



# *Azibuye emasisweni*

Reclaiming our space  
and centring our knowledge

**EDITED BY**  
Zethu Cakata  
Nompumelelo Z Radebe  
Mogobe B Ramose

***Azibuye  
emasisweni***

**Reclaiming our space  
and centring our knowledge**



Published by AOSIS Books, an imprint of AOSIS Scholarly Books, a division of AOSIS.

### **AOSIS Publishing**

15 Oxford Street, Durbanville, 7550, Cape Town, South Africa  
Postnet Suite 110, Private Bag X19, Durbanville, 7551, Cape Town, South Africa  
Tel: +27 21 975 2602  
Website: <https://www.aosis.co.za>

Copyright © Zethu Cakata, Nompumelelo Z Radebe and Mogobe B Ramose (eds.). Licensee: AOSIS (Pty) Ltd  
The moral right of the editors has been asserted.

Cover image: This cover design was created by Coco Design with the use of a copyright-free photograph by wirestock (reference 10637176), obtained from Freepik, titled 'Mesmerizing view of the silhouette of a tree in the savanna plains during sunset', available from [https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/mesmerizing-view-silhouette-tree-savanna-plains-during-sunset\\_10637176.htm](https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/mesmerizing-view-silhouette-tree-savanna-plains-during-sunset_10637176.htm), under the appropriate Freepik licensing terms for editorial use.

Published in 2023  
Impression: 1

ISBN: 978-1-77995-266-0 (print)  
ISBN: 978-1-77995-267-7 (epub)  
ISBN: 978-1-77995-268-4 (pdf)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2023.BK364>

How to cite this work: Cakata, Z, Radebe, NZ & Ramose, MB (eds.) 2023, *Azibuye emasisweni: Reclaiming our space and centring our knowledge*, AOSIS Books, Cape Town.

Printed and bound in South Africa.

Listed in OAPEN (<http://www.oapen.org>), DOAB (<http://www.doabooks.org/>) and indexed by Google Scholar. Some rights reserved.

All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical publications or reviews, no part of the work may be reproduced in any manner without prior permission from the publisher. Contact the AOSIS Scholarly Books Rights Department at [publishing@aosis.co.za](mailto:publishing@aosis.co.za) or [books@aosis.co.za](mailto:books@aosis.co.za).

The publisher accepts no responsibility for any statement made or opinion expressed in this publication. Consequently, the publishers and copyright holder will not be liable for any loss or damage sustained by any reader as a result of their action upon any statement or opinion in this work. Links by third-party websites are provided by AOSIS in good faith and for information only. AOSIS disclaims any responsibility for the materials contained in any third-party website referenced in this work.

Every effort has been made to protect the interest of copyright holders. Should any infringement have occurred inadvertently, the publisher apologises and undertakes to amend the omission in the event of a reprint.

# ***Azibuye emasisweni***

**Reclaiming our space  
and centring our knowledge**

**EDITED BY  
Zethu Cakata  
Nompumelelo Z Radebe  
Mogobe B Ramose**



## Social Sciences, Humanities, Education and Business Management domain editorial board at AOSIS

### Chief Commissioning Editor: Scholarly Books

**Andries G. van Aarde**, MA, DD, PhD, D Litt, South Africa

### Board members

**Anthony Turton**, Professor in the Centre for Environmental Management and Director TouchStone Resources (Pty) Ltd, University of the Free State, South Africa

**Charles O'Neill**, Associate Professor in the Department of Business Administration, The British University in Egypt, El Sherouk, Cairo Governorate, Egypt

**Cheryl A. Potgieter**, Professor and Head of the Research and Doctoral Leadership Academy (RADLA) and Head of the GenderJustice, Health and Human Development research niche, Durban University of Technology, South Africa

**Christi van der Westhuizen**, Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy (CANRAD) research programme, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa

**Emmanuel O. Adu**, Professor of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare, South Africa

**Elphinah N. Ciske**, Professor of Nedbank Research Chair, Department of Continuing Professional Teacher Development, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

**Jayaluxmi Naidoo**, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science Education, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

**Johann Tempelhoff**, Professor and Lead of the Cultural Dynamics of Water (CuDyWat) research niche and Head of the South African Water History Archival Repository, School of Basic Sciences, North-West University, South Africa

**Llewellyn Leonard**, Professor of Environmental Management and Chair of the Centre for Excellence (Adaptation and Resilience), School of Ecological and Human Sustainability, University of South Africa, South Africa

**Piet Naudé**, Professor of Ethics related to Politics, Lead of the MBA programme in Business in Society and Leadership Development and Director of the University of Stellenbosch Business School, University of Stellenbosch Business School, South Africa

