Trends in African philosophy and their implications for the Africanisation of the South Africa history caps curriculum: a case study of Odera Oruka philosophy

Paul Maluleka

University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa
Paul.maluleka@wits.ac.za
0000-0003-3168-150X

Thokozani Mathebula

University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa
Thokozani.mathebula@wits.ac.za
0000-0003-4762-6206

Abstract

A Kenyan philosopher, Henry Odera Oruka (1944–1995), conceptualised and articulated the six trends in African philosophy. These are ethno-philosophy, nationalistic-ideological philosophy, artistic (or literary philosophy), professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity and hermeneutic philosophy. In this article, we maintain that the last three of these trends, namely professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity, and hermeneutic philosophy, are useful in our attempt to contribute to Africanising the school history curriculum (SHC) in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in post-apartheid South Africa. Against this background, we make use of Maton's (2014) Epistemic-Pedagogic Device (EPD), building on from Bernstein's (1975) Pedagogic Device as a theoretical framework to view African philosophy and its implications for the Africanisation of the SHC in CAPS in post-apartheid South Africa. Through the lens of Maton's EPD, we show how the CAPS' philosophy of education is questionable; untenable since it promotes 'differences of content'; and is at the crossroads, i.e., it is stretched and pulled in different directions in

schools. Ultimately, we argue that Oruka's three trends form a three-piece suit advertising one's academic discipline (professional philosophy); showing South Africa's rich history told in the words of African elders (sage philosophy); and imploring school history learners to embark on a restless, unfinished quest for knowledge in the classrooms in post-apartheid South Africa.

Keywords: Trends in African philosophy; Decolonisation; Africanisation; Pedagogic Device; Epistemic-Pedagogic Device; CAPS; South Africa.

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Introduction

Oruka's six trends were a direct response to a Euro-western discourse that, for many years, had many believe that African philosophy did not exist. He responded to this discourse precisely because he saw the urgent need to contribute to the Africanisation of the study of philosophy and somewhat elevate the status of African philosophy, because for him "…philosophy is not a science in the ivory tower but has to contribute to the betterment of the life of the people - it has to be practical. Philosophers have to deploy the results of their thinking to the well-being of their communities" (Graness, 2012:2). With that said, philosophers are yet to reach a common consensus on the definition of philosophy (Mathebula, 2019). This is because of the nature, the character and the complexity of the discipline itself. For this article, philosophy is a body of knowledge that encourages divergent views on *what we claim to know, and how we claim to know what we claim to know*. With that said, a universal philosophy perspective is an inclusive, rational and reflective practice that makes it possible to merge Western and African philosophies to form a single knowledge system. A single universal mode of inquiry is chosen because it does not treat the so-called 'Western thought' and 'African thought' as unique, distinct, opposite philosophies – thus leading us to unwittingly perpetuate "narrow provincialism", to use Amin's phrase (1989, cited in Moll, 2002:11). If this definition is accepted, philosophers who theorise about it (philosophical issues) and practice it (issues of educational practice in nature) do not treat it as a fixed body of knowledge but rather a logical, coherent, critical, discursive, dynamic, continuous, ongoing and reflective science. It should not be surprising that we chose to focus on the philosophy of education's intellectual ancestry and its prospects hence the metaphor of philosophy as a road (or a journey) to wisdom (Letseka, 2012; Mathebula, 2020). Embarking on this road to knowledge, we

- Adopt Karl Maton's Epistemic-Pedagogic Device (EPD) as a theoretical framework to show how the three fields of practice, specifically the recontextualisation field through its recontextualising logics, can be used as a site in which professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity, and hermeneutic philosophy can be prioritised in both the production and reproduction fields that inform and shape the school history curriculum (SHC) in CAPS;
- Outline Oruka's three trends in African philosophy of education and their implications for the Africanisation of the SHC in post-apartheid South Africa;
- Unpack the CAPS underlying principles that point to Oruka's three strands in African philosophy of education in post-apartheid South African schools; and

- Argue that education for Africanisation of the SHC rooted in Oruka's professional, sage and hermeneutic philosophical project is not only feasible and desirable in schools but also, a categorical imperative in the classroom in post-apartheid South Africa.

