

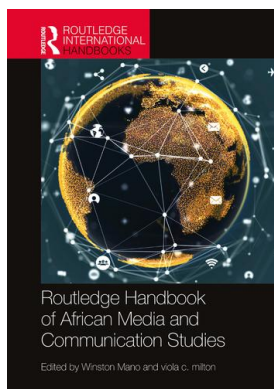
This article was downloaded by: 10.3.97.143

On: 06 Dec 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



Routledge Handbook of African Media and Communication Studies

Winston Mano, viola c. milton

Afrokology as a transdisciplinary approach to media and communication studies

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351273206-19>

viola c. milton, Winston Mano

Published online on: 12 Feb 2021

How to cite :- viola c. milton, Winston Mano. 12 Feb 2021, *Afrokology as a transdisciplinary approach to media and communication studies from*: Routledge Handbook of African Media and Communication Studies Routledge

Accessed on: 06 Dec 2023

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781351273206-19>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Afrokology as a transdisciplinary approach to media and communication studies

viola c. milton and Winston Mano

Education in Africa and for Africans continues to be like a pilgrimage to the Kilimanjaro of metropolitan intellectual ideals, but also to the tortuous route to Calvary for alternative ways of life.

(Nyamnjoh 2012, 37)

The study of media and communications in the global South is limited by uncritical overreliance on theories and methodologies from the global North and, as Nyamnjoh observes above, a struggle to find viable alternatives. In the African context, the problem is exacerbated by the stubborn resilience of coloniality and its concomitant ignorance of contributions from within Africa and the global South in general. This has arguably created gaps in critical conversations needed to deepen and complicate insights in the discipline. The necessary corrective, we argue, is a transdisciplinary approach that centers and takes seriously African “schools of thought” and how these relate to our alternative understanding of media and communications from an African perspective. In the African context, research in media and communication tends to highlight philosophical and empirical differences related to key concepts that connect to African lived experiences, including for example, participation, justice and transformation which remain important for Africa (cf. Frassinelli 2019; milton 2019; Sesanti 2019; Mutsvairo 2018; Mutsvairo and Karam 2018; Mabweazara 2015; 2018; Chasi and Rodney-Gumede 2016; Mano, and Meribe 2017; wa Thiong’o 2009, 2016; Ngomba 2012; Skjerdal 2012; Obonyo 2011; Mano 2010; Banda 2009; Ansu-Kyeremeh 2005; Nyamnjoh 2005; 2011; Kasoma 1996; Karikari 1996). We draw on these insights as well as the contributions to the current volume to center Afrokology as a *transdisciplinary* heuristic toolkit that can anchor self-standing African media and communication which resonates with conditions on the continent. This chapter, therefore, considers the necessary philosophical principles or values as well as methodologies integral to Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit. As argued in Chapter 1, an African-centered approach is related but different from Asante’s (1980) Afrocentrism and more informed by Afrokology and decoloniality:

It should be possible, however, in what concerns Africa, to have an Africa-centred approach to knowledge production that is driven neither by Eurocentrism nor Afrocentrism, but

instead invites scholars, in their critical consciousness, to use whatever concepts and research tools they deem most appropriate in studying Africa and the rest of the world. . . . Context, after all, does matter.

(Nyamnjoh 2020, 29)

For this reason, the starting point remains African concerns and epistemologies.

Afrokology, we have argued in Mano and Milton, (2021, also Chapter 2 in this volume), is an attempt to re-imagine media and communication studies and to reunite its practice and theory with philosophical roots in Africa. We argue that Afrokology can awaken relational accountability that promotes respectful representation, reciprocity and rights of both the researcher and the researched. Afrokology is presented in this chapter as an innovative heuristic and analytical toolkit that could enhance the academic positioning of media and communication debates and one which is important for connecting critiques of existing and past theories, policies and practices. It is a way of seeing, knowing and doing media and communication that is facilitative. In this sense, Afrokology could be the basis for a deliberate push for more effective epistemological inclusivity. As pointed out in Chapter 2, Afrokology recognises other sources of knowledge as important but puts a premium on relevance and dialogue between and among them. It arrives at this by for example recognising knowledge previously ignored under colonialism which considered it to be

too savage and primitive to share a table with European colonial enlightenment and often misrepresented in the postcolonial era by ill-adapted curricula, epistemologies, and theories, and by many an academic and scholar whose intellectual clocks are set to the rhythm of transatlantic scholarly cannons, practices, and standards of value in knowledge production and consumption.

(Nyamnjoh 2019, 3)

In doing so, we wish to move away from the idea that knowledge from the global South – particularly Africa – can serve primarily an instrumental function (i.e. mainly as a feature in case studies on disease, violent conflict, aid and development). In the words of Comaroff and Comaroff (2012, 114):

These other worlds . . . are treated less as sources of refined knowledge than as reservoirs of raw fact: of the minutiae from which Euromodernity might fashion its testable theories and transcendent truths. Just as it has long capitalized on non-Western “raw materials” by ostensibly adding value and refinement to them. In some measure, this continues to be the case.

What is clear from the above is systematic sidelining of knowledge from Africa and other previously colonised contexts in the global South. In Chapters 1 and 2, we mounted a summative critique of the Euro-American bias of media and communication theory and practice. In this final chapter, we will now set out the challenges to be met in constructing an unequivocal decolonised African media and communication studies. This is certainly not the first effort towards decolonising media and communication studies. Yet, as has been argued throughout this volume, despite its laudable ethical origins, which sought to foster cross-cultural and intercultural solidarity, international communication and its concomitant ‘de-Westerning’ communication studies’s efforts to bring everyone and everything into the fray, are, ironically, still largely failing to recognise the perspectives from the global South. First,

by their sustained push for internationalisation, scholars in this tradition tend to neglect or misunderstand problems and inequalities that do not have their roots in the unhelpful demarcations and categories of for example. In the context of education for example, internationalisation has thus far meant large numbers of students from the global South studying in the global North without concomitant internationalisation of philosophical contributions from the global South. Satellite academic institutions from the global North have been set up in the global South to project and engender Northern academic ideas and models. As such, the categories and concepts espoused by internationalisation, such as Thussu's (2009) "counterflows" and/or "contraflows", themselves become inflated in their reach, sometimes even reinforcing the ethnic essentialisms that internationalisation and/or de-Westernisation in fact intend to deconstruct. This can be seen for example in the ways that Netflix engages with African film and soap operas which has involved "sanitising" African production templates for global audiences in a manner that undermines African input and underplays connections to African lived realities. Presenting this as "counterflows", in our view, inflates the contributions from African approaches to storytelling. Merely setting a story in Africa does not constitute a meaningful disruption of the cultural imperialism enforced under colonialism. As is argued by Ndlela (2013, 59) such a "franchising approach, into the sub-Saharan thus can be conceived as one of a variety of internationalisation strategies of media conglomerates" which perpetuates media and cultural imperialism. Netflix, for example, has a huge demand for new shows and has actually provided opportunity for a wider range of voices, but questions should be asked about mediated counterflows, global/local dynamics and audiovisual diversity in relation to its in-house productions. At stake in raising these questions is whether concepts associated with internationalisation, de-Westernisation or even decoloniality have dissolved into mere buzzwords, i.e. free-floating signifiers, devoid of meaning and content. We argue that Afrokology, through its transdisciplinary focus and radical reconnection with relevant African philosophical constructs, can help add more meaning to concepts such as internationalisation, de-Westernisation or even decoloniality.

