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INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS
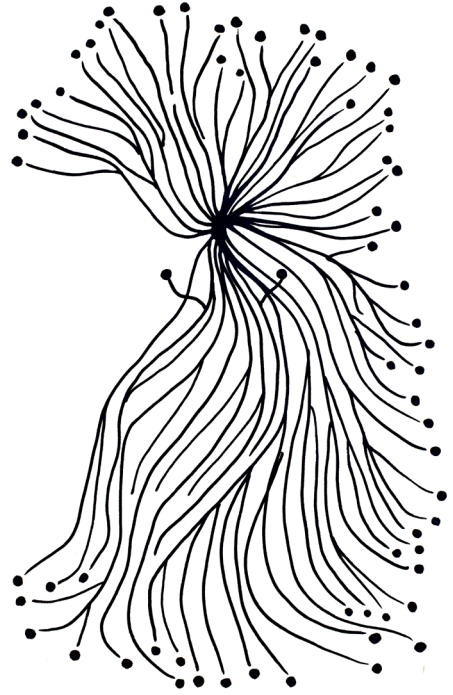
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mobilisation

Edited by
Paul Heritage

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS:
PARTNERSHIPS, ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION

A **People's Palace Projects** publication
Edited by **Paul Heritage**

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Authors

Paul Heritage, Christopher Smith, Andrew Livingston, Takumã Kuikuro, Gareth Loudon, Giovanna Fassetta, Maria Grazia Imperiale, Lilly Sar, Kimaren ole Riamit, and Thiago Jesus.

Editor

Paul Heritage

Editorial coordination

Thiago Jesus and Pedro Pérez Rothstein

Editorial production

Mayra Mota, Alexandra Araujo Alvarez and Pedro Pérez Rothstein

Revision

Poppy Spowage and Rosie Hunter

Graphic Design

Refinaria Design

Illustrations

Aislan Pankararu

FOREWORD

Christopher Smith

FOREWORD

Christopher Smith

Executive Chair, Arts and Humanities Research Council and UKRI International Champion

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In 2018, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) launched a call for those who held Global Challenges Research Fund awards and their partners to produce case studies reflecting on collaborative research partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers and communities. This led to the Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilisation seminar in Rio de Janeiro in March 2019, and two subsequent webinars, which have inevitably been concerned with the impact of COVID-19 on working with Indigenous communities.

I am hugely grateful to People's Palace Projects (PPP), which has led this work. Key findings and recommendations include the need for building mutual trust and cultural understanding over time, underpinned by intelligent and fair funding, appropriate methodologies, and through the co-design, co-production, and co-dissemination of research.

Now we have this group of essays which presents a step further forwards, and towards an important event mounted by PPP as part of a pr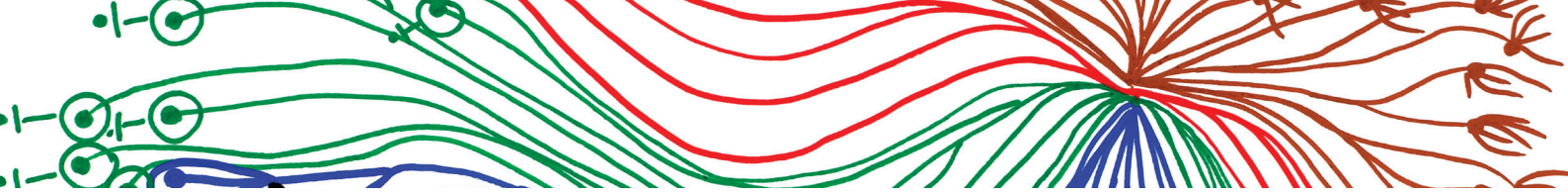ogramme of events linked to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). The presence of Indigenous research at COP26 rightly recognises the disproportionate impact of climate change, driven by the actions of developed nations, on the rest of the world and on Indigenous peoples in particular.

Kimaren ole Riamit reminds us that this is not a marginal subject: 'Globally, groups that self-identify as Indigenous Peoples[1] are about 370 million individuals and occupy and use 22% of the world's land. Despite representing 5% of the world's population, their lands and territories harbour 80% of the world's biological diversity (UNDP, 2011, p.54),[2] and they represent a significant portion of the world's cultural diversity, including about 7,000 languages.'

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[1] Native, aboriginal or tribal peoples, ethnic minorities, hill tribes, scheduled tribes, sea gypsies, bushmen, Indians/First Nations, Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups (VMGs).

[2] Nakashima, D., Rubis, J.T. and Krupnik, I. (eds.) (2018) *Indigenous Knowledge for Climate Change Assessment and Adaptation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This is the stark and insufficiently acknowledged fact of our contemporary situation. As we hope for sustainable development and underestimate its cost, lament the disappearance of diversity yet do little more than document its disappearance, it is the voices of those who harbour and protect that diversity most, and whose ways of life threaten it least, that are also the most difficult yet most necessary to hear.

THESE ESSAYS START TO SKETCH HOW TO LISTEN IN A DIFFERENT WAY

At one of the workshops, Anápuáka Tupinambá, of Rádio Yandê, Brazil, argued that: 'The Indigenous person remains in their designated space, still as the informer, the object'. Turning away from this subject/object dichotomy is precisely the challenge, and it takes time and, therefore, a different approach from short-run, stop-start research. The quote comes from Gareth Loudon's helpful reflection on some of the ways that funding needs to reflect the modalities of ethical research; and the essays as a whole are shot through with important challenges to those of us who fund research, and who have sadly seen funding rapidly diminish as a result of choices made around Official Development Assistance in the wake of the pandemic.

The critical outcome of this work is the argument that equitable partnering and giving a voice to Indigenous researchers, recognising that their self-enquiry and their methodologies may be different but are not lesser than ours – neither in importance nor in rigour – is not an appealing but inessential addition to our way of working. Rather it is the bedrock of what good research looks like.

Lilly Sar, from Papua New Guinea, argues that 'research is not about seeking to know what is out there; rather it is about how and what you're building for yourself and for your community'. Fassetta and Imperiale, in their Think Piece which leads off from their original essay, *Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships, and Knowledge Mobilisation: Think Piece*,[3] write of the importance of community engagement, capacity building, empowerment, and self-determination – not only in the outcomes of research but in the very essence of what is called 'Two-Eyed Seeing'.

In this paradigm, relevance, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity are what research is in essence, not the by-products, or the impact case statement or the unexpected bonus, but the very essence of what we should fund.

This claim is a strong one, and there are disciplines, even within humanities and social sciences – and certainly in the physical sciences – which might regard this as to one side of their core activity. That would, I think, be to miss the point of where Indigenous research takes us.

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3 Available at: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20200531032105tf_/https://www.ukri.org/news/esrc-ahrc-gcrf-indigenous-engagement-programme/

The core of enquiry is not, on this reading, dispassionate observation but entangled performance. This has a rigour and an emotional demand of its own, which is rooted in the recognition that research does not exist separately from its object but is in an inextricable dialogue with it, and one which is fundamentally enriched by a heightened respect for the entanglement. All the usual words we use around research – integrity, thoroughness, originality (which one might gloss as authenticity) – are signs of respect for what we study, and characteristic of a relationship. They arise when we engage with the object of our research with a determination to let her, him, it, or them, speak to us.

Lilly Sar places this squarely in the realm of the ecological. To give another example: for some time, amaranth was regarded by commercial farmers as a weed and huge efforts were made to eradicate it, which of course included research into herbicides. Its cultivation was even forbidden, overturning Indigenous agricultural practices. Now, its extraordinary nutritional potential is being recognised, and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is funding studies into its potential in combatting malnutrition, and combining scientific advance with education.[4]

Yet one of the pioneers of returning it to cultivation in New Mexico was a local woman, Beata Tsosie-Peña, who argues that: 'Unlike Western cultures, which view seeds as property and patents to be fought over in a legal system... seeds are Indigenous relations to the land in accordance with natural law and spiritual and cultural beliefs'.[5] There is, in reality, no divide between agri-environmental science and the deep awareness of our interconnected systems of environment, food, and nutrition. From whatever perspective, we are engaged with the complex balance of creating a flourishing world, or, in our challenged times, mitigating the impact of the way we have unbalanced our ecosystem.

It would be too easy though to appropriate 'Two-Eyed Seeing' as a generic descriptor for a marginally more socially embedded research practice. We need to go much further than that. Positioning ourselves in relation to Indigenous research requires empowering others, not aggrandising ourselves. We have a long way to go before our funding systems and our ways of thinking fully align with inclusive, participatory, and holistic approaches to the generation of knowledge that builds community. Looking hard at the way that Indigenous engagement has approached the challenges shows how difficult this is, and how rewarding. Research done equitably is, simply, better research.

Above all, as we struggle to meet the challenges of the changes to our climate and the threats they pose to the way of life of all of us, rich, poor, globalised, Indigenous, and endangered, the call to relevance, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity in research is urgent and undeniable.

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4 See UKRI report: *The production and promotion of nutrient rich foodstuffs to address the double burden of malnutrition*, available at: https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=BB%2FT008946%2F1

5 Available at: https://www.landwitnessproject.com/beata-tsosie-pena

PREFACE

Andrew Livingston
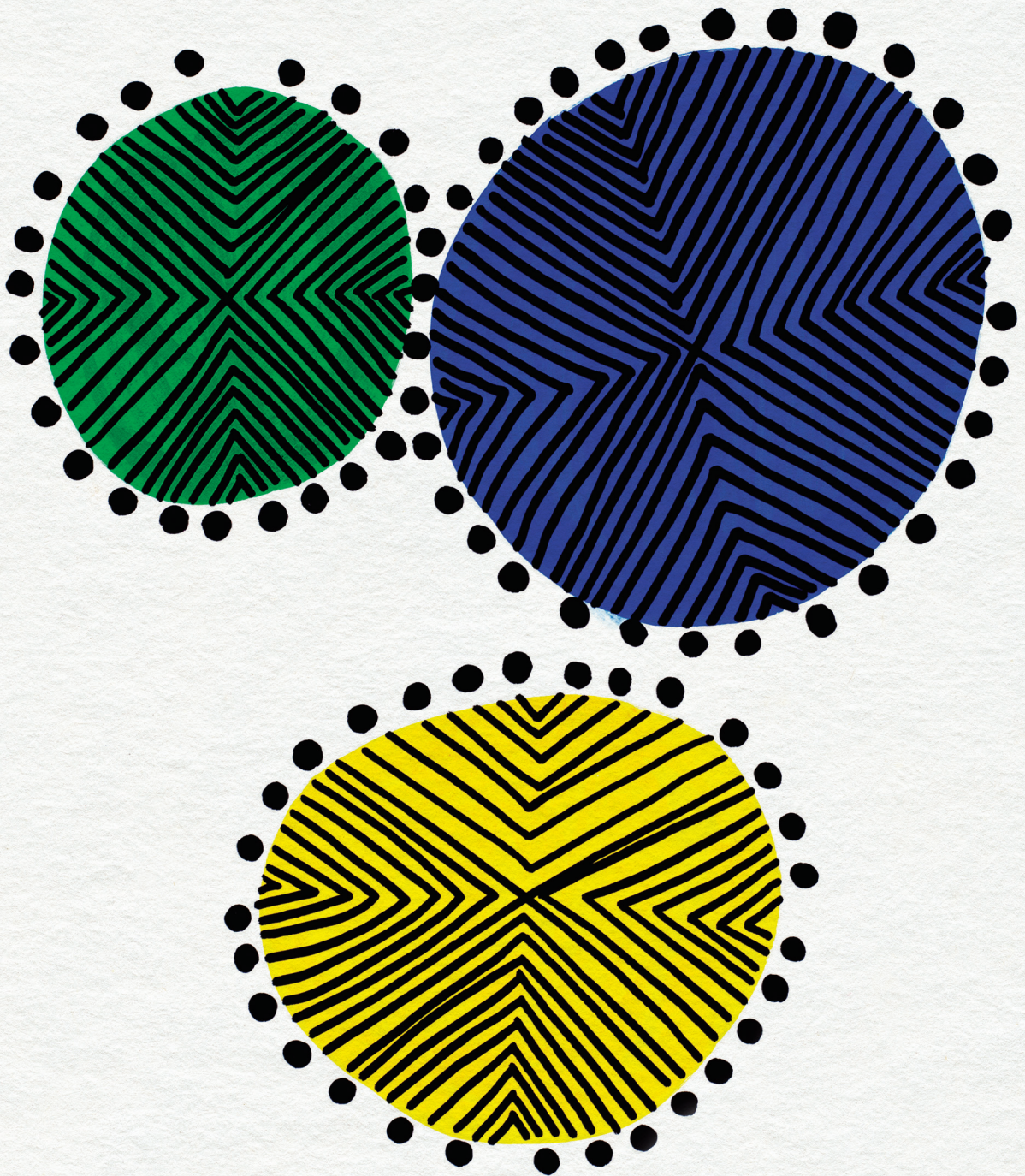
PREFACE

Prof. Andrew Livingston

VP Research and Innovation,
Queen Mary University of London

Queen Mary University of London was founded over 200 years ago, with a vision to open the doors of opportunity to those from under-represented communities. This ethos continues to inspire us today and remains at the heart of our university.

Our 2030 Strategy sets out our aspiration to be the most inclusive research-intensive university anywhere in the world. Our belief that diversity is a potent catalyst for ground-breaking ideas informs our commitment to bringing new voices and perspectives into research, through global and public engagement, knowledge exchange, and meaningful and equitable partnerships. We challenge ourselves to create research impact which changes the world for the better: building towards a future which is more prosperous, sustainable, and healthy for all.

The ongoing collaboration between People's Palace Projects (PPP) and the Kuikuro Indigenous Association of the Upper Xingu (AIKAX) represents the Queen Mary ethos at its very best. In fulfilment of our strategy, the project has created new partnerships between a diverse community of scholars, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. These unique collaborations have, in turn, created new narratives about the importance of the arts in addressing urgent questions of socio-economic development.

This work has engaged audiences worldwide – from Upper Xingu to the Mile End Road, the Venice Biennale, and COP26. Opportunities for dialogue, understanding, and activism have created a connecting thread between globally and culturally distinct communities, stimulating public debate and action on some of the most important issues in society today.

This has been particularly true during the COVID-19 pandemic, when PPP and AIKAX worked together on a local response to this global crisis. External support from PPP enabled the Kuikuro to isolate themselves in their village. The community is now fully vaccinated and, although it has experienced cases of COVID, there have been no deaths – an achievement made even more remarkable when contrasted with the pandemic's impact on other communities in the region.

At the heart of all our research endeavours at Queen Mary is our commitment to acting with the highest ethical standards, and with integrity, in all that we do. But this can be challenging – even for research partnerships that aim to legitimise and make visible excluded perspectives or to address issues of socio-economic injustice – due to systematic inequalities around finance, access, and the circulation of knowledge.

The workshop on Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilisation, led by Professor Paul Heritage and Takumã Kuikuro, and funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), offered a rare opportunity to explore the challenges in research partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners, with a particular focus on culturally sensitive knowledge exchange, equitable co-creation, and mobilisation for meaningful impact.

This is a shining example of how research projects can inspire large institutions to aspire to better things. Queen Mary is learning from this collaboration and, in doing so, is becoming more able to fulfil our core values and mission. In this, we are indebted to the Kuikuro for sharing their knowledge and expertise with us. I would like to express our particular gratitude and respect to Takumã Kuikuro, Fellow of Queen Mary, whose wisdom, creativity, and vision has been the vital ingredient in so much of what this partnership has achieved.

The articles in this publication invite you to continue the discussion on how we can produce research that is mutually beneficial to academics and to Indigenous communities. I urge you to consider how the authors' questions apply to your own work. What do questions of partnership, engagement, and collaboration mean in your context? How might they look different?

INTRODUCTION LETTERS

Paul Heritage and Takumã Kuikuro

INTRODUCTION LETTERS

14th September 2021

Arts Research Hub, France House, QMUL Mile End Campus, London, UK

Dear Takumã,

Hekite gele ege?[6]

Sending you a letter seems appropriate as we end the journey of discoveries that began with the UKRI Workshop on Indigenous Research Methods we hosted together in April 2019. Brazil was born in a letter when the Portuguese scribe Pero Vaz de Caminha signed and sealed a letter that notified his sovereign that Pedro Álvarez Cabral's expedition had sighted and landed on the *terra firme* that was soon to be named (and claimed) as Brazil. His 27-page letter documents a 10-day cultural exchange between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples that was to change the world. Our encounter at the Museum of Indigenous Peoples in Rio de Janeiro was a recognition of the urgency of the changes that the world needs to make over five centuries later.

Pero Vaz de Caminha's quill was the camera that recorded that first encounter but his letter only tells one side of the story. We have no letters from April 1500 that record how the people on the shore viewed those who had come in their galleons. Pero Vaz de Caminha didn't name those people that a thousand Portuguese sailors met on that beach, now known as Cabrália after the leader of the invaders – not after those who so gracefully received them. The people on those historically distant shores were Tupiniquim and Tupinambá, Yanomami and Yawalapiti, and Pataxó and Kayapó before they ever became *índios*. Pero Vaz de Caminha insistently describes the people he met there as men and women 'just like us'. We know what came next in this story. Within 50 years, his vision of a common and shared humanity was displaced by the classification of the peoples of the Americas as *índios*.

Pero Vaz de Caminha's letter would take 15 months to arrive back in Lisbon, almost as long as we have been separated by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is over two years now since I last made the journey to your village, driving through the barren soya fields on the central plains of Brazil to enter the rich fullness of the Xingu Indigenous Territories where savannah meets Amazon forest. As I write to you now, I am reminded

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6 "How are you?" in Amonap language, also known as Apalakiri, a Cariban language spoken by the Kuikuro and Kalapalo peoples of Brazil, and formerly by the Matipu. It is spoken by an estimated 1,100 native speakers in seven villages along the Culuene River in the Xingu Indigenous Territory of Mato Grosso.

that the Xingu is a place where 16 different Indigenous peoples have rewritten the narrative of Brazil and the terms of exchange that is possible and necessary.

Takumã, you are part of a generation of Brazilian Indigenous activists, academics, and artists who have stepped out of the frame determined by the questions raised by Pero Vaz de Caminha's letter[7] (to which I replied in the case studies we prepared for the first workshop). For over five centuries, the *índio* has been constituted as a point of interrogation – not only for the European coloniser, traveller, and researcher but also for Brazil itself. Indigenous people that have survived the massacres, diseases, and forced assimilations are still constituted as if they were a puzzle (one brought into sharper relief by the questioning of their right to self-definition by the current Brazilian government). Your survival today, Takumã, and your work as a filmmaker turns the 'Indigenous question' around so that the point of interrogation becomes not who are those people on the shore, but who are we on the prow of the boat?

I hope you will look back on this UKRI programme and find that it has contributed to the re-inscription of Indigenous research enquiries so that they become a process of equitable exchange and not knowledge extraction. The articles we publish here are part of what we began in Rio de Janeiro and have tried to pursue further in the subsequent webinars that the two of us hosted. Each of these articles shares ways in which partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers have brought into question the methods, practices, and outcomes that are integral to the undertaking of research. They highlight common aims and ambitions for research methodologies forged across continents and across disciplines, highlighting how Indigenous research needs to be conceptualised and constructed as something fundamental to the development of the communities where the investigation or enquiry is undertaken.