Theoretical framework

Maton (2014) developed the EPD drawing from Bernstein's (1975) pedagogic device (PD). Bernstein was of the view that knowledge is constructed and transmitted in three fields of practice that are hierarchically related and governed or regulated by distinct operative logics. These fields include *the production field* (a site where knowledge is constructed, usually, but not exclusively, at universities), *the recontextualisation field* (a site where the knowledge from the production field is recontextualised by people such as curriculum designers and textbook writers in partnership with the state into officialised curriculum documents and textbooks), and *the reproduction field* (a site where knowledge from the production field recontextualised in the recontextualisation field is then reproduced by mainly in-service educators and lecturers through various pedagogical choices in their classrooms and lecture venues). This process, for Bernstein, symbolises a production line that is hierarchically interrelated but not dialectical. For instance, any change in the operative logics in the recontextualisation field cannot inform and shape what happens in the production field. In other words, the recontextualisation of knowledge in the recontextualisation field cannot happen without the said knowledge being produced in the production field, and the reproduction of the said knowledge cannot take place without the said knowledge being recontextualised in the recontextualisation field from the production field (Bernstein, 2000). Therefore, Maton's EPD stretches and strengthens Bernstein's PD by arguing that the fields of practice are not only interrelated; they are dialectical too (Maluleka, 2021). See image 1:
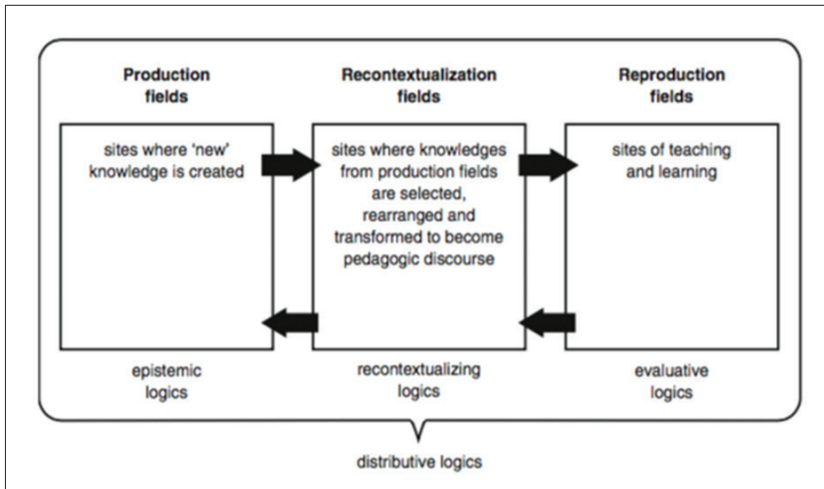
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Image 1: The arena created by the epistemic-pedagogic device (EPD)
Source: Maton, 2014:51.

This means that whatever change in the operative logics of any one of the fields of practice has a direct and dialectical impact on the other two fields of practice. For instance, new knowledge cannot be viewed as exclusively being produced in the production field. This new knowledge can be produced in either the reproduction or recontextualisation field and dialectically move between all the three fields of practice. This understanding of Bernstein's PD is powerful in that it disrupts the view of the academic project as resembling a production line. It also empowers other players located in other fields of practice that are not the production field to produce new knowledge that has the potential to inform and shape the understanding of the SHC and the philosophies of education that inform and shape it. It is from this logic then, that we are of the view that if the three trends proposed by Oruka are employed in the recontextualisation field, that is, the harmonisation of 'philosophy' and 'education' becomes a balancing act that is not difficult to follow. The state, as mandated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), can give direction to curriculum designers located in the recontextualisation field as to what kind of SHC, informed by a certain philosophy of education, they think the country should adopt. Therefore, we chose to concentrate on the recontextualisation field because we believe that players (specifically curriculum designers and textbooks writers) in this field are better positioned to advance and productively insert Africanisation in the SHC in CAPS that recentres Oruka's three trends of philosophy. This is because some of these players, if not all

of them, are both academics or intellectuals located in the production field (universities), and at the same time, they are either curriculum designers or textbooks writers. From this logic, those players have the power to influence what happens in the production and recontextualisation fields, which has a bearing on the reproduction field.

Oruka's three trends in African philosophy of education and their implications for the Africanisation of the school history curriculum in South Africa: A production field

What conception of African philosophy should underpin education in the post-apartheid South African SHC? A historical-analytical geography is worth considering at length, for what it reveals about the philosophy of education in post-apartheid South Africa since,

> The education system under apartheid had been fragmented along racial and ethnic lines and had been saturated with the racial ideology and educational doctrines of apartheid. The theoretical undergirding for this fragmentation in education was traced to the influence of Fundamental Pedagogics, which in its practice of science, its critics claimed had been responsible for reproducing and maintaining the ruling social and political ideology in South Africa, namely, Christian National Education. Taylor (1993, p.3) is of the opinion that there is a wide and enduring view that Fundamental Pedagogics was more about socialisation than philosophy and more about instilling passive acceptance of authority than providing students with the conceptual tools necessary for creative and independent thought. Furthermore, it is evident that such a narrow utilitarian view of education, as a process of socialisation, emphasised the maintaining of particular cultural and social norms [to] provide the necessary homogeneity for social survival and political hegemony, and did not account for the possibility of the learner participating critically in the learning interaction (see Higgs 1994c). In this way, Fundamental Pedagogics instilled a spirit of intolerance, and an unwillingness to accommodate divergent perspectives and points of view, while at the same time embracing a totalising discourse on the nature of education theory and practice (Higgs, 1998:3).

