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social realities – cannot be done without significant economic redress, such as the introduction of a universal basic income grant that affords a dignified life to all.[3] Has the urgency created by the pandemic got South Africa any closer towards this goal? And who would be encompassed within its so-called universality: would even a basic income grant be enough, if South Africa maintains its narrow notions of citizenship that Nyamnjoh so eloquently critiques, such that the basic humanity of migrants is not recognized?

Nyamnjoh's book reminds us that the categories we live by and with need not be real, if we have the courage to think and act past them, and that any rhetoric of decolonization needs to widen beyond zero-sum binaries of whiteness versus blackness and citizens versus *makwerekwere* if it is to succeed.

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Response by the author

I am grateful to Bertha Kibona and Shannon Morreira for taking time to read and engage with #*RhodesMustFall*, and for their generous comments. They are right to suggest that, despite the heroic student protests of 2015 and 2016, many of the issues discussed in the book are still with us. The resilient colonialism at which the students nibbled is truly resilient. It continues to dictate the nature and practice of statecraft, providing the parameters of stricture within which citizenship and belonging are understood and experienced. It privileges particular forms of identity and the politics of belonging, and it sustains hierarchies of humanity that contradict its language of rights, freedoms and entitlements. Much of what the students protested against were the inequalities and poverty that colonialism and apartheid had built into being and becoming human in a racialized context. Many of the students protesting belonged to the category of 'born-free' South Africans, who, according to the logic and magic of such a label, having had no first-hand experience of colonialism and apartheid, were more likely to blame post-apartheid leaders and failures for persistent inequalities, poverty and epistemic injustices. Resilient colonialism privileges micro-sociologization and the ethnographic present and frowns on those who flash their torchlights of enquiry into the past for the structural roots of present-day predicaments.

Yet, bringing history and the ethnographic present or sociology into conversation could be a very useful approach to knowledge production of the order that contributes to redressing some of the inadequacies highlighted by the student protests. A non-linear future is much indebted to the rear-view mirror. Thus, in answer to Morreira's question on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, one could argue that, due to structural inequalities inherited from the apartheid era and compounded by corruption and lip service to transformation under the ruling African National Congress (ANC) government, in South Africa, despite timely national state of disaster and prolonged lockdown measures taken to mitigate

[3]See 'Basic income support fact sheet', Black Sash, 2010 <http://www.blacksash.org.za/index.php/basic-income-support-fact-sheets>, accessed 20 May 2021.

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the explosive proliferation of Covid-19, the country has still emerged as having the most cases and the most deaths in Africa so far.

It is concerning that the virus is seeping into vulnerable populations around big cities, the less privileged areas and the slums. Most people, forced to balance between saving lives and saving livelihoods, have been thrust into a very precarious existence. Women, especially those who live in the townships and commute to forage for subsistence in the cities, are particularly affected. Pumla Dineo Gqola observes that, while it is possible for employers to socially distance by working from home, 'this does not extend to the women who clean their houses, who are not able to work away from the physical sites of their jobs. Working-class black women in domestic work and similar employment are obliged to travel long distances almost daily.'[1] Equally challenged are people who earn their living by crossing borders on a regular basis, and who have had, in some instances, to bear the brunt of rising anger among nationals frustrated with joblessness and the threat of hunger. Nationals tend to perceive foreigners, wrongly or rightly, as taking advantage of scarce jobs and/or spreading Covid-19 and crime. Hence, far from radically disrupting established hierarchies of inequalities in livelihoods, Covid-19 has mostly preyed upon and in some instances exacerbated existing victimhood and vulnerabilities.

There is concern as well that the loan approved by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to mitigate the negative economic effects of Covid-19 has only compounded the precarious situation of the South African poor, for a range of reasons, among which the IMF's notoriety as a cure that is often more dangerous than the disease. Indeed, moved by nationwide outrage at reports of corruption in his ANC government's response to the coronavirus pandemic, President Cyril Ramaphosa wrote a letter to fellow members of the ANC in which he expressed his support for the popular anger and disillusionment at these reports. He wrote:

> What has caused the greatest outrage is that there are private sector companies and individuals (including civil servants) who have exploited a grave medical, social and economic crisis to wrongfully enrich themselves. This is an unforgivable betrayal for the millions of South Africans who are being negatively affected by the impact of Covid-19, experiencing hunger daily, hopelessness and joblessness.[2]

Resilient inequalities are not specific to South Africa. Almost everywhere, regardless of geography, the fact of a resilient racialized configuration of the world has meant that black and brown people have borne the brunt of coronavirus infections and deaths, as Covid-19, in its globalized nimble-footedness, has opportunistically insinuated itself into intimacies by preying on sociality, comparative disadvantages, pre-existing precarities and related physical frailties that feed from and into debilitating hierarchies of systemic inequality and poverty. A current concern in South Africa and throughout the continent is with what has been termed the 'vaccine apartheid' and anxieties about a pandemic of vaccine scarcity. Calls for global solidarity to ensure fairness in distributing Covid-19 vaccines seem to go unheeded, as vaccine manufacturers yield to the highest bidders and

[1] 'On movement, human rights and Covid-19' by Pumla Dineo Gqola, 26 March 2020 <https://www.newframe.com/on-movement-human-rights-and-covid-19/>.