As I write this, in September 2021, I am still hoping that you can be with us in person as we bring this final stage of this journey to an end with a series of debates hosted by Queen Mary University of London, where you received your Fellowship. It seems to me that the issues, questions, and doubts we discussed at the Rio workshop have increased in urgency over the 30 months of this programme. What is certain is that the debates on this programme have produced an institutional commitment from UKRI that recognises the unique contribution of Indigenous research to critical global challenges. Individually, UKRI managers have engaged actively with us throughout to create resource, time, and space for this programme – even through such troubled and critical times. I am sure you will join me, Takumã, in thanking Ian Stanton, James Fenner, and Gemma Evans from the AHRC, as well as Pamela Mason, Sarah Church, and Mary Day from the ESRC, who have been tireless in their support for both of us as we ran this programme. It is also an appropriate moment to express our gratitude to the research team at the Federal Museum of Indigenous Peoples, who supported

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[7] See the author's reply to Pero Vaz de Caminha in Heritage, P. and Strozenberg, I. (eds.) (2019) *The Art of Cultural Exchange: Translation and Transformation between UK and Brazil (2012-2016)*. Malaga, ESP: Vernon Press.

the initial workshop and who were subsequently removed from office as part of the policy changes implemented by the current Brazilian government. It is a reminder to all of us wherever we work that the research we do and that is described in this publication struggles with the defining issues of our age.

What I have learned from you, Takumã, over the seven years since we first started working together is that the making of art and the making of research are fundamentally the same thing. I love it when you describe yourself as a researcher rather than a filmmaker (although that is increasingly how you are recognised nationally and internationally). Through your work you show us that research and creativity share common practices and processes of interrogating and giving context to our world in order to offer a vision of how we might live together better. You teach me the indivisibility of our world. In different ways, the writers in this collection advocate for the same vision as they share their experiences of how disconnections, incongruities, and variances in their collaborations are absorbed and perhaps absolved in the making of research together.

Um grande abraço,

Paul Heritage

Artistic Director of People's Palace Projects.

28th September 2021

Ipatse Village, Xingu Indigenous Territory, MT, Brazil

Dear Paul,

How are you?

You write to me about that meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 2019 and what I remember most is that the Cacique of the Kuikuro was there. One of the most important leaders of Indigenous people in the Upper Xingu came to Rio de Janeiro because he knew that it would bring a new way for looking for everyone. There were Indigenous peoples from all over the world together with Indigenist researchers such as anthropologists, linguists, and the like. It was a chance to exchange knowledge, and to understand that the knowledge we have comes from where we are: our region, our communities, our land. That is what strengthened us when we were together in Rio de Janeiro. It was a cultural exchange in which we learnt how to learn from each other. Above all, we learnt from Indigenous researchers and that is what we need to do more. Paul, we need more international meetings like that which bring Indigenous researchers together. Meetings like this bring other types of understanding, different concerns and struggles, and new ways of thinking about how we can create a better future for the next generation. That is what really gave a vision to that meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

The world is under attack from climate changes that affect Indigenous and non-Indigenous people everywhere. Our greatest worry must be to ask how we are going to confront these changes and survive: as Indigenous lands are burnt dry, as temperatures rise, our forests are destroyed, and industrial farming devastates our way of life. Just like Indigenous people across the world, the people of the Xingu are asking: how are we going to live? What is our future? How can we fight? How can we share our story with others? So, we have to think together about how you can join us in our struggle. We live in the forest to protect our culture, our dances, our painting, our way of life, and the knowledge of our elders. The impact of these global changes has an enormous impact on Indigenous lands, communities, and villages.

Here in Brazil, we are under attack, so we people need all of you as our partners —especially those of you in the universities. Help us to become researchers at your institutions. Create quotas for us to enter university, because our culture and our future is in the hands of our young people. We need them to study to become lawyers,

politicians, and to gain other areas of knowledge so that we can fight for our rights. Our cultures, our lands, our survival depends on us living in peace in our villages. Our times are changing and with them our traditions. When we plant and when we harvest is part of our spirituality. Everything is under threat. We need partners who know Indigenous people, who have walked on our land, bathed in our rivers, painted their bodies to join us now in our fight to get Indigenous people into universities across the world. They will become the most important people in the fight for Indigenous rights. That is how you can help us. We want partners who can open up the universities for us.

You know my four children: Kelly Kaitsu Kuikuro, Ahuseti Larissa Kuikuro, Mayupi Bernardo Kuikuro, and Sarirua Kalumã Kuikuro. I want them to speak other languages so they can represent Indigenous people in other places around the world. That is what I want to say to you as we come to the end of this programme.

Takumã Kuikuro

President of IFAX- Instituto da Família do Alto Xingu

REVISITING INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT, RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS, AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION

THINK PIECE

Giovanna Fassetta and Maria Grazia Imperiale

School of Education, University of Glasgow
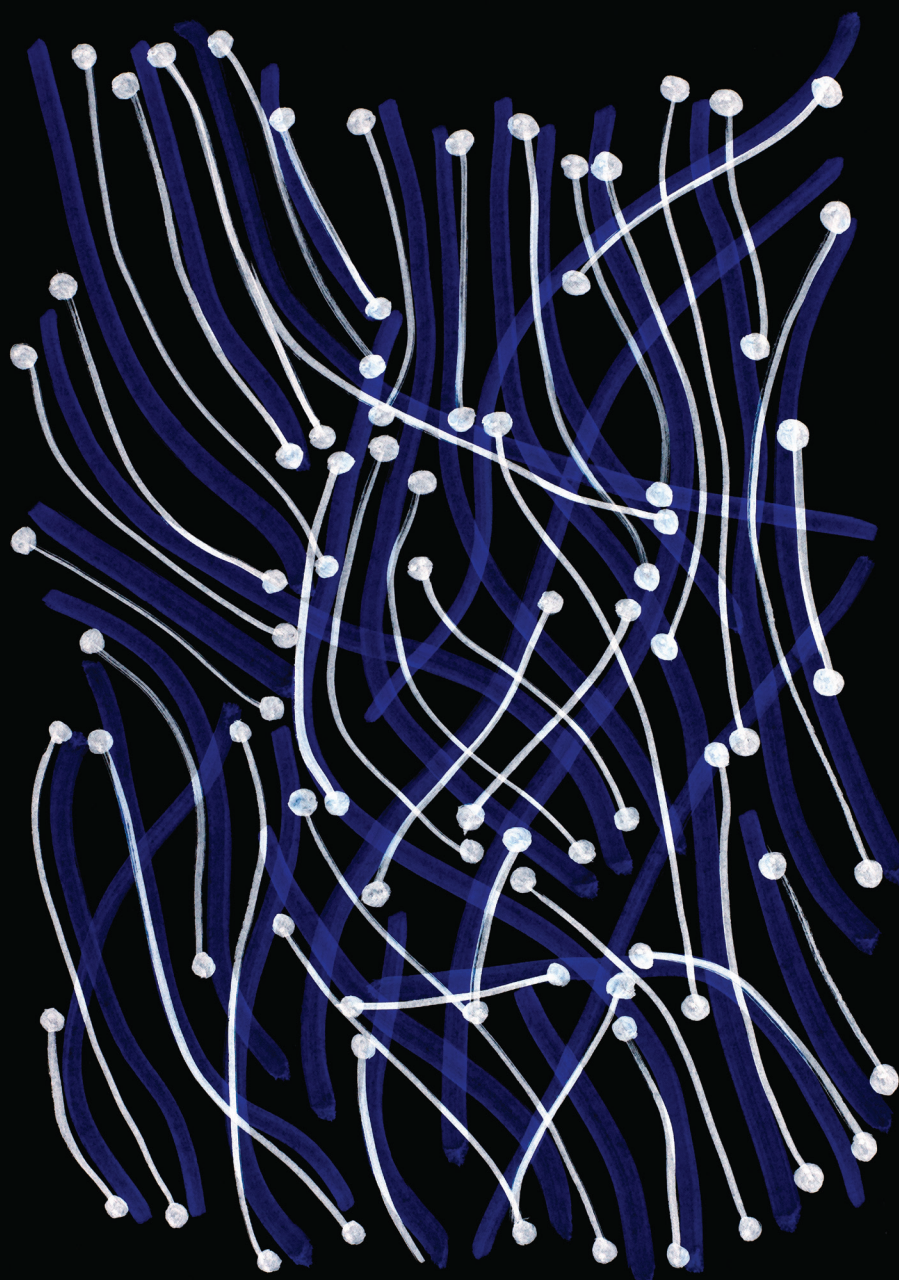
REVISITING INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT, RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS, AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION

THINK PIECE

Giovanna Fassetta and Maria Grazia Imperiale

School of Education, University of Glasgow

FOREWORD

We acknowledge that the authors are not from an Indigenous background. We are aware of the contradiction this entails in relation to a Think Piece that discusses Indigenous research and that advocates Indigenous participation at all stages of a project. We recognise that this is a limitation of this work. What we are able to offer, to *partly* redress this shortcoming, is our substantial experience of conducting participatory research and action research in ODA countries,[8] working with participants for whom past colonisation still reverberates to this day, but also with participants for whom colonisation is still an everyday occurrence. We hope that our experience and understanding, together with the range of insights, knowledge and expertise we have accessed while researching this piece, mean that the points we make here will be useful to spark reflections and encourage conversations around ways of working that aim to make a real difference.

Giovanna Fassetta and Maria Grazia Imperiale

Glasgow, 15 July 2021

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[8] Countries in receipt of Official Development Assistance, as defined by the DAC list issued by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD).

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, we wrote a Think Piece entitled *Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships, and Knowledge Mobilisation* (henceforth TP1). TP1 was commissioned by UKRI[9] as part of its *Indigenous Engagement Programme*, a series of reflective pieces and events all aiming to explore the opportunities, challenges, and gaps in research that engages Indigenous communities and knowledges. TP1 reviewed literature on empirical research in a range of disciplines to highlight consensus in relation to theories, approaches, and methodologies; to identify gaps in the research profile; and to offer some guidelines for best practice.
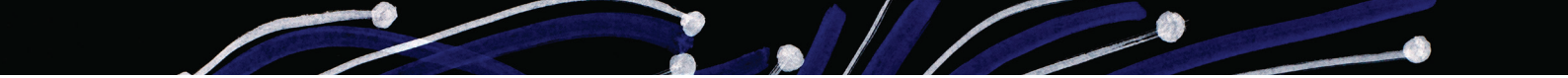
Only two and a half years down the line, we register some change in relation to Indigenous knowledge and research with Indigenous peoples. In part this is due to the work done through the *Indigenous Engagement Programme*, and in part to the number of research projects commissioned through the GCRF[10] portfolio, which contributed – and are contributing – to building connections, producing synergies, and creating new knowledge-bases of shared global interest. Recent funding cuts to the GCRF portfolio, with the consequent abrupt termination or drastic shrinking of several projects midway, will not have contributed to the building of trust among Indigenous communities and Global South partners. It perhaps may even have damaged relationships, as partners were requested to demonstrate their reliability through 'due diligence' processes and had signed contracts that suddenly could not be (fully) honoured on the UK side. At a time when Indigenous knowledges can offer invaluable help in cultivating 'the art of living on a damaged planet' (Haraway, 2016, p.37), this may prove a particularly short-sighted decision, and one that has potential to undo much of the good work done in recent years to build equitable and sustainable partnerships.

This revised Think Piece (henceforth TP2) builds on the points highlighted in TP1, adding more recent literature and insights, and also expanding a few areas that remained underdeveloped or that were unforeseen when we wrote TP1. Like TP1 before it, this is an integrative literature review, one that aims to 'to resolve inconsistencies in the literature and provide fresh, new perspectives on the topic' (Torraco, 2016, p.405). This is not a systematic literature review and does not claim to give an exhaustive recount of the state of the art in relation to research with Indigenous peoples and communities. We revisit TP1 to incorporate new material and new insights, but we do so by building on the groundwork created by the findings and recommendations of TP1, as most of the points we made in 2018 still appear to be valid.

TP2 will first briefly explain why we decided to revise the original Think Piece; who we refer to when talking about Indigenous peoples and communities; and where the

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[9] UK Research and Innovation, the United Kingdom's non-departmental public body responsible for directing government research and innovation funding.

[10] Global Challenges Research Fund, part of the UK's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

challenges inherent in attempting to define categories lie. We will illustrate how we went about selecting the literature for both TP1 and TP2, before summarising the main points from TP1 on which we have built this paper. We will then add insights from the most recent literature, before focusing in more detail on some of the topics that we only touched on in TP1, and on topics whose crucial importance has only emerged more recently. Notable among these has been the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on Indigenous communities and the consequent move online, which has speeded up a process of digitisation of Indigenous knowledge that had already started pre-pandemic. We will end by offering the thoughts and discussion points on which we have been reflecting since the start of our journey in 2018. We hope that the points we make and the questions we pose will be useful to academics and non-academics from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds, to ensure transparent, respectful, and truly decolonial research.

WHY THIS REVISED THINK PIECE?

As noted above, TP1 was part of a programme of events organised by People's Palace Projects (PPP) on behalf of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). Together with 12 case studies illustrating and discussing Indigenous engagement projects, TP1 stimulated an extremely rich and productive three-day discussion in Rio de Janeiro, which took place in March 2019. Hosted by the Kuikuro people of Brazil, the Rio event included a large number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers from several countries as well as guests with relevant expertise (e.g., local academics and Indigenous artists and writers). Following the Rio event, in the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, a series of online discussions, workshops, and multimedia materials further explored Indigenous engagement in research partnerships and knowledge mobilisation.[11]

As well as the programme of events organised by PPP, in the past three years the GCRF portfolio expanded considerably to include a range of large and small research projects in several countries, many of which also engaged Indigenous peoples and communities. As a consequence, academic discussions and reflections in relation to Indigenous engagement in research partnerships and knowledge mobilisation have multiplied. Recent academic literature reflects this increase, and we revisit TP1 to take on board some of the new insights emerging from PPP's *Indigenous Engagement Programme* and from the reflections and discussions taking place worldwide.

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11 https://peoplespalaceprojects.org.uk/en/projects/indigenous-research-methods/

WHO ARE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES?

The UN definition of 'Indigenous peoples' includes around 370 million people who are spread across 70 countries worldwide (UN factsheet, ND). Indigenous peoples 'have been present for thousands of years, preserving their language, traditions, culture, and livelihoods' (FAO, 2016, p.4). It may be impossible to neatly define or demarcate 'Indigeneity'; it is also arguably not the researcher's job to do this. As Viveiros de Castro (2018) notes, deciding who is Indigenous and who is not Indigenous is an administrative question and academics should reflect on the actual legitimacy of the question of who is Indigenous and who is not, as this question rests on the assumption that some humans are 'authentic' and, thus, that others are 'inauthentic'. As with all categories, Indigeneity is a construction which relies on arbitrary boundaries and not an objective 'reality', and, as such, de Castro (2018) argues, it does not bear any relation to people's everyday life and realities. Nevertheless, the (historical) inequalities created by this category are real, and they have greatly impacted – and still impact – the lives of Indigenous individuals and communities. Indigenous populations have been subjected to the colonisation of their land and culture and deprived of sovereignty by the colonisers. Far from being a thing of the past, 'imperialism still hurts, still destroys and is reforming itself constantly' (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p.20), continuing to marginalise and weaken Indigenous communities, their knowledges and practices. The term 'Indigenous peoples' thus represents a very broad category of internally diverse members that are brought together by common experiences of colonisation as well as by a struggle for self-determination; for rights to ancestral land and natural resources; and for the protection and revitalisation of knowledge systems, spiritual beliefs, customs, and languages (FAO, 2016).

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in research with Indigenous communities, much of it stemming from the acknowledgment that Indigenous peoples possess invaluable knowledge of practices for the sustainable stewardship of natural resources (Datta and Hulbert, 2020; see also Thornton and Bhagwat, 2021). Attempts by researchers to tap into Indigenous knowledge systems, however, often come across reluctance and barriers as, historically, research practice has been synonymous with Western[12] appropriation of land and resources as well as with attempts to commodify Indigenous knowledge (Sillitoe, 2015; Briggs, 2013). Extractive models of research have alienated Indigenous peoples and communities, since they have little say on the issues being studied; are not always included in the communication of findings or the shaping of outcomes and outputs, and often do not see any lasting benefits from the research they are asked to be part of. It is therefore unsurprising if, as several authors point out (e.g., Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Sillitoe, 2015), Indigenous communities are wary of researchers and unwilling to engage in research projects.

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12 'Western' is a category which has historical and political – rather than geographical – boundaries. Like the category 'Indigenous', it has huge significance in people's lives because of the consequences that belonging to it carries for individuals and groups. In the case of 'Western', these consequences are the power and privilege that belonging to the 'West' has historically carried, and still largely carries.

APPROACH OF TP1 AND TP2

Academic literature which discusses Indigenous knowledges in research encompasses a huge variety of disciplines and a broad range of geographical locations, foci, and approaches. As a consequence, in order to be manageable, the literature review for TP1 and TP2 has required a rigorous but also an adaptable approach. Since, with such a broad range of disciplines and contexts, a systematic literature review was not possible within the time constraints available, we decided to undertake an integrative literature review (see Lin et al, 2020), i.e., to review, critique, and summarise representative literature on research with Indigenous peoples and communities, bringing it together in an integrated way.

Both for TP1 and for this revised version, we conducted an initial search on multiple databases using a variety of keyword combinations (e.g., 'Indigenous engagement' AND 'research partnership'; 'community-based research' AND 'Indigenous'; 'Indigenous methodologies' AND 'research mobilisation') and limited the results to peer-reviewed journal articles. TP1 brought together academic publications published between 2013 and 2018 while TP2 draws insights from the wealth of academic work that has been published since then. TP2 also draws on personal insights, reflections and discussions which are the result of a number of relevant projects we have been engaged in since we wrote TP1.

Following the initial search, we reviewed abstracts and selected the articles that were most relevant, excluding duplicates. On completion of this selection process, we felt that some older seminal publications would have been left out (e.g., Tuhiwai Smith, 2012), likewise grey literature produced by international and governmental agencies (e.g., the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), and so these were added to our search. These were integrated with insights gathered from the *Indigenous Engagement Programme* and a number of GCRF-funded projects that also needed to be included to inform our understandings (see List of References for a full list of the works consulted in both TP1 and TP2).

The inclusion criteria for TP1 and TP2 were therefore:

- Peer-reviewed articles that provide examples of empirical research with Indigenous communities on a range of issues;

- Research papers and reviews of literature on Indigenous knowledge and methodologies;

- Grey literature (e.g., reports, association codes of ethics for work with Indigenous peoples) that outlines best practice guidelines for research with Indigenous communities;

- Publication in English.
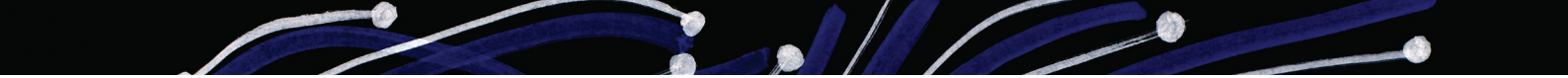
MAIN POINTS OF TP1: A BRIEF SUMMARY

TP1 provided a critical reflection on research with Indigenous peoples, focussing on considerations of engagement, research partnerships, and knowledge mobilisation. Overall, the review showed that, while the underpinning ethos of research with Indigenous communities is to contribute to social justice by legitimising Indigenous ways of knowing and by arguing for Indigenous rights, effective and full engagement and participation of Indigenous peoples are not easily achieved. Moreover, the meaning of 'participation' varies and therefore different layers/levels of what a participatory study may involve were articulated – explicitly or implicitly – by the literature (see Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018).