The fundamental pedagogic philosophy that underpinned apartheid education gave way to a new philosophy of education in post-apartheid South Africa. As a notable example, the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa "recognise[s] the injustices

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of our past … to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental rights" (Republic of South Africa, 1996:1). Equally, the Higher Education Act (1997:1-3) promises to "redress past discrimination and provide optimal opportunities for learning … contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship … promote the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom [and] democracy". Thus, it is for this reason that we believe that Oruka's three trends in African philosophy of education should guide curriculum designers and textbook writers located in the recontextualisation field, and certainly, philosophers at our universities, when they plan, develop and implement a SHC for post-apartheid South African schools. This, with the view of challenging and transcending what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:8) has termed "the final contour of coloniality" underpinning the current SHC in CAPS and its distributive logics, as highlighted by EPD's distributive logic. EPD, amongst other things, stands for "the control of African subjectivity and knowledge, including the imposition of western epistemology and its use in shaping the formative processes of development and entrenching the permanency of black subjectivity" Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:8). Therefore, the three trends we propose are *professional philosophy, hermeneutical philosophy*, and *philosophical sage.*

Professional philosophy

The professional philosophy trend in African philosophy constitutes works by Africans and non-Africans who are trained in formal philosophy, usually trained in Euro-western philosophy (Higgs & Smith, 2006). Its main advocates include the likes of Oruka (1972), Kwasi Wiredu (1980), Peter Bodunrin (1981) and Paulin Hountondji (1996). These scholars hold a universalist view of what should inform and constitute the discipline of philosophy anywhere in the world (Imbo, 1998). For them, this philosophy ought to be independent, dynamic, logical, coherent, critical, and discursive and should avoid being particularistic in its approach (Wiredu, 1980). This, they believe, will enable those who practice the discipline to enjoy "freedom of inquiry, openness to criticism, scepticism and fallibilism and non-veneration of authorities" (Oyeshile, 2008:60). The implications of this trend on the development of the SHC in post-apartheid South Africa are as follows. Firstly, an African philosophy of education that informs and shapes the SHC must be underpinned by conscious, logical, coherent, critical, dynamic, continuous, creative discursiveness, and rational and systematic tradition of *doing philosophy* (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru, 2013; Ndofirepi, 2013). This would in turn complement some of the existing skills and aspects

already embedded in the current SHC in CAPS such as reflection, analytical thinking, as well as working with and within an implicit historical significance, using evidence, historical thinking, historical writing, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspectives, the ethical dimension of history, sourcing, contextualisation, and corroboration (Department of Basic Education, 2011a & b; Maluleka, 2018). Moreover, this would mean that the SHC would then need to embrace a *doing history* approach that entails thinking, reading, and writing like a historian that ought to inform any SHC (Bertram, 2008; Wineburg, 2001; Wineburg & Martin, 2004; Seixas, 2010, 2013). In so doing, both educators of history and their learners are likely to engage in "robust formal intellectual encounters characterised by systematic complex arguments and counter-arguments" (Mburu, 2018:73). This would result in "critical reflections on personal wellbeing or human flourishing, on communal ethics and how this ought to impact on human conduct" (Letseka, 2000:182). This will also see philosophy and applied history coming together, thus professional philosophy "plays mainly the role of a midwife: it helps in bringing [history] to birth in the way that midwives help in delivering babies" (Akinpelu, 1981:167).

Philosophical sage

The philosophic sagacity is considered the second trend in African philosophy of education by Oruka. It is known as sage philosophy, which is practised by indigenous knowledge producers, influenced by learning from their culture and other cultures. This is because a purely traditional African or philosophy does not exist. Despite the Western influence, sage individuals "are deeply rooted in their culture, little affected by Western scholarship, and authentic agents of traditional Africa in the modern situation" (Ndofirepi, 2013:48). Some of them "…might have been partly influenced by the inevitable moral and technological culture from the West; nevertheless, their outlook and cultural belonging remain that of traditional rural Africa. And except for a handful of them, [most] are illiterate or semi-illiterate" (Oruka, 1991:51). These are *oMakhulu*[1] who are considered institutions of indigenous knowledge that store, transfer, and disseminate knowledge in the form of history and philosophical wisdom (Magoqwana, 2018). Also, sage philosophers engage in a process of reflective philosophical evaluation of thought which is often rigorous

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1 "The term uMama-Omkhulu (elder mother-shortened to uMakhulu) is used to assert isiXhosa [and other indigenous African languages for that matter] as a source of knowledge" (Magoqwana, 2018: 76).