Afrokology recognises that there is a need for media and communication studies to redress the marginalisation and misrecognition of African scholarship and lived experiences. Moreover, it notes that media and communication as well as related individual disciplines such as history, anthropology, sociology, literature, philosophy and geography are incapable of addressing emerging contemporary problems on their own. In particular, "addressing emerging contemporary problems involves decisions on values that require civic participation and the building of social legitimacy for proposed transition pathways to sustainable societies" (Popa et al. 2015, 45). Afrokology's radicalism thus rejects established agendas and accustomed ways of representation and seeing. First, Afrokology challenges the supposed universal validity of Western definitions of media and communication through what Mignolo and Walsh (2018) calls "re-existence". This is understood to mean the "redefining and re-signifying of life in conditions of dignity" (location 185 of 7946 Kindle). It does so through making visible the underexplored relationship between lived experiences in the global South and global North. Re-existence, therefore, strongly implies that the global South ought to be understood within "its historical antecedents, the historical legacy of colonialisms, and the ensuing period of decolonization" (Shome 2019, 198). Afrokology thus problematises the ways in which the world is known, challenging the unacknowledged and unexamined assumptions at the heart of Western disciplines that are insensitive to the meanings, values and practices of other cultures. We have stated from the onset that recognising the importance of African insight and knowledge in thinking about media and communication in no way constitutes a value judgement concerning the superiority of such knowledge compared to existing media and communication frameworks/approaches. On the

contrary, views from Africa open up the field and offer new ways of thinking about issues that tend to be overlooked or conceptualised differently in dominant academic circles. In addition to the foregoing, Afrokology goes beyond interdisciplinarity – which entails a coordination of disciplines in a common cause – arguing instead for a transdisciplinary approach. This requires a mindful repositioning of media and communication theory and practice within, across and beyond disciplines.

This approach, we argue, is best suited towards the goal of re-existence as it encourages collaboration that transcends disciplines and their usual ways of working together in interdisciplinary teams to transform problems in media and communication. Disciplines, according to Nyamnjoh (2017), tend to encourage introversion and emphasise the exclusionary fundamentalism of the heartland rather than the inclusionary overtures of the borderland. As we will show, although some of the content of Africa's media and communication studies is similar to that in the global North, and particularly in the rest of the global South, it is perceived and made sense of differently. Afrokology can, in this sense, address the representational deficiency that is evident in how dominant scholarship in media and communication studies situates itself vis-à-vis the margins. One could argue in this respect that the rhetoric of “diversity” has failed at its job of creating a community and environment that is conscious of the needs and experiences of marginalised academic communities. The chapters in this volume argue for new frames of understanding within media and communication that are better informed by the experiences of Africans within the context of global South, using our marginality as a vantage point. The collective focus constitutes an effort towards recovering the lost historical and contemporary voices of the marginalised, the oppressed and the dominated, through a radical reconstruction of knowledge production. As such, the approach contests the notion of a single path to understanding history and the production of knowledge, arguing instead for the acknowledgement of a diversity of perspectives and priorities. Nyamnjoh rightly suggest that such an approach entails “conviviality in knowledge production [that goes beyond] just seeking conversations and collaboration across disciplines in the conventional sense but also, and even more importantly, the integration of sidestepped popular epistemologies informed by popular universes and ideas of reality” (ibid, 269). It should manifest in new levels of collaboration that unlocks new insights, methods and theories beyond narrow prescriptions of individual academic disciplines, including media and communication.

Thus, we argue that transdisciplinarity is particularly apropos to Afrokology, as the transdisciplinary approach to curriculum integration dissolves the boundaries between conventional disciplines and organises teaching and learning around the construction of meaning in the context of real-world problems or themes (UNESCO International Bureau of Education n.d.). Transdisciplinarity goes further than interdisciplinarity. Whereas interdisciplinary approaches seek to generate “an understanding of themes and ideas that cut across disciplines and of the connections between different disciplines and their relationship to the real world,” transdisciplinary approaches embrace what Nyamnjoh (2012, 148) refers to as epistemological interconnectedness and conviviality. Unlike interdisciplinary approaches, transdisciplinary approaches do not merely combine contents, theories, methodologies and perspectives from two or more disciplines, instead, they are

characterized by integration and overriding of subject boundaries. As a “scientific utopia”, it stands out as an intellectual category requiring a wide range of disciplinary, scientific, and epistemological potential. It is different from the multi- and interdisciplinary approach in a way that, on one hand, it transcends the subject boundaries, and, on the other, it is not part of any specific subject research. Thus, the transdisciplinary approach allows for the

understanding of the complexities of the modern world which is a primary feature of its scientific legitimacy.

(Todorova n.d., <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED567177.pdf>)

In essence then, the attractiveness of a transdisciplinary approach is enabling inputs and scoping across scientific and non-scientific stakeholder communities and facilitating a systemic way of addressing a challenge. Creating transdisciplinary objectives is not an easy task. It needs to include multiple disciplines with a human centered goal or global issue. All these pieces need to connect for the objective to make sense. Thinking the global in terms of many worlds and many worldviews is not just about taking a critical stand against mainstream theories, it is to assume a politically emancipatory position that includes processes of knowing and also defending other possible ways of being in the world (Smith 2005). This entails that African researchers need to move from the margins and participate in the production and articulation of mainstream ideas, from the vantage point of their ontological positions. As is stated by Querajazu (2016, 5),

The world each being inhabits is populated by entities (persons, objects, theories, practices) that are ontologically configured in processes of choosing and decisions that produce the establishment of reference frameworks that people use to situate themselves in the world. Accordingly, these reference frameworks are very different to a person in the Amazon than to a person raised in a Western city, those frameworks are historically contingent, not natural, neutral or universal.

In this respect, Afrokology as social and theoretical perspective, encourages methodological approaches that embraces the African experience together with an understanding that knowledge produced “must be liberating” (cf. Mazama 2003). At issue is the fact that African ways of knowing and existence must be at the center of approaches to research and practice so that the implementation of principles, methods, concepts and ideas from African cultural experiences shape our understandings of communication theory and practice. The emancipatory approach is intrinsic to Afrokology. It builds on the call by Mignolo (2009) and other academic activists throughout Latin America for scholars to embrace a pluriverse of Southern values, perspectives and societies to understand the coexisting epistemologies and practices of the different worlds and problems we inhabit and encounter. Yet, as Querajazu (2016) notes, in the pluriverse, although those many worlds exist on their own, they are interrelated. Conway and Singh (2011, 701) add that:

Notions of the pluriverse imply multiple ontologies, multiple worlds to be known – not simply multiple perspectives on one world. Universalist discourses and globalist projects are grounded in a unitary ontology and imperialist epistemologies which assume that the world is one, that it is knowable on a global scale within single modes of thought and is thus manageable and governable in those terms.

It is precisely in these interrelations and intersections that we can find our answers, at least some of them, to the question of ontological difference. Afrokology moves from the viewpoint that the work that we do must contribute to unlocking marginalised ontological and epistemological nuances that can help inform being African in the world. Its transdisciplinary goal is thus geared towards relexicalising our own world to fundamentally disrupt conventional hierarchies of knowledge production, including *who* decides on the questions to ask, *how to ask* them and *how to theorise* the world. In this sense, Afrokology aligns with transdisciplinarity in creating

new knowledge that can contribute to societal progress through incorporating both scientific knowledge and societal perspectives (Schramm et al. 2012).