**Reina-Marie Loader**, Programme Lead of the MA programme in Producing Film and Television and Lecturer in Film Production, Faculty of Media and Communication, Bournemouth University, United Kingdom

**Siphamandla Zondi**, Professor of Politics and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

**Stanley Murairwa**, Professor and Head of the Department of Business Sciences, College of Business, Peace, Leadership and Governance, Africa University, Zimbabwe

**Tembi Tichaawa**, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Tourism, School of Tourism and Hospitality, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

**Vusiwana C. Babane**, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape, South Africa

**Zilungile Sosibo**, Professor of Education, Faculty of Education, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa

### Peer-review declaration

The publisher (AOSIS) endorses the South African 'National Scholarly Book Publishers Forum Best Practice for Peer-Review of Scholarly Books'. The book proposal form was evaluated by our Social Sciences, Humanities, Education and Business Management editorial board. The manuscript underwent an evaluation to compare the level of originality with other published works and was subjected to rigorous two-step peer-review before publication by two technical expert reviewers who did not include the volume editor and were independent of the volume editor, with the identities of the reviewers not revealed to the editor(s) or author(s). The reviewers were independent of the publisher, editor(s) and author(s). The publisher shared feedback on the similarity report and the reviewers' inputs with the manuscript's editor(s) or author(s) to improve the manuscript. Where the reviewers recommended revision and improvements, the editor(s) or author(s) responded adequately to such recommendations. The reviewers commented positively on the scholarly merits of the manuscript and recommended that the book be published.

## **Research justification**

The manuscript was conceived out of the need to centre African epistemologies deliberately and unapologetically into scholarship. It is among the numerous contributions that respond to the marginalisation of indigenous knowledges in the curricula. What sets it apart from previous contributions is its demonstration of how African epistemologies could feature in both scholarship and the curriculum. It draws from indigenous languages and indigenous cultural practices to make a case for human and social sciences that draw from the socio-cultural context of the land. African knowledge is yet to make a full contribution in spaces of learning because of the disciplinary boundaries founded on Western separatist logic. From an African epistemology, knowledge is interconnected because of the cosmological understanding that the universe is one entity. Bringing African knowledge into the academy requires a concerted effort to bring it of its own accord. There have been commendable efforts by scholars in South Africa to bring African knowledge into higher education in ways that do not alter or re-shape this knowledge to suit the dominant Euro-American script, and the aim of this book is to showcase such efforts.

This book presents a corpus of original work. Each chapter explores the authors' organic ideas, exploring ideas that have not been advanced before. Instead of focusing on decolonisation as a form of resistance, the authors illustrate the concept of decolonial praxis, showcasing how decolonisation is done in specific disciplines within the social sciences.

This book will contribute in the fields of decolonisation and re-Africanisation discourses. It does not only provide a critique of colonial philosophies in various disciplines in human sciences, but it also provides African philosophies. This is a major stride in the development of decolonial and Africanised curricula. It provides clear direction on how disciplines such as psychology, sociology, anthropology and the arts could be viewed from African ontological and epistemological standpoints. Furthermore, the book also addresses issues of decolonial pedagogy, meaning what it means to teach and learn from an African perspective.

The chapters in this book applied both conceptual and empirical methodological frameworks. Conceptual chapters draw from an African worldview to bring forth African epistemologies, while the empirical chapters use qualitative research design to explore perspectives about various aspects of education and the marginalisation of African voices and experiences.

We confirm that Chapters 2, 4 and 8 represent more than 50% substantial reworking of the awarded MA and PhD studies from which they draw. We would like to declare that this manuscript represents the authors' original ideas. Any idea taken from an external source is properly referenced. Appropriate permission has been sought and granted for works that appear in previous publications.

This book is designed for an academic audience. It comprises scholarly texts that are both multi- and transdisciplinary in nature. Scholars from various fields of human and social sciences will find the book useful. The specific areas of focus are education, sociology, psychology, anthropology, languages and the arts.

**Zethu Cakata**, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.



# Contents

Abbreviations and acronyms, figures and tables appearing in the text and notes	xi
List of abbreviations and acronyms	xi
List of figures	xii
Table list	xii
Notes on contributors	xiii
Preface	xix
<b>Chapter 1: We want to speak to our children: Introducing <i>Azibuye Zethu Cakata</i></b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Zethu Cakata</i>	
Overview	1
<i>Azibuye emasisweni</i> : Metaphors to us	3
The decolonised curriculum and African humanity	4
Book outline	5
Conclusion	7
<b>Chapter 2: What good is the South African education system for indigenous people?</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>Lieketseng Ned</i>	
Introduction	9
Recent highlights about the education system	10
Background to the study	14
Study site	15
Methodology: A case of narratives	16
What do the indigenous people of Elliotdale say?	17
Group 1: The contemporary <i>Amaqaba</i>	18
Group 2: The contemporary <i>Amagqobhoka</i>	18
Group 3: The drop-outs group – the uncomfortable in-between	19
How do AmaBomvane envision an education system?	22
Implications	23
Conclusion	25