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(Ndofirepi, 2013). These are individuals that are "… versed in the wisdom and traditions of [their people, and very often they are] recognised by the people themselves as having this gift" (Oruka, 1991:51). Oruka (1990a:16) furthers characterises these sage individuals as:

> ... critical, independent thinkers who guide their thoughts and judgments by the power of reason and inborn insight rather than by the authority of the communal consensus. They are capable of taking a problem or a concept and offering a rigorous philosophical analysis of it, making it clear rationally where they accept or reject the established or communal judgment on the matter.

This does not mean that all oMakhulu qualify as critical sages. Hence, Oruka argues that there is a difference between an ordinary sage and a critical sage. An ordinary sage (also known as folk sage) "…does not necessarily make a philosopher, some sages are simply moralists and the disciplined, diehard faithful to a tradition… others merely historians and good interpreters of the history and customs of their people" (Oruka, 1990b:177). While a critical sage (also known as a philosophic sage) is " … not only wise but also capable of being rational and critical in understanding or solving the inconsistencies of his or her culture and coping with foreign encroachments on it. Thus, as thinkers, they opt to recommend only those features of belief and wisdom that make the grade of their test" (Oruka, 1990b:177). To drive home this point, Hall and Tandon (2017) show that there are elements of a 'knowledge democracy' discourse and decolonising practice in most of our universities. As a notable example, a Ugandan intellectual and civil society activist, Paulo Wangoola (cited by Hall & Tandon, 2017:9–10) "dedicate[d] himself to the creation of a village-based institution of higher education and research that is today known as the Mpambo Afrikan Multiversity, a place for the support of mother-tongue scholars of African Indigenous knowledge".

It is equally important to note that sage philosophy is different from culture philosophy (ethnophilosophy) that often characterises what is known as African philosophy (Ochieng-Odhiambo, 2012). This difference is propelled by the fact that sage philosophy "implicitly rejects the holistic approach to African philosophy" that characterises culture philosophy (Bodunrin, 1984:2). Hence, Oruka (1990b:178-179) argues that

> … beliefs or truth claims within a culture philosophy are generally treated as absolutes … Philosophic sagacity, however, is often a product of a reflection; a re-evaluation of the 'culture philosophy'. The few sages who possess the philosophic inclination to make a critical

assessment of their underlying beliefs.

The implications of this trend in the development of a SHC in post-apartheid South Africa are far-reaching. For instance, oral history and research projects that are offered as part and parcel of the history curriculum in CAPS can only be carried out if learners work closely with oMakhulu — the critical sages in their respective communities. However, this is only possible if learners are given clear and explicit guidelines on how to approach these projects in a manner that recentres and humanises oMakhulu as institutions of indigenous knowledge. If this is done, it would mean that schools would end up with a history curriculum that does not only pay lip service to the critical role oMakhulu can play in our understanding of the world and its past, but also effectively and practically bring oMakhulu into the classroom in a different pedagogical form. This would enable both educators and learners to recognise and engage with them in ways that are meaningful, truthful, and enriching to their learning about the past — the rich history and heritage of South Africa gone by. The educational benefits of the sage philosophy-based history curriculum are thus immense. First, history learners are encouraged to devote their time and energy to scientific research inquiry, e.g., oral history and research projects where history learners can work with oMakhulu, as critical thinkers in their respective communities. Second, learners are given clear and explicit guidelines as to how to approach this task in a manner that recentres and humanises oMakhulu as institutions of indigenous knowledge. Third, sage philosophy "make[s] practical sense of deep theoretical issues" as argued by Waghid (2005:126-7). In the end, oral history projects are at the heart of the African philosophy of education that looks both to the academic discipline and to educational practice in post-apartheid South African schools.

Hermeneutical philosophy

The third hermeneutical trend is considered one of the most important trends in modern and contemporary African philosophy (Komo, 2017). Its leading pioneers include the likes of Oruka, Barry Hallen, Theophilus Okere, Tsenay Serequeberhan, Kwame Gyekye, Nkombe Oleko, Benoît Okolo Okonda, and many others (Ndofirepi, 2013). This is a trend that seeks to explore the problem of the relationship between culture and philosophy, as well as the relationship between universality and particularity in the development of a SHC for post-apartheid South African schools. Hence, hermeneutical

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philosophy's approach to these problematic issues is different from ethno-philosophy.[2] In the hermeneutical approach, the starting point of philosophy is with the understanding of the lived experiences of Africans with the view of dismantling pervasive effects of cultural and economic imperialism imposed by the global North (Ndofirepi, 2013). This is informed by the fact that this trend understands philosophy to be inherently interpretative (Komo, 2017). Hence, Okere (1983) in his book, entitled: *African Philosophy: A Historico-Hermeneutical Investigation of the Conditions of its Possibility*, explores the interpretative nature of hermeneutic philosophy. Okere concludes that its interpretative nature is a result of the intersectionality and interconnectedness of language, context, and history which are inextricably linked to culture (Komo, 2017). By centring culture, Okere was pushing back against the notion advanced by Euro-Western philosophy that purported that Africans as a people cannot think, reason, or rationalise. If people have their own cultures, histories, philosophies, and languages it means they too can think, reason, or rationalise. In his own words, Okere (1983:17) argues the following about reflective interpretation being philosophy: "reflection is the appropriation of our effort to exist and of our desire to be across the works which bear witness to this effort and desire. It is the incorporating of our new understanding of our culture into our self-understanding".