Transdisciplinarity is an approach for research on the complex real-world problems our societies are facing. In their book, Schramm et al. (2012) illustrate how transdisciplinarity contributes to societal and scientific progress through integrating perceptions of problems and knowledge from scientific disciplines and societal practice. Through this process, new knowledge emerges. As has been noted, the mainstream scientific methodologies are often poorly equipped to deal with emerging contemporary problems, hence, “both scientists and policy makers have called for re-conceptualizing the role of experts, practitioners and citizens in the production and use of scientific knowledge” (Popa et al. 2015, 45). Afrokology thus favors approaches that bring researchers from different fields together with society stakeholders to develop solutions valued by the stakeholders. Afrokology as a transdisciplinary toolkit, we argue, have potential to engage with real-world problems and to overcome some of the barriers to implementing change and transformation in African contexts. Transdisciplinarity in this sense presents a fundamental shift in terms of how we perceive disciplines. The prefix ‘trans’ in transdisciplinarity can be understood to indicate that “which is at the same time across disciplines, and inside different disciplines, and beyond all disciplines” (Niculescu 2014, 19). Transdisciplinarity’s goal is therefore “the understanding of the present world, one of its imperatives is the unity of knowledge” (ibid). Crucially, transdisciplinarity goes beyond the mere application of theories, concepts or methods across disciplines with the intent of developing an overarching synthesis (Lattuca 2001). Instead, it focuses on dissolving disciplinary boundaries by focusing on questions that see disciplines as irrelevant. While interdisciplinarity explicitly *critiques* the disciplines, transdisciplinarity *de-emphasises* disciplines (ibid, our emphasis).

Afrokology as a heuristic transdisciplinary toolkit, we argue, can coalesce disciplines’ theories and methods into novel approaches that engage with African lived realities. Media and communication currently exist within universities that are not as convivial in practice as one would expect (Nyamnjoh 2017, 269). On the one hand, universities have degenerated into markets producing subjects/disciplines to meet demands that the market can accommodate. On the other hand, “The scarcity of conviviality in universities and among the disciplines and scholars suggests, and rightly so, that the production, positioning and consumption of knowledge are far from a neutral, objective and disinterested process” (ibid). One could argue that the real problem herein is the idea of the disciplines themselves as isolated and predetermined categories. For Nabudere (2006, 25) “The real question for African scholars is whether it is possible and rewarding to adopt such a ‘tired’ methodology to the innovative and revolutionary work of the African regeneration in research about our societies?” Nyamnjoh (2020, 16) adds that an investment in answering these questions would help address the admission that disciplines might wish to achieve universal knowledge, but often fails to do so. In a rapidly changing Africa, one should question whether dividing universities by academic departments across disciplinary lines creates barriers rather than benefits. There is urgent need to disrupt the neat disciplinary boundaries and the in-built biases it engenders. We argue here that there is a need to transcend the barriers of disciplines, which, in our view, stifles collaboration and misrecognises “the deep power of collective imagination and the importance of interconnections and nuanced complexities” (Nyamnjoh 2017, 267). In other words, the epistemological and methodological approaches based on disciplinary knowledge must be undermined in order to make media and communication more effective (Nabudere 2006, 2). “A 21st century debate of Africa and the Disciplines should do more than target those with power in the academy in the North – non-Africanists and Africanists alike – by focusing on similar dynamics within the African continent” (Nyamnjoh 2020, 16). The need for convivial scholarship in African contexts was recognised by

postcolonial scholars and departments in African universities for whom saw cross-disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity provided a gateway for more context specific media and communication programmes.

The efforts towards multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching is perhaps best illustrated by how some English Departments in postcolonial African universities have attempted to transform by incorporating areas such as film, theatre, cultural and media studies. In the 1960s for example, Ngūgĩ wa Thiong'o and Kimani Gecau, amongst others, established community theatre in the context of decolonisation and social change in the English Department at the University of Nairobi. At the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) there has similarly been a deliberate push to rethink and center the teaching of English within African democratic aspirations and social change, following a multidisciplinary approach. The department recognised that, under colonialism, English departments served to confine teaching and learning to the traditions of England, in ways that benefitted England more than it did the students and researchers in these programmes (Department of English and Media Studies, n.d.). Thus, after independence in 1980, the department repositioned itself towards Zimbabwe and Africa, rather than England. Amongst others, in the 1980s and 1990s the Department of English adamantly centered African literature as part of a radical comparative approach to world literatures. The approach foregrounded intersectional social change focussing on the politics of race, gender and class. In 1993, the Department of English at UZ introduced a postgraduate diploma in Media and Communication Studies as part of their curriculum. Multidisciplinary curriculum changes intensified between the 1990s and early 2000s, with attempts at introducing Africa-facing syllabi for both media and communication studies and English literature. Departmental changes during this phase included a new MA programme in Communication and Media Studies which prioritised original research on Zimbabwe and the broader African context. Amongst other areas, there was a strong focus on theatre, music, orature, indigeneity, African languages and African history as key components in media and communication studies. The teaching pioneered innovative arrangements involving a wide range of local, regional and international guest speakers. In addition, the department organised internships and work placement programmes within and outside media, state and civil society organisations in Zimbabwe and regionally. Insisting on a multidisciplinary approach, lecturers teaching on the postgraduate media and communication programme were recruited from amongst others law, sociology, political science, education and English, and were both local and international. The students were similarly recruited from a wide range of disciplines.

In addition to this strong national and regional focus, a mutually beneficial partnership between the UZ Department of English and the Department of Media and Communication at Oslo helped deepen and widen the teaching and learning for researchers and students at both universities. On the one hand, the University of Zimbabwe benefited from collaborative research and teaching which opened the windows on international approaches to media studies and helped to consolidate an international profile for Zimbabwean researchers. On the other hand, staff and students from the University of Oslo equally benefited from studying alongside Zimbabweans as they gained unique insights into African epistemologies which informed their scholarly engagements with African media and journalism. UZ's approach to teaching and learning can be seen as a frontrunner for Afrokology of Media and Communication especially in terms of how its research and teaching deepened and broadened the African focus. Meanwhile in neighbouring South Africa, the Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) similarly pursued an interdisciplinary approach focused on social justice issues. From its inception in 1985, the CCMS, modelled after the Birmingham Cultural Studies Centre, mobilised lecturers and students around issues of

domination and resistance (Tomaselli, Mboti and Ronning 2013, 37). The graduate programme was focussed on research that would serve the anti-apartheid struggle, enable interdisciplinarity; and work with civil society and oppositional movements. The CCMS's interdisciplinary approach was borne from the anti-apartheid struggle and infomed by a social justice ethos (ibid). In this sense, the CCMS is a frontrunner of the transdisciplinary approach we outline here. Yet, we argue that the approach did not go far enough as it did not, unfortunately, relexicalise the field in a way that centers African knowledges.

By way of explanation, it can be noted that two approaches, outlined in the Table 19.1, guided postcolonial teaching at African universities committed to changing the locus of power

However, we argue that for epistemological transformation to happen, *transdisciplinarity* is needed. This would mean a move from narrowly focused interdisciplinarity, to an embrace of multiple understandings of disciplinary combinations informing work in media and communication. The transdisciplinary research process entails co-production or systematic integration of knowledge from various scientific and societal bodies of knowledge (Table 19.2).

