Africa Knows! Keynote speakers and conference update

This conference will be different than any conference before: the organisers are focusing on making it a corona-proof conference by making it largely online and spreading it over a 3-month period. Another focus is on having a ‘decolonised’ conference, with most convenors and participants based in Africa.

First three keynote speakers known!
*The keynote lectures can be followed online by the conference participants*

**Dr Chika Ezeanya Esiobu**  
*Deconstructing and Reconstructing the African’s Mindset: Strategies, Platforms and Projected Impact*

Chika Ezeanya Esiobu holds a PhD in African Studies from Howard University in Washington DC. Dr Ezeanya Esiobu’s intellectual work is centrally located within the conviction that Africa’s indigenous knowledge is key to the continent’s advancement. In 2019, she was recognised as an influential person of African descent under 40. She is the author of *Indigenous Knowledge and Education in Africa* (Springer: 2019). Dr Chika is currently a visiting honorary professor with the University of Rwanda. Watch her TED Talk ‘How Africa can use its traditional knowledge to make progress’ (2017).

**Prof. Erika Kraemer Mbula**  
*(Title forthcoming)*

Professor of Economics and Chairholder of the DST/NRF/Newton Fund Trilateral Chair in Transformative Innovation, the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Sustainable Development, at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Prof. Kraemer Mbula’s work focuses on alternative development paths for African economies. She specialises in the analysis of innovation systems in connection to equitable development and inclusive development, and has done pioneering work on innovation in the informal sector.

**Prof. Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni**  
*The Cognitive Empire in Africa: Knowledge, Consciousness, and Epistemic Freedom*

Full Professor and Chair of Epistemologies of the Global South with Emphasis on Africa at the University of Bayreuth in Germany. Previously, Prof. Ndlovu-Gatsheni worked as Research Professor and Director of Scholarship at the Department of Leadership and Transformation at the University of South Africa (UNISA). He is the founder of the Africa Decolonial Research Network (ADERN) based at the University of South Africa. In 2007, he was a Visiting Fellow at the African Studies Centre in Leiden, the Netherlands.

Conference planning

**Kick-off**  
There will be a kick-off event on 2 and 3 December 2020 at De Haagse Hogeschool in The Hague, that can be attended by a restricted number of participants. In addition to the keynote lectures (that will hopefully be partly on location, but definitely virtual), six panels will have their meetings. There will also be a number of side events during these days, that will be announced later.
Papers
Almost all 50 panel convenors have made their choices and so far 300+ abstracts have been accepted. All authors have been asked to make a draft paper and upload it on the conference website before October 6. Consequently, a process of internal discussions among the convenors and authors of each panel will start, resulting in an updated paper later on.

Panel ‘meetings’
The conference will take place between 2 December and late February, with time slots for each panel. These time slots will be communicated on the conference website later on. It is the intention that each panel can be visited virtually. Most panels will also try to have a physical meeting, with a connection to the virtual meeting, and these physical meetings will be held where the convenors are based, of whom many in Africa.

Side events
During the entire period of the conference, side events will be organised. These include the screening of African films, the publication of 54 country knowledge profiles, as well as the publication of blogs about knowledge development in Africa by leading African scholars.

Conference access
Would you like to get access to the conference without presenting a paper or leading a panel? Please write to Marieke van Winden at winden@asc.leidenuniv.nl. The fee for this kind of access is 50 euro. Would you like to contribute in any other way: please feel free to contact Marieke as well!

The organising committee,
Ton Dietz, David Ehrhardt and Marieke van Winden
www.africaknows.eu