The implications of Hermeneutical philosophy in the development of a SHC compel those operating in the recontextualisation field to think of curriculum and its knowledge as needing to critically reflect the culture of the people it is meant for. First, the SHC should transcend the seemingly particular, opposite and irreconcilable Euro-centred and Afro-centred philosophies or schools of thought. Second, Western philosophy and African philosophy should bury their narrow differences and "work together, recognising that what they have in common is much more than what separates them" (Budge, 1993:154) — a unity of a single philosophy, of a single abstract subject-matter, careful and systematic thinking (method) and way of life. Third, two possible traps need to be avoided when thinking about an African philosophy of education based history curriculum: a) an essentialist definition

2 Ethno-philosophy is what is known as culture philosophy. What then is hermeneutic philosophy? Komo (2017:85-86) argues that hermeneutic philosophy is an approach to philosophy that precedes ethno-philosophy, and it is concerned with articulating "a genuine African philosophy within African cultures, without eschewing philosophical tradition or exigencies". In other words, it is an approach that is concerned with mediating between philosophy and culture, because philosophy is always determined by culture (Okere 1983; Komo 2017). Equally, "philosophy always grows out of the cultural background and depends on it. Without this background, there cannot be a foreground. Although philosophy is not to be confused with myths, weltanschauung, and religion, it is always rooted in a specific culture. Culture provides the horizon of interpretation" (Komo 2017:85-86).

of African identity that suggests that there is only one authentic set of characteristics which all African people share and which do not alter across time — identities involve multiplicity, therefore they are rarely coherent and integrated (Woodward, 1997:2); and b) Africans are not a solidified, undifferentiated and homogenous mass of people (this tends to ignore differences and the fact that 'Africans' are individual subjects too). Moreover, Hermeneutical philosophy advances the type of philosophical and historical underpinnings to a curriculum that is not universalistic or singularistic, but rather promote philosophical and historical underpinnings that are for epistemic shareability, pluriversality, particularism as pluralism, and transmodernity. As it stands, the current history curriculum in CAPS reflects this 'collective singular' — that is often employed in African philosophy of education in the Global South. Hence, Kgari-Masondo (2019:119) argued that "CAPS-History emphasise[s] the importance of teaching historical concepts but excludes the critical concept of historical significance … which safeguards skills of interpretation and understanding why certain histories are in the official arena and others not". In other words, although the historical significance is stated in the history curriculum in CAPS; it is not explicitly stated and emphasised as one of the important skills learners need in *doing history*.

African philosophy of education and CAPS-history curriculum: A recontextualisation field

The CAPS underlying principles point to Oruka's three trends in African philosophy of education. To illustrate this point, CAPS' philosophy of education includes, among others:

- "Active and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths" (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:4) — this is evidence of professional philosophy;
- "Valuing indigenous knowledge systems: acknowledging the rich history [as told in the words of our elders] and heritage of this country as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the Constitution" (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:5) — this is evidence of philosophic sage; and
- "Ensur[ing] that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives … promotes knowledge in local contexts, while sensitive to global imperatives" (Department of Basic Education, 2011a:4) — this is evidence of hermeneutical philosophy.

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There are three points worth noting about the African philosophy of education in the CAPS document. First, it reflects Oruka's professional philosophy, philosophic sage and hermeneutical philosophy as located in the production field. Second, this advancement of scholarly knowledge from the production field is then recontextualised by history curriculum designers in the recontextualisation field. Third, Oruka's three strands are brought together within the new context of consolidating South Africa's Constitutional democracy by a) recognising history as an academic, professional philosophy that fosters active, critical and inquisitive citizens in post-apartheid South African schools; b) subscribing to sage philosophy, i.e., the words of elders as walking libraries of wisdom in post-apartheid South African schools; and c) acknowledging hermeneutics as a philosophy of education that helps both educators and learners to create meaning in their local context while mindful to global issues. It is clear therefore that these strands of philosophy, i.e., professional (or critical, academic), sages (wisdom of elders) and hermeneutics (lived experiences of Africans), have emerged in the wake of attempts to Africanise the history curriculum in CAPS in post-apartheid South Africa. As mentioned in the previous section, the CAPS' philosophy of education is firstly questionable especially if you consider the urgent need to disrupt the academic and particular worldviews, to form a single philosophy in schools. Secondly, it is untenable since it promotes 'differences of content', i.e., oral tradition versus written tradition in the school history curriculum. Furthermore, the difficulty is that presently CAPS does not have a settled African philosophy (of education): it is at the crossroads and is stretched and pulled in different directions. Let us take a look at how Oruka's three trends in African philosophy of education are reflected in the history curriculum in CAPS.