From Table 19.2, it can be ascertained that transdisciplinarity engenders a new culture based on convergence between disciplines that generates new knowledge, methods and approaches. In our view, the aforementioned examples of disciplinary interventions from Zimbabwe and South Africa speaks to multi- and interdisciplinary innovation which points to inadequacy or incompleteness of disciplinary specific knowledge. These institutional changes were notable initiatives

Table 19.1 Characteristics of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research

	<i>Participants/ Discipline</i>	<i>Problem Definition</i>	<i>Research Style</i>	<i>Presentation of Findings</i>
Multidisciplinary	Two or more disciplines	Same question but different paradigm or different but related questions	"Parallel play" by individuals	<i>Separate</i> publications by participants from each discipline
Interdisciplinary	Two or more distinct academic fields	Described/defined in language of at least two fields, using <i>multiple models</i> or intersecting models	Drawn from more than one, with <i>multiple</i> data sources and varying analysis of same data	<i>Shared</i> publications, with language intelligible to all involved fields

Source: Aboelela et al. (2007, p. 340).

Table 19.2 Characteristics of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research

Transdisciplinary	Two or more distinct academic fields	Stated in <i>new</i> language or <i>theory</i> that is <i>broader than any one discipline</i>	Fully <i>synthesized</i> methods, may result in new field	Shared publications, probably using at least some new language developed for <i>translation</i> across traditional lines
-------------------	--------------------------------------	---	---	--

Source: Aboelela et al. (2007, p. 340).

to integrate disciplinary perspectives in ways that attempted to plug gaps or incompleteness in existing disciplinary knowledge. The point is that the transformations in the postcolonial education institutions saw individuals with different and diverging interests, philosophies, methodological backgrounds and epistemological systems, and thus potential grounds for conflict, rally around a shared objective. This exemplifies convivial scholarship.

The examples from UZ and CCMS show that potentially transformative research depends on the quest for new knowledge and the existence of a significant shared problem to which participants can contribute in salient ways. It also depends on human and material foundations within disciplines, collaborative mutualism across disciplines, and a transformative learning process that enables knowledge integration across diverse perspectives. We argue that the multidisciplinary initiatives of Departments of English and the interdisciplinary work by the Centre for Communication, Media and Society was a productive and transformative turn that enriched the disciplines. A move towards transdisciplinarity can build on these initiatives and result in a new intimacy with other disciplines that could richly address the current incompleteness in the purely disciplinary approaches of the past. For Nyamnjoh (2020) and Harrison (2016), theorisation inspired by experiences in and of the global South, are instructive in this regard as it amplifies agency and resilience, disavows notions of intellectual inferiority and affirms constructive creativity. The in-built collaboration that such creativity and agency inspire acknowledges incompleteness in knowledge-creation and draws on new cross-fertilisation among disciplinary academic collaborators that could lead to the production of new knowledge. Escalating the disciplinary connections to a transdisciplinary level using Afrokology as a heuristic tool can augment African media and communication.

To test the usefulness of the above hypothesis, we proceed by operationalising the concept through outlining the key characteristics that in our view, underpin Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit for African media and communication studies. In Table 19.3, we operationalise and illustrate Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit that informs a new relational ontological, axiological and epistemological approach.

Thus, it can be inferred that an Afrokological transdisciplinary approach can help overcome the current intellectual poverty and narrowness of academic disciplines. It implies acknowledging differences between current intellectual traditions in media and communication in terms of their relevance, relational and comparative aspects. The challenge here is to wrest theory from lived realities and feelings in order to connect human responses and feelings to dominant systems of meaning and social action. In other words, Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit argues for knowledge and experience from all contexts to be respected and valued in their own terms. African knowledge producers are already increasingly aware of this need to be cognisant of the predicaments of those they research, teach and publish. The key, as Nyamnjoh (2020, 15) argues, is not to be bound by disciplines or geography, but to understand that doing justice to the lived realities “requires . . . working in teams, within institutions and in local and global networks of cooperation, as well as with stakeholders beyond the ivory tower”. As such, an Afrokological transdisciplinary toolkit values informal knowledge and therefore considers formal education and research to be but one actor in a connected and open teaching, learning and research environment. In this sense, it challenges the supposed universal validity of established theories and concepts while providing alternatives to dominant frameworks and approaches. In Nabudere’s (2006, 25) words, “Scholars must be ideologically transformed to see through the conceptual and theoretical frameworks they use and to create different meanings that can sometimes be, not only linguistically translatable, but even epistemologically consistent with the new concepts found within the traditions themselves”.

Table 19.3 Afrokology as a transdisciplinary approach to media and communication

	Ontology		Axiology		Epistemology		Research Design	
Reason for doing research	Philosophical underpinnings	Assumptions about the nature of reality	Place of values in the research process	Nature of knowledge	What counts as truth	Methodology	Techniques of gathering data	
To undo the misrepresentation and historical marginalisation of African worldviews, thought, knowledge and to aesthetics and to relexicalise their own world.	An emancipatory approach, informed by oppositional consciousness which places emphasis on a transdisciplinary approach that encourages amongst others the inclusion of scientific and non-scientific stakeholders.	Ostensibly universal concepts are viewed from multiple perspectives to engage with diverse socially constructed realities that impact on social justice. Emphasis is on pluriversality rather than universality	Enfolding research with praxis is important for empowerment of marginalised/ silenced communities to challenge their oppression.	Knowledge is political and relational. It can amplify human freedom and promote social justice.	That which contributes to unlocking marginalised ontological and epistemological nuances that can help inform being African in the world. It is therefore informed by the set of multiple relations that one has with the pluriverse.	Methodology of the oppressed which is not driven by a particular method but rather by questions that emerge from larger social context. Relational and comparative approaches may provide answers to problems previously outside the scope of the field.	A commitment to public engagement and collaboration as a mode of intellectual production. Researchers construct emic-etic participatory methodological techniques that also engage with lived experience.	

To this end, and in order to understand the world, Afrokology draws on critical theory, postcolonial theory, decoloniality, indigenous knowledge, social justice and human rights as frameworks that can assist in decolonising the mind (wa Thiong'o 2009). Researchers adopting an Afrokological stance prioritise the value of furthering social justice and human rights. An understanding that research should be influential in bringing about social change is key. Developing oppositional consciousness rests on researchers being ethically, intellectually and curiosity-wise attuned to the lived realities and feelings of the researched. Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit foregrounds relational accountability that promotes respectful representation, reciprocity, and rights of the researched. The real-world goal, in this sense, becomes the most important aspect of research. This demands respect for knowledge and experience from all contexts in their own terms. It does not privilege one method or philosophical tradition, but rather different traditions are deployed in a reflexive manner to examine changing contexts. Here, it is useful to turn to transformative learning theory that suggests that "new, integrated conceptual understanding is initiated by disorienting dilemmas" (Pennington et al. 2013, 564). Disorienting dilemmas refer to a trigger that potentially challenges one's taken for granted assumptions, as the initial catalyst for transformative learning.

Transformative learning is a key aspect of the Afrokological toolkit and is the process "by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action" (Mezirow 2000, 8). Engaging with others whose life experiences have been significantly different from the lifeworlds of researchers is becoming an increasingly important pre-requisite for impactful research. This calls for "convivial scholarship" that acknowledges incompleteness in existing disciplinary knowledge, and therefore champions integrating and perhaps even overriding disciplinary boundaries in favour of research informed by and catering to social action as a prerequisite for effective praxis. Epistemological interconnectedness and conviviality may lead to insights otherwise not accessible. Under Afrokology, collaborative work across disciplines and with societal actors within a creative transdisciplinary context can profoundly alter the prior research and perspectives of all involved. In addition, these efforts can produce new transdisciplinary connections that can certainly be transformative for how we approach media and communication.

