

THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE 2015: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) FOR AN
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**AN EMERGING AFRICA:
IMPERATIVES FOR HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT**

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Nelson Mandela

- **“The time for Africa’s renewal, for our continent to occupy the pedestal of the successful, has come to pass.**
- **Africa yearns and deserves to redeem her glory, to reassert centuries old contribution to economics, politics, culture and the arts and once more to be a pioneer the many fields of human endeavor”.**
- Nelson Mandela, in a presentation of the Africa Peace Prize to Mozambique 1st November 1997 *ibid.*

It hasn't been easy..

- The **outdated systems** continue to hold their sway in almost every area of human endeavor
 - -in the academy
 - -in the policy sphere
 - -in the livelihood space

We were told we had nothing

- The era of the Empire,
- **weak and strong** at the same time,
- declared **Africa to have nothing.**
- In particular, **its knowledge systems were irrelevant.**
- We were **unsuited** for the modern world.

So we learnt everything.....

- So from **table manners;**
- and **dress codes**
- to **economic methods,**
- **political philosophy**
- and **governmental administration,**
- to **notions of civilizational truth and destiny.**
(Ralston Saul J. 2014: “The Comeback”.
Toronto. Penguin Canada Books.)

Fast forward to the 21st century

- We realised that our knowledge embodies
 - a significant amount of **innovation and creativity**
 - And we contribute to the “**diversity and richness of the planet’s civilizations and cultures**”.

In policy terms..Oopppps!!!

- We also contribute to **cultural identity,**
- **sustainable development and social cohesion**
- **And globally, to the**
- **conservation of the environment,**
- **the promotion of food security and**
- **the advancement of public health.**

What does this mean???

- It means:
- We have to take what
- we feed into the minds
- of our young **seriously!!!**
- **FROM NOW ON!!!!**

To begin with

A RIDDLE: THE WILL TO ACT

- What happens when we raise the ethical benchmarks in research, practice and policy work?
- What happens when the inner voice of disenfranchisement meets the outer voice of empowerment... ?
- When the inner cry for self determination meets the warm embrace of co-determination? (Odora Hoppers 2015. Keynote; Learning for Change. Arusha Tanzania 2015)

Knowing that...

- Sometimes the **entities** that
- perform the **functions** and **wield the authority**
- are **actually NOT persons** like pilots and doctors,
- **but WORDS** (Odora Hoppers, Keynote to the Swedish Research Council, 2009)

How can we move,

Beyond the

- **need for more Rights**
- **To a method of dialogue....**
- **And thus to: Cognitive Justice (Visvanathan 1997)**

This leaves us with few options: we have to “Rethink Thinking” itself

- In other words we have to **Rethink** key areas of knowledge production, such as law, economics, science, and education
- Call for transformations in the **way we think** about issues..
- (see my publication: “Rethinking Thinking: Modernity’s “Other” and the Transformation of the University” 2012)

In the academy:

- We have to **Transform by Enlargement**
- We have to introduce a wider range of stakeholders e.g **bicultural experts** at the epistemological level in the academy (Odora Hoppers; SARCHI Framework and Strategy 2009)
- Introducing key topics as **“Innovation from Below”– not from the labs, but by common people”** (Prof Mashelkar and Prof Gupta; National Innovations Foundation, India)

Transformation by enlargement also means

- Working with **Law faculties**
- to strengthen the paradigmatic imperatives surrounding **“Restorative Justice”**
- So that they are not only stuck
- only in **“Retributive Justice”**
- That was part of my task in my Chair.

Keeping in mind: Duress and Humiliation

- In Africa, and most of the colonized world,
 - **Duress and humiliation** particularly in research and policy work (leave alone life itself) are the “single” and most important **weapons of mass destruction.**
 - Therefore, **Cognitive Justice** is the right of all forms or traditions of knowledge to co-exist **without duress.**

Quoting Nandy

- Who states that the meek do not inherit the earth by their **mekness alone** – they need **defences of the mind and conceptual categories** around which they can organise their thoughts and actions (Nandy 1983).

Citing the Unesco Declaration: (2000)

- there is a need for a **vigorous and informed, constructive inter-cultural and democratic debate** on the production and use of scientific knowledge.

Jackson...and... Plato

- As Samuel Jackson's cautioned that: **An injustice anywhere is an injustice everywhere.**
- And from Plato: **Justice will only exist where those not affected by injustice are filled with the same amount of indignation as those affected by it.**

A NEW, EQUAL, MORE RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIP

- In other words by thinking and acting so, it means that we create a unique moment when **the inner voice of disenfranchisement meets the outer voice of empowerment...**
- **When the inner cry for self-determination meets the warm embrace of co-determination.**

THANK YOU