Under the headings 'What is History', 'Skills and Concepts' and 'Rationale', the History curriculum (grades 10-12, 16-18 years of age) wording reads, respectively:

History is a process of inquiry. It involves thinking critically about the stories people tell us about the past, as well as the stories that we tell ourselves. Usually, this is done by writing an essay, but it may be done by, for example, making or completing a table, designing a diagram or chart, or preparing a speech. The purpose of this is to remind learners that: questions convey that history is a discipline of inquiry and not just received knowledge; historical knowledge is open-ended, debated and changeable; historical lessons should be built around the intrigue of questions; and research, investigation and interpretation are guided by posed questions (Department of Basic Education, 2012:8-11).

As we can see from the quote above, there are three points worth noting about professional philosophy as located in the recontextualisation field. First, African philosophy — and by implication history is "a set of texts, especially the set of texts written by Africans and described as philosophy by their authors themselves" (Hountondji, 1996:33). Second, to defend African philosophy as written text, Akinpelu (1981:1) suggests that "to philosophise is to engage in a strenuous [educational] activity of thought … to satisfy the importunate questioning of the human mind" —this is an active, not a passive human activity. Third, let us add African philosophy is viewed as 'pure' or 'proper' philosophy — a parent discipline that "has an integrity and worth of its own, and its legitimacy is not dependent upon successfully contributing to practice" (Siegel, 2014:30). To put it more simplistically, this refers to the intellectual coming together of school learners — philosophers of education "to make practical sense of deep theoretical issues" as Waghid (2005:126-7) aptly points out. We contend that in the face of this yearning for 'independent critical thought', 'lazy and shallow theorising', on the one hand, and 'voracious and enthusiastic' practising, on the other hand, are not only distinct but opposite — if not incompatible self-regulatory human activity. If we look closer, we can see that professional philosophy's approach to the history curriculum in CAPS is questionable. One hopeful note is that school history as a discipline requires one "to be thoughtful and self-direct[ing]" (Waghid, 2001:211, addition ours). With that said, Rathbone (1971:104) maintains, that "each [philosopher of education] is his [sic] own agent — a self-reliant, independent, self-actualizing individual who" "reads up on things for himself before forming opinions" (Ntenteni, 2016:365). Let us turn out attention to sage philosophy in the history curriculum in CAPS.

As mentioned earlier, CAPS' sage philosophy implores learners to acknowledge the rich history told in the words of African elders. An example in point is 'An oral history and research project' in the Social Sciences History component (grades 7-9, 13-15 years of age) whose

> topic must be on South African history and must involve both oral history and research. [Elders,] parents and local groups. Learners should: identify a person to interview. Interview a person who was affected by and responded to the [colonial] apartheid law they have researched. They may write down the interviewee's answers during the interview…Write a coherent story of 600 words about the person they interviewed. Hand in their questions and answers, the story, as well as their own reflections on the experience of doing the project (Department of Basic Education, 2011b: 14-15).

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As the Social Sciences History component quote above indicates, there are three issues worth mentioning about sage philosophy as a recontextualised field in South African schools. First, history learners are encouraged to devote their time and energy to scientific research inquiry by "focusing on those individuals in society who are known to be wise and far-sighted, and who can think critically" (Higgs & Smith, 2017:14). Second, oral history is seen as a fully-fledged academic discipline with the encounter between the interviewer and the sages at its centre. Third, concurring with the above view, we maintain that research writing is about the scholarship (particular ways of thinking and writing), thinking (quality of the argument, evidence and critical insight) and writing (knowledge is constructed and produced). To achieve this end, learners can grasp the conceptual geography in scientific investigation in South African schools, i.e., the original focus (of oral history) and achieved insight (oral history) are parasitic on theoretical processing (central operation of theorising). Learners conducting oral history projects must go that far, theorisation is not only possible but a categorical imperative, especially in enabling South Africa's recentring research project in the global "processes of knowledge production" (Hountondji, 1997:13). In our humble view, this process of scientific inquiry is at the heart of African philosophy of education — namely the struggle by African philosophers of education to look both to the parent discipline and educational practice in post-apartheid South African schools — this is our disquiet about sage philosophy's approach to the history curriculum in CAPS, it is untenable because it promotes differences of content and not a single style of inquiry. The focus shifts to hermeneutical philosophy in the history curriculum in CAPS.