Methodologically, it is argued that innovative linkages of theory and practice fostering mutually beneficial relationships between researchers and the communities they study, can initiate transformative learning. It places a premium on reflexivity on the assumptions and values that underlie the understanding of lived experiences by scientists, practitioners, policy makers and citizens. Researchers therefore employ methods and techniques that are fit to transdisciplinarity, taking into account the contemporary changes and developments in human knowledge. Several authors in this volume pointed to the asymmetry in how knowledge is valued in both scientific and non-scientific spaces. Empirical evidence has been provided to illustrate how knowledge from the global South has been silenced and misrecognised. This misrecognition has resulted in a situation that fosters a global North-imported, formulaic approach to the research and praxis of media and communication. Yet, standardised evidence and theoretical approaches, when juxtaposed with the current pulsating realities on the ground, have rendered such templates of narrowly defined global North approaches irrelevant (cf. Mano and milton 2020; milton and Mano 2020).

The African setting has cases which show that media models from the global North cannot easily be translated in specific contexts owing to political, cultural and economic differences. A simplistic example of this would be the adoption of a license fee model for public service

broadcasting funding in countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe (Mano and Milton 2020). International models of PSB posit that this funding model allows public broadcasters to invest in programming or operational improvements, because they can be confident about their revenue for the term of the license agreement. This, however, is not the experience in these two countries. South Africa and Zimbabwe's particular socio-cultural and economic contexts have made it difficult for any systematic collection of License Fee Revenue as evidenced from annual reports for their respective public broadcasters (ibid). Although compulsory for all broadcasting gadget owners, licence fees in South Africa bring less than a third of the revenue, with close to two thirds coming from advertising and other commercial sources (Milton 2018). In addition, in Zimbabwe, it has proved uneconomic to send licence fee inspectors to collect over sparse geographic areas as it is often more expensive to do so (Mano 2016). Since colonial days audiences have also developed a culture of withholding payment of television license fees as a sign of protest against what was widely considered to be colonial institutions. These examples, while simplistic, are demonstrative of the need to develop models and theories in tandem with the lived realities in African contexts. It demonstrates, amongst others, how our theorisation about media, culture and communication does not stay in the theoretical dimension but has enormous consequences for the ways we enact reality and in the creation of socio-political arrangements that end up affecting our daily lives. Writing about the value of excellence theory and activism in the mining industry in South Africa for example, Greeff (2015, 235) concludes that

organisational communication practitioners would need to be more interpretative in their communicative efforts, as the modernist and mechanistic normativity of the excellence theory hinders appropriate corollaries to organisational activism situations. It is within these interpretative, contextually and situationally driven understandings that organisational communicators will charter and sustain the 'pragmatic value' in democracy.

It can also be noted that power relations in Africa impact media and communication production, representation and consumption in ways that have favored vested interests at the expense of ordinary people. Duncan (2013) asks in this respect why journalists in a 'free press' end up being aligned, often unwittingly, with authority? She concludes that sociology of news perspectives holds limited explanatory value as "they ascribe particular journalistic choices to organisational and institutional dynamics only, to the exclusion of broader power-dynamics outside newsrooms". Duncan (ibid, n.pag.) argues that the South African journalism space does not adequately cater for forms of journalism that expose how power actually works in society:

Political economy concerns itself broadly with the relationship between the structures of control in capitalist society and the production of wealth needed to reproduce that society, including the power relations in the production and consumption of media. . . . There is no evidence to suggest that South Africa's press owners brought pressure to bear directly on their newsrooms to prevent workers' voices from coming to the fore in the early press reporting of Marikana, as the mining houses do not own significant stakes in the press. Rather, what was in operation was a set of journalistic rituals that have become all too familiar in commodified newsrooms, and ones that do little to give voice, much less agency, to the most powerless in society. In South Africa, unfortunately, these rituals will do little to confront the most serious national challenge of the post-apartheid period, namely to prevent the descent, once again, into a police state.

The foregoing scenarios demonstrate the critical need for research and teaching praxis to include approaches that meet people where they live and thrive. Media and communication studies as such has not only marginalised difference by ignoring other epistemologies, but by neglecting other ontologies, particularly those that belong to indigenous peoples, it relegates them to the realm of myths, legends and beliefs. This constitutes a damaging epistemological position where Africans and others in the global South are silenced or at most incorporated as add-ons. In fact, Elabor-Idemudia (2002) reminds us that the social sciences [and humanities] are founded on the culture, history and philosophies of Euro-Western thought and are either antagonistic to the history and cultures of non-Western societies or have no strategy to give voice to their cultures (Smith 1999, 2005). Consider for example how the communication models in Africa have had to include popular culture, rumours, pavement radio, street theatre. In his work on popular music as journalism in Zimbabwe, Mano (2007, 61) argues that

Where mass media are weak, and opposition political parties are frail, music can serve as the voice of the voiceless by offering subtle avenues of expression. Popular music can perform the journalistic function of communicating daily issues in ways that challenge the powerful and give a voice to the disadvantaged. Popular music competes and rivals mainstream journalism in the ways it addresses political, social and economic realities in repressive contexts.

This innovative understanding of the nuances of power relations in African cultural contexts gives voice to the culture of the oppressed. Crucially, Mano's argument centers not only on what the songs say, as lyrics are not the only characteristic of songs, but more importantly on how these are interpreted and textured into particular political and economic contexts (75). This is what Sandoval refers to as "coalitional consciousness". Sandoval (2000) argues that a mixture in the appropriation of ideas, knowledge, and theories is necessary as it reflects the reality of surviving as a minority or Other, which entails using every and any aspect of dominant power. Mixing, she argues, is the methodology of survival for the oppressed. Drawing on South African consciousness, Chasi and Rodny-Gumede (2016, 2) refer to this coalitional consciousness/mixing as "legitimizing the 'smashing and grabbing' of usable and valuable insights from anywhere while viably calling for the construction and elaboration of conceptual schema that are locally relevant". In *Borders, Media Crossings and the Politics of Translation: The gaze from Southern Africa* (2019), Pier Paolo Frassinelli challenges the reader to take the outside in. Drawing on cultural theory, decoloniality and lived experiences within the South African context, he pushes the boundaries of borders, and our perceptions thereof in politics, in life and also in our discipline. This is reminiscent of Nyamnjoh's argument that [in Africa] we have this capacity for presence and simultaneous multiplicities because when you take others in and you are able to take yourself out, you would be out x number of things you take in and create more impact. Frassinelli (2019) argues for a transdisciplinary approach to media and communication, where the idea of convergence is utilised to revisit the concepts of the border and translation to explore possibilities for constituting and imagining forms of collectivity grounded on difference and forged in struggle against bordering regimes, devices and institutions. This for him is useful for rethinking disciplinary divisions in the humanities and move beyond what has been called the two humanities: "literature, history, and philosophy on one side and communication and media studies on the other" (ibid). We agree with Frassinelli's argument that this task begins with dealing with a plurality of forms, genres and traditions of written, oral, aural, visual and multimodal expression, as well as with their social life and significance. Through our transdisciplinary emphasis we also advocate co-production and synergies beyond disciplinary focus. For us, what is needed is a methodological and theoretical orientation that speak to current social,

political and cultural conflicts and dislocations and in so doing, engenders alternative ways of seeing and experiencing media and communication as well as sociocultural experiences across multiple platforms.