[2] 'Let this be a turning point in our fight against corruption' by Cyril Ramaphosa, 23 August 2020; 'Read the full letter Ramaphosa sent to the ANC on corruption' <https://ewn.co.za/2020/08/23/read-the-full-letter-ramaphosa-sent-to-the-anc-on-corruption>, accessed 5 June 2021.

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jealously protect their patents. Where one lives remains a strong determinant of whether one lives.

Kibona and Morreira are right to emphasize the importance of intersectionality. Categories such as race, ethnicity, geography, class, gender, sexuality and age matter, but not in the same way or exactly to the same degree in every context. Taking cognizance of how what matters intersects in a given context is useful in bringing out the complexities and nuances in the situations and relationships that we are interested in exploring and explaining.

Since publication of the book, I have become increasingly interested in how we could develop a framework of incompleteness as a replacement for the current dominant framework of completeness and the pursuit of superiority through zero-sum games of conquest and absolutes, violence and violations. A framework of incompleteness, I believe, provides further insights to address some of the questions and invitations to dialogue that Morreira and Kibona have invited me to reflect on. My invitation to universities and knowledge producers to embrace convivial scholarship presupposes incompleteness and flexible mobility. Such a scholarship accommodates collaboration beyond tokenism within and outside the academy in a manner that guarantees epistemic justice in the production and circulation of knowledge. This speaks to Kibona's question on how to take the knowledge we generate in the academy to townships and what happens in the townships back to the academy.

One could argue that at the heart of resilient violence and hierarchies associated with Rhodes, and their impact on citizenship and belonging, is an obsession with completeness. Within the logic and framework of completeness, there is little or no room for incompleteness as a value. Incompleteness, though inextricably part and parcel of being human and being in the world, tends to be understood as a negative attribute, something not to embrace, let alone celebrate. Yet, nothing could be further from the truth. Without the permanence of incompleteness in who we are, what we are, and how we are, we wouldn't be seeking, so desperately, to extend ourselves with technologies and relationships quite the way we do.

Throughout history, people have used both their incompleteness and their mobility in different ways. Some, like Rhodes, think that incompleteness is negative, something to transcend via a linear progression to something one might call completeness, sustained through the eternal production and reproduction of oppression, repression and suppression, aided and abetted by contrived and radically exclusionary identities and identity politics of purity and purification. They believe that completeness is possible, that it comes from using one's mobility to reach out and encounter others in unequal ways, conquering them and imposing one's superiority. They believe that mobility entails survival of the fittest – the fittest being those who transgress borders and boundaries with impunity to dispossess, humiliate and humble those they encounter with dehumanizing indignities and repressive technologies of control, containment and confinement. As #*RhodesMustFall* demonstrates, they believe in their untamed power to define themselves, to define others, and to define into existence or oblivion in tune with their every whim and caprice. However, not every mobility has to be animated by such ambitions of conquest, domination or suppression.

Some move around, informed by the understanding that incompleteness is the norm. Completeness is a perilous illusion, especially if defined in zero-sum terms as independence or autonomy. Suppose one does not recognize that incompleteness will always be with one, even in one's supposed superiority and autonomy. Then one could easily develop arrogance by not recognizing one's debts and indebtedness to others. With erasures and disavowals of histories of entanglements and indebtedness, one could conveniently forget by claiming exclusive ownership

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of shared patrimonies and/or of the things and inheritances of others. One could even turn the tables on the reality of unequal encounters and claim that it is actually the victims of one's ambitions of conquest – those one has dispossessed and dehumanized – who are in one's debt. One could, for instance, parade the illusion that the debt of civilization and modernization that one has brought others through one's aggressive transgressions of their borders and their humanity is immeasurably greater than the debt of dispossession and dehumanization that they owe them. Hence, far from claiming restoration and restitution, one's victims should in fact demonstrate eternal gratitude and recognize their debt and indebtedness. Such warped logic, it could be argued, is commonplace in imperial and colonial encounters, as well as in capitalist relations where nothing seems valuable enough unless as a commodity. Incompleteness thus pushes us to problematize and rethink current assumptions of debt and indebtedness informed by the dominant logic that completeness is possible and attainable.