As we have already pointed out, CAPS' hermeneutical philosophy helps learners to be more creative, flexible and more understanding of others. As a notable example, the topic 'The first farmers in southern Africa' in the Social Sciences History component (grades 4-6, 11-12 years of age) shows that:

> *Indigenous societies were political and strategically, economically, and technologically innovative before the colonial period. The myth that so frequently surfaces is the contrast between societies with writing ('civilised, progressive, innovative'), with indigenous societies ("tribal, mired in a static traditionalism"). All people all over the world are equally politically, economically, strategically, and technologically innovative, irrespective of when they live and where they live (Department of Basic Education, 2011c:39).*

As the Social Sciences History component quote above shows, there are five points worth highlighting about the hermeneutical philosophy as a recontextualised field in South

African schools. First, it shows that Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism, as two positions in the philosophy of knowledge, entail each other — Eurocentric thinkers are blind to the entailed opposite while African thinkers believe there is nothing to be done about it in South Africa. Second, it is against this mutual entailment that we encounter the Eurocentric and Afrocentric's "theoretical inadequacy" — this compels the advocates of these positions to "start to develop Africa in a universal system of thought" (Moll, 2002:1) in South African schools. Third, in the absence of clarification and critical evaluation of African philosophy of education, we end up with an uncritical and unargued acceptance of a false dichotomy between bad, indigenous elements of the history curriculum and good, Western features of the history curriculum or the other way around — and that is not useful. It is not useful because African philosophers should "take the word philosophy in the active, not passive, sense" (Hountondji, 1996:53). Fourth, philosophy is a universal practice, not confined to Western or African people. It is possible, as Le Grange (2007:586) argues, to disrupt the dichotomy between classical Western philosophy and African indigenous worldviews. Lastly, as Horsthemke (2015:23) also states, "a rapprochement between so-called indigenous and 'non-indigenous' insights are not only possible but desirable – educationally". Our concern with the hermeneutical philosophy approach to the history curriculum in CAPS is that it does not have a settled African philosophy of education because it is torn between two worlds, i.e., the universal and the particular. We concur with Le Grange's (2007:581) assertion that "the inclusion of [Africanisation] in South African curriculum policy statements [wa]s a positive step and could provide opportunities for debate on interaction(s) between Western and indigenous worldviews". The focus now turns to Education for Africanisation of the SHC in South African schools from a reproduction field perspective.

Education for Africanisation of the school history curriculum in South African schools: A reproduction field

At this point, the Africanisation of a SHC has undergone a transition from production via recontextualisation to reproduction in post-apartheid South African schools:

- Oruka's philosophy of education, namely professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity and hermeneutic philosophy is reflected in the production field (higher education);
- At the same time, CAPS' curriculum designers echoed Oruka's three trends

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in African philosophy of education in the recontextualisation field (SHC document); and

- Of concern to us is how the Africanisation of the SHC is translated into the reality of history learners' lived experiences — a reproduction field (classroom)?

But, apart from this concern (i.e., the tension between the ideal and the achievement of the ideal), education policies and curriculum developments, in general, are thought of, read as and seen as "de-personalised [contextual fields] complete[ly] devoid of human experiences" (Hulme & Hulme, 2012:44). To make matters worse, we have noted the following: 1) Curriculum and assessment policy statement philosophy of education is questionable, especially if you consider the urgent need to disrupt the universal and particular worldviews, to form a single philosophy in post-apartheid South African schools; 2) apart from being questionable, CAPS' philosophy is unsustainable because it promotes 'differences of content'; and 3) the difficulty is that presently CAPS does not have an established African philosophy of education because it is dynamic, complex and multifaceted. What should be the response to this philosophical state of affairs? As for us, the universality of African philosophy must be preserved … because these differences of content are meaningful precisely and only as differences of content, which, as such, refer back to the essential unity of a single discipline, of a single style of inquiry (Hountondji, 1996:56). If this argument is accepted, it means that we have to develop a conscious, self-critical and intelligible education for Africanisation of the SHC in post-apartheid South Africa with clear identifiable steps. So, how does education for Africanisation in South African schools use the history curriculum in CAPS? What then are the strategies for getting from where we *are* to where we *ought to be*? What does this task involve in practical terms? It involves Oruka's three trends, i.e., professional philosophy, philosophic sagacity and hermeneutic philosophy which are not incompatible but, rather, are intimately and reciprocally linked philosophies of education that should be underpinning the history curriculum in CAPS.

At a professional philosophical level, Africanisation of the SHC should be perceived as an academic discipline characterised by:

- liberating the memory of school history learners who guarantee permanent records by 'writing their memories' or 'keeping diaries in the classroom'.
- clarity, logical and systematic thinking in its writing and research — thus school history becomes an active, not a passive human activity for learners in

the classroom.

- school history learners who embrace *doing history* that entails thinking, reading, and writing like a historian — robust formal intellectual encounters through systematic complex arguments and counter-arguments in the classroom.
- valuing individual thoughts, group discussion and general debate — that enable school history learners to ask the thorniest of questions in the classroom.
- developing human capabilities (agency approach) and helping school history learners to forge social solidarity with their peers in the classroom.

At sage level, Africanisation of the SHC in post-apartheid South Africa would be a product of rich history told in the words of African elders through oral history and research projects through:

- school history learners who devote their time and energy in scientific research inquiry (oral testimony, i.e., eyewitness or first-hand accounts of events or situations that occurred during the life of elders interviewed or oral evidence, i.e., oral tradition, which includes stories, praise songs, genealogies or narratives that have been handed down by word of mouth from one generation to the next) in the classroom.
- the oral history which is seen as a fully-fledged academic discipline with the encounter between the interviewer (school history learners) and the sages (knowledgeable elders) at its centre in the classroom.
- school history learners who conduct oral history projects that enable South Africa's recentring research project in the global "processes of knowledge production" (Hountondji, 1997:13) in the classroom.
- the theorisation that brings theoretical findings in dialogue with the collection of data in the classroom – thus "promot[ing] certain kinds of 'blue-sky' knowledge that is likely to result in 'tangible' or 'concrete' social benefits such as health, wealth and liberty" (Ndofirepi & Cross 2017: 4) in post-apartheid South Africa.
- a school history curriculum that is not a feel-good, cosmetic response to African challenges and problems, nor too quick, too neat, too easy a solution — but a life struggle for social justice in pursuit of Africa's sustainable future.

Hermeneutically, Africanisation of the SHC in South Africa would show that African

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philosophy is "essentially an open process, a restless, unfinished quest, not closed knowledge" (Hountondji, 1996:71). This would mean

- school history learners' analysis of Africanisation consists of a conceptual definition and specification of its central features (e.g., one can analyse or define Africanisation as a 'true democratisation of knowledge' and specify the elements that make up the concept).
- learners' synthesis of Africanisation shows the logical relationships whereby the concept (as a unity of knowledge) implies or is implied by another (e.g., one can show a logical relationship between Africanisation and its obligation to transcend the seemingly particular, opposite and irreconcilable Euro-centred and Afro-centred schools of thought).
- learners attempt to improve Africanisation, involves recommending a definition or use that will assist them to clarify the meaning of the concept (e.g., one can recommend, as authors do, that the concept 'Africanisation' should be used in a strictly theoretical sense, and not in the popular, ideological sense).
- if school history learners treat the so-called 'Western thought' and 'African thought' as unique, distinct, opposite philosophies, they are unwittingly perpetuating "narrow provincialism", to use Amin's (1989) phrase (cited in Moll, 2002:11).
- as Kanu (2014:92) maintains that philosophy is an "all-inclusive enterprise, a universal activity not limited to whites or blacks, nor confined to the peoples of the West and the East" in history classrooms.
- instead, universal knowledge takes the locale as the basis of international knowledge production – far from "permitting Western triumphalism or the retrieval of pre-colonial African tradition" (Enslin & Horsthemke, 2016:188) in the history classrooms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let us put forward the following claim: African philosophy of education and Africanisation of the history curriculum in post-apartheid South African schools can be interpreted in a hierarchical, interrelated and dialectical relationship. By this we refer to the following: one, professional experts in higher education who treat African philosophy as a body of knowledge — this is our production field; two, sages who are walking libraries in local

communities in South Africa — this is our recontextualised field; and lastly, and the lived experiences of learners (enacted curriculum) in the classrooms — this is our reproduction field. Sadly, the CAPS' philosophy of education is firstly questionable, especially if you consider the urgent need to disrupt the academic and particular worldviews, to form a single philosophy in schools. Secondly, it is untenable since it promotes 'differences of content', i.e., oral tradition versus written tradition in the school history curriculum. Thirdly, the difficulty is that presently CAPS does not have a settled African philosophy (of education): it is torn between two worlds, i.e., the universal and the particular. In a strict education for Africanisation sense, the school history curriculum in post-apartheid South African schools should be perceived first and foremost as a professional philosophical project that African philosophers in higher education devote their time and energy to; second, a sage project that oMakhulu's as part of the broader school communities help history learners through oral history and research projects to address problems and deal with issues facing locals. Last, but not least, it should be perceived as a hermeneutic project that brings philosophy down from the sky, i.e. helps learners to make practical sense of deep philosophical issues in post-apartheid South African schools.

Acknowledgements:

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