What should be evident by now, is that an Afrokology of media and communication studies arises from an understanding that communication is about real people and their interactions with each other and their environments and as such, they ought to matter very much in the research and teaching of our discipline. But the roots of ontological marginalisation are so deep that they are present not only in the theory of media and communication but also impact practice. We have provided examples above which illustrate how the recycling of Western canons can influence individual and institutional practitioners whose work, from language to formats, fails to adequately connect with contemporary Africanity. Here, Afrokology argues that Afro sensing and a consideration of the context of people become critical in taking forward the study and practice of communication today. Chilisa (2012, 191) highlights seven cardinal African virtues, including truth, justice, rightness, propriety, harmony, reciprocity and order and balance. These virtues, in her opinion, underpin what Reviere (2006) unpacks as the five canons of Afrocentric research enquiry, i.e. *Ukweli* [truth], *Kujitolea* [commitment], *Utulivu* [calmness and peaceful], *Uhaki* [justice] and *Ujamaa* [community]. However, these so-called virtues or canons do not necessarily translate easily from country to country across Africa.

Chasi's chapter in this volume for example takes issue with the notion of Africans as inherently harmonious, noting that this perception has led to a reading of *ubuntu* by many Bantu-language speaking Africans who live in sub-Saharan Africa that emphasises "community, calmness and harmony" without taking into account the inevitability of violence in human reactions. Chasi therefore offers an alternative reading that recognises violence as an integral element in the lived experiences of Africans and from a strategic communication perspective illustrates ways in which the "warrior ubuntu" actor exists as an agent to advance African development and democracy. Chasi's intention is not to refute the idea that Africans value harmony but rather to present an African-facing rereading thereof. His account of *ubuntu* illustrates that, in as much as one cannot apply models and theories from the global North wholesale, one should also be cautious in assuming the mobility of African ideas and values within the continent. Mboti (2015, 144) similarly cautions that African persons are "complex, expressive *doing* beings whose actions are never easily reducible to the limiting duality of 'individual freedom' versus 'interdependent freedom'". Writing about the perception that *ubuntu* necessarily translates to "harmony", he asks "What is it about trying to force Africans to fit, at every turn, these neat conceptual cages?" Mboti (ibid) then argues that

There is no justification to limiting the categories one can posit nor to the memberships one can hold in these groups. It is not expressly clear, anyway, why one needs to clarify the problem through categories at all. We should be prepared to admit that there may even be other different kinds of ethical relations that may not be necessarily or roughly generalized under the catch-all category of *ubuntu*. . . . It occurs to me that the question of collisions, and, of course, the other questions that follow from it, would need to be adequately and sufficiently answered first before one assumes what an African morality or African ethics is.

Mboti's provocative argument emphasises the need for a media and communication studies approach that broadens, rather than flattens the scope and breadth of research, coursework and praxis. For this reason, the approach we wish to advance is generative rather than prescriptive. We should broaden the scope of our own literature reviews for example to those literatures and forms of expression that have not yet found their way into the global communities of

knowledge and practice. milton (2019) paraphrases Homi Bhabha to argue that scholars of communication need to become familiar with the performative narratives of Africa's diverse contexts as reference points for their pedagogical and philosophical narratives. This will allow an entry-point for Mboti's call to desist limiting our sense-making of African lived experiences, as citizens' particular performances of identity both draw on and disrupt the reference points established in established national and so-called universal pedagogical narratives (cf milton 2019, Bhabha 1994). This then, is one way in which to disrupt the universe and practice the pluriverse. Another is through for example assembling different methods with which we make sense of reality and produce it in different manifestations (Law 2004). This undoubtedly helps make sense and contextualise many of the actions and reactions of different actors in the world. Identity, citizenship, spirituality, culture, power, concepts which are of ordinary use in the communication lexicon, could be analysed and understood in a radically different way just by first accepting the existence of other worlds and their entities, and then by trying to see what these concepts look like or refer to from distinct ontologies.

An example of the above is Africans' engagement with the digital which has been shaped by local and global supervening social necessities. Africans have undoubtedly led the way in developing technologies and services that have been adopted across the world. Africans without adequate internet technology and banking have been innovative in establishing for example M-Pesa, a leading mobile money service, with millions of active customers and thousands of active agents operating across seven African countries. Similarly, and equally exemplary, is Ushahidi, which started as an ad-hoc group of Kenyan bloggers developing a code in a couple of days from various locations in order to try to figure out a way to gather and manage information about the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya. Today, Ushahidi is a nonprofit, open-source software company that develops a web platform that makes it easy for people in any part of the world to disseminate and collect information about a crisis. The innovation allows users to submit reports by text message, email, or web postings, and the software aggregates and organises the data into a map and timeline. Its mission is to build and use technology to help marginalised people raise their voice, and those who serve them to listen and respond better – both crucial aspects of African digital innovations. The African digital innovations have developed in spite of disruption, marginalisation and government sanctioned chaos to become rare success stories in global contraflows. So for example, at the time of writing this, Ushahidi is now the primary incident reporting and situational software for the United Nations Department of Field Services (Ushahidi 2018, n.pag). In addition, the platform has been used in several countries and in different projects, in Africa and elsewhere – from monitoring sexual harassment in Egypt to responding to diverse needs during the Haiti earthquake in 2012. Many innovative African digital startups demonstrate a unique coming together of social, economic and technological thinking – in other words, they already embody aspects of a transdisciplinary turn in knowledge creation. These examples of African conditionalities illustrate the necessity for theoretical explication of the conditions and social relations in which they are produced. As a heuristic tool, Afrokology can inform building new theoretical lenses from Africa that can explicate the immersion of marginalised voices in communication – especially the evolving digital space. This should be done not only to document African experiences, but also as a way to illustrate Africa's role in mothering solutions fit for global citizenship.

Conclusion

Afrokology, in the ultimate, anchors agency to an African-centered approach to media and communication. It is about acknowledging the power of Africans to determine and contribute

original transformative thinking in the field, through decoloniality and lived experiences, in ways that are relevant to their context. Afrokology, we have argued in this chapter, is a transdisciplinary heuristic tool, i.e. a way of doing media and communication that is more responsive to the pressing issues of our time. It is not a method per se, but rather a mode of producing knowledge that speaks to content, practice and theory, from specific and historical African realities. As substantiated in Mano and Milton (2021), operationalised Afrokology can be the necessary resource for overcoming intellectual stasis in the discipline as it is inclusive of varied African-facing perspectives that inform media and communication. Afrokology as a heuristic tool will require research methods that are developed and adapted to its own specific ontology and epistemology. Having done the aforementioned in this chapter, we argue that identifying, describing and ordering these methods should be the next critical step in operationalising an Afrokology of media and communication. Afrokology allows researchers to redefine their concepts, data, methods, and tools with reference to the emerging requirements from a new context that integrates and synthesises knowledge systems across disciplines and philosophical underpinnings. The chapter has articulated and provided the basis of a transdisciplinary approach that can underpin Afrokology of media and communication. It goes beyond a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary focus to coalesce disciplines, theories and methodologies together with relevant non-scientific experiences and proficiency. Afrokology therefore encourages critical reflection, relational accountability and epistemological interconnectedness with collaborators. Such reflexivity, we believe, can lead to radical new conceptualisations through which collaborators can revise their mental models and which would allow for the broadening of the conceptual and technical foundations of media and communication. Convivial scholarship, in this sense, is potentially transformative and may provide answers to problems previously outside the scope of the discipline. In other words, the departure from the disciplinary comfort zones enables innovative thinking, which could lead to a radically new vision and innovation for media and communication. The chapter and the book therefore privileges Afrokology as a convivial approach that is inclusive, innovative and transformative.