Gaps in research with Indigenous communities were identified by TP1 around four main areas: (i) insufficient considerations of diversity between and within Indigenous communities; (ii) lack of open and frank reflection on challenges, missteps or ineffective practices; (iii) lack of clarity on how methodologies are adapted to specific contexts and participants; and (iv) little information on how research is analysed, interpreted, translated, and disseminated in ways that effectively engage Indigenous participants (see Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018). Given the gaps identified, TP1 offered suggestions on capacity-building needs and guidelines for best practice. Building on TP1, below we expand topics we believe were left underexplored in TP1 as well as adding an overview of what appear to be more recent trends in Indigenous research.

INDIGENOUS AND WESTERN EPISTEMOLOGIES

In TP1, we discussed the tensions around Western and Indigenous epistemologies highlighted by much of the literature on research with Indigenous peoples and communities. We noted widespread agreement on the need to avoid the imposition of Western approaches; a focus on the importance of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing; and an emphasis on cross-cultural understanding and on the equal legitimacy of Western and Indigenous knowledges. These arguments are also prominent in the literature we reviewed for TP2, and virtually all the literature we approached gives space to these arguments. As we noted in TP1, however, Indigenous epistemologies are usually discussed in contrast to Western epistemologies and with reference to the dominance of the latter over the former (e.g., Dew et al., 2019; Fitzpatrick et al., 2019; Poland et al., 2020; Jull et al., 2020). Only seldom do authors give a clear indication of what they mean by 'Indigenous epistemologies' or 'Indigenous ways of knowing' and, when they do, this is touched upon briefly, usually by highlighting the connections between knowledge and land, and language and spirituality, which are seen as distinctive of Indigenous approaches (e.g., Harvey, 2018; Corntassell and Hardbarger, 2019; Poland et al., 2020).

We refer to our original work for a more in-depth discussion on Indigenous epistemologies, which we also found reflected in the more recent literature (see

Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018). One epistemological approach we touched upon in TP1 but which we did not discuss in depth is the 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach. This is an approach that aims to link Indigenous and Western epistemologies as ways of integrating different knowledge systems. Because of a specific focus on the ontological assumptions and processes involved in knowing, literature on the 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach tends to discuss in some detail epistemological choices and is, therefore, of particular interest and deserves more attention.

COMBINING EPISTEMOLOGICAL TRADITIONS: A 'TWO-EYED SEEING' APPROACH

The publication of work that adopts a 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach as a theoretical framework has noticeably increased in recent years (Forbes et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2019a). More common in Canadian health research, the term 'Two-Eyed Seeing' was first used in 2004 by Mi'kmaw Elder from Eskasoni First Nation, Dr. Albert Marshall. *Etuaptmumk* (the Mi'kmaw term which translates as 'Two- Eyed Seeing') aims to convey the complementarity of Western and Indigenous sciences (Reid et al., 2020; Broadhead and Howard, 2021; Peltier, 2018).

As Reid et al. (2020) point out, 'Two-Eyed Seeing' is one of four conceptual frameworks that promote knowledge coexistence. The others are: the 'Two Row Wampum' (or *Kaswentha* in the Haudenosaunee language), which refers to the two-coloured treaty belt woven to record an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Dutch settlers in eastern New York; the 'Two Ways' (or *Ganma* in the Yolngu language), which indicates a particular confluence of sea and fresh water and which is used as a metaphor of knowledge systems coming together used by the Yolngu people of north-eastern Australia; and the 'Double Canoe' (or *Waka-Taurua* in Te Reo Māori), a contemporary metaphorical framework which refers to two canoes that are bound together temporarily for a common purpose (Reid et al,. 2020). While there are commonalities between all these four approaches, since all stress the need to bring together different knowledge systems, the 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach moves a step further: from an acknowledgment of the need to unify knowledges to an emphasis on the importance of *acting* on the strength that derives from the coming together of these perspectives (Reid et al., 2020).

As Broadhead and Howard (2021) note, 'Two-Eyed Seeing' has the potential to create a 'third space' (p. 113) of understanding. It is not a research methodology, but a guiding principle that encourages self-reflection and that emphasises the transformational capacity of knowledge (Forbes et al, 2020; Benoit et al., 2019). A 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach to research with Indigenous communities takes the processes grounded in a Western paradigm (i.e., research planning, research implementation, production of knowledge, and action) and explores ways to shift

these processes towards an Indigenous paradigm that consists of: community engagement, capacity building, empowerment, and self-determination (Reid, 2020).

However, a review carried out by Wright et al. (2019b) of studies describing themselves as using a 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach highlights inconsistencies in how this approach has been interpreted and applied in research with Indigenous peoples. The authors emphasise a need for researchers to describe thoroughly their application of a 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach 'to promote its maturation into a well-defined framework for research with Indigenous people' (Wright et al., 2019b, p.1). Similarly, the literature review by Forbes et al. (2020) stresses a degree of ambiguity in relation to the ways in which this approach is operationalised in research that asserts its use. Nevertheless, the authors were able to find commonalities among the literature and noted that projects with Indigenous peoples that use 'Two-Eyed Seeing' predominantly incorporated community-based (participatory) research and qualitative methodologies.

Forbes et al. (2020) identify a number of core process-related themes/elements in 'Two-Eyed Seeing' research: power is shared; culturally safe spaces are fostered; institutional and community ethics and protocols are followed; research projects are transformative; research rigour is maintained. 'Two-Eyed Seeing' research projects also share the challenges that are caused by tensions between the structures of Western academia and traditional Indigenous decision-making processes. What appears to be crucial, in adopting a 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach in research, is to ensure that, in the coming together of different knowledge systems, Western epistemologies do not simply validate Indigenous ones, but that both share equal status, relevance, and legitimacy (Broadhead and Howard, 2021). As Wright et al. (2019a) note, when thoughtfully applied, a 'Two-Eyed Seeing' approach can reflect the four Rs of ethical Indigenous research: relevance, respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. These four Rs echo much of the discussion on methodology and ethics evident in the literature which we reviewed for TP1, which we discuss and expand in the next section.

METHODOLOGY AND ETHICS

The general consensus in the literature we discussed in TP1 was that the methodologies best suited to research with Indigenous peoples and communities are those that rest on collaborative, participatory approaches. Several articles reported projects that made use of community-based participatory approaches and that emphasised the crucial role of enduring relationships between researchers and the community they work with, including strengthening relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers (Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018). Many articles we reviewed in 2018 also emphasised the importance of carrying out rights-based and advocacy research that aims to achieve social justice. Qualitative methodologies, embedded within a participatory framework, were highlighted as more in line with holistic Indigenous

ways of knowing, and only a very small number of studies discussed mixed-methods approaches informed by postcolonial paradigms. Although an immanent ethics of relationships and praxis appeared to be at the heart of Indigenous research, most of the literature reviewed argued that bureaucratic Western university policies seldom align with Indigenous protocols, with repercussions on individuals' expectations and experiences. As a result, researchers must try to navigate both Indigenous and Western ethics systems and processes at the same time (Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018).

In the literature we reviewed for TP2, published between 2018 and April 2021, we found similar insights, perhaps with a stronger emphasis on the importance of developing sustainable and equitable research partnerships as part both of the research process and of the methodology (e.g., Cheer et al., 2020; Dew et al., 2019; Sherriff et al., 2019; Aijazi et al., 2021; Lin et al., 2020; Hardy et al., 2020). Hardy et al. (2020), for example, conducted a post-project self-assessment four years after the conclusion of their initial project, to track lasting impacts of the original research. This choice responded to a call, made by Indigenous community leaders and scholars, to develop an 'internal narrative of change' (p.1) and to maintain relationships. A focus on developing equitable partnerships is also attested by a scoping literature review on partnerships between researchers and research users in social science research and in health care research (Zych et al., 2020). It is also evidenced by an increase of grey literature and resources on ethical engagement with Global South partners in general, such as the resources developed by the *Sustainable Futures in Africa Network*.[13]

Ethics is at the forefront of partnership-building and of developing Indigenous research (Aijiazi et al., 2021). For example, an article by Jull et al. (2020) discusses a set of 15 principles for conducting health research involving Aboriginal people, which were originally developed by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) between 2007 and 2010. The CIHR principles include points such as (amongst others): reconciliation of ethical spaces; sacred space and traditional knowledge; community control and approval process; participatory research; and community and individual consent. Each principle is accompanied by CIHR guidelines, a set of possible ways in which the principles can be demonstrated and some examples from relevant research. In their article, the authors analyse how current and past research projects have benefitted – and could benefit in the future – from these principles, noting ways in which they contrast with principles outlined by the Canadian *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. The Canadian Tri-Council guidance is the official standard to which researchers need to adhere when conducting research with humans. This policy contains a chapter on conducting research with Indigenous peoples, which presents itself as a how-to guide but does not provide resources to understand power imbalances or to embed ethics as part of the research process (Jull et al., 2020). Jull et al. (2020)

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13 'A Critical Resource for Ethical International Partnerships (2020)': https://www.sustainablefuturesinafrica.com/2020/03/19/a-critical-resource-for-ethical-international-partnerships/

argue that following the policy as it stands may have a negative impact on long-lasting relationships with Indigenous communities. The literature reviewed for TP2 continues the argument evidenced in TP1 that putting ethical principles into practice means grounding Indigenous research in advocacy and promoting social justice (Harris et al., 2018; Baijius and Patrick, 2019; Datta and Hurlbert, 2020; Corntassel and Hardbarger, 2019; Wien et al., 2019).

Recent literature continues to demonstrate how bureaucratic ethical procedures at Western universities seldom match the protocols and ethics of Indigenous communities. Fitzpatrick et al. (2019) investigated the input on consent given by an Aboriginal community. Their findings suggest that: a) reputation and trust is essential to an ethical approach to research; b) the role of a 'Community Navigator' (that is, a facilitator – someone who is an insider and therefore has knowledge of the community) is crucial and, thus, needs to be included in research design; c) images are preferred to words; d) some Indigenous participants prefer to sign consent rather than to give it orally; and e) consent is achieved through talking circle methodologies (see Poland et al., 2020). These findings highlight the importance of including elders and the figure of the Navigator, who are external to the research project but important members of Indigenous communities. The findings by Fitzpatrick et al. (2019), moreover, evidence the importance of considering a multimodal approach to ethical procedures such as, for example, using images as part of the process of gaining consent. From these considerations derive the choices of methods that are more appropriate to Indigenous research, which we discuss presently.

METHODS

Most of the articles we reviewed for TP1 identify narrative approaches as better suited to Indigenous research because of their reliance on the oral transmission of knowledge. Storytelling, yarning, story circles, and other variations on oral methods were indicated by the vast majority of the empirical literature as the more culturally appropriate ways to engage with Indigenous peoples and communities. Arts-based and embodied methods (e.g., dance and theatre) were also indicated by much of the literature we reviewed as research tools to be used in Indigenous research.

Whereas most of the new literature confirms a trend (e.g., Fitzpatrick et al., 2019; Hokowhitu et al., 2021) for the use of qualitative, participatory methodologies in Indigenous research – with a preference for embodied and arts-based work – in the new literature we reviewed, we also found an interesting critique of participatory/community methodologies (Titz et al., 2018); articles which argue for the inclusion of mixed-methods (Twum and Abubakari, 2019); and mentions of Indigenous quantitative methodologies (Walter and Suina, 2018). These articles, written by Indigenous researchers, are exceptions, relatively speaking. However, we think it is important to draw attention to them as we believe such contributions are crucial for discussions about future developments of Indigenous research.

To look in more detail, Titz et al. (2018) problematise and unpack the concept of 'community': how invoking this fuzzy and poorly defined entity has come to carry a 'moral licence', the implicit assumptions that actions, projects and methods used are inherently ethical and that they benefit locals. The authors argue for a more critical understanding and use of this term, advocating approaches that tackle the roots of vulnerabilities and inequities. Twum and Abubakari (2019) investigated households' coping strategies amid floods in an informal settlement in Accra (Ghana) through a mixed-methods approach: they acknowledged that preference is usually towards using qualitative methods, but they noted that the use of questionnaires in their study was an important way to complement interviews and personal narratives. Walter and Suina (2018) make – in our view – a compelling argument on the absence of work around Indigenous quantitative methodologies. They note that since the publication of Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* (2012), the scholarship around Indigenous research has primarily focussed on qualitative methodologies, with an avoidance of quantitative approaches. The authors argue that the consequences of this gap are evident: quantitative data on Indigenous peoples that are framed by Western epistemologies usually employ a 'statistical narrative of deficit' (Walter and Suina, 2018, p.233). Through a case study, the authors illustrate how quantitative methodologies informed by Indigenous paradigms can be used – not least referring to the broader work of the *Indigenous Data Sovereignty Movement*. The case study illustrates the work of a Tribal Epidemiology Centre serving Native Americans and Alaskan Native people throughout the US: the main aim is to strengthen the provision of Indigenous statistical data around public health, and build capacity among Indigenous communities on the use of surveys, data collection, and analysis tools in order 'to disrupt the traditional paternalistic orientation of state and federal governmental entities towards tribes and to support sovereign tribal nations to realise their own vision for health and wellness instead of one that is imposed by outside standards' (Walter and Suina, 2018, p.239). This would, ultimately, 'change the way, for the better, that Indigenous data are done' (Walter and Suina, 2018, p.242). We found this article particularly powerful in critically engaging with binaries and assumptions that, as we will emphasise in the conclusive section, are not sufficiently problematised in the literature we reviewed.

ENGAGING INDIGENOUS PARTICIPANTS

In TP1, we focused on this section in greater detail because of what we perceived to be a very broad – and, to some extent, unhelpful – use of the notion of engagement when referring to Indigenous peoples, which was reflected in the multiple meanings of the term 'participation'. We identified participation as a spectrum, which we divided into three main groups. These groups referred to participation as: (a) access to and consultation of Indigenous peoples at some point in the research process, as well as the inclusion of Indigenous researchers in some cases; (b) the forging of enduring research partnerships requiring the building of research on existing relationships of trust and, usually, long term collaborations; and (c) empowerment

of Indigenous communities. The latter grouping drew from a much smaller pool of academic articles with an explicit commitment to social justice through sustainable impact and capacitating (Fassetta and Imperiale, 2018). As we noted in TP1, while the vast majority of the papers we reviewed fit into one of the first two categories, they were also not neatly bounded groups, and there were some overlaps. Moreover, we considered the possibility that some of the papers had not made explicit their commitment to decolonising and emancipatory approaches, and therefore the three groups we identified were general trends rather than exclusive categories.
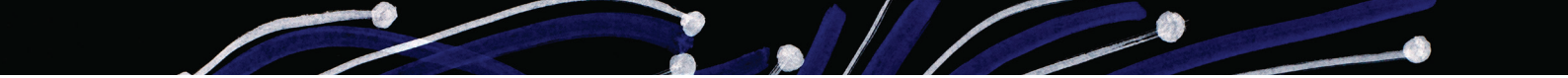
When we looked at the more recent literature for TP2 to see if we could find any further approaches in relation to engagement with Indigenous participants, the trends were very similar to those we illustrated in 2018. Perhaps, as noted in the introductory section, there is increasing understanding of the crucial importance of developing sustainable and equitable partnerships, and greater emphasis on ensuring that Indigenous peoples are fully engaged at all stages of research projects. Overall, scholars recommend engagement as the axis of Indigenous research (e.g., Poland et al., 2020; Kiskey et al., 2021) which is in line with what we found for TP1.

However, a new focus is emerging around the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous communities, with literature that looks at the ways in which these have been affected differently from non-Indigenous communities. The specific challenges Indigenous communities are experiencing will be discussed in the next section.

COVID-19, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND ONLINE TOOLS

As we write this in June 2021, the world is still very much trying to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, and to minimise its many repercussions on people's lives, health, wellbeing, and employment. With very few exceptions, every country has been affected by the pandemic, and no group in society has been immune to its devastating consequences. However, as several authors (e.g., Tuhiwai Smith, 2020; Jones et al., 2020; Vaughn et al., 2020) note, the pandemic has disproportionally affected Indigenous peoples, as pre-existing social and health issues mean that they have suffered higher rates of illness and have experienced worse consequences on top of what were often already precarious economic situations. Tuhiwai Smith (2020) and Vaughn et al. (2020) note that COVID-19 is not the first epidemic to have decimated Indigenous communities: several historical epidemics (e.g., smallpox and measles) carried by Western colonisers ended up killing vast numbers of Indigenous peoples who had not previously been exposed to these illnesses.

COVID-19 has affected almost all communities, but the restrictions brought in to contain it have been particularly difficult to manage for Indigenous peoples when the measures to limit the spread of the virus mean isolating individuals from their (extended) families and communities (Tuhiwai Smith, 2020). In some cases, such as that of Métis women and girls in Canada, isolation can also mean disruption to the

matrilineal, intergenerational knowledge system on which women and girls rely for their wellbeing and that of their communities (Jones et al., 2020). Moreover, while the lockdowns that are a consequence of COVID-19 have been harsh on everyone, in some cases they have halted or severely delayed important projects that benefit Indigenous peoples, such as the provision of drinking water to Canadian First Nation communities (Arsenault, 2021).

To minimise the impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns and consequent isolation, several Indigenous individuals and communities have self-organised, for example by providing food packages to those in need or seeds to plant for those more isolated (Tuhiwai Smith, 2021). Working with elders to ensure provision of appropriate healthcare has also been identified as crucial to reach Indigenous peoples and to ensure culturally relevant healthcare and prevention drives (Vaughn et al., 2020).

Online communication tools and social media platforms have also played – and are still playing – a role in the maintenance of a sense of community for Indigenous peoples isolated during COVID-19 lockdowns. In Aotearoa New Zealand, for example, Māori religious and spiritual groups are using social media to reach their communities (Tuhiwai Smith, 2020). However, this has exacerbated the digital divide, with those who are most in need often further disadvantaged by the move to online education and work. As Tuhiwai Smith notes, 'Indigenous knowledge has adapted well and quickly to the virtual space provided by technology' (2020, p.375), which was already, prior to the pandemic, a site for the revitalisation of Indigenous knowledges.

Whaanga and Mato (2020) discuss the (pre-pandemic) 'Indigenous digital footprint' (p. 447), noting how the use of digital tools is connecting Indigenous communities to their language, culture, and identity, as well as helping families keep in touch with each other. While the voices of Indigenous peoples are still rare in the virtual space, online platforms (such as the open-source site _Mukurtu_[14]) are used for the dissemination of Indigenous knowledges and languages; for the mapping of Indigenous lands and land use; and for the virtual repatriation and reappropriation of Indigenous artefacts – and of control over the narratives which accompany them (Whaanga and Mato, 2020). The greater availability of digital technologies and internet-mediated communication tools also facilitates research with Indigenous communities during lockdowns, as face-to-face calls are more aligned to Indigenous ways of communicating and can help to establish trust and rapport at a time when COVID-19 restrictions mean that no in-person research is possible (Dale et al., 2021).

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14 https://mukurtu.org/

GAPS IN RESEARCH

TP1 highlighted the following gaps in the literature on Indigenous research, which we found still to be present, by and large, in the most recent literature:

1. Considerations and representations of diversity. This referred to a general lack of clear discussion, in the literature reviewed, of the specific characteristics of Indigenous peoples involved in a research project. Too often the literature refers to Indigenous peoples as a homogeneous category, glossing over differences in age, gender, social status, education, location, whether in urban or rural areas, etc.

2. Reflexivity, inclusivity and languages. This identified a lack of acknowledgement of what goes wrong or what does not go according to plan in research, portraying projects as plain-sailing and successful. It further noted an absence of open discussion on how inclusion/exclusion dynamics can be set in motion in the course of a research project – dynamics that can impact relationships with, and between, individuals or communities. The challenges that languages can bring to research were also highlighted in this group of concerns, including a lack of reflection in the literature about which language(s) were used, whether interpreters were present and the potential effects of these variables on the research process.