Much energy and commitment have been devoted to decolonization of curricula by staff and university institutions in South Africa since the 2015 and 2016 student protests. They deserve acknowledgement. What remains to be done in a systematic and significant manner is to embrace incompleteness as a framework for convivial scholarship. As I have argued elsewhere, convivial scholarship is scholarship that neither dismisses contested and contrary perspectives a priori nor throws the baby out with the bathwater. It is critical scholarship of recognition and reconciliation, scholarship that has no permanent friends, enemies or alliances beyond the rigorous and committed quest for truth in its complexity and nuance, in communion with the natural and suprasensory environments that make a balanced existence possible.[3]

Rhodes, more generally, has proven to be more resilient. He is still firmly around even in his purported absence as a statue at the University of Cape Town. Visible or not, Rhodes is amenable to activation and activating those who have kept his memory alive to enable their pursuit of potency for efficacy in their ambitions of dominance. Paradoxically, some of us critical of Rhodes and his racialism and dehumanization of the endogenous populations of South and Southern Africa are not always conscious that if decolonization is to entail rupture with everything colonial, then nothing directly or remotely connected with Rhodes ought to survive decolonization as a zero-sum game of autonomy.

Little will change unless all those who praise or denounce, admire or mock Cecil John Rhodes are ready to disabuse themselves of the zero-sum games of superiority and conquest and the delusions of grandeur that made him possible, and that have continued to activate and reactivate him even from beyond the grave. Simply put, one cannot beat Rhodes, his disciples and supporters through a winner-takes-all logic. Since such deactivation, if radically pursued, amounts to the death of sociality, it is more productive to explore forms of conviviality informed by the recognition of incompleteness and provision for the humility that it inspires. It is only in this sense that Rhodes and his legacy, be this in the form of statues, monuments, material and consumer culture or institutions and curricula, can be recalibrated in any meaningful and genuinely inclusive manner. Until incompleteness is recognized and provided for in curricula, scholarship, policy, public and private action, and the idea of conviviality embraced beyond token references

[3]F. B. Nyamnjoh (2019) 'Decolonizing the university in Africa' in *Oxford Research Encyclopedias*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; F. B. Nyamnjoh (2020) *Decolonising the Academy: a case for convivial scholarship*. Carl Schlettwein Lecture 14. Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien.

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and platitudes, experiences of counterviolence on symbols of despicable impunities seeking to undo historical violence and violations inflicted in the name of conquest, supremacy and their purported achievements would persist and grow. A good starting point for beginning the process of ensuring radical inclusivity for all and sundry is by taking convivial scholarship seriously.

British imperialism brought Rhodes to Southern Africa. But it would appear that empire was nothing more than a fragile illusion on the part of the ruling elite. In the twenty-first century, Britain has voted for Brexit, beginning an unravelling process of autochthony and its ever-diminishing circles of inclusion. The rise of nationalist, identity, cultural and nativist populism in Britain – whose ambitions of dominance had earlier imbued it with the mission of civilizing the rest of the world as God's chosen country and race – is an indication that large-scale cosmopolitan nation states, even when divinely ordained, are not unassailable. It suggests, as well, that nothing made by humans is beyond unmaking by humans. More importantly, it speaks to the sterility of pursuits of completeness, and, ultimately, of a world configured around ambitions of conquest and zero-sum games of superiority. Incompleteness as a social organizing principle moves in a very different direction – one that invites exploration, contemplation and openness to infinite interconnections, fluidities and conviviality.

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Simidele Dosekun, *Fashioning Postfeminism: spectacular femininity and transnational culture*. Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press (hb US$110 – 978 0 252 04321 5; pb US$26 – 978 0 252 08508 6). 2020, v + 106 pp.

Nigerians are fashionable people, impressively so. Like anywhere, in Nigeria, fashion is a performance – of taste, but also of gender, class and other identities. Among elites, these performances are often ostentatious and they are meant to be. In *Fashioning Postfeminism,* Simidele Dosekun examines the spectacular feminine fashions of eighteen super-elite young women in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital. The women Dosekun interviewed and observed represent an extreme end of the spectrum with regard to both wealth and their indulgence in fashion. They spend many thousands of dollars a month on clothes, shoes and bags, not to mention makeup and hair. They invest hours each day preparing for their fashionable performances, whether that be a night out at a club, a party, a date, or simply going to work.

While the descriptions and interviews with these fashion-obsessed women made for engrossing – if also sometimes disturbing – ethnography, Dosekun's most ambitious agendas are theoretical and political. Theoretically, the book interrogates the phenomenon of post-feminism, using the author's interlocutors' lives as evidence. Dosekun is a careful thinker, well versed in a wide range of relevant literature, which she deploys expertly to build her analysis. The main argument and foremost conclusion of the book is that 'postfeminism is and tells a lie' (p. 143). The promise that women can be happy and empowered, transcending gender inequalities simply through flamboyant consumption and the performance of hyper-fashion, is shown to be hollow, even for the book's ultra-privileged protagonists. The primary political takeaway is that 'postfeminism is not postpatriarchal' (p. 53). Dosekun concludes that, in Nigeria – and, by implication,

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