Afrokology draws from decoloniality as a transformative move. Decolonising research is therefore part of its effort towards “thinking, creating, and acting with the goal of creating a different world” (Maldonado-Torres 2016, 28). In this regard, Milton (2019, 33) notes that

The work we do, the discourses we engage in and the curricula we develop need to take cognisance of, and focus their attention on, problems that are more public and pressing in terms of their relevance to address important social issues. They need to do so without using the tools of the very systems and paradigms that arguably are implicated in creating the problems in the first place. . . . Moreover, we need to examine how power is exercised in and through the very institutions, cultural relations and practices of the systems of which we are critical.

At issue is a need to avoid tools that only cater for narrow parameters of change, which tend to lock us into the very systems of power we are attempting to get out of (Lorde 1984). This is related to Nyamnjoh’s (2020, 30) questioning of how and when to deploy disciplinary approaches:

When and for whom is discipline and conformity needed, desirable, liberating, productive, rational, and an instrument of power and privilege? When and for whom is discipline and conformity needless, undesirable, repressive, unproductive, punishing, irrational, and an instrument of control and delegitimation?

These questions are expressions of the need to develop theory reflective of the freedom, emancipation and development interests of Africans. An express interest is to address the ongoing legacies of colonialism and apartheid. We have shown throughout this volume that there is promise that one or more new conceptual and methodological formulations for communication and media studies are in the works. Given the global marginalisation of our scholars and of our scholarship, it is worth discussing how best these and other new directions should be curated for greater local and global impact.

We have offered Afrokology as a transdisciplinary heuristic toolkit which holds promise for challenging the boundaries of our disciplines and in fact challenge how the humanities are framed. As argued by Pohl (2011, 618) transdisciplinarity involves “a comprehensive, multi-perspective, common-good oriented and useful approach to a socially relevant issue. It is research that does not just try to understand the world, but also aspires to help changing it”. As a transdisciplinary heuristic tool, Afrokology would thus have to account for the ever-changing and developing nature of its objects of study, thus in the process redefining both itself and that which it studies. It inevitably involves cross-fertilising various other “disciplined” ideas and influences and is therefore, we submit, deliberately impure, contingent and dynamic. Based on our explication of Afrokology in Mano and Milton (2021) and our unpacking of the concept as transdisciplinary toolkit in this concluding chapter, we suggest possible building blocks for an Afrokology of media and communication (1) developing a common vocabulary informed by African history and lived experience for collaborators who need to share information; (2) engaging with epistemologies of knowledge based on African lived experiences and exploring their global implications (Nabudere 2006); (3) establishing a “methodology of the oppressed”, including especially speaking to, against and through power and taking seriously oppositional consciousness in postcolonial Africa and the African diaspora cf. Mano and Milton (2021, p. 36); (4) developing an ethics of relational accountability that promotes respectful representation, reciprocity, and rights of the researched; and (5) relexicalising the field, including for example reinterpretation of the work of major Euro-American theorists in relation to the insights of those African experiences that insist on international solidarity and resistance to racism, gender and class bias (cf. Chapter 1).

In the final analysis, Afrokology of media and communication will need to go beyond (discipline-based) scientific questions to widen its scope and scale for tackling emerging challenges. The chapter and the volume have so far demonstrated that, while disciplines have been good at providing essential knowledge, methods and tools, they lack capability to handle more complex challenges that demand cross-disciplinary collaboration. For this reason, Afrokology embraces convivial scholarship and epistemological conviviality which allows Africans, “in all their nimble-footedness” to engage with and be engaged by “mobile” disciplines (Nyamnjoh 2020). This we believe, can weigh in on media and communication studies in ways that transcend a mere fixation with superficial indicators of representation and accommodation (cf Nyamnjoh 2020). It is part of what we see as a necessary step in overcoming the discipline’s complicitness in historic absences which amongst others has precluded engagement with epistemologies of knowledge based on African lived experiences and their global implications. It is but a vital start of a convivial dialogue which can inform differential consciousness, derived from African self-understanding and the alliance-building strategies it demands for media and communication.

References

- Aboelela, S.W., Larson, E., Bakken, S., Carrasquillo, O., Formicola, A., Haas, G.J. and Gebbi, K.M. 2007. Defining interdisciplinary research: Conclusions from a critical review of the literature. *Health Services Research*, 42(1): 329–346, Part 1.

- Ansu-Kyeremeh, K. 2005. *Indigenous Communication in Africa: Concept, Applications, and Prospects*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Asante, K.M. 1980. *Afrocentricity, the Theory of Social Change*. Buffalo, NY: Amulefi Pub.
- Banda, F. 2009. Kasoma Afriethics: A reappraisal. *The International Communication Gazette*, 71(4): 227–242.
- Bhabha, H.K. 1994 [2004]. Dissemination: Time narrative and the margins of the modern nation. In Bhabha, H. K., ed. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 199–244.
- Chasi, C. and Rodny-Gumede, Y. 2016. Smash-and-grab, truth and dare. . . *The International Communication Gazette*, 78(7): 694–700.
- Chilisa, B. 2012. *Indigenous Research Methodologies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J.L. 2012. Theory from the South: Or, how Euro-America is evolving toward Africa. *Anthropological Forum*, 22(2): 113–131.
- Conway, J. and Singh, J. 2011. Radical democracy in global perspective: Notes from the pluriverse. *Third World Quarterly*, 32(4): 689–706.
- Department of English and Media Studies. n.d. *Background*. University of Zimbabwe. www.uz.ac.zw/index.php/about-the-department-english.
- Duncan, J. 2013. South African journalism and the Marikana massacre: A case study of an editorial failure. *The Political Economy of Communication*, 1(2). www.polecom.org/index.php/polecom/article/view/22/198.
- Elabor-Idemudia, P. 2002. Participatory research: A tool in the production of knowledge in development discourse. In Saunders, K., ed. *Feminist Post-Development Thought*. London: Zed Books, 227–242.
- Frassinelli, P. 2019. *Borders, Media Crossings and the Politics of Translation: The Gaze from Southern Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Greeff, W.J. 2015. The proof is in the pudding: (Re)considering the excellence of activism in the South African mining industry. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 41(2): 220–237.
- Harrison, F.V. 2016. Theorizing in ex-centric sites. *Anthropological Theory*, 16(2–3): 160–176.
- Karikari, K., ed. 1996. *Ethics in Journalism: Case Studies of Practice in West Africa*. Accra: Panos Institute and Ghana Universities Press.
- Kasoma, F.P. 1996. The foundations of African ethics (Afriethics) and the professional practice of journalism: The case of society-centered media morality. *Africa Media Review*, 10(3): 93–116.
- Lattuca, L. 2001. *Creating Interdisciplinarity: Interdisciplinary Research and Teaching Among College and University Faculty*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Law, J. 2004. *After Method: Mess in Social Science Research*. New York: Routledge.
- Lorde, A. 1984 [2007]. The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. In Lorde, A., ed. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Berkeley: Crossing Press, 110–114.
- Mabweazara, H. 2015. Mainstreaming African digital cultures, practices and emerging forms of citizen engagement. *African Journalism Studies*, 36(4): 1–11.
- Mabweazara, H., ed. 2018. *Newsmaking Cultures in Africa: Normative Trends in the Dynamics of Socio-Political and Economic Struggles*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Maldonado-Torres, N. 2016. *Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality*, 1–37. https://fondation-frantzfanon.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/maldonado-torres_outline_of_ten_theses-10.23.16.pdf.
- Mano, W. 2007. Popular music as journalism in Zimbabwe. *Journalism Studies*, 8(1): 61–78.
- Mano, W. 2010. Communication: An African perspective. In Allan, S., ed. *Rethinking Communication: Keywords in Communication Research*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Mano, W. 2016. The state and public broadcasting: Continuity and change in Zimbabwe. In Flew, T., Iosifides, P. and Steemers, J., eds. *Global Media and National Policies: The Return of the State*. London: Springer, 190–205.
- Mano, W. and Meribe, N. 2017. African communication modes. *The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication Wiley*, 1–10.
- Mano, W. and Milton, v.c. 2020. Civil society coalitions as pathways to PSB reform in Southern Africa. *Interactions*, 11(2).