<b>Chapter 3: <i>Nsaka Sunsum</i> [“touching the spirit”]: A pedagogy and process of black educational excellence</b>	<b>27</b>
<b><i>Wade Nobles &amp; Zetha Nobles</i></b>	
Introduction	27
Hamilton Naki	27
Vivian Thomas	28
Ben Carson	28
Cultural antimony: The root of the problem	29
The question of educational excellence and the role of African (black) psychology	32
Culture is to humans as water is to fish	34
The <i>Nsaka Sunsum</i> [“touching the spirit”]	36
The language and logic of <i>Nsaka Sunsum</i>	38
Igniting the inner genius	46
Divine dancing	46
Learning gumbo	46
Expressive personhood	47
Rhythmic reinforcement	47
Sensory (auditory) learning enhancement	47
African (black) psychology: Implications for pedagogical practice via the <i>Nsaka Sunsum</i>	48
<i>Nsaka Sunsum</i> curricular components	49
Curricular objectives	49
Curricular content	50
Curricular intent	50
Teaching process	50
Curricular outcomes	51
The teacher-Jegnoch	51
Conclusion	51
<b>Chapter 4: Reconstructing African concepts: Socially constructed meanings of <i>impucuko</i></b>	<b>55</b>
<b><i>Zimigonaphakade Sigenu</i></b>	
Introduction	55
Socially constructed nature of concepts	57
The socially constructed meanings of <i>impucuko</i>	60
Emerging insights from the inquiry for decolonisation and decoloniality	66
Conclusion	70

<b>Chapter 5: African anthropology in practice</b>	<b>71</b>
<i>Nompumelelo Z Radebe</i>	
Introduction	71
The background of anthropology	72
What is African anthropology?	74
Ethics as praxis	76
The concept of <i>ukukhonza</i>	77
Interconnectedness of knowledge	78
Themes in African anthropology	79
Language as data	80
Rethinking the study of culture	81
Rituals in the everyday practices	82
Future of African anthropology	83
Conclusion	84
<b>Chapter 6: Colonial template in decolonial efforts: A case example of psychology</b>	<b>85</b>
<i>Zethu Cakata</i>	
Introduction	85
Operationalising psychology	87
Thinking within the colonial design and parameters	88
Cultural embeddedness of African psychology	91
Accessing culturally embedded knowledge	93
<i>Ukuphuma iphulo: An isiXhosa research strategy</i>	94
The relational nature of African epistemology	95
Prevalent misconceptions about African phenomena	97
Conclusion	98
<b>Chapter 7: The African mind: An anti-Cartesian approach to teaching and learning</b>	<b>101</b>
<i>Morgan Ndlovu</i>	
Introduction	101
The anti-Cartesian meditations of the non-Western subject	104
The Cartesian thinking in theories of learning and pedagogy	107
Perspectives on the possibility of an African mind	111
The African indigenous sites of pedagogic discourse	113
Conclusion	114

<b>Chapter 8: Envisioning the precarious legacy of black imagination: The art curriculum and underrepresentation of black South African artists</b>	<b>117</b>
<i>Bongani Mkhonza</i>	
Introduction	117
Unearthing the nexus of exclusions	119
Interrogating the university art collection acquisitions	121
Questioning the notion of transformation	122
Afrocentricity and decoloniality paradigms	124
The state of the art curriculum	127
Afrofuturism: The idea of African art and imagining the future	129
Conclusion	131
<b>Chapter 9: <i>Azibuye emasisweni</i>: A way of concluding</b>	<b>133</b>
<i>Nompumelelo Z Radebe</i>	
Introduction	133
The objective of the book	134
On African epistemology and pedagogies	135
Transdisciplinary in action	136
<i>Azibuye emasisweni</i> : The conclusion	138
<b><i>Zaya</i>: A postscript</b>	<b>141</b>
<i>Wade Nobles</i>	
<b>References</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Index</b>	<b>157</b>