3. Methodology and methods and a general tendency on the part of the literature we reviewed to adopt narrative and/or arts-based methodologies, with an assumption they were inherently decolonised and adapted to Indigenous ways of knowing. While these are important methodologies in Indigenous research, not all papers reviewed discussed how methodology and methods were adapted to the specific Indigenous context.

With TP2, we wish to add a practical dimension to the gaps we evidenced by offering some points for collective reflection. We believe that these are still points not considered by much of the literature we reviewed for TP1 and TP2, but that they are important to ensure that Indigenous research draws from a collective discussion that moves from the – much needed – criticism of traditional Western research towards a fine-grained reflection to which everyone, but in particular Indigenous peoples and communities, can contribute. We offer these points and some questions in the next section in the hope that they continue the very important conversation that started with the *Indigenous Engagement Programme*.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION: OUTSTANDING POINTS AND QUESTIONS TO FOSTER FURTHER DISCUSSION

Indigenous research is changing fast. An increasing number of researchers from Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds recognise the importance of respectfully, ethically and openly engaging with Indigenous knowledges and worldviews. Most of the literature we reviewed for TP1 and TP2 acknowledges the need to engage Indigenous participants at all stages of research, to give Indigenous knowledges equal relevance and authority, and to ensure sustainable outcomes that are effectively grounded in Indigenous communities' needs and contexts as identified by them.

The progress and the agreement highlighted in TP1 and TP2 represent huge steps in the right direction, even though a lot of work still remains to be done. Future directions should point towards full engagement with Indigenous peoples and communities, which will bring real appreciation of the value of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies that ensures a more thorough decolonisation of research. What we wish to do, by way of conclusion, is to share some reflections that emerged during the readings done for the writing of TP1 and TP2, and the activities that were part of the *Indigenous Engagement Programme*. These discussions are still ongoing, and we do not claim that there are definitive answers to our questions. We also acknowledge that several of the questions we ask do not just apply to research with Indigenous peoples nor can they be redressed entirely. However, we believe that it is important that the conversation around Indigenous research becomes more fine-grained, more open, and more wide-ranging.

Discussion point 1 – Methodology

The relevant literature for TP1 and TP2 shows how the vast majority of research papers list storytelling and/or arts-based and embodied methodologies as the appropriate approaches in research with Indigenous peoples and communities. In the majority of the articles we reviewed, this methodological choice is presented as self-evident and, at times, it appears to be made almost by default with no consideration for other possible options. We acknowledge the need to rely on methodologies that do not privilege Western forms of knowledge production and that leave space for Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies, and we believe this is crucial to effective decolonial research. However, we also think that the way in which several papers present specific methodologies as axiomatic in research with Indigenous peoples is problematic, and suggest a discussion that considers these questions:

- To what extent does the uncritical privileging of some methodological choices (e.g., qualitative, performative, narrative) in research with Indigenous peoples reflect Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies in their plurality?

- To what extent does disregarding almost *a priori* some approaches (e.g., quantitative, technological, systematic) as not appropriate also contribute to *constructing* views of indigenous ontologies and epistemologies as a homogeneous entity?

- What are the ethical implications of embodied methodologies that rely on performance when those 'performing' and those 'consuming' are consistently split along the lines of Indigenous/Global North research partners? How can this be redressed?

Discussion point 2 – Funding

Funding allocations in research with Indigenous communities and, in general with Global South partners, can prompt some challenging conversations. Recent literature has started to acknowledge the financial dimension of research projects, in particular the serious mismatch between the demands and procedures of Global North institutions and the circumstances and needs of Global South partners, such as difficulties with advance payments; challenges with money transfers; and short-term funding that is insufficient to forge long-term partnerships (Forbes et al., 2020). This was also highlighted by one of the case studies which was part of the *Indigenous Engagement Programme.*[15] However, no paper we read for TP1 or TP2 acknowledges funding as a dimension of the collaboration, nor discusses the imbalance of power that money can generate, in particular when the circumstances of Global North higher education institutions and those of Indigenous partners can be very unequal. We find the absence of the financial dimension of research troubling, and believe that it would be productive for academic conversation to reflect on the following questions:

- Why is there no acknowledgement in the literature of the financial aspects of international research projects with Indigenous communities, and a general pretence that collaborations are only based on common aims and objectives?

- Can we have effective collaboration and co-production when the Global North partners have the power to control budgets and make decisions, while Indigenous organisations and communities are recipients who need to meet conditions?

- What potential influence can funding allocations have on relationships (between individuals and between/within communities) when funds are assigned to some people/communities but not others?

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15 Case Study: 'Resilient Pastoralism: Towards Sustainable Futures in Rangeland' (Grant Reference NE/P01626X/1): https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20200601114549/https://www.ukri.org/news/esrc-ahrc-gcrf-indigenous-engagement-programme/related-content/indigenous-case-study-upton/

- How can we ensure good practice and decolonising approaches be built into funding calls (by funding agencies and donors) in ways that do not shape research approaches but ensure they are adapted to the specific partners' needs and contexts?

- What are the collective strategies that we can identify – after the huge impact of the UK government's cuts to international aid and GCRF grants – to ensure that academic research with Indigenous partners is not dependent on political agendas?

Discussion point 3 – Indigenous identities

According to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,[16] indigeneity is predicated on self-identification plus recognition of the Indigenous person on the part of the community. Academic literature shares a clear respect for the right of Indigenous communities to define themselves, to protect these identities, and to demand that their needs and knowledges are theirs to identify. However, we noticed a tendency in some of the literature we reviewed to rely on generic and generalised ideas of 'indigeneity' – one which overlooks diversity within Indigenous communities. This was also highlighted, quite poignantly, by Indigenous participants at the Rio 2019 event. For instance, Denilson Baniwa, an artist from the Baniwa people of Brazil, noted that:

> *'People think of us, Indigenous people, as integrated into nature, like a tree or a tapir.… Like an animal in nature, untouchable, that has no reasoning or idea of modernity. When Indigenous people start wearing clothes, using computers, cameras, to speak languages other than their people's, Brazilian society tends to say you are no longer an Indigenous person.'*

Denilson Baniwa, 2019 – video recording available[17]

Felipe Cruz, from the Tuxá people of Brazil and the University of Brasilia, also noted that:
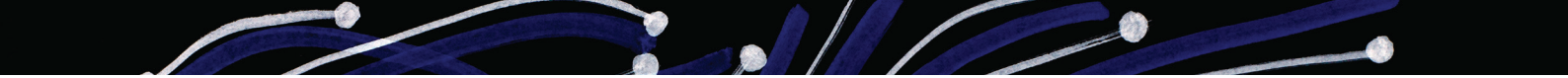
> *'Everything you write about us seems reductionist, so when we talk about you it will seem reductionist as well. You may say "but the white [person] is not like that. White [people] are multiple". And so are we.'*

Felipe Cruz, 2019 – video recording available[18]

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16 'Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices' factsheet: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf

17 Indigenous Research Episode 1: *We, Indigenous People*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FbQDt0figVsandt=384sandab_channel=People%27sPalaceProjects

18 Indigenous Research Episode 2: *Protagonists of Our Own Research*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDGFv78uVqcandt=219sandab_channel=People%27sPalaceProjects

The words of both these Indigenous participants in the Rio event very much chimed with our reflections on the literature we had read, and we invite a conversation on this which could start from the following questions:

- How do we avoid narratives of indigeneity that are 'exoticising' and/or nativist?

- How do we avoid the risk of homogenising Indigenous communities and thus concealing internal diversity and even the contestations that are immanent to all social groupings (e.g., on the basis of gender, age, social status, etc. – and also in their intersection)?

We offer these reflections and questions in the hope that they will be picked up and debated by those engaged in Indigenous research, and contribute to shape and further, even if in a small way, the decolonising agenda crucial to Indigenous research.

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Please, note: TP2 builds on the reading done for TP1. For the full list of references and of works consulted for TP1, see: Fassetta, G. and Imperiale, M.G. (2018) Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships, and Knowledge Mobilisation: Think Piece. UKRI. Available at: https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20200531032105tf_/https://www.ukri.org/news/esrc-ahrc-gcrf-indigenous-engagement-programme/

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INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES: THE ROLE OF HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN IN INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

REFLECTION PIECE

Gareth Loudon

School of Design, Royal College of Art
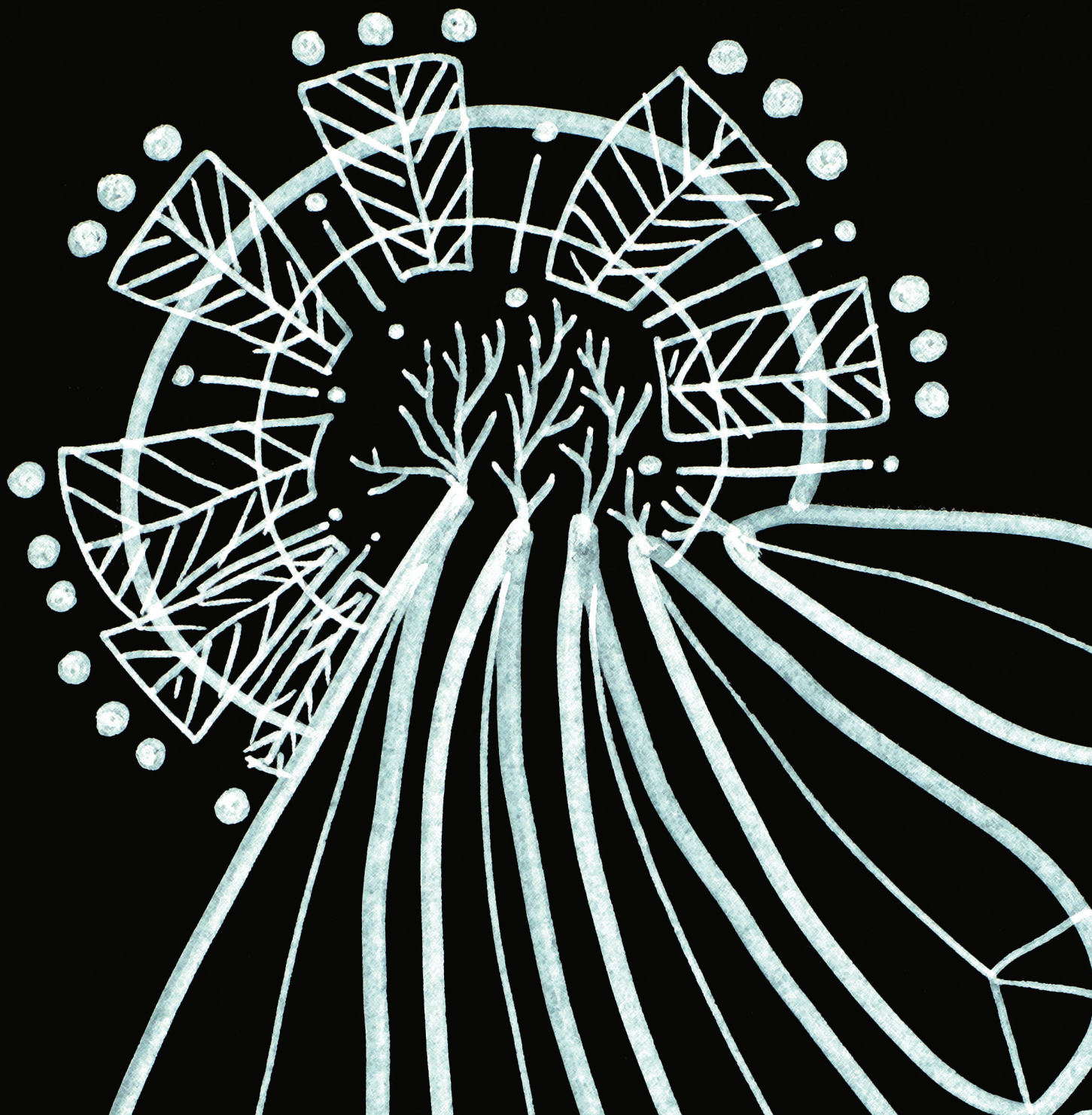
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INTRODUCTION

My reflections are mainly based on insights gained from discussions at the Indigenous Research Methods Workshop in Brazil, held at Casa Rio and Museu do Índio in Rio de Janeiro from the 19th to the 23rd March 2019. The workshop was the result of a partnership between the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), and People's Palace Projects (PPP). The workshop in Brazil brought together researchers who had undertaken twelve different collaborative Indigenous research projects across ten different countries (Brazil, Colombia, India, Mongolia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, and Dominica). The focus of the workshop was to discuss issues relating to Indigenous engagement, research partnerships and knowledge mobilisation. In preparation for the workshop, the ESRC and AHRC commissioned case studies from the twelve projects, as well as a think piece from Giovanna Fassetta and Maria Grazia Imperiale (2019) summarising the global literature on Indigenous engagement. There were also follow-on international webinars in April 2020 and March 2021, organized by People's Palace Projects.

One of the case studies was my collaborative project with Professor Santhosh Kumar, based at university Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham in India. The project explored how human-centred design (HCD) research methods can be used to engage with and support Indigenous communities in rural India, with a focus on how to improve their health and wellbeing (Loudon et al., 2019). The project was a collaboration with researchers from Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham; villagers from Indigenous tribal communities in the Kerala state of India; medical doctors and healthcare workers who work in these rural communities; and experts in eHealth solutions. HCD is a problem-solving process that is often used to create new products, systems or services based on the needs, desires, and contexts of a community or a particular group of individuals (Giacomin, 2014; Brown, 2019). HCD is inherently collaborative and interdisciplinary, bringing together methods and skills from disciplines such as anthropology, design, economics, and engineering.

Many important topics were discussed at the workshop in Brazil and the subsequent webinars, including access to academic literature; how funding structures can lead to unequal relationships between researchers in the Global North and the Global South; and the importance of engagement in forums held in the Global South (People's Palace Projects, 2021). I will touch on some of these discussions, but mainly focus on issues raised relating to self-determination; the importance of creating tangible benefits for Indigenous communities; the role of interdisciplinary research; and the emphasis on building capabilities. The reason for the focus on these particular issues is that I believe the key principles and practices of HCD can be used to help address them. However, there are significant implications for how research should be funded and organised if such an approach is to be successful.

In the insights below, I initially lay out some of the key points made by participants at the workshop in Brazil, followed by a brief explanation about why I believe that HCD principles and practices can be effective, including an example of work undertaken by Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham with an Indigenous community in India. Finally, I address some of the challenges raised at the workshop, the webinars, and through the case studies, and suggest possible ways forward for the field.

INSIGHTS FROM THE INDIGENOUS METHODS WORKSHOP IN BRAZIL

Theme: Self-Determination

An important theme that emerged from the workshop was the importance of self-determination for the Indigenous communities, but also the desire for support from universities and other organisations.

> 'One of the most fundamental issues of indigeneity is self-identification and self-determination.'
> (Kimaren ole Riamit, Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya)
> 'We must be the protagonists of our own research. But with your support, of course. We need support from the universities.'
>
> Eliane Potiguara,
> Indigenous writer and activist, Brazil

This links with the approach of 'development as freedom', advocated by Amartya Sen (2001) in his book of the same title, in which he argues that development should focus on 'the promotion of overall freedom of people to lead the kind of lives they have reason to value' (p.10). This also implies that Indigenous communities should have the freedom and self-determination to change how they want to live their lives, and has implications for Western researchers in terms of how they view and work with Indigenous communities.

> 'Indigenous peoples apparently remain Indigenous if they are isolated, so that we appreciate them as representing places we have been, where we have left as civilised societies, you know, the past we have left; and observing them from a vantage point of a developed, advanced, modernised civilised society. I just wanted to say that Indigenous people make choices on what technology works for them [and] what education serves their interests.'
>
> Kimaren ole Riamit,
> Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

Theme: Creating tangible benefits

Many comments made during the workshop related to the attitudes of, and promises made by, Western researchers when looking to undertake research with Indigenous communities and the subsequent impact of their work on these communities.

> *'They [the researchers] gave to our community and kids expectations of work with us, but when they finish their thesis, they forget about us.'*

Claudia Maigora,
Emberá Chamí tribe, Colombia

> *'[We were] flooded with researchers because of climate change. What for? For whom?'*

Pelenise Alofa,
Kiribati Climate Action Network, Kiribati

> *'We pick the wounds of communities and we leave them open afresh. We offer really hardly nothing in research to respond to this other than a publication summary in Northern Europe.'*

Kimaren ole Riamit,
Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

> *'Many times I hear communities saying "what is in this research for us?" And people say "advocacy – we are going to make awareness". But sometimes awareness is not enough. What is the tangible benefit in the community? Not for individual people in communities, but community resources?'*

Lilly Sar,
University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea

> *The Indigenous person remains in their designated space, still as the informer, the object.*

Anápuáka Tupinambá,
Radio Yandê, Brazil

> *'What happens to them when they've gone? Have they forgotten the people that gave them all the information, all the data that was given?'*

Lilly Sar,
University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea

These comments mirror points made by Fassetta and Imperiale in their Think Piece (2019) and by Adam Branch and Laury Ocen in their case study (2019) on the inequalities and injustices that are still prevalent in collaborative research between Western researchers and Indigenous communities. They are also in line with findings by Drawson, Toombs and Mushquash (2017), who highlight that Indigenous research 'has historically been completed on, rather than with' Indigenous communities (p.1).

Themes: Holistic thinking and interdisciplinary approaches

Fassetta and Imperiale (2019) highlight that Indigenous knowledge, beliefs, and practices are often holistic in nature and therefore suggest that international development research with Indigenous communities should have an interdisciplinary dimension. However, much of the Indigenous research conducted to date has been by Western researchers from a particular discipline (historically, anthropology).

> *'The Western way of thinking germinates, it eats people's minds. One moment you are here with me, then the next second you are running away from the centralism of the Indigenous ways of thinking.'*
>
> Eliane Potiguara,
> Indigenous writer and activist, Brazil

> *'Why is anthropology in the mix and not any other scientific discipline involving research?'*
>
> Carlos Fausto,
> Brazilian National Museum,
> Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Pamela Mason, strategic lead for International Development at the ESRC, also highlighted the need for an interdisciplinary dimension in Indigenous research.

> *'Learning needs to extend beyond the social sciences and humanities communities, and we need to be engaging with engineers. We need to be engaging with health researchers and medics; we need to be talking to natural scientists, environmental scientists – so that question of interdisciplinarity, I think it's really critical.'*
>
> Pamela Mason,
> ESRC

Themes: Building capabilities

Another theme that emerged was the importance of building the capacity and capabilities of Indigenous communities.

> *'What can Indigenous research contribute to the development of communities?'*
>
> Lilly Sar,
> University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea

> *'How to establish knowledge centres, research and knowledge hubs where this knowledge is collected so that it is not just taken away?'*
>
> Kimaren ole Riamit,
> Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

Again, this theme resonates with the arguments put forward by Sen (2001) about the importance of 'the expansion of the capabilities of persons to lead the kind of lives they value – and have reason to value' (p.18).

HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN

Fassetta and Imperiale (2019) propose that Indigenous research should be driven by 'questions or problems raised by Indigenous communities'; should 'demonstrate full inclusion of Indigenous people at all stages of the research process' and 'include an interdisciplinary dimension' to 'ensure engagement, knowledge mobilisation, and sustainable impact' (p.13). A similar argument is made by Sen (2001), who emphasises that people (for example, from Indigenous communities) should be 'actively involved…in shaping their own destiny, and not just passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs' (p.53). These arguments were reinforced during the workshop discussions in Brazil.