- Mano W. and milton v.c. (2021). *Routledge Handbook of African Media and Communication Studies*. London and New York: Routledge. pp. 19–42.
- Mazama, A. 2003. *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Mboti, N. 2015. May the real Ubuntu please stand up? *Journal of Media Ethics*, 30(2): 125–147.
- Mezirow, J. 2000. Learning to think like an adult: Core concepts of transformation theory. In Mezirow, J., ed. *Associates, Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 3–34.
- Mignolo, W.D. 2009. Epistemic disobedience, independent thought and decolonial freedom. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(7–8): 159–181.
- Mignolo, W.D. and Walsh, C.E. 2018. *On Decoloniality: Concepts. Analytics. Praxis*. Durham: Duke University Press. www.amazon.co.uk/kindlestore.
- milton, v.c. 2018. South Africa: Funding the South African broadcasting corporation. In Herzog, C., Heiko, H., Novy, L. and Torun, O., eds. *Transparency and Funding of Public Service Media – Die deutsche Debatte im internationalen Kontext*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 181–202.
- milton, v.c. 2019. Kind of blue: Can communication research matter? *Critical Arts*, 33(3): 30–45.
- milton, v.c. and Mano, W. 2020. South Africa: Beyond democratic deficit in public service broadcasting (PSB). In Thussu, D.K. and Nordenstreng, K., eds. *BRICS Media: Reshaping the Global Communication Order?* London: Routledge.
- Mutsvairo, B., ed. 2018. *The Palgrave Handbook of Media and Communication Research in Africa*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mutsvairo, B. and Karam, B.S., eds. 2018. *Perspectives on Political Communication in Africa*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nabudere, D.W. 2006. Towards an Afrokology of knowledge production and African regeneration. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies*, 1(1): 7–32. DOI:10.1080/18186870608529704.
- Ndlela, M.N. 2013. Television across boundaries: Localisation of big brother Africa. *Critical Studies in Television: The International Journal of Television*, 8(2): 57–72.
- Ngomba, T. 2012. Circumnavigating de-Westernisation: Theoretical reflexivities in researching political communication in Africa. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 36(2): 164–180.
- Niculescu, B. 2014. Multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, indisciplinarity, and transdisciplinarity: Similarities and difference, RCC perspectives no. 2. *Minding the Gap: Working Across Disciplines in Environmental Studies*, 19–26.
- Nyamnjoh, F. 2005. *Africa's Media: Democracy and the Politics of Belonging*. London, New York and Pretoria: Zed Books and UNISA Press.
- Nyamnjoh, F. 2011. De-Westernizing media theory to make room for African experience. In Wasserman, H., ed. *Popular Media, Democracy and Development in Africa*. London: Routledge, 19–31.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. 2012. 'Potted plants in greenhouses': A critical reflection on the resilience of colonial education in Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 47(2): 129–154.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. 2017. Incompleteness: Frontier Africa and the currency of conviviality. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 52(3): 253–270.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. 2019. ICTs as Jujitsu: African inspiration for understanding the compositeness of being human through digital technologies. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 11(3): 279–291.
- Nyamnjoh, F.B. 2020. *Decolonising the Academy: A Case for Convivial scholarship*. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien (Namibia Resource Centre & Southern Africa), ISBN 9783906927251.
- Obonyo, L. 2011. Towards a theory of communication for Africa: The challenges of emerging democracies. *Communicatio*, 37(1): 1–20.
- Pohl, C. 2011. What is progress in transdisciplinary research? *Futures*, 43(6): 618–626.
- Popa, F., Guillermin, M. and Dedeurwaerdere, T. 2015. A pragmatist approach to transdisciplinarity in sustainability research: From complex systems theory to reflexive science. *Futures*, 65: 45–56.
- Pennington, D.D., Simpson, G.L., McConnell, M.S., Fair, J.M. and Baker, R.J. 2013. Transdisciplinary research, transformative learning, and transformative science. *BioScience*, 63(7): 564–573.

- Querajazu, A. 2016. Encountering the pluriverse: Looking for alternatives in other worlds. *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional*, 59(2): e007. www.scielo.br/pdf/rbpi/v59n2/1983-3121-rbpi-59-02-e007.pdf.
- Reviere, R. 2006. The Canons of Afrocentric Research. In Asante, M.K. and Karenga, M., eds. *Handbook of Black Studies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 261–274.
- Sandoval, C. 2000. *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press. www.amazon.co.uk/kindlestore.
- Schramm, E., Bergmann, M., Jan, T., Knobloch, T., Krohn, W. and Pohl, C. 2012. *Methods for Transdisciplinary Research: A Primer for Practice*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
- Sesanti, S. 2019. Decolonized and Afrocentric education: For centering African women in remembering, re-membering, and the African renaissance. *Journal of Black Studies*, 50(5): 431–449.
- Shome, R. 2019. Thinking culture and cultural studies – from/of the global South. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 16(3): 196–218.
- Skjerdal, T.S. 2012. The three alternative journalisms of Africa. *International Communication Gazette*, 74(7): 636–654.
- Smith, L.T. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Smith, L.T. 2005. On tricky ground: Researching the native in the age of uncertainty. In Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S., eds. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, 85–107.
- Thussu, D.K., ed. 2009. *Internationalizing Media Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Todorova, P. n.d. *The Contemporary Transdisciplinary Approach as a Methodology to Aid Students of Humanities and Social Sciences*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED567177.pdf>.
- Tomaselli, K., Mboti, N. and Ronning, H. 2013. South – North perspectives: The development of cultural and media studies in Southern Africa. *Media, Culture & Society*, 35(1): 36–43. DOI:10.1177/0163443712464556.
- UNESCO International Bureau of Education. n.d. *Transdisciplinary Approach*. www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/t/transdisciplinary-approach.
- Ushahidi. 2018. *10 Years of Innovation: 10 Years of Global Impact. This Is Ushahidi*. www.ushahidi.com/uploads/case-studies/ImpactReport_2018.pdf.
- wa Thiong'o, N. 2009. *Re-membering Africa*. Nairobi, Kenya: East African Educational.
- wa Thiong'o, N. 2016. *Secure the Base: Making Africa Visible in the Globe*. London: Seagull Books.