

Annotation #4

The article, *Applying Ayittey's Indigenous African Institutions to generate epistemic plurality in the curriculum* by Oscar Eybers touches on the decolonization of historical education in South Africa and a re-emphasis on indigenous pre-colonial African knowledge and studies. With statues of former colonizing figures still adorning universities in the country, many black South Africans see the remnants of oppression and pain a lingering part of their daily lives. The author tries to allow this study to be a reversal of alienation or pain for the students and transform South African institutions to an inclusive one where students feel like they belong. The suggestion for this solution is through decolonization, where there will be an increase of curricula which delves into indigenous knowledge and experiences, and a step away from a Eurocentric education. A few ways that the author have listed include a change in the curriculum for teaching humanities (which will focus on African human relations and the natural environment), law (with Africa being the home of some of the oldest legal systems), natural sciences (iron technology) and commerce (African subsistence and trade). The study states that this is an effective tool since it will Africanize the curricula but that decolonization does not imply the complete abandonment of western history in South Africa.

I agree with some parts of the article, especially regarding the importance for the indigenous culture to learn deeply about their own past and culture. Having spent the majority of my life learning history through heavily Eurocentric academia, I understand the feeling of neglect felt by many South African students. However, one major point that I disagree with is the implementation of decolonization in history since that is a very dangerous game to play in the field of history as it connects to society. With a sizeable population of white Afrikaners and natives of European descent, there will be a risk of segregation in historical education: where the history of different races are taught separately, thus recreating the problem of segregation in the past. The decolonization of historical curriculum will affect the wider nation as a whole since the existence of South Africa is directly a result of European colonization, with countless ethnicities within the country as well as multiple official languages. While I agree with the author that there needs to be more indigenous South African history taught in classes, there should not be a reduction of colonial history. If a significant emphasis is placed on South Africa's black history, then this will raise another question: how much time should we dedicate our history to the Zulus, the Xhosa, or the tens of other ethnicities?

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