# Abbreviations and acronyms, figures and tables appearing in the text and notes

## List of abbreviations and acronyms

ABPsi	Association of Black Psychologists
ADERN	Africa Decolonial Research Network
AGC	art gallery committee
ANC	African National Congress
APA	American Psychological Association
BA	Bachelor of Arts degree; bachelor's degree
BAAP	Black Academics Advancement Programme
BSS	Bachelor of Social Sciences
CANRAD	Centre for the Advancement of Non-Racialism and Democracy
CAPS	<i>Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement</i>
CBR	community-based rehabilitation
CHAPS	Centre for HIV-AIDS Prevention Studies
CSAP	customer service aptitude profile
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DAG	Durban Arts Gallery
DEMM	divine energy (spirit) made manifest
DHEST	Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IHK	indigenous health knowledge
IKSs	indigenous knowledge systems
IOL	Independent Online
JAG	Johannesburg Art Gallery
KU	Katholieke Universiteit
MA	Master of Arts degree; master's degree
MCFSP	Mastercard Foundation Scholar's Programme
MRC	Medical Research Council
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges

NIHSS	National Institute for Human and Social Sciences
NRF	National Research Foundation
OAM	Oliewenhuis Art Museum
PAM	Pretoria Art Museum
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy degree; doctorate degree
PYP	Primary Years Programme
RADLA	Research and Doctoral Leadership Academy
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SA	South Africa
SAMAB	South African Museums Association Bulletin
SANG	South African National Gallery
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TAU	teaching advancement at university
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCDP	University Capacity Development Programme
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UCT	University of Cape Town
UK	United Kingdom
Unisa	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America

### **List of figures**

Figure 3.1:	The four Ms of intent.	39
Figure 3.2:	The five Rs of the method.	40
Figure 3.3:	The six supportive practices.	40

### **Table list**

Table 4.1:	Summary of the meanings of <i>impucuko</i> 100 years apart.	62
------------	-------------------------------------------------------------	----

# Notes on contributors

## **Bongani Mkhonza**

Department of Art and Music, School of Arts,  
College of Human Sciences, University of South Africa,  
Pretoria, South Africa  
Email: mkhonbw@unisa.ac.za  
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5187-5286>

Bongani Mkhonza has been a curator for the University of South Africa (Unisa) Art Gallery and Collection for over thirteen years and is a senior lecturer in Art History at Unisa in Pretoria, South Africa. Mkhonza's research interests are focused on university art collections, cultural policy, critical race theory, Afrocentricity and decolonial studies. During his tenure, Mkhonza has sharpened his skills in working in collaboration with diverse teams of academics and collectives, such as the Unisa Decolonial Collective, and has curated over 20 art exhibitions nationally and some internationally. Mkhonza holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Philosophy and Art. His PhD research was theoretically grounded in African art, African postcolonial and African decolonial studies. Mkhonza's main area of teaching and research is critical race theory and postcolonial and decolonial discourses. He is also currently supervising students in Visual Art and Art History at the honours degree (Hons) and master's degree (MA) levels. Mkhonza's recent work includes 'Relocating the Centre: Decolonising University Art Collections in South Africa' (*On Curating*, Issue 49, pp. 30–37) and 'Towards Epistemic Repatriation: Re/membering as the Moral Responsibility of Museums' (*South African Museums Association Bulletin [SAMAB]*, Issue 43, 2021).

## **Lieketseng Ned**

Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies, Department of Global Health,  
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Stellenbosch University,  
Cape Town, South Africa  
Email: lieketseng@sun.ac.za  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9844-7828>

Lieketseng Ned has a PhD in Health Sciences Rehabilitation from Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Ned is a senior lecturer at the Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies within the Department of Global Health at Stellenbosch University. Her areas of professional and research interest include critical disability studies, community-based rehabilitation (CBR), indigenous knowledges and methodologies and decolonial health and education. Ned's scholarly contributions are reflected in her numerous research outputs, which include journal articles, book chapters, policy briefs, media engagement opinion pieces and expert guest-speaking, published both locally and internationally. She is a recipient of the coveted

Top 200 Young South Africans Future Leader Award from the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper in 2019 and a distinguished Jakes Gerwel Writing Foundation fellowship in 2021. Ned has held various national grants, including the National Research Foundation (NRF), Black Academics Advancement Programme (BAAP) and NRF's Thuthuka Grant and the South African Medical Research Council (MRC) Self-initiated Grant. She is also a recipient of the Stellenbosch University's COVID-19 Special Rector Fund and Funding for Innovation and Research into Teaching and Learning Grant. Ned was, during the writing of this book, the South African representative for Community-Based Rehabilitation Africa Network, chairperson for the Western Rehabilitation Centre Facility Board and serves as the editor-in-chief of the *African Journal of Disability* (AOSIS).

### **Mogobe B Ramose**

Department of Clinical Psychology,  
Faculty of Health Sciences, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University,  
Pretoria, South Africa  
Email: tanella@mweb.co.za  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3921-7613>

Mogobe B Ramose is an extraordinary professor of Philosophy in the Department of Clinical Psychology at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, Pretoria, South Africa. The focus of Ramose's work is *ubuntu*, the Nguni concept in which philosophy, ontology and ethics are thought together in a wholistic approach to humanness. He has held many institutional affiliations in the course of his career. Ramose has taught at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven) in Belgium, the University of Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe, the Katholieke Universiteit Brabant (now renamed Tilburg University) in the Netherlands, the University of Venda in South Africa, Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia and Unisa, where he was instrumental in introducing the subject area of African philosophy. Ramose's notable work is seen in, but not limited to, his book *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu* (Mond Books, 1999). In 2013, he edited a collection of essays entitled *Hegel's Twilight: Liber Amicorum Discipulorumque Pro Heinz Kimmerle* (Brill/Rodopi, 2013). *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu* outlines how justice and law can be understood through the *ubuntu* philosophy. Ramose's work displays an unwavering commitment to questions of justice, politics, ethics and truth. Over the years, he has penned over 40 journal articles and more than 33 chapters in books, and reviewed eight books. Ramose is one of the most cited authors in South Africa and has been invited to present at various conferences and a large number of public lectures. His publications continue to be quoted in South Africa and internationally in learned journals on diverse issues of philosophical discourse and public policy.

**Morgan Ndlovu**

Department of Anthropology and Development Studies,  
 Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, University of Zululand,  
 KwaDlangezwa, South Africa  
 Email: [morgan@highveldmail.co.za](mailto:morgan@highveldmail.co.za)  
 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6846-5566>

Morgan Ndlovu is an NRF-rated scholar and a professor of Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology and Development Studies at the University of Zululand, KwaDlangezwa campus, South Africa. Ndlovu has previously worked as an associate professor of Development Studies at Unisa, where he is a research fellow in the Department of Development Studies. He holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from Monash University in Australia. Ndlovu is a founding member of the Africa Decolonial Research Network (ADERN). His research interests include African history, black radical thought, decolonial critical theory, indigenous knowledge systems (IKSs), African liberation traditions, African spiritualities and African development discourse. Ndlovu has served as a member of the National Heritage Council's (NHC)'s panel of experts responsible for shaping the South African national heritage policy. He is an author of numerous articles, books and book chapters on the colonisation of knowledge and power, nature and being, with specific reference to African contexts. He has presented several academic and policy-oriented papers at local and international conferences and workshops. Ndlovu is the author of *Performing Indigeneity: Spectacles of Culture and Identity in Coloniality (Decolonial Studies, Postcolonial Horizons)* (Pluto Press, 2019) and the co-editor of *Marxism and Decolonization in the 21st Century: Living Theories and True Ideas* (Routledge, 2021).

**Nompumelelo Z Radebe**

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology,  
 Faculty of Human Sciences, University of South Africa,  
 Pretoria, South Africa  
 Email: [radebnz@unisa.ac.za](mailto:radebnz@unisa.ac.za)  
 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6368-9907>

Nompumelelo Z Radebe is a senior lecturer and chair of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology at Unisa, Pretoria, South Africa. Radebe teaches postgraduate students on anthropological methods, redevelops modules as part of curriculum transformation and supervises MA and PhD students. Prior to her teaching career, she worked as a researcher for various institutions in South Africa, including the University of Pretoria (Centre for HIV-AIDS Prevention Studies [CHAPS]) in Pretoria, South Africa, the MRC in Cape Town, South Africa and the University of Cape Town (UCT) Children's Institute in Cape Town, South Africa. Radebe is a member of the international decolonial networks that, among other things, organise decolonial summer schools in different universities in South Africa. Her contribution to these summer schools is in providing practical examples of



how to decolonise the curriculum when located in Africa. In 2017, Radebe was a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley, California, United States of America (USA), in the Department of Ethnic Studies, and this experience played a pivotal role in sharpening her decolonial tools of analysis. She was awarded the institutional prize for Teaching and Learning at Unisa for curriculum transformation. Radebe is part of the Teaching Advancement at University (TAU) Fellowship Programme that is part of the Ministerial Statement on the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP), a national initiative in support of the implementation of the UCDP. Her research interest is in exploring African epistemology to expand on theories that address global challenges. Drawing from her anthropological expertise, Radebe uses isiZulu to theorise and provide evidence of the African ways of knowing and being in the world.

### **Wade Nobles**

Department of Africana Studies,  
San Francisco State University,  
San Francisco, California, United States of America  
Email: drwnobles@gmail.com  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8737-0001>

Wade Nobles is the son of Annie Mae Cotton (1914) and John Nobles (1900). John Nobles' father was Mims Nobles, who was born into the barbarism of American slavery in 1863. Mims' father was Wade Nobles, who was also born into the savagery of slavery in 1836. Wade Nobles was the oldest son of Candace/Agnes (Cilla), who too was born into captivity in Edgefield, South Carolina, USA, in 1810. Nobles is the namesake of Agnes' eldest son. Wade Nobles is a teacher, author and researcher with over 53 years of community-based research and programme development experience.