> *'Before we design a project or a proposal, there should be a collaborative effort at the grassroots level and to ask one question…what exactly would you want to portray?*
>
> Cozier Frederick,
> Ministry of Kalinago Affairs, Dominica

> *'The lesson we have learned is really about building truly equitable partnerships, to facilitate co-creation, co-production [and] co-ownership of research outputs. To do that, you need to think of research from design to dissemination. Because every moment in this cycle is a moment of exclusion otherwise.'*
>
> Kimaren ole Riamit,
> Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

My response to these comments and suggestions is that HCD follows these principles and practices and therefore should be seriously considered as a method for approaching Indigenous research. HCD is about co-creation and co-production and has its roots in methods such as rapid rural appraisal (Chambers, 1981) as well as participatory rural appraisal (Chambers, 1994). During my project with Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, I saw an example of this approach in action (Sreeni, 2020) where K.R Sreeni from Amrita helped an Indigenous community (Sadivaiyal) in the Tamil Nadu state in India produce and sell organic rice (as well as other crops). Sreeni's approach was about enhancing the capacity and capabilities of the villagers so that they could become what is known as a 'Self Reliant Village' (Amrita SeRVe, 2021). At all times, the villagers decided as a group what strategies they wanted to take and were active participants throughout.

The collaborative work spanned more than two years, having started in 2016. The work involved fundraising; securing land rights; interdisciplinary collaboration (such as working with Kerala Agricultural University on the development of low-cost organic fertilizer mixes); developing natural pest control solutions; core farming work; cost analysis; marketing; and selling the crops. The research programme resulted in income stability for the community and a significant improvement in the villagers' health and wellbeing (Sreeni, 2020). During my visits to Sadivaiyal in 2018, I saw first-hand the love and appreciation that the villagers had for Sreeni, but what was also evident was the respect and love Sreeni had for the villagers. A short video highlighting the project work is available to view online (Sadivaiyal, 2020).

I believe that HCD methodologies can help to address some of the major issues raised during the workshop in Brazil and the subsequent webinars. However, to enable the effective implementation of such an approach, there are some key challenges that need to be addressed by universities and funding organisations.

CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD

ILEPA's Kimaren ole Riamit posed the following question during the workshop in Brazil:

> *'How do we bring tangible consequences?…scholarships are kept in the North, but data is abstracted from the South. So how do we therefore then create meaningful, equitable, genuinely positive partnerships and collaborations?'*

Kimaren ole Riamit,
Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

This also links to Mr Kimaren's other point, quoted previously, about the need to establish research and knowledge hubs. Branch and Ocen (2019) highlight their concern when Western researchers are trying to gain Indigenous or traditional knowledge. What can happen is that local academics are bypassed, with Western researchers

choosing to collaborate directly with Indigenous communities instead, leading to the 'downgrading' of local university academics. Instead, they suggest that Western researchers should attend and join (if invited) academic debates and agendas happening in local universities and research centres, so that research projects can then evolve from long-term relationships. This idea was also supported by Fassetta and Imperiale (2019) who propose 'knowledge exchange/building workshops for researchers and practitioners aiming to work in international development projects with Indigenous communities' (p.7). Such an approach can help to avoid another issue that can arise when Western academics define a research question before they have found local partners or collaborators. That is, the project ends up being directed predominantly by the Western academics and there is not an equal collaboration with local partners or collaborators in terms of setting aims and objectives for the research, or in terms of the resultant allocation of research funding.

These comments and suggestions match my own experience of working with Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham that evolved from the long-term connection I have with Professor Kumar and discussions we had about the work that Amrita was already undertaking with Indigenous communities in Kerala and Tamil Nadu states in India. Therefore, I propose that Western universities should look to work with local universities and academics who have close links with Indigenous communities (where possible), or perhaps researchers based at local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), as this could help to strengthen local knowledge centres and research hubs. It can also help create meaningful, equitable, genuinely positive partnerships and collaborations. The AHRC and ESRC already have funding calls for research networking grants that provide a mechanism to help establish collaborations and support knowledge exchange. But perhaps this type of funding needs to be strengthened and designed in a way that supports the establishment of longer-term relationships rather than short-term activities, and include scholarships for academics based in the Global South, so that local knowledge centres and research hubs can be more easily established and sustained.

To my knowledge, the current grant review processes only include UK-based academics. However, if we want to build 'truly equitable partnerships, to facilitate co-creation, co-production [and] co-ownership of research outputs', as pointed by Mr Kimaren, it seems inappropriate to exclude the voices of Indigenous communities, universities, and NGOs from the Global South (that work with Indigenous communities) in the review process – whether that be for networking research grants or other types of funding schemes, such as the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF, 2021). Therefore, I suggest that there are more appropriate ways of conducting peer reviews for Indigenous research. There was a strong desire from participants at the workshop in Brazil to play a role in helping to find solutions to this challenge.

Another proposal made during the workshop in Brazil was to have a two-stage process for funding calls: the first stage being for detailed planning and exploration of ideas, and the second stage for implementation.

'How do you bring a change in community?...I think we should make a point that any Indigenous research must have enough funding or second phase funding, when you have to have some form of development that is tangible in a community.'

Lilly Sar
University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea

'We propose a two-phase approach for consideration to [the] funding cycle. One where there is a pre-sort of qualification and some resources; small resources are allocated for communities to inform the design tools.'

Kimaren ole Riamit
Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), Kenya

A two-stage funding process would fit well with a HCD approach, where the first stage of HCD typically focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of people's needs, behaviours, motivations, beliefs, and values to help gain a clear understanding of the problem(s) to address together with a plan of action. The second stage of HCD is the implementation of the plan that includes an iterative process of idea generation, fast prototyping, and evaluation by all key stakeholders considering aspects of desirability (people), feasibility (technical), and viability (financial sustainability). An added benefit of the two-stage process is that funds are initially available for the participation of groups and organisations that would otherwise be excluded from the project due to prohibitive costs. A two-stage funding approach also reduces the financial risk for UK research councils.

HCD uses multidisciplinary teams, including domain specialists and potential end users, to make sure that ideas proposed and developed are desirable, feasible, and viable. This is because it is highly unlikely that any one discipline (or person) has all the necessary skills to address complex challenges, for example working with Indigenous communities, and creating tangible benefits for them. As highlighted above, participants at the workshop in Brazil emphasised the need for interdisciplinary approaches and holistic thinking for Indigenous research that HCD can potentially offer. However, there are challenges in successfully implementing such an interdisciplinary approach. The first is described by Branch and Ocen (2019): "the technological infrastructure of Western disciplinary scientific knowledge makes it hard for it to enter into conversation with those outside its narrow disciplinary bounds". Therefore, I propose one of the key actions for UK Research Councils is to run training workshops and networking sessions for academics so that there is greater understanding of different disciplines; the skills and role they can play; the language they use; and to address prejudices that can exist amongst Western academics about the role and contribution of other disciplines.

The second challenge to the successful implementation of an interdisciplinary approach such as human-centred design relates to the ways funding applications are currently peer-reviewed. The UK Research Councils already have mechanisms in place to consider interdisciplinary research applications through 'The Cross-Council Remit Agreement' (CCRA, 2021) and through their targeted funding calls, such as those supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF, 2021). However, this can mean passing applications between different research councils for review and has the potential to slow the review process down. In addition, there is still the challenge of having academics on peer-review panels with limited knowledge of different disciplines. Linked to my previous point about the need for Indigenous research expertise in the peer-review process, I think there needs to be a fresh look at the peer-review process to explore new possible mechanisms and approaches. For example, perhaps training in interdisciplinary collaboration should be mandatory for all academics undertaking peer reviews for the UK Research Councils.

CONCLUSIONS

My proposal is that the interdisciplinary principles and practices of human-centred design can help address some of the key issues raised during the Indigenous Methods Workshop in Brazil, namely self-determination; creating tangible benefits; holistic thinking; taking interdisciplinary approaches; and building capabilities. However, change is needed in the way funding schemes are structured and project proposals assessed to support such an approach more effectively. In addition, more training is needed for Western academics to help them better understand the benefits of interdisciplinary research and how best to undertake such work.

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THE CHALLENGES IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS FOR INDIGENOUS RESEARCH I: REFLECTIONS FROM A COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCHER, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Lilly Sar

Centre for Social and Creative Media,
University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea.
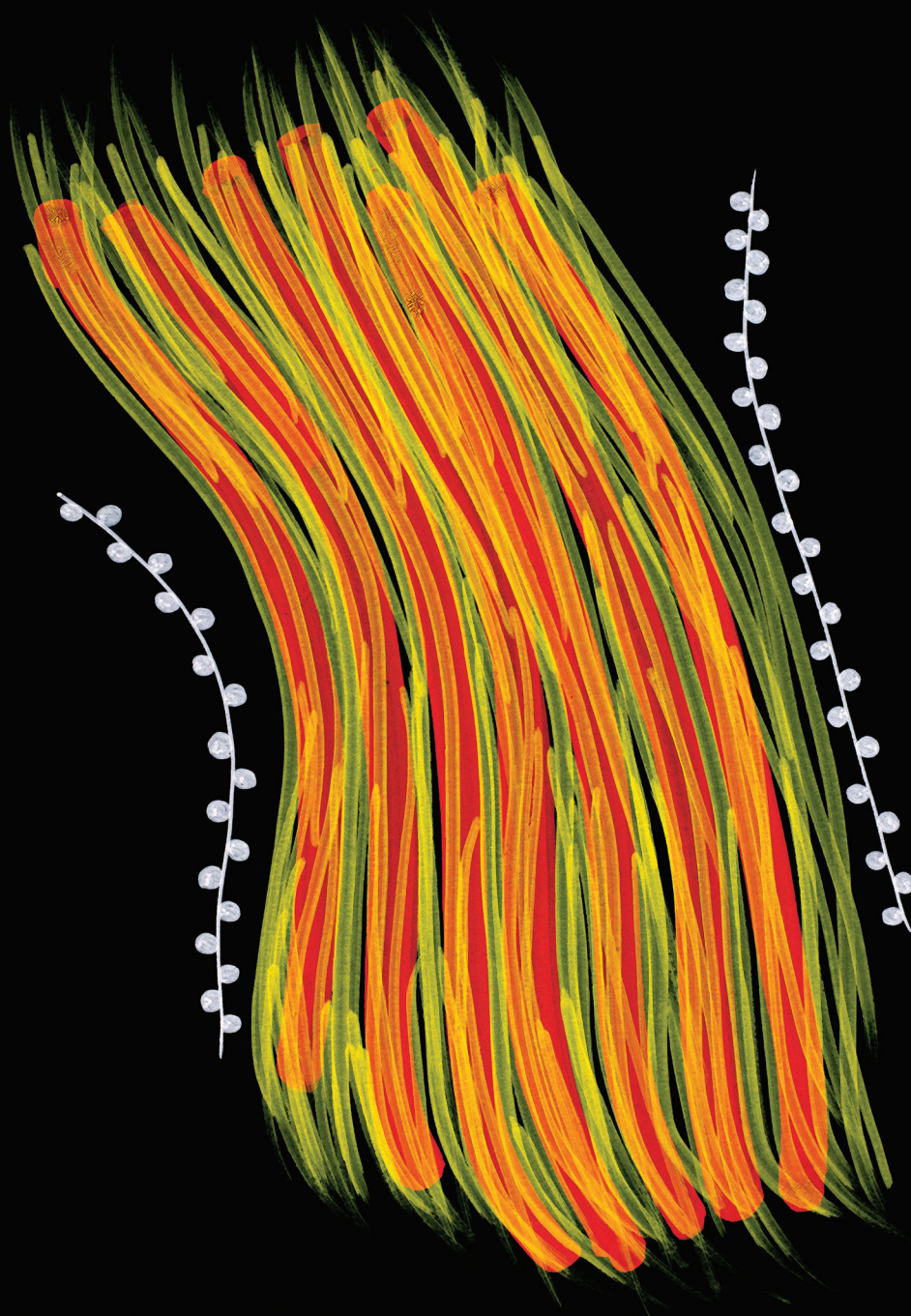
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INTRODUCTION

My experience in working with rural communities in Papua New Guinea (PNG) was because I wanted to see tangible changes in the livelihoods of the rural households in PNG and the wider Pacific Islands. I did not consider the research enquiries and approaches I used in communities as an 'Indigenous Research Methodology' (IRM) nor did I see myself as an 'Indigenous researcher'. Therefore, when I was asked to write a piece for 'Challenges in the next 10 years in Indigenous research', I accepted it in line with my enthusiasm to know more about IRM as a process of enquiry in addressing natural resource management (NRM) and in agriculture.

Who are Indigenous peoples? The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s Free, Prior and Informed Consent[19] manual describes Indigenous peoples as having common characteristics:

- They self-identify as Indigenous and in some cases are recognised by other groups, or by State authorities, as having a distinct collective identity;

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19 'Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a specific right that pertains to Indigenous peoples and is recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). It allows them to give or withhold consent to a project that may affect them or their territories.' Available in: http://www.fao.org/Indigenous-peoples/our-pillars/fpic/en/#:~:text=Free%2C%20Prior%20and%20 Informed%20Consent%20%28FPIC%29%20is%20a,project%20that%20may%20affect%20them%20 or%20their%20territories.

- They have ancient historical ties with respect to living in and using specific territory;

- Their cultural distinctiveness is voluntary and handed down through generations. This may include aspects of language, social organisation, religion and spiritual values, modes of production, laws and institutions; and

- They have experienced or are experiencing subjugation, marginalisation, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination. (2016, p.12)

The term 'Indigenous peoples' embraces diversity. Crook et al. (2019) explain indigeneity in Melanesia is not a political issue about marginalisation or being socially disadvantaged. Indigeneity is about Indigenous peoples having a rich culture and diverse cultures in PNG and other Pacific Island nations. Diversity of languages in PNG is one aspect that makes this country unique with more than 800 recognised languages.

Within the context of this discussion, being Indigenous is about the relationship that Indigenous peoples have to their land and the environment, and the sustainable utilisation of their natural resources. The utilisation of the natural resources such as soil, water, flora, and fauna are governed by ancestral principles in Indigenous communities. These principles are expressed holistically and describe the interaction between people and environment. They include knowledge of culture, history, cosmology, and the responsibility of contributing to community- and relationship-building activities, as well as participating in the transformation of social reality based on Indigenous perceptions. In PNG, Indigenous communities own and live on their land. Ninety-seven percent of land is owned by clans and the use of their land is governed by customary regulations and obligations. The notion of 'Indigenous' is cultural rather than political.

This discussion is a reflection of my experience as a community-based researcher in Indigenous communities, with a focus on NRM and agriculture. Questions that guide the discussion are:

1. How does my experience in community-based research align with Indigenous research methodologies in the context of natural resource management and agriculture?

2. What are the major challenges when conducting research with Indigenous peoples and communities and what are some examples?

3. What makes a research practice 'good' and what are some examples?

The first part of the discussion is a reflection on my research practices in PNG as well as the ethics of the research. I also present the challenges of undertaking research in Indigenous communities and provide some examples. The discussion ends with highlighting how participatory film-making as a communication tool can offer a positive example of good research practice in community development.

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND MY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE IN PNG COMMUNITIES

The way research is undertaken in Indigenous communities and the way researchers interact with the research participants is significant. Having worked in village communities as a community-based researcher, I know that the same is expected from other community-based researchers. In both IRM and community-based research, all partners are involved in all stages of the research, recognising the strengths that each partner brings to the research process.

As a community-based researcher, I am accountable to my community for building as well as maintaining community relationships well beyond a project's conclusion. The general perception of being an Indigenous researcher is that, when I gain knowledge as a researcher, I am not just getting abstract ideas; I am gaining knowledge in order to fulfil my responsibility to community and to the people to whom I have a relationship. Indigenous research is carried out by Indigenous researchers because of their lifelong learning with and commitment to community: therefore, research is not about seeking to know what is out there, rather it is about how and what you're building for yourself and for your community.

To understand IRM (Kovach, 2010; Chilisa, 2012) I reflected on the theoretical basis of my research in agriculture, which is grounded in Indigenous knowledge systems (Warren, 1989; Warren, et al. (1995) and considers local knowledge unique to a given culture and society. Chambers used the term rural peoples' knowledge to refer to rural farmer knowledge as:

> *The people's part of the term emphasises that much of the knowledge in located in people and only rarely written down. "Knowledge" refers to the whole system of knowledge, including concepts, beliefs and perceptions, the stock of knowledge, and the processes whereby it is acquired, augmented, stored and transmitted. (1983, p.83)*

When working in rural communities, a researcher has to be aware of the ethics and protocols required to engage with rural households. The process of engagement can determine the outcome of the research for the researchers as well as the community. Indigenous research methods, like community-based research, use qualitative methods such as interviews, conversations, and a range of participatory methods drawn from the participatory action research practices. Regardless of the methods of choice, the key issue is to select a method that enables Indigenous voices to emerge. Therefore, there is a need to have an ongoing dialogue about intentions, values, and assumptions throughout the research process in any collaboration or partnership.

Ethics of doing research in communities

Ethical conduct and good practice research in NRM – UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992) – includes recognising the rights and respecting Indigenous and local communities and their knowledge. Researchers agree to respect, preserve, and maintain knowledge, innovations, and practices of Indigenous communities, including their traditional lifestyles.

Indigenous research methodologies have been framed within the context of self-determination and transformation, and have become necessary to Indigenous peoples' participation and in deciding their wellbeing and to pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007) asserts the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determine their development. It highlights that Indigenous peoples have the foundational right of self-determination (FAO Free Prior and Informed Consent, 2016). It not only recognises their right to their lands, territories, and resources, but also cultural rights and right to development.

Local peoples' aspirations for a 'voice' as well as improved livelihoods has led them to declaring their right for self-determination: the right to own their lands, and to preserve their culture and language (FAO, 2016). The values and structures imposed by past colonial nations neglected Indigenous rights and through their position of power devalued Indigenous cultures, contributing to the erosion and eventual loss in culture and identity of Indigenous peoples. This then led to development of research methodologies which were inclusive and based on Indigenous perspectives.

Protocols for research in Indigenous communities require respect for the people, researchers being willing to involve communities in the research process, to spending time getting to know the community social structures and kinship relationships, and for Indigenous people to see some benefits from research.

Involving elders and chiefs in a central way can help researchers be respectful and to generate an ethical dialogue. Some steps to follow in such research would be to create a research framework that empowers. The framework begins with an acknowledgement that the researcher does not know it all. Respect leads to an openness and comprehension that lends itself to collaboration and the building of trusting and reciprocal relationships. Participants' trust and confidence in the research process can be enhanced through the engagement of Indigenous researchers, who can play a crucial role in every step in the research process. A requirement for the framework that empowers is to spend adequate time in communities; as Walker et al. (2013) states, 'critical emersion' is to stay long enough to know the research context.

Indigenous research methodologies aim to include and to represent Indigenous experiences in order to encourage more Indigenous people to participate in research. However, there are challenges observed that should be considered when conducting

future research in Indigenous communities. In the next part of this discussion, I present some challenges in Indigenous research, sharing some examples of these challenges from my own experience.

CHALLENGES IN INDIGENOUS RESEARCH AND SOME EXAMPLES

Research that leads to profound knowledge helps the community. If knowledge was gained yet not used to help community, it is meaningless.

Chambers (1997; 1983) asked critical questions when discussing research with rural farmers. The importance of research being relevant to people is the same question researchers should be asking when working with Indigenous peoples. Whose research is this? Who owns it? Whose interest does it serve? And who benefits? These are questions that research participants may ask and I have been asked numerous times. Indigenous people are often sceptical about researchers and are not willing to share information due to bad experiences they may have had with them in the past.

Indigenous researchers also face challenges associated with their need to be accountable to community, and this can be demanding for a person who is seeking to protect cultural values. Furthermore, there could be tensions that relate to the roles and responsibilities of Indigenous researchers in their community, and the ambition of making research a safe and beneficial process for Indigenous people whilst also working in academic environment. There is a need to document perspectives of community-based researchers and the strengths that they bring to the research process.

Academic research has certain values and practices which are reinforced in how academics/researchers' work is assessed. In most cases, funding applications and research outputs are still assessed in terms of scientific outputs and not social benefit. In the absence of social indicators, researchers working in Indigenous communities need to specifically define the benefits for communities in the research methodology. Feedback from local people is an important element of community-based research. I often hear local people say 'researchers and developers did not listen and did not get the story right' (see Box 1).

Many researchers working with Indigenous communities have struggled individually to engage with the tension of experiencing disconnections between the demands of research on one hand, and seeing the realities they encounter in the communities. I quote from my field notes from 2007 (Lilly Sar, 2010):

BOX 1

An engineer setting up a donor-funded community water project in Bargam community in Madang province, PNG, refused to take advice from the members of the community on the design of the dam. The villagers suggested a design, taking note of the potential volume of water to allow overflow. The engineers thought they knew it all and disregarded advice from the locals. Soon after the water system infrastructure was completed, the water pump could not pump the required volume due to the inappropriate design of the dam and eventually broke down. To this day the community is still experiencing extreme water shortage for their household needs as well as for agricultural purposes (Andrew Fei, personal communication, 10th Feb, 2021). This reflects epistemology of the expert and disregard of other knowledge systems.

Lilly Sar, 2021 field notes

Ah. Ol wok moni pinis. Kam na giamanim mipela, maus wara ino isi. Bai lusim mipela na bai go bek long gutpela bed, em ino save olsem ren i pundaun long het bilong mi na mi ino silip gut. Emi no save olsem nau nait, bai mi silip bel hangre.

[Translation] They have worked to earn their money. They have come and lied to us. They will leave us and go and sleep on their comfortable beds, they don't know that tonight rain will fall on my head and I will not sleep. They don't know that tonight I will sleep hungry. (12/01/2007)

When the local farmer stated 'they have worked for their money already', it is an expression that refers to researchers and development workers going into rural communities to talk about development interventions only because it is their means of earning money. That means 'change agents' are only doing what they are paid to do and that their responsibilities to the communities ends with the conclusion of the project or publication of the study, rather than a prolonged engagement and commitment to give more than they take from the research relationship. In PNG, when a person is referred to as '*maus wara*' it means the person talks too much – similar to flowing water – only in this case it is words flowing, but the words have no real meaning for those listening. That is to say, the person talks too much with little action.

Weaving the knowledge systems

Indigenous communities continue to cultivate and sustain Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). The enquiry processes used to recover IKS is referred to as Indigenous Research Methodologies (IRMs), and this continues to be the focus of most research in rural communities as reflected through anthropological studies as well as literature on ethno-biological knowledge in PNG. Indigenous knowledge is often regarded as ethno-science, folk knowledge, traditional knowledge, local knowledge, people's knowledge, amongst others. This view and others reflect the challenges posed by conventional science, which is still based on top-down research approaches and fails to appreciate 'other' knowledge systems.

BOX 2

Sar (2012) provides an interesting case in point on farmer innovation on ant-plant mutualism on sweet potatoes and how this local knowledge and resource-use practice was identified through participatory research. Facilitating a collective stakeholder appraisal of farmer production problems and solutions provided the space for understanding farmer livelihood systems. A major finding from the research is the identification of the mutualistic association between ants and crops and how the research provided the platform to construct knowledge through integration of tacit knowledge and science. The farmer innovation on the use of ants on sweet potatoes is a recent phenomenon. The beneficial association between the ant *Anoplolepis gracilipes* and sweet potato has been reported by farmers at Meteyufa community Goroka Local Level Government, Eastern Highlands, PNG. The ant suppresses the sweet potato weevil *Cylas formicarius* in commercial sweet potato production.

The ant is a generalised predator-scavenger, but feeds on nectar from extrafloral nectaries (EFN) in sweet potatoes. The EFN is a specialised structure or lobe at the juncture of the petiole and leaf which provides food for ants. Sweet potato also provides shade and as well as provides suitable habitats for *A. gracilipes* colonies in the mounds. The ant defends against the sweet potato weevil, thus creating a symbiotic relationship between ants and the sweet potato. Farmer knowledge on ants was integrated with science for a sustainable commercial sweet potato production without any pesticide input. However, farmers were informed that the ant also plays a dual role in which it is beneficial on sweet potato and is also an invasive pest tending coffee green scale on coffee. Coffee green scale is a pest on coffee.

The literature shows various authors suggesting alternative research approaches so as to include IKSs in addressing agriculture and natural resource management. Paul Sillitoe (1998) presented an emerging approach that included using interdisciplinary teams comprising of biological and social scientists (including anthropologists) in research on Indigenous knowledge. Most research in the past has been based on disciplinary lines with limited sharing and networking, contributing to poor research interventions in communities. The role(s) of anthropologists and other social scientists is now recognised in Research and Development (R&D) agencies in PNG. Farmers have been engaged collectively in participatory research, including Farming Systems Research, Participatory Rural Appraisals/Rapid Rural Appraisals and Farmer Field Schools (Sar, 2012).

The participatory research approach used promoted synergy and interdisciplinary work. In addition, it contributed to new understanding of the complex interaction between ants and the primary hosts – sweet potato and coffee – which is an important finding from this research. This example illustrates, perhaps even demonstrates, the need to engage in constructive dialogue and mutual respect for other knowledge systems in development interventions. It also supports what Freire (1970) advocated as 'consciousness raising' and creating awareness of the marginalised so that they can participate in development. The participatory research process contributed to better understanding of farmer realities, farmer perceptions, and elicited support to find solutions.

The conventional research paradigm in agricultural R&D in PNG has mainly involved research that is station based, with little input from the local people as beneficiaries into the research agenda, and little recognition of Indigenous knowledge. Many rural people in PNG have long traditions of enquiry in human-nature interactions. This traditional knowledge is embedded in the day-to-day activities and expressed through practices such as adapting cropping patterns, diversifying food supply in response to risks, and sustainable hunting and fishing practices. This knowledge has been passed down from generations. There was a significant call for Indigenous peoples to have authority over their knowledge system in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and have the right to maintain and protect their knowledge (UNDRIP, 2007). Indigenous peoples have authority over their knowledge systems and have the right to maintain and protect their knowledge. However, these knowledge systems are downplayed by conventional science so little, if any, attention is given to the issue of farmer innovation and Indigenous knowledge. Furthermore, a real challenge is how to integrate insights from farmer innovations and Indigenous knowledge into mainstream sciences. There remains a need for researchers to ask how the research processes for engaging IKS support or neglect the rights and capacities of the communities maintaining their Indigenous knowledge systems.

With the increasing vulnerability of the elderly to all forms of threats, this knowledge base can be lost. Percival (2008) had difficulties in getting examples of Indigenous

coping strategies in the Pacific region as much of the traditional knowledge was lost. There are also potential biotic threats from COVID-19 and other external and endemic diseases on Indigenous communities. People over the age of 50 are more susceptible to COVID-19, hence an increased threat to loss of Indigenous knowledge. In addition, a potential abiotic threat from climate change is impacting rural landscapes, farming systems, and livelihoods of Indigenous communities. More frequent extreme climatic events such as drought increase, threat of bush fires, and deforestation affect the quality of life in rural communities.

Importance of local language in Indigenous research methodology

PNG is linguistically and culturally diverse with more than 800 officially recognised local languages. Every community you go to may have a different language, hence a common language such as Tok Pisin will be the mode of conversations for engaging with different language groups and communities. Language, culture, and Indigenous knowledge are deeply intertwined, and the loss of one also impinges on the survival of others. The linguistic diversity (represented mostly by local languages) in PNG is facing rapidly increasing threats that are causing a drastic loss both of languages and knowledge of Indigenous peoples, including knowledge of the environment and sustainable use of resources. A study conducted to assess language skills and ethnobiological knowledge amongst youth showed positive correlation between language and both bird and plant knowledge in PNG (Kik, 2018). Franco et al. (2015) stress that language is an important carrier of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), while Maffi (2007) found TEK dependent on languages, and that loss of languages would lead to loss of TEK. Box 3 highlights the need for training in agroforestry practices as rural households in PNG still depend on forests resources to sustain their livelihoods.

Globalisation has contributed to the erosion of cultural diversity and rapid loss of languages in PNG. The country has a rich culture as reflected through the songs, the dances, the artifacts, and the languages. However, integral to culture is connectivity, since people are intimately connected to the land and they value their relationships which brings purpose and meaning to life. This is reflected in loss of cultural values (family/clan relationships) contributing to breakdown in social structures.

BOX 3

In 2019 I was documenting agroforestry practices in the Bena community of the Eastern Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea. Most research participants were middle-aged and most had forgotten names of important tree species. The activity could not be completed successfully without engaging an elder – well into his 70s – to assist in naming trees in the local language. This phenomenon is not specific to this community, rather is widespread throughout PNG and the Pacific Island communities.

Lilly Sar, 2019 field notes

There is also less respect of the repository of IKS by elders in rural communities.

Urban migration due to work and educational opportunities contributes to people being detached and alienated from nature, relatives, and cultural heritages, thus there are critical consequences to the breakdown of intergenerational transmission of knowledge, loss of language, customs, ties to culture, and to world view. This also contributes to people losing their ability to converse in their own local languages. In other cases, young people living in their own communities are increasingly communicating in lingua franca such as PNG Tok Pisin since early childhood education is taught in English, hence they lose confidence in conversing in their local language.

The g*aramut* (Box 4) is an acoustic channel known as the PNG talking drum. The *garamut* is still being used to send messages through elaborate series of beats on the wooded drum. The use of the drum is community specific and uses the local language. If languages are lost, and elders who know how to send and interpret the messages sent through drum beats pass away, the end result is a significant level of loss of local knowledge, culture, communication skills, and practice.

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BOX 4

GARAMUT: THE TALKING DRUM.

An example of a traditional knowledge system is the relaying of messages through a *garamut* (slit wood for communication) in the Bargam community, Madang province. Garamut messages are passed using local languages, the skills to decode and encode messages is at a very high risk of loss if younger generations do not know how to use the *garamut* signals to pass messages, as well as to interpret the messages that are being passed through the *garamut*. Knowledge on the selection of the tree species to harvest for the *garamut*, how to make it and the drumbeats for specific messages are learnt only when the messenger knows the language.

Lilly Sar, 2019 field notes

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Training of young Indigenous researchers

Social science research has progressed from seeing Indigenous people as merely subjects of research to the development of practical approaches that employ participant-focused methodologies and design. There has been marked progress in engaging Indigenous people in all stages of the research process. As a result, Indigenous research methodologies have been promoted in academia in order to incorporate Indigenous world views, perceptions, and knowledge in research designs and enquiry processes. This move has contributed to an increase in Indigenous scholars participating in academic discussions.

However, loss of identity to kinship and linguistic heritage contributes to disconnection with clan networks and/or limited career opportunities. These are issues which contribute to a lack of interest from young academics to pursue research interests

in Indigenous communities (Box 5). Infrastructure is often poor, making access impossible because of the remoteness of some Indigenous communities. Conditions are hardly encouraging for young scholars to take up the opportunities to do 'research that matters' in rural/remote Indigenous communities.

Indicators for community engagement

Researchers practising Indigenous research methodologies have to come up with responsible indicators to assess the quality of engagement with communities. So much research has been done in Indigenous communities. Despite the best intentions, there are inherent tensions between a commitment to the principles of participatory and ethical research, and the expectations of funding agencies and academia. Strict adherence to ethical guidelines and research protocols does not necessarily translate into good research practice. More significantly, there may not be the funding, capacity, and timeframe to allow all parties to devote energy and resources to follow through on the ideal ways of working.

There are other indicators, but for this discussion I focus on two indicators to include in the research planning and implementation processes. The first indicator for IRM is whether the Indigenous peoples were credited for sharing their knowledge and contributing to the research. All research emphasises the practice of recognising the knowledge contributors, such as the authors whose ideas are used. Tony et al. (2019) is an example of good research practice where the research paper included the community partner, Eriko Fufurefa, as co-author. The current partnerships established with UK universities through the AHRC/GCRF has certainly built synergies between the universities in establishing multidisciplinary partners in working with Indigenous people.

The second indicator is whether the research led to any actions or changes in the community. This indicator recognises the principle of reciprocity, a key factor in IRMs codes of ethics.

> **BOX 5**
>
> At the University of Goroka, the Centre for Social and Creative Media offers a postgraduate programme in Communication for Social Change. This programme facilitates training of postgraduate students across disciplines to conduct research in local communities drawing from the Indigenous research framework. However, responses solicited from students participating in course evaluations show mixed reactions regarding the relevance of this course and reflects the current interest (or disinterest) in research in Indigenous communities in PNG.
>
> Lilly Sar, 2019 field notes

SOME POSITIVE RESEARCH PRACTICES EMERGING FROM COMMUNITIES: SHARED THROUGH PARTICIPATORY FILM-MAKING

Community-based participatory research has been increasingly adopted as a way to build partnerships between Indigenous communities, research institutions, and governments, as well as increasing Indigenous community participation and control in research. The focus is on collaboration, the incorporation of external and community knowledge in knowledge construction, and outcomes that can contribute to positive change in natural resource management.

Researchers can engage members of local communities in creative data reporting practices such as developing creative stories from interview transcripts or using mixed media, such as videos, to allow people and communities to have a voice.

The Centre for Social and Creative Media (CSCM) at the University of Goroka has engaged in participatory action research in media production. The aim is to document community stories and to share the experiences in and between communities as well as to a wider audience to influence policies. I present two case studies of using community filming to highlight good research practices in Indigenous communities. The first case study is a story of preserving fresh and saltwater crocodiles (Box 6), and the second case study describes a tree kangaroo conservation programme. The studies illustrate cases of community-managed conservation projects and the projects have been successful due to their recognition and utilisation of kinship relationships and clan-specific knowledge in natural resource management. The projects are also sustainable because the livelihoods of resource owners have improved.

The traditional knowledge keepers have demonstrated the nature-culture-spiritual interconnections and how this is contributing to sustainable conservation, as well as improvement of livelihoods in partnership with a commercial crocodile breeder farm.

The traditional knowledge keeper the CSCM filming crew met is said to communicate with crocodiles – a practice of man and environment co-existing in harmony. This knowledge is not abstract and distant, rather personal *lived* experience, which is developed and shared through narratives and a range of formal and informal instructions, apprenticeships, and mentoring.

One key lesson learnt from the study was the cohesion between families in crocodile

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BOX 6

A film project on biodiversity conservation featured the Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative (SWMI). This was a community-driven biodiversity conservation of the fresh water crocodile (*Crocodylus novaeguineae*) and saltwater crocodile (*C. porosus*) in the East Sepik province, Papua New Guinea. Sepik River is home to some of the world's largest fresh water and saltwater crocodiles.

Lilly Sar, 2019 field notes

conservation strategies, rights of control, access, harvest, and sale of eggs to commercial breeding programmes. This project illustrates an effective community partnership with the private sector in sustainable crocodile management and community empowerment. The project also attributes its success to the maintenance of kinship and social systems that uphold collective survival/security and prosperity, and mutual responsibility and accountability.

These notions and concepts that guide people's way of life and behaviour include the concept of reciprocity, communal harmony and integrity, respect for elders, shared labour, and respect for environment. The conservation project now provides more families the opportunity to earn a living in their own villages through the sale of crocodile eggs, contributing to a better quality of life – including the payment of school fees which alleviates poverty and is an empowering process for the river communities. More analysis is needed to understand the dynamics of these communities and learn what makes SWMI work and other processes not function as well or at all.

This local initiative is unique and is a shift from depending on external interventions for self-mobilisation in community conservation capacity, with an increase in levels of trust, responsibility, and project management in conservation and smallholder livelihood improvement. This community conservation programme is now recognised by the private sector and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). In partnership with a commercial crocodile breeder, crocodile eggs are harvested with due consideration of sustainability. This partnership provides income for resource owners as well as conservation of the crocodile populations. New forms of mutual assistance have emerged, with the commercial breeder funding aerial surveillance to monitor populations of crocodile populations and threats to crocodile breeding sites.

An important principle that continuous to guide my practice as an academic and community-based researcher is critical immersion. PNG is culturally diverse, hence requires academics, researchers, and development workers to spend prolonged time engaging with target communities to capture world views, knowledge and skills, and nature-culture relations so as to foster cross-cultural understanding. This provides opportunities for researchers to know their target communities and entry points into communities better, navigating through potential minefields by respecting local power dynamics, such as relationships with elders and asking elders, as well as members of the community, to participate in research. It also allows researchers to view experiences, understand ways of knowing from other people's perspectives, or being able to see the world through the eyes of the researched. In addition, it enables researchers to identify with the community, build relationships and trust while gaining awareness of how individuals in a community are influenced by culture at the same time as collecting field data. Sillitoe (1998) states that 'all knowledge is culturally embedded' and that use of Indigenous knowledge must be grounded in an in-depth understanding of the local culture. According to Walker et al. (2013), critical immersion within the research process employs holistic cultural awareness

of self and others, full absorption into the research context, and the lens of critical consciousness.

Spending time in communities promotes the principles of participation and accountability, allowing researchers' better understanding of how to involve communities in generating and disseminating authentic research. Moreover, many of people in rural communities are stigmatised in mainstream PNG society so need to develop confidence and personal identity that can lead to social transformation through praxis-oriented research, as observed in the study. Research immersion in a community provides space for inquiry towards collective knowledge and construction for change.

This story (Box 7) is an example of an expatriate researcher and family living in the remote conservation site and working in distinctive ways to yield novel insights on the ecology, distribution, and conservation of the tree kangaroos. The researcher created new spaces for communal support in conservation of the two tree kangaroos and the forest habitats. Community participation was an integral part of the project implementation, with local involvement formalised through regular information-sharing workshops to plan and monitor the ecology and distribution of the tree kangaroos. Trust was established by engaging the local people to collect data and as well as gathering community stories on the tree kangaroos from elders in the communities.

In order to address acute poverty in the area, the project initiated a programme providing assistance for 'resource owners' to access water tanks, provided building materials to construct semi-permanent homes, and install solar lights. Social mapping was done in the beginning to identify elders/clan chiefs and members of the clans in the conservation area. Social mapping created data of every household in the community and guided how the benefits from the project would be shared in the communities. In addition, the project facilitated new methods of raising small livestock production as an alternative source of protein, since the people could not hunt tree kangaroos because of a moratorium on hunting this species. The project recognised upfront sustainable livelihood options for resource owners rather than the conventional focus on the conservation of the target endangered species such as Tenkile and Weimang. This represents a major shift in thinking about community participation in biodiversity conservation.

This new approach of using science and local cultural practices to manage natural resources demonstrates that resource owners are capable of participating and contributing to conservation and as well as enjoying the

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BOX 7

The CSCM film highlighted community-managed conservation done by Tenkile Conservation Alliance in Lumi, Sandaun Province. Immediate threats addressed were the critically endangered tree kangaroo species Tenkile (*Dendrolagus scottae*) and *Weimang* (*Dendrolagus pulcherrimus*) and to protect their habitat from further degradation.

Lilly Sar, 2019 field notes

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economic and social benefits because of the participatory research approach employed by the project. The project also demonstrates that research framed and undertaken by local people, and guided by their experiences, knowledge, and values can play an important role in creating new knowledge and the conservation of biodiversity. The approach was ground-breaking when compared to other conservation practices. It not only enriched conservation efforts but also helped create ownership and engagement of the local resource owners. It was also obvious that, in order to produce a framework to create better, fairer, and sustainable conservation practices, the resource owners' livelihood options need to be considered.

CONCLUSION

As a community-based researcher, I have attempted through appropriation of Indigenous research methods to enhance the capacities of rural communities in my project sites to make their situations, world views, and perspectives more visible. Future projects exploring IRM need to consider and incorporate the themes explored in the essay to benefit the researchers and the Indigenous peoples.

The challenges – as identified in this paper – are not exclusive, but rather they point to prevailing issues which should be considered when conducting research in Indigenous communities. There is a place for research with Indigenous peoples in the rapidly changing sociopolitical landscape in PNG and the Pacific Islands. Based on increased understanding of IRMs, researchers are encouraged to engage in practices that are inclusive and allow equal participation by communities, and to allow them to find a voice, their identity, and a place in society.

In order to advance the dialogue on IRMs, research should emerge from – and depend on – an ethos that aims to respect, value, engage, and serve local people. Fundamental protocols relating to Indigenous research need to be culturally sensitive, demonstrate a willingness to partner with Indigenous communities in both processes and outcomes, and ensure local people see some benefits from the research. A key proposal is that the experiences of Indigenous researchers working in their own communities should be documented. This will give IRM researchers the opportunity to address challenges faced by Indigenous researchers in dealing with the tensions between the role of Indigenous research in communities and to the research environment in academia.

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THE CHALLENGES IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS FOR INDIGENOUS RESEARCH II: EXPERIENCES, LESSONS, AND REFLECTION FROM MAASAI PASTORALISTS, KENYA

Kimaren ole Riamit

Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA)
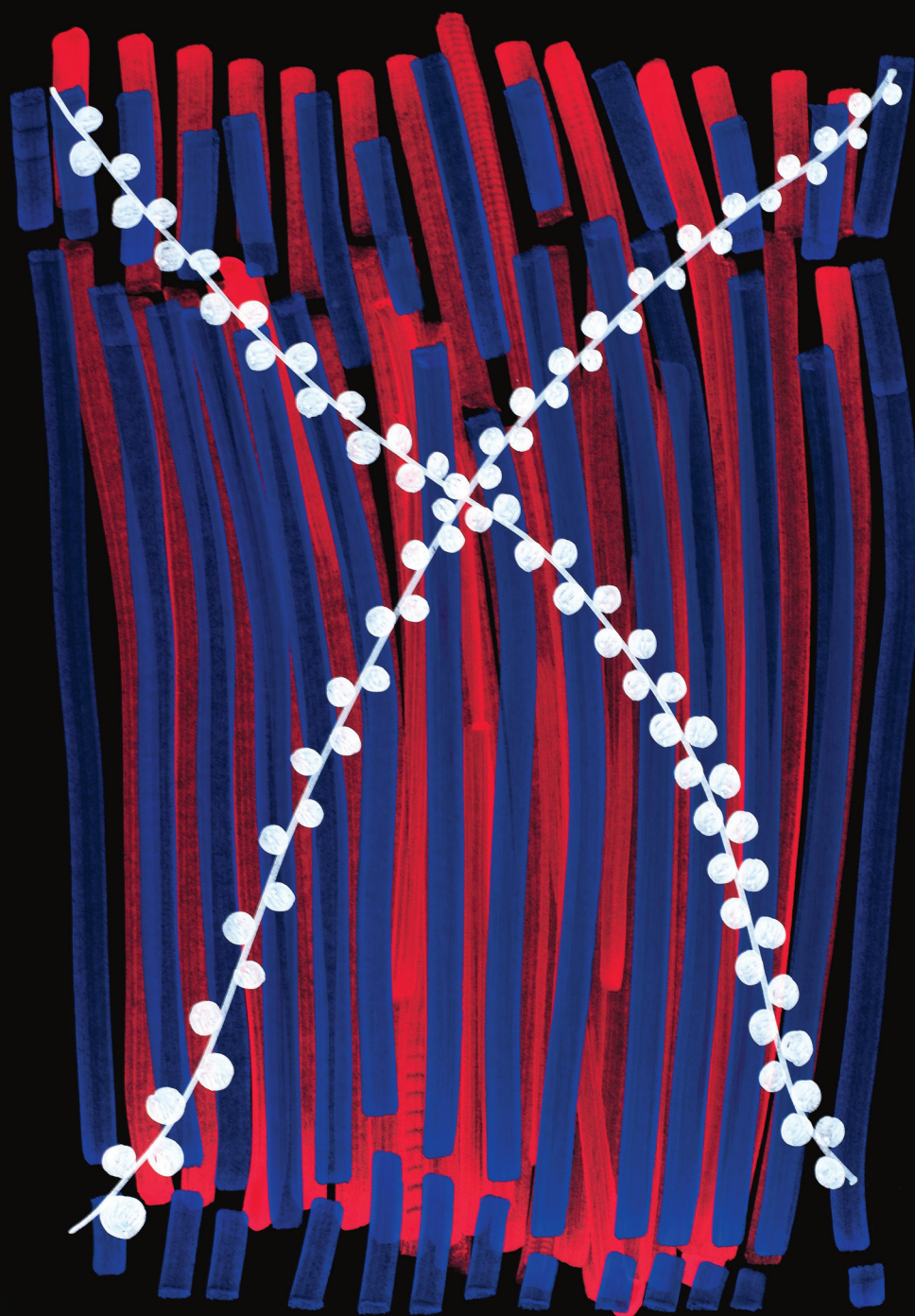
THE CHALLENGES IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS FOR INDIGENOUS RESEARCH II: EXPERIENCES, LESSONS, AND REFLECTION FROM MAASAI PASTORALISTS, KENYA

Kimaren ole Riamit

Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA)

INTRODUCTION

Research as enquiry, concepts, and theory formation, labelling and category creation, rationale, and narrative generation and its socialisation has remained a powerful force in influencing the nature of policies, programmes, and practices exerted on Indigenous peoples globally. Simply put, Indigenous research/research on Indigenous peoples has remained one of the most powerful intergenerational systemic forces contributing to the present state of affairs among Indigenous communities across the globe.

Research on Indigenous peoples is a political process enacted within domineering and often repressive political structures, with unspoken underlying interests beyond knowledge for knowledge's sake. From colonial encounter to the present, Indigenous peoples in various parts of the world have struggled – and continue to struggle – against dominant research-generated theories, development paradigms, and associated policies (such as assimilation, divide and rule, etc.) which lead to projects imposed on their land territories by the state and private sector without their inputs, let alone their consent.

Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing are still regarded as an obstacle to civility and modernity. In this way, the economic, political, and social cultural systems and values of Indigenous peoples within Indigenous ways of knowing were denigrated as uncivilised, unscientific, and backwards. Indigenous world views were thus branded as barbaric and primitive for which faults the imposition of modernity was the

obvious cure. With the emergence of independent nation states in former colonies and ensuing nation-building efforts, recolonisation of Indigenous peoples' territories with parallel attempts to obliterate their identities and cultures intensified in earnest.

The homogenising and centralising powers of the modern state, with its default position of ignoring or minimising ethnic dissent and/or diversity (particularly in Africa) in order to validate class oppression, sustained the onslaught on indigeneity and associated ways of seeing the world. Globalisation through neoliberal economics and liberal political theory worsened the destruction of Indigenous societies.

With these concerted efforts to 'civilise' and 'modernise' the Indigenous, one must ask the question: to what extent has civilisation and modernity improved the lot of the Indigenous? The stark reality of most Indigenous peoples of the world (including the Maasai in Kenya) is that they represent the most impoverished and marginalised groups of our society. As Tauli-Corpuz states:

> *Clearly, development was aimed at making self-governing and self-sufficient Indigenous communities into dependent entities subsumed into the global market and nation-states. Their subsistence livelihoods were shattered with Indigenous peoples reduced to laborers. (2010, p.13)*

The many unsuccessful research-informed development interventions have led to growing doubts over top-down approaches, both in research and in development planning and practice. There is mounting pressure from Indigenous peoples' movements on alternate world views and social inclusion, and a growing quest for exploring and appreciating different knowledge systems and ways of knowing. As traditional research approaches and methodologies are questioned (Swift, 1977; Fry and McCabe, 1986), there is a notable and growing interest in seeking to appreciate the relationship and impact of approaches, processes, and outputs/outcomes of research on Indigenous communities. This is evidenced by the growing number of scholars, research institutions, range of disciplines interested in these questions, and emerging dialogue spaces being created. This paper, therefore, explores this trend and reflects on future trajectories on how best to envision Indigenous research by drawing from the experiences of Maasai pastoralist Indigenous communities in East Africa.

Some key questions to be explored include:

- Is there a correlation between the disproportionately high ratios of marginality and impoverishment amongst Indigenous peoples and the prevailing approaches to Indigenous research?

- What role has research played through its influence on policy, programmes, and practice to produce the sorry state of Indigenous peoples?

- What positive story is there to show amongst Indigenous peoples for having been one of the prominent subjects of research (especially within the humanities and social sciences), such as the 'anthropological gaze', for eons?

- Are there some positive stories/emerging trends of positive practices on approaches to research with – and on – Indigenous peoples?

- What mix of factors is necessary to provide optimal social-political environments to facilitate negotiations about research protocols and parameters to birth mutually respectful and beneficial collaborations/partnerships in research with – and on – Indigenous peoples?

AN OVERVIEW ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AS A SOCIAL CATEGORY

Globally, groups that self-identify as Indigenous peoples[20] number about 370 million individuals and occupy and use 22% of the world's land. Despite representing 5% of the world's population, their lands and territories harbor 80% of the world's biological diversity (UNDP, 2011, p.54), and they represent a significant portion of the world's cultural diversity, including about 7,000 languages. In addition, Indigenous peoples represent about 15% of those living in poverty. As many as 33% of all people living in extreme rural poverty globally are Indigenous peoples or are from Indigenous communities. Indigenous people's life expectancy is up to 20 years lower than their non-Indigenous counterparts.

The relationship between being Indigenous and experiencing economic inequality in developing countries has come to the fore in recent years (see page 76). Indigenous peoples' original ways of life, environment conservation approaches and traditional livelihood production systems have been compromised and often replaced with the worst of Western lifestyles, i.e., unemployment, poor housing, alcoholism, and drug abuse. Studies indicate that the health of Indigenous peoples is substantially poorer than that of the general population, with much higher disease and mortality rates.

Indigenous peoples suffer systemic repression and deprivation, to the extent that their demographic survival is threatened. They're most likely to be excluded from schools, and girls from rural areas are doubly disadvantaged in terms of education access.

An edited volume by Patrinos and Hall (2012) on why higher rates of poverty may result among Indigenous peoples identifies six interrelated principles, namely: spatial/geographical disadvantage often associated with harsh climatic conditions; poor access to basic infrastructure and general 'remoteness'; incapacitated human resource with respect to education and health coupled with a demeaning of – and

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20 Such as native, aboriginal or tribal peoples, ethnic minorities, hill tribes, scheduled tribes, sea gypsies, bushmen, Indians/First Nations, vulnerable and marginalised groups (VMGs).

unsupported – traditional livelihoods; lack of assets to cope with vulnerabilities; social exclusion and discrimination reflected in lack of social capital and limited access to key networks such as market opportunities; poor/minimal representation in decision-making and political representation, often arising from historically determined social and political relationships (including exploitation); and 'opportunity hoarding' among elites, including 'in research and cultural and behavioral characteristic such as lack of ability to speak the dominant language or follow the dominant cultural norms' (Patrinos & Hall, 2012, p.7).

Closer to home here in Kenya, the peoples who identify with the Indigenous peoples' movement in Kenya are mainly pastoralists and hunter-gatherers as well as a number of small farming communities. Pastoralists comprise approximately 25% (12 million) of the national population while forest hunter-gatherer communities are approximately 140,000. Pastoralists mostly occupy the arid and semi-arid lands in northern Kenya and towards the border of Kenya and Tanzania in the south. The hunter-gatherer groups are generally found in the forested areas of the central Rift Valley Province in the western part of the country, with a few other groups dispersed in the southern coastal areas of the country.

These groups (pastoralists and hunter-gatherers) have experienced dispossession of – and displacement from – portions of their ancestral lands, disregard and devaluation of their subsistence-based traditional occupations, exclusion from participation in the governance and political life of the country, and limited access to justice and basic social infrastructure and services, including experiencing recurrent interethnic conflicts. These communities fulfil the criteria for identifying Indigenous communities as contained in the Constitution of Kenya 2010, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the African Union (AU), and other policies targeted at Indigenous peoples within multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the European Union. The issue of indigeneity and its association with social inequity and exclusion in Kenya is officially acknowledged, with measures to address it embedded in the national constitution.[21]

MAASAI PASTORALISTS: AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' GROUP IN KENYA

The Maasai people of East Africa is one of the ethnic groups identified as not only Indigenous communities under Kenya's national constitution but also vulnerable and marginalised, together with their pastoralist cousins and hunter-gatherer forest peoples (Constitution of Kenya, 2010, art. 260). Prior to the advent of colonialism in East Africa, the community occupied vast portions of what is now Kenya's Rift Valley Province, stretching southerly from Laikipia to the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro along the Kenya-Tanzania border (Thomson, 1885).

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21 Constitution of Kenya 2010, art. 204.

Historical and ethnographic literature indicates that they were a people of both livestock/cattle and land with their pre-colonial territory estimated at about 10 million acres (Tignor, 1976 cited in Mwangi, 2007). Property rights to land in Maasailand were managed under customary law within the traditional social organisations/institutions (Lughes, 2007; Mwangi, 2008). Until the early 1930s, the Maasai were characterised by the Kenya Land Commission as being probably the wealthiest tribe in East Africa in both land and the stock they were able to sustain (Rutten, 1992).

Things soon changed for the worse upon the arrival of colonial explorers, the imperial British government, and white settlers. The colonial encounter and the subsequent Anglo-Maasai 'treaties' of 1904/1911 resulted in the Maasai being pushed from the highlands of the Rift Valley to the southern, much drier and semi-arid districts of Narok and Kajiado along the Kenya-Tanzania border (Appendix 1). The blatant dispossession and displacement of Indigenous Maasai communities from their ancestral land is demonstrated by the admissions of Sir Charles Eliot (administrator in the British-run East Africa Protectorate) in one of his confidential letters to his colonial superiors in which he stated that: 'No doubt on platforms and in reports we declare we have no intentions of depriving natives of their land, but this has never prevented us from taking whatever land we want' (cited in Rutten 1992, p.175).

In addition to the enormous land lost under the colonial regime, the community also lost expansive ancestral domains due to nationalisation of land, as either wildlife conservation areas or forests, and through encroachment by agricultural communities. Today, Maasai number about 1.2 million, with a birth rate of about 3.5% and an infant mortality of 8% (Gok, 2019).

Maasai peoples' political and leadership arrangements were organised and practiced along and within *Iloshon*[22] (about 16 territorial sections), with authority resting on the Council of Elders with operational support from *Ilmurran* (warriors), the providers of security. The second social institution is *Olgilata* (clan), generally comprised of membership of kinship relations, which are patrilineal and grouped into five major clans[23] and two moieties[24] (Galaty 1981; Maundu et al., 2001; Mwangi, 2007; Rutten, 1992).

Although over the years the Maasai have undergone great changes in structure and organisation, they are a unique ethnic group relatively less influenced by the Western ideologies of modernity and 'civilisation'. Despite the enormous pressure for change, the community has managed to maintain its cultural and ethnic identity to a large extent – the Maa language, traditional mode of dressing, belief and value system, and its customary institutions – often making it one of the key attractions for cultural tourism and for ethnography studies and research studies in the country,

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22 Ilkaputiek, Ilpurko, Ilmatapato, Ilkisonko, Ildamat, Ildalalekutuk, Ilkeek-Onyokie, Iloodo-Kilani , Iloitai, Isiria, Il-Wuasinkishu, Ilaikipiak, and Moitanik.

23 Ilmakesen (of baboon), Ilaiser (of rhinoceros), Ilmolelian (of elephants), Iltaarrosero (of hyena), and Ilikumai (of raven).

24 Odomong'i (the house of the red oxen) and the other Orok-kiteng' (of black cattle).

informed by Indigenous knowledge systems and practices such as herbal medicine, Indigenous food systems, traditional governance, ecology, conservation, and natural resources management.

Indigenous research on a range of areas of enquiry has contributed to the shaping of the present state of affairs among the Maasai community in terms of land ownership, comparative level of development, and access to basic services and cultural identity. Given the limitation of this paper, I will explore and draw lessons on Indigenous research approaches and experiences from two foundational experiences among pastoralist Maasai of East Africa: land and livestock ownership; control and management (pastoralism).

MAASAI INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE WITH RESEARCH

Under this section I provide a snapshot of the Maasai pastoralists' experiences with research undertaken in their territories. The Maasai society are peoples of land and cattle. As nomadic pastoralists, they eked a living through extensive use of the East African rangelands based on customary ownership and informed by their Indigenous knowledge systems and practices. The enduring impacts on research are reflected on these two fronts: approaches to land and livestock ownership, and management.

First came the explorer who preceded the colonialist and the independent nation state. The most memorable explorer to enter Maasailand was Joseph Thomson. A glimpse of Thomson's reflections on Maasailand is captured in his description of the land before him, in which he stated: 'This whole district, one of the richest in Africa, is practically uninhabited, except in some dense forest patches, owing to the terror in which the Masai [sic] are regarded' (1885, p.78), and 'I have never seen a more charming, park-like scene. It makes one quite melancholy to see such rich tracts lying thus deserted' (1885, p.86).

Thomson's depiction of the precolonial Maasailand was that of a land that was overall rich, idle, deserted, and available for the taking by the incoming British white settlers. In a way, the explorers were the precursors of modern research, and their exploration reports painted the initial image of Africa's Indigenous peoples and their land and natural resource in the minds of European expansionists. Adverts of open, rich, virgin, and free lands were made in Europe.

The Order in Council of 1901/1902 gave power to the Colonial Commissioner to make ordinances, including power of annexation of land to the British Crown under the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890, which directed that 'waste and unoccupied land' in the protectorate belonged to the Crown. This interpretation of Indigenous pastoral open land – without structures and human settlement – as 'idle and unoccupied' was made in total ignorance of the traditional/customary use of land in the context of pastoralism. Ross, writing a political history of Kenya in 1927, describes the white settlers' attitude:

Then came settlers. The Masai went on tending their herds in blissful ignorance of the fact that their grazing grounds in the Rift Valley were applied for twice over….Finally under heavy pressure, they surrendered, much against their will, to the wishes of the Government…the whole episode was an eviction and nothing else, it was carried out not only because the white men wanted land near the railway but because intending stock-raisers acted on a principle that was subsequently stated (in an official publication) in these words: "A European requiring a stock farm cannot go wrong in acquiring land formerly occupied by Masai, who're experts in choosing grounds". Everybody knew that, from 1900 onwards. (Emphasis author's own, Ross, 1927, p.14).

In response to initial efforts of the Maasai community to resist the takeover of their land by the British East Africa Protectorate, the colonial administrator, Sir Charles Eliot, observed in a letter dated 11th April, 1904:

There can be no doubt that the Maasai and many other tribes must go under. It is a prospect which I view with equanimity and a clear conscience, that I wish to protect individual Maasai but I have no desire to protect Maasaidom. It is a beastly, bloody system founded on raiding and immorality, disastrous to both the Maasai and their neighbors. The sooner it disappears and is unknown except in the books of anthropology the better. (Cited in Rutten 1992, p.199)

The perceived large Maasai pastoral herd and associated land-use approaches was also blamed for soil erosion and land degradation in the Maasai reserves. The colonial administration interpreted this not in terms of a reduction in grazing rangelands and quality, but rather on what was perceived as the Maasai's irrational attachment to livestock around the arguments of the 'Cattle Complex' advanced by Herskovits (1926), which is claimed to have led the Maasai to emphasise livestock quantity over quality. Herskovits's study is another piece of research that has had enduring negative impacts on Maasai pastoralists to date.

The argument is premised on a thinking that traditional and customary property rights – often associated with common ownership of property – are wasteful either due to underutilisation or overexploitation of natural resources, and hence inefficient and unsustainable. The overuse of resources in the context of common resource regimes is generally associated with environmental degradation thought to arise from, in the case of pastoralists, notions that overstocking leads to overgrazing of the rangelands and eventual desertification. Recent research continues to argue that management of resources under customary ownership is hardly regulated and often associated with an open access, free-for-all system (Fratkin and Mearns, 2003; Mwangi, 2007; Lesorogol, 2007; Knox et al., 2002; Hardin, 1968). This school of thought

is heavily influenced by earlier thinking of economic theorists and range ecologists, particularly Hardin's (1968) seminal piece, *The Tragedy of the Commons*. This theory has received its fair share of criticism. The theory in principle saw individuals as economic actors in society who are solely driven by a raw and insatiable appetite for returns, unaware of the finite nature of resources and without regard for future generations, who often appear to act in isolation. Additionally, the theory confuses common property regimes and open access, and fails to account for the existence of successfully managed common resources over space and time.

Applying the theory of *The Tragedy of the Commons* to rangelands, it was assumed that pastoralism relied on open access systems, with no controls over resource use, and leading inevitably to destructive extraction. But, contrary to this argument, Indigenous pastoral systems have instead been increasingly recognised as common property resource management systems, with established institutions for communal control, which can deliver sustainable use, and have commonly done so. Thus, Hardin's theory was simplistic and abstract in nature (Homewood et al., 2004; Lesorogol, 2008; Galaty, 1992; Mwangi, 2005; Mwangi, 2007; Ecologist [pseudonym], 1993; Rutten, 1992).

The relationship between livestock numbers and range degradation is debated, and more appropriate techniques for the assessment of rangeland carrying capacity and degradation are proposed. Contributors argue that the mainstream view of range science is fundamentally flawed in its application to certain rangeland ecologies and forms of pastoral production. It took ages for new thinking to emerge around environment in disequilibrium, as opposed to an assumed state of equilibrium – grazing systems within pastoral rangelands in which constant levels of primary production are to be sustained in environments characterised by relatively high levels of climatic stability. Yet, in non-equilibrium environments of arid and semi-arid Africa, where rainfall is persistently erratic in its amount, timing, and spatial distribution, pastoralists have evolved complex grazing systems founded on people and livestock mobility that are adaptable to high variability and uncertainty (Behnke & Scoones, 1993). Following range ecologists' research outputs such as Hardin's (1968) *Tragedy of the Commons*, the East African national governments have often pursued policy approaches based on transforming pastoralists and pastoralism to sedentarised ranchers and individualised and privatised landholdings. Overall, outcomes of such policy approaches have often been more negative than positive.

Overall experience of Maasai pastoralists in research

The Maasai community is a very popular and prominent – even romanticised – research subject, with little accredited to them or accruing to them in terms of newly generated and documented knowledges, and/or application of that knowledge to local contexts. When they occasionally participate in Indigenous research undertaken in their territory, they are often brought on board at the tail end of the research project – when concepts and research questions, processes,

administrative arrangement, and resource allocation have been settled/sealed. Their role in research projects has often been 'facilitatory' (interpreters, guides, respondents, security providers etc.) towards the realisation of pre-set objectives within pre-established research frameworks, and less as equitable research partners with agency to (co)create, (re)frame, or adjust the course of the research. In this way Indigenous community social actors' effective role and space in Indigenous research is ultimately reduced to that of 'filler materials' as opposed to 'active ingredients' and equal partners, granted space and opportunity to exercise agency. Instead, they are often co-opted into the research enterprise as 'collaborators' to manage the politics of belonging and legitimacy.

Little of their unique concerns, interests, and perspectives shows up in the ultimate analysis and authorship – an undertaking preserved for Global Northern researchers within their elite institutions, including their equally elite Global Southern partners who occupy national spaces with minimal opportunities for validation at the community research level. The realities of weak, pre-existing relations/engagement between research institutions and Indigenous peoples in-country, because of the nascent struggle for recognition of indigeneity in Africa, including in Kenya, (as compared to the Americas) further complicates the situation.

The national government funding support for research work in Kenya is less than optimal. The highest amount received by the National Research Fund was in 2017, in which Ksh 3.3. billion (£21.6 million) was allocated. In 2020, these figures went down to Ksh 0.5 billion (£3.27 million). As a result, most research work undertaken in the country comes from research institutions and governments from the Global North.

This apparent reluctance in optimal approach to sharing, exchanging, and generating knowledge in the context of traditional research goes against some established tenets in the management of knowledge amongst pastoral Maasai communities, as illustrated by the proverbs '*Mmeishaa e-lukunya nabo engéno*' ('One mind cannot monopolise all knowledges'); also '*Ngéni ooponu, naa ngéni eponari*' ('Knowledgeable is the visiting outsider, and so is the host'), and '*Ïyiolo ake enijo, Kake Mmiyiolo enikijokini*' ('You certainly might know what to say/ask, but you may not possibly know the responses you'd receive'). All these speak to the principles of mutual respect, reciprocity, and open-mindedness in the exercise of generation, sharing, and application of knowledge.

Research on Maasai and Maasailand has often enriched and enabled proliferation of academicians and publications in diverse fields/disciplines from – and in – the Global North, leaving behind a sustained trail of high 'illiteracy' within the research data-source communities, as scholarship opportunities attached to research projects are locked for students/scholars from the North – a situation which ultimately serves to reproduce the prevailing asymmetries of power with respect to Western epistemological influence in research. Northern institutions' research funding access modalities and reporting protocols are also so designed to retain or return resources in the Global Northern funders. The concentration of research work within Maasailand was recently brought to light through a protest letter in response to newly introduced research fees by the

County Government of Narok. The letter was drawn up by researchers conducting research across the Greater Mara ecosystem within Narok County (June 26th, 2020). The range of research work undertaken was summed up as 'theoretical and applied research on wildlife, human health, pastoral livelihoods, zoonotic disease transfer, land-cover change, and ecosystem function'. The letter was endorsed by at least 23 Senior researchers/professors representing highly recognisable northern institutions in the United States, Denmark and the UK,[25] with less than five local institutions.[26]

APPRECIATING THE PRESENT: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' SELF-DETERMINATION AND RE-THINKING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

Exercising agency – Assertive, growing and intensified Indigenous peoples' voices across scales

In the recent past, there is a notable shift in how Indigenous peoples are engaging with external actors within their territories. This shift is from a mostly reactive past – arguing against views, explanations, interpretation of their culture, identity, knowledge, and philosophies provided by others/outsiders/non-Indigenous – to one of pro-active, opinion shapers, and initiators of original thought from their own Indigenous lenses (Porsanger, 2010). Indigenous peoples have been asserting their agencies in several ways and across scales.

Proactive and coordinated Indigenous peoples' movements – at national, regional, and international level – have gained momentum. These movements are associated with regional and international mechanisms and processes that have a bearing on human rights, land, natural resource and environmental, representation in decision-making arrangements, ways of knowing, exercising agency, and preservation of cultural heritage. The UN human rights, environment and development-oriented negotiations spaces are platforms within which communities have influenced discourses and outcome decisions to reflect their interests and address their concerns. As a result, Indigenous knowledge systems and practices on land and natural resources, including rights to self-determination and representation, are increasingly being recognised within UN systems,[27] multilateral mechanisms, and national spaces.

25 Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute; Center for Biodiversity Dynamics in a Changing World (BIOCHANGE), Aarhus University; Nottingham Trent University; Norwegian University of Science and Technology; Yale University; Michigan State University; University of Liverpool; Colorado State University; University of Minnesota; University of Hohenheim; University of Glasgow; University of Florida; University of York; Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior; University of Nebraska-Lincoln; University of Copenhagen; IHE Delft Institute for Water Education.

26 Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Museums of Kenya, University of Eldoret, Kenya Wildlife Trust (KWT).

27 UNCBD Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); UNFCCC decisions – Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) under paragraph 135 of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Indigenous knowledge held by resource-dependent communities is now increasingly recognised as essential to biodiversity conservation and in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Around the world, local communities formerly painted as environmental villains are now celebrated by international conservation agencies as important allies because they are closer to nature and foster a sacred source of ecological knowledge. This shift in mindset reflects research-based arguments that knowledge claims of local people are intimately connected with historical understandings of their landscapes and complex ecological processes at the local scale, and should be incorporated into conservation science, climate response actions, and development planning and practice.

Although Indigenous knowledge is evoked in biodiversity conservation and climate change discourse and planning proposals, Indigenous peoples' actual participation as knowledge holders and actors in research work and intervention activities on their lands and territories remains incongruent with these gains in text. This is often related to the reluctance by scientists, state agencies, and development practitioners to relinquish power and devolve decision-making and knowledge creation processes to Indigenous peoples and local communities.

At the project level and/or research site(s), Indigenous communities are increasingly aware and are raising questions of process, substance, outcomes, and ownership, with respect to their role, perspectives, and impact of outcomes of interventions and research work undertaken within their territories. This Indigenous self-assertiveness is also reflected in initiatives that are Indigenous initiated, designed, implemented, and owned. Indigenous peoples are stepping out to demonstrate approaches, principles, and practices that would effectively respond to their historical and contemporary concerns in the way development and research is undertaken.

Indigenous peoples are pioneering and leading initiatives that seek to overcome a confluence of factors that have cumulatively precipitated the sorry state of Indigenous peoples of the world. The constraining factors include spatial disadvantage on account of occupying the remotest corners of their countries; a double tragedy of their traditional livelihoods and associated Indigenous knowledge system being ignored/demeaned while there is corresponding inequality in access to basic infrastructure and services (human capital development); weak social capital arising from social exclusion and discrimination; and the structural marginalisation within decision-making arrangements.

The Indigenous Navigator project[28] and Indigenous Peoples Sustainable Self-Determined Development (IPSSDD) approaches to development are examples of the said Indigenous peoples' self-initiated and driven approaches. The ultimate aspirations of these approaches are 'redefining and re-interpreting' development and research from the lens of Indigenous peoples, including addressing the need for disaggregation of data on Indigenous peoples and on the development of indicators

28 Available at: https://Indigenousnavigator.org/.

relevant for Indigenous peoples. In challenging approaches to development and research planning and practice, Indigenous peoples are asserting that their traditional political, economic, social, cultural systems, and ways of knowing be respected and allowed to co-exist with modern systems adopted by most nation states.

The concept of IPSSDD embodies certain values – equity, reciprocity, solidarity, harmony between people and nature, collectivity, and conservation of natural wealth for generations which have, thankfully, been reflected under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) article 3. The article provides that Indigenous peoples have a right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development (Porsanger, 2010). In this way, Indigenous peoples evolved the concept of self-determined development to assert that their ways of life and values, as manifested in their spiritual, cultural, and cosmological relationship with nature, their territories, and resources should not be destroyed by the project development and modernisation.

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING: INTERACTION WITH OTHER KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Appreciating nature and practice of Indigenous knowledge systems

Rethinking and reimagining enriched future approaches to Indigenous research calls for reflection on our historical interaction with, experiences, and appreciation of Indigenous ways of knowing, the historicity of their present realities, and their cultural heritage within which their knowledge systems are produced and applied.

These reflections trigger critical epistemological questions about the continuum of the research process, such as: Who is doing the research and about whom? What procedures/methods are used? Who owns and controls the tools/assets used in the research production process? Who defines the problem being studied and constructs the research instruments? Who interprets the information acquired and writes up the final report? Who finances the research and who is the audience? How will knowledge be reproduced and distributed (written? Accessible language?)? How accessible will the findings be to the population under study? These questions feed into broader questions related to ways of knowing, notions of reality, the interaction between various knowledge systems (scientific and Indigenous), and the processes of knowledge formation and application.

One of the immediate issues related to Indigenous research is how Indigenous knowledge systems are perceived, appreciated, and engaged within research work. Epistemology concerns different theories about knowledge, and specifically about how knowledge is produced, distributed, and consumed. It poses questions about

who can be a 'knower' (can Indigenous peoples?), about what beliefs must pass in order to be legitimated as knowledge (only tests against Global Northern research institutions/researchers' experiences and observations?), and about what kinds of things can be known (can 'subjective truths' count as knowledge?) (Mbilinyi, 1993).

Firstly, there is often prevailing misunderstanding of Indigenous ways of knowing characterised by perceptions that it is a static set of information, handed down with little change from one generation to another. Global Northern researchers and research work on Indigenous peoples often falls into the temptation of ignoring, if not devaluing and re-interpreting Indigenous knowledge within the frames of Western ways of knowing.

Important to appreciate some of the key elements/features of Indigenous ways of knowing, including how it is generated, synthesized, transmitted, and applied. Indigenous knowledge refers to knowledge and knowhow that has been accumulated across generations and which guide human societies in their innumerable interactions with their surrounding environment. It is generated through learning-by-doing, observations through exposure sensitivity, experimenting, and knowledge building (Berkes, 2012).

Indigenous ways of knowing are dynamic knowledge systems, with successive generations assessing and adapting 'old' knowledge to accumulate and create new knowledge. It is a shared system of knowledge that is collectively reshaped, enriched, and exchanged by a web of social actors. Indigenous knowledge is, therefore, continually called into question and refreshed.[29] Knowledge holders can adjust and modify their actions in response to environmental change. Cultural attitudes and values of society are the foundation on which such knowledge is acquired, transformed, and deployed (Takano, 2004).

Indigenous and scientific knowledge systems are anchored on distinctive world views and ontologies. While Indigenous knowledge systems are more about processes, and less of fixed bites of information, data, or fact, standard scientific measurements often tend to be: reductionist, highly structured, and abstract – focusing on a limited set of variables; a process of extrapolation from narrow data sets – a restricted set of matrices and focused on the mean values; and ultimately associated with a difficulty in downscaling data to suit local needs. Indigenous knowledge systems entail 'multi-dimensional ensembles' while specific scientific disciplines focus on 'single facets' (Takano, 2004, p.13). Indigenous knowledge systems are interconnected, integrated, socialised, interdependent, and experiential. Indigenous knowledge is practice-oriented with little appetite for theorising and discoursing, while Western ways of knowing exhibit weak linkages to application of the generated knowledge in the short term. These differentiations in ways of knowing and doing within and across knowledge

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29 Indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems and practices, including Indigenous peoples' holistic view of community and environment, are major source of adaption to climate change, but these have not been used consistently in existing adaption efforts. Integrating such forms of knowledge with existing practices increases the effectiveness of adaptation (Field, C.B., Barros, V.R., Dokken, D.J. et al., 2014).

systems begs certain questions: what synergies can be developed between knowledge systems that are anchored in distinctive world views and ontologies? How can joint decision-making, co-production, and co-ownership draw upon such diverse sets of knowledge, in part irreconcilable, to broaden the intellectual foundations and societal relevance of research and development actions of human endeavors?

As Mbilinyi (1993) observes: 'No one vision or gaze is free of bias and distortion… there is no one authoritative knowledge… Nor is there a privileged gaze from locations of the oppressed' (p.12). With respect to the complex process of knowing, Mbilinyi observes that: 'Different layers of meaning and different levels of causality exist in society; the most effective strategies for change are those which explore all the different layers and levels' (1993, p.13). There is, therefore, urgent need for caution, careful reflections, and deliberate efforts to pool together biophysical and social sciences to mobilise collective cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise to facilitate a move away from single facets attainable within specific disciplines towards unpacking the 'multi-dimensional ensembles' associated with Indigenous ways of knowing (Mbilinyi, 1993, p.13).

Power relations: The politics of Indigenous research

Research is an exercise in power relations. Power in efforts to generate, synthesize, give meaning, voice, and legitimation is encountered at different levels and across and within a range of actors. First there is historical power relations between researchers from the Global North (privileged knowledge holders of the research marketplace, resources, and instruments of legitimation) and Indigenous peoples (low literacy levels, weak representation in institutions of higher learning, and minimal access to resources to support and undertake own research). In this context, Indigenous research is perceived/projected by traditional academics as 'some nativist discourse', an exotic addition to 'real' and 'objective' research.

This situation grants outsider researchers 'authoritative voice' over Indigenous research (Smith, 1999, p.14), ultimately giving rise to and perpetuating hegemonic relationships between Indigenous research and outsider scholars. The outcome is a subordinated position for Indigenous peoples' actors, with diminished opportunities for self-determined actions and outcomes. These glaring power imbalances ought to be acknowledged and strategies developed to address its shortcomings.

Politics of representation and self-determination with respect to identity, territorial claims, Indigenous peoples' rights, and remedies for historical injustices within international and national spaces create what often becomes a common scenario for most Indigenous research. Any knowledge elicitation process is a relationship-building undertaking. The history of Indigenous peoples' encounters with 'outsiders' across the globe has often been everything else but positive for Indigenous peoples. Such encounters have often been brutal, characterised by displacement, dispossession, violence, and massacres. Research by 'outsider' researchers from the Global North is

therefore a discomfiting and uneasy encounter for Indigenous peoples. This historical reality calls for deliberate strategies and actions informed by these historical realities to build research relations founded on trust.

It is therefore critical that strategies are developed to provide space for Indigenous peoples to contribute their insights to inform research beyond existing literature and dominant academic theoretical frameworks predominantly founded on flawed historical relationships between Indigenous peoples and researchers outside of their social, political, and cultural contexts. These approaches should ultimately facilitate a shift towards granting Indigenous peoples the space to be crafters of their pathways to ways of knowing and doing.[30]

Future research approaches should therefore go beyond the dominant research approaches 'on Indigenous peoples' which is undertaken by 'outsider' researchers on their terms and for their own purposes or that of their sponsoring institutions. Instead, efforts should be made to promote and support Indigenous research – done by Indigenous scholars to develop Indigenous theorising, identifying, and applying Indigenous concepts and ultimately build their projects on an Indigenous research paradigm.

The other area of concern with respect to approaches to Indigenous research is the ensemble of research methodologies deployed. It is essential that future Indigenous research explore research methodologies that facilitate decolonisation of research methodologies by creating opportunities for Indigenous research to centre research concepts and world views. Such methodologies should essentially allow Indigenous research to break free from the frames of Western theories of knowledge – often quite different from those of Indigenous peoples – and produce new knowledge which Indigenous societies require and need for their development process (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Such approaches should facilitate the safeguarding against abuse of intellectual property rights of Indigenous peoples and from misinterpretation and misuse of Indigenous knowledge or attribution of sources of Indigenous knowledge.

Equity and fairness in accessing and allocation of research funds is another front for which re-evaluation is necessary. It is critical that research financing protocols are fair and equitable to enable accommodation of the unique circumstances of Indigenous peoples, such as diverse cosmovisions, cross-cultural collaboration dynamics – which may require more time to build than often contemplated in design of traditional research – different experiences of time, language, travel, and cultural practices and the ultimate need to overcome perpetuating inequitable structural and systematic inequalities.

Tauli-Corpuz (2010) proposes three core issues to be considered and negotiated in developing parameters and requirements for research on Indigenous issues: