration is pursued, should give us an inkling of the enormity of the project that an 'Africanising' university 'transformation' has taken on, and it would explain the immense investment and expenditure of time, energy, effort, and resources required to enter into, and to judge and to act within, this contestatory field. These demands are all the more exacting, as a university is far from being inherently structurally fitted to express the consensus or 'identity' of a 'community' or 'group'. As John Guillory reminds us,<sup>17</sup> it harbours 'complex hierarchies in which the position and privilege of judgment are objects of competitive struggle' (Guillory 1993:27).

Not being able to rely on cultural capital acquired either by inherited status or in the process of schooling, the new set has to create its habitus by contrasting means. Against an older, relatively ascetic attitude<sup>18</sup> of the traditional educated elite, it 'urges a morality of pleasure as a duty' Bourdieu elaborates on the self-fashioning of the class that he calls 'the new petite bourgeoisie':

[The doctrine of pleasure as duty] makes it a failure, a threat to self-esteem, not to 'have fun' ....; pleasure is not only permitted but demanded.... The fear of not getting enough pleasure, the logical outcome of the effort to overcome the fear of pleasure, is combined with the search for self-expression... (Bourdieu [1979] 1984:367)

'Pleasure as duty', now solicited as obligatory expression of conformity with the demands of conspicuous consumption, comes up against the sense of disgust, even horror, on the part of members of the traditional educated elite, for whom higher education is ostensibly associated with non-material gains. For the latter, enjoyment, the highest form of which is that of aesthetic experience, is annihilated in its subjugation to the concrete, to immediate sensation removing all distance through which the subject would experience his or her freedom. Trading in the taste of freedom, the new set upholds that which confers no distinction as that which earns credit (see Bourdieu 1984:488–489). Thus is the class struggle played out in competing fractions of cultural capital in the academy, right down to the level of affect in its most visceral expressions and responses.

However, this explanation addresses the complex issues associated with 'transformation' only in part. In providing the strata aspiring to come into new cultural capital with a rationale, Bourdieu's analysis is strangely complicit with what it describes. For me, the bugbear lies in

his definition of 'cultural capital' as mode of acquisition of cultural goods, values, positions, and strategies that are convertible into hard currency on the market (see Bourdieu 1984:65); and of the class struggle as 'the struggle between the different "manners", ie the different manners of acquiring' (see Bourdieu 1984:72). Bourdieu, along with the aspirant cultural capitalists so aptly characterised in his study, lose sight of an important dimension of higher education – namely that of its critical excess in relation to an economy understood on the basis of acquisition, accumulation, and commodity exchange (see Young 1992:122). For the exchanges involved in teaching and learning involve not only a transfer of services or commodities for a fee posited and regulated as their equivalent; more importantly, they at least partly involve non-equivalent exchanges along the lines of the gift, premised on a relation of fundamental inequality that is not reducible to a sociological or political-economic notion of inequality. Rather, it is a non-symmetrical relation of obligation that becomes the site, or rather a network, of ethical practices (see Readings 1996:154). This network of ethical practices is not simply a historically and culturally specific development that can be described in sociological categories. It is a carefully guarded social value that can be understood more fully from the perspective of a psychic-cultural history of forms of human sociality within a philosophical anthropology.

Thus, the commercialisation and, dare I say, 'Africanisation', of higher education has opponents other than old-fashioned transformation-resistant white fuddy-duddies – opponents with whose force it has not reckoned. One of its strongest and most defiant opponents is the unconsciously held idea of 'social value' that remains relatively immune to 'external' rationalisation, Africanisation-by-precept, 'streamlining', 'fast-tracking', cost-cutting, and managerialism in the higher education system.<sup>19</sup> The social value of education involving an ethical obligation derives its force from the import of (secularised) religious, ethical, and creative artistic and scientific inspiration emanating from sources as authoritative as they are innovative, including revelation, wisdom, or grace. (Has anyone ever seen anything of genius jumping out from a policy document or a piece of decreed research?) The continuing import of these sources, Max Weber tells us, revolutionises society 'from within', as opposed to the relatively ephemeral effect of 'external' bureaucratisation, policy directives, and managerialism (see Weber [1922]1978:117).<sup>20</sup>

## Notes

1. This paper was presented at the HSRC Symposium 'A South (African) Dream? Negotiating Affirmative Action for Social Cohesion in the Transformative State: policy, platitudes, progress and prospects', Pretoria, February 25–26, 2010. An abridged version appeared under the title 'Under new management' in the 'Beyond Matric' Supplement of the *Mail and Guardian*, April 16–22, 2010: 5–6.

2. The year 2010 was heralded as "The Year of Happiness" by the Dean of Humanities at UNISA (see <http://www.unisa.ac.za/Default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=24571>).

3. This motto echoes the claim on 'humanity' on the part of rising bourgeoisies in the histories of Western European nation-states, particularly the French and German bourgeoisies of the second half of the eighteenth century (but minus the latter's demand for sublimation of pleasure in aesthetic experience, as admission criterion to 'humanity').

4. Announcing 'a brand new beginning of a better future', the Vice Chancellor and Pro-Vice Chancellor at the time explain,

[The branding project] reflects the consultants' proposal of the direction our identity should take after extensive reviews of our business strategy. ... The new brand identity that we are busy developing is an embodiment of the Unisa values and is inspired by the philosophies of Credo Mutwa, arguably one of the world's finest contemporary philosophers. In short these philosophies affirm that the spirit of an age is in part a deconstruction of the past and a rediscovery of an indigenous African scheme of life.

(Pityana and Mathabe 2005)

5. Fanon denounced the role of the 'national middle class' upon decolonisation, pointing to their unproductive and parasitic character:

The national bourgeoisie of under-developed countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, not in building, nor labor; it is completely canalized into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket.

(Fanon [1961] 1969:120)

6. There are indications that the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande is preparing to tackle two aspects of this issue. At the Stakeholder Summit on Higher Education Transformation, held at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Bellville April 22–23, 2010, he called for a review of the salaries and other incomes of universities' 'top management', and announced measures preventing this stratum, as well as academics and students, from entering into tendering deals with the universities with which they are associated.

7. Among these challenges, Moeletsi Mbeki's *Architects of Poverty. Why African Capitalism Needs Changing* (2009) is probably the most widely and referenced. His critique in a nutshell:

BEE and its subsidiaries – affirmative action and affirmative procurement – which started off as defensive instruments created by the economic oligarchs to protect their assets, have metamorphosed. They have become both the core ideology of the black elite and, simultaneously, the driving material and enrichment agenda which is to be achieved by maximising the proceeds of reparations that accrue to the political elite.

(Moeletsi Mbeki 2009:69)

8. See Bezuidenhout, Bischoff, Buhlungu and Lewins (2008):

In higher education, institutional culture has become a 'buzzword' to denote the subtle forms of prejudice and discrimination that continue the perpetuation of a racialised and gendered social order and in this case, labour segmentation.

(46)

9. 2008 academic Salary Ranges as compared to the cost to employer remuneration for senior directors and managers as listed in the Annual Report 2008.

10. As Bourdieu explains, traditional 'mastery' of knowledge implied an 'unconscious mastery' based on slow internalisation of the principles organising knowledge and of the structures of authority involved in its transmission. 'Mastery' was not transmissible solely by precept or prescription:

Learning it presupposes the equivalent of the prolonged contact between disciple and master in a traditional education ... the apprentice or disciple can unconsciously acquire the rules of the art, including those that are not consciously known to the master himself, by means of a self-abandonment ... . By contrast, all institutionalized learning presupposes a degree of rationalization ...

(Bourdieu [1979] 1984:66)

11. Von Holdt elaborates:

Hierarchy and deference are closely associated with the assertion of 'face', rapid upward mobility and the ambivalence towards skills. Officials who have been promoted beyond their competence levels, or who operate in an environment where skill is ambiguous and contested, remain uncertain about their own skills and job performance and their authority may come to seem precarious. The assertion of 'face' and hierarchy become mechanisms to conceal these problems and avoid challenges.

(Von Holdt 2010:16)

12. Moeletsi Mbeki analyses the convergence of business interests with the emergence of the category 'Previously Disadvantaged Individual' (PDI) given recognition in the Constitution in terms of 'a transfer of resources from the wrongdoer – perceived to be white-owned businesses and the South African state – to the victim, the PDI. By this logic the South African state owes the PDIs high-paying jobs. This transfer of wealth from the strong to the weak is what has come to be known as BEE'. He outlines the consequences:

1. 1. In order for the wrongdoer to be able to pay reparations, the wrongdoer has to maintain a privileged position. ...
2. 2. For the victim to continue to draw reparations it is critical that he or she remains perceived as a victim and as weak. ...
3. 3. ... As the state is said to have been party to the disadvantaging of the PDIs it is therefore also perceived to owe them something. By way of reparations the state must therefore provide PDIs with high-paying jobs.
4. 4. The ideology of reparations traps members of the black elite into seeing themselves as the beneficiaries of the production of other social groups and therefore primarily as consumers. To facilitate their role as consumers the black elite sees the state essentially as distributive rather than developmental ... (M Mbeki 2009:69–72).

13. I am here positing a close analogy between my argument pertaining to EE and Africanisation in South African universities, and John Guillory's argument concerning the notion of representation of certain social groups in the literary canon (Guillory 1993:5).

14. See Guillory for an analogous argument.

15. Racial polarisation becomes endemic within institutional 'transformation' scenarios. Academic constituencies are being addressed by faculty executive members in terms of their racial composition. A Dean at UNISA repeatedly prefaced her beginning of the year (2008) rounds to individual departments with statements remarking on 'too many white faces', adding, in no uncertain terms, 'They must go'. Such statements have since reverberated in communications from faculty management downwards to departments on numerous occasions. (1993:8)

16. The criterion of 'relevance' features prominently in the calls for 'epistemological transformation'.

17. Guillory works closely with Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural capital' here. Bourdieu links educational level and cultural competence to market conditions, primarily the modes of their acquisition and the values placed on them. Creating, maintaining and cultivating social distinction become ways of marking social distance, and distinctness of class and status. Beyond that, however, the capacity of distinction tends to confer cultural legitimacy (see Bourdieu 1984:66).

18. This asceticism needs to be qualified. It is not defined by an aversion to pleasure as such, but the pursuit of a supplementary gain of pleasure through heightened tension and deferment of the resolution of this tension (see Bourdieu 1979 1984:490, also Freud 1987a:163, Freud 1940:146).

19. This kind of 'external' rationalisation, imposed from without by technical means, solicits only relatively superficial adaptations from those subjected to it:

The broad masses of the led merely accept or adapt themselves to the external, technical resultants which are of practical significance for their interests ... The bureaucratic order merely replaces the belief in the sanctity of traditional norms by the compliance with rationally determined rules and by the knowledge that these rules can be superseded by others, if one has the necessary power, and hence are not sacred.

(Weber,1978: 117)

20. The ideas in this last paragraph have been stated and more fully developed in Kistner: 2007.

## References

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