Nobles is a founding member and past president (1994-1995) of the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) and the founding executive director of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture in Oakland, California, USA, where he spent over 50 years researching, designing and implementing African-centred service and training programmes. Nobles has served as a visiting professor in Salvador de Bahia and São Paulo in Brazil, as well as the United Kingdom (UK), Ghana in West Africa and Cape Town, South Africa. During the writing of this book, he served as the chairperson of the Association of Black Psychologists' (ABPsi) Pan-African Black Psychology Global Initiative with members situated in Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria, UK, Jamaica, Canada, Haiti and Ghana.

Nobles is the author of over 100 articles, chapters, research reports and books; the co-author of a seminal chapter focusing on black psychology, titled 'Voodoo or IQ: An Introduction to African Psychology' (Institute of

Positive Education, 1976); the author of *African Psychology: Toward its Reclamation, Reascension and Revitalization* (Black Family Institute Publishers, 1986); *Seeking the Sakhu: Foundational Writings in African Psychology* (Third World Press, 2006), an anthology of over 30 years of African-centred research and scholarship and one of his latest publications; and *The Island of Memes: Haiti's Unfinished Revolution* (Black Classic Press, 2015).

Nobles and his wife, Vera Nobles, are the proud parents of five children and grandparents to thirteen grandchildren.

### **Zetha Nobles**

Office of Administration,  
Executive Director, Global Peace Leadership Academy,  
Houston, Texas, United States of America  
Email: [zetha.nobles@globalpl.org](mailto:zetha.nobles@globalpl.org)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7701-5540>

Zetha Nobles is the eldest daughter of Vera and Wade Nobles. Nobles has had extensive experience as an educator in Louisiana, Maryland and California (USA), Kuwait, Dubai (United Arab Emirates [UAE]) and Ghana and Nigeria (Africa). She has served as the assistant superintendent in Kuwait, where she successfully chaired the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation for two international schools. Nobles also served as a Primary Years Programme (PYP) principal in the international baccalaureate in San José, California, USA, as an elementary school principal. She successfully developed and created educational institutions as the founding director of a large school in Dubai and with almost 30 years of experience in teaching, school administration and loving children. Nobles most recently founded the Global Peace Leadership Academy, headquartered in the state of Texas, USA, whose mission is to revolutionise the global collective consciousness through education by providing academic acceleration for all students while teaching and promoting global peace, leadership, love, empowerment, human integrity and action.

Nobles' qualifications and experience are in developing strong administrative teams, equitable opportunities for all students, coaching for top-tier educational acumen, school management, school improvement and coaching. Nobles has provided intellectual guidance, planning and delivered highly regarded educational conferences. She has taken large and small groups on study educational development tours to Egypt, Nigeria and Ghana (Africa), Dubai (UAE) and Jamaica (West Indies). Nobles has grounded (lived) experience in the USA, Kuwait, UAE, Jamaica, Nigeria and Ghana. Nobles is a proud graduate of Xavier University in New Orleans, Howard University in Washington DC and the University of California, Berkeley in Northern California (USA).

Nobles' 'business of education' acumen is only matched by her incredible, unbreakable love for children and global peace. Her mantra is from Asa Hilliard, whom she calls 'Uncle Asa': 'There is no mystery on how to teach them. The first thing you do is treat them like human beings and the second thing you do is love them'.

### **Zethu Cakata**

Department of Psychology,  
Faculty of Human Sciences, University of South Africa,  
Pretoria, South Africa  
Email: cakatz@unisa.ac.za  
ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6977-7008>

Zethu Cakata is a full professor in the Department of Psychology at Unisa, Pretoria, South Africa. Cakata's previous work experience includes roles as a researcher and lecturer in institutions such as Statistics South Africa (StatsSA), the Department of Psychology at the University of Pretoria and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), all three institutions based in Pretoria, South Africa. She has scholarship interests in indigenous African ways of understanding human sciences, particularly psychology, African psychology and re-Africanisation of the curriculum through language. Cakata also explores phenomena such as names and naming practices, ethics about studying indigenous phenomena and research methodology. She has published research about the need to centre African knowledge in higher education curricula with titles on the spiritual meaning of what is today known as the 'bride price', the cultural embeddedness of African psychology and the 'spiritness' of African knowledge. In Cakata's work, she also uses metaphoric language as a reliable site of African epistemology. She holds a research grant from the National Institute for Human and Social Sciences (NIHSS) and is leading the Learning from the Elders Project, which looks at decolonial ways in which communities could contribute to universities.

### **Zimingtonaphakade Sigenu**

Equitable Education and Economies Unit,  
Human Sciences Research Council,  
Cape Town, South Africa  
Email: zimiesgn@gmail.com  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9269-0234>

Zimingtonaphakade Sigenu holds a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Development Studies from UCT, Cape Town, South Africa. Sigenu holds a BA in Politics and Sociology and a Bachelor of Social Sciences (BSS) (Hons) in Sociology, both awarded by UCT. She was a researcher in the Young African Researcher Fellowship Programme at the HSRC in Cape Town during the writing of this book. Sigenu's research interests comprise endogenous knowledge systems and production, higher education transformation and youth and rural development. She is a Mellon Mays fellow, awarded her fellowship by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, and is an alumnus of the Mastercard Foundation Scholar's Programme (MCFSP).

# Preface

**Mogobe B Ramose**

Department of Clinical Psychology,  
Faculty of Health Sciences, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University,  
Pretoria, South Africa

The reader might be struck by the fact that the title of the book makes use of a rather unusual language. Why is the title in English not sufficient? Surely it is routinely accepted that the title may be in English, French, Portuguese or Spanish? Why the deviation from this apparently unshakeable norm? The puzzle becomes even more complex when one observes that the sequence in the book title is the unusual language first, followed by English.

The questions posed here and the sequence in the book title already describe and define both the character and the intention of the book. The table of contents reveals that the majority of the contributors of chapters to the book either have names justifying the assumption that the authors are of 'African' origin, indigenous to the continent from time immemorial, or are the descendants of slaves uprooted forcibly out of 'Africa' during the ethically unjustifiable trans-Atlantic slave trade. Such is the description of the contributors of chapters to this book. The description also applies to the editors of the book.

The unusual language appearing in the book's title is isiZulu, one of the vernaculars of the indigenous peoples of 'Africa' from time immemorial. It is the language spoken by the AmaZulu. The language is classified as belonging to the Nguni groups, under the broad umbrella of the Bantu languages of 'Africa'. It appears first in the sequence of the title of the book because the majority of the contributors appear to be 'African' when one sees them in person. Although appearances sometimes deceive, in this case, there is only very little room for deception concerning the identity of the majority contributors as 'African' or being the descendants of slaves forced out of 'Africa' during the ethically unjustifiable trans-Atlantic slave trade.

The language is unusual only for those who imagine that the indigenous peoples of 'Africa' have no languages of their own. Such an imagination is either an unconscious or deliberate denial of the right of the peoples of 'Africa' to exist and to reason. Actually, precision demands, at the risk of being clumsy in English, the deletion of 'and', stating that the indigenous peoples of 'Africa' have, from time immemorial, also had a complete, equal

**How to cite:** Ramose, MB 2023, 'Preface', in Z Cakata, NZ Radebe & MB Ramose (eds.), *Azibuyeye emasisweni: Reclaiming our space and centring our knowledge*, AOSIS Books, Cape Town, pp. xix-xxi. <https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2023.BK364.00>

and perfect right to exist-reason. Body language and the spoken and written word are the different ways in which this right manifests itself. So, it is an ontological delusion to imagine that the indigenous peoples of 'Africa' from time immemorial have no languages of their own.

Through her voice much better than John Keats' poem 'Ode to a Nightingale' (1819), Miriam Makeba, a black female artist hailing from 'Xhosaland', introduced isiXhosa to international audiences through her songs. IsiXhosa, then, is a usual global language not only to the ears but also the eyes of those who care to study it even outside of Makeba's country of origin. The struggle for the retention, continuation and use of one's own language is well-known globally. In South Africa, it is exemplified by the Afrikaanse Taalmonument ('Afrikaans Language Monument'), erected in 1975 on the Paarl mountain in the Winelands district of the Western Cape province in South Africa in memory of the successful Afrikaner struggle for linguistic equality between Afrikaans, Dutch and English.

*Azibuye* is a concept that belongs to the Nguni language group. It has a distinct tone of command, defiance, protest, resistance and affirmation. For this reason, it must be written with an exclamation mark: *Azibuye!* It means 'Let them return! We want them back!'. One does not demand the return of that which one never owned. To concede this is to understand that *Azibuye!* is the assertion of the demand for the restoration of that which was lost unfairly. Attention must be given to the suffix [-*buye*], the jussive mood of *ukubuyisa* [to return] and the link between *Azibuye!* and *Mayi-buye Afrika!* The former is plural, referring to many things that ought to be returned. The latter is singular and specific. It is the ethical demand for the return of 'Africa' to its rightful, original owners, its indigenous peoples from time immemorial.

The conceptual convergence of the two [*buyes*] is, at the same time, the coincidence of the historical experience of losing – without ethical justification – that which belongs to one in the collective sense. It is thus an ethical demand for the return of the land – unencumbered sovereign title to territory, not 'land reform' – to its original rightful owners from time immemorial. Given the indigenous 'African' people's right to exist-reason, the demand extends to the recovery and reaffirmation of their ways of knowing and doing, their epistemologies. Hence, the title in English: *Reclaiming our space and centring our knowledge*. But to whom is this ethical demand addressed?

The addressee is the Romans who occupied the Northern region of what they called 'Africa' for more than 600 years. In calling this region 'Africa', the Romans arrogated unilaterally unto themselves the power to give a name to the region. I have used the name 'Africa' in quotation marks up to this point in order to suggest that it is an ethical imperative to

challenge the putative right of the Romans to unilaterally give the name to that region. Scholars such as Ali A Mazrui of Kenya have done so. He concluded his challenge by stating that he would use the name 'Africa' 'under protest', and so do I. The authors and editors will henceforth use it without quotation marks.

Following the Romans, the addressee in 1455 is also Romanus Pontifex, the papal bull of Pope Nicholas V. This papal bull, *Dum Diversas*, was issued to King Alfonso V of Portugal on 18 June 1452. It gave King Alfonso V of Portugal ownership of and lordship over Africa, on the premise that such a divine gift of land required neither the prior knowledge nor the consent of the indigenous peoples, the original rightful owners of the land from time immemorial. The papal bull is an integral part of the context within which the voyages of both the Portuguese navigators Bartolomeu Dias (also called Bartholomew Diaz) and Vasco da Gama were undertaken. In late December 1497, Vasco da Gama named the anchored region 'Natal', called by the same name to date in South Africa. By the time the Dutch navigator and colonial administrator of the Dutch East India Company, Jan van Riebeeck, settled in the 'Cape of Good Hope' in early 1652, injustice was already committed on and in Africa.

With its sanction of the ethically unjustifiable violence of colonisation, Romanus Pontifex complemented the initial injustice committed by the Romans on and in Africa. Aside from the decolonisation of Africa being accompanied only by political independence, the injustice on and against Africa persists in the dual aspects of material and intellectual poverty. This is the established order constructed by the Western colonial conqueror's exercise of the ethically questionable 'right of conquest'. The chapters in this book may be construed as a challenge to this persisting injustice. They are arguments for epistemic and social justice because of the indigenous peoples in South Africa who were conquered in the unjust wars of colonisation.

The chapters are multiple and varied in their perspectives. It is hoped that both the strengths and weaknesses of each chapter will advance the cause of epistemic and social justice precisely by inviting either commendation or censure. It is left to fellow scholarly readers to evaluate each of them.



The authors of this book exceptionally address key issues around the necessity of cultural syntonic knowledge production for the reclamation, healing and future of African people. It is also a prototype for the decolonisation of other colonised indigenous people. At the same time, the case for returning to one's own culture to provide quality education for students is emphasised in various ways throughout this book.

It is made clear that formal education – the institution primarily responsible for socialising members of society into the worldview, values and practices of the dominant social order – functions to maintain the status quo. Educational institutions in service of the perpetuation of colonialism or neo-colonialism are central to implementing systems of dehumanisation that deprive indigenous people of their rich cultural inheritance, replacing it with misinformation and negation of their identities and personhood.

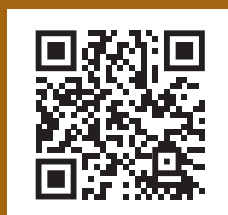
*Azibuye emasisweni: Reclaiming our space and centring our knowledge* articulates the problems with great detail and clarity, as well as the essential methods for correction and healing strategies. Utilising South Africa's common languages and cultural traditions, this book presents a model that could also serve the most oppressed cultural groups across a series of chapters, ancillary to providing the culturally embedded knowledge needed. Western pedagogy and methodologies are not assumed to have applicability in African communities due to the different ways of knowing and doing in these communities. The superior value and erudite nature associated with indigenous African knowledge are reclaimed and given the stellar placement it deserves. The purpose of this book is to serve researchers and scholars with work that contributes to humanity as a whole.

**Prof. Linda James Myers, College of Arts and Sciences  
and College of Medicine, Ohio State University,  
Columbus, Ohio, United States of America**

---

This book is a welcome contribution to thinking through the decolonial turn in both research and teaching environments. Its respect for indigenous knowledge, worldviews and interests is unique. The book is a must-read for scholars involved in research into decolonising knowledge and practice.

**Prof. Siphamandla Zondi, Department of Politics  
and International Relations, Faculty of Humanities,  
University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa**



Open access at  
<https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2023.BK364>



ISBN: 978-1-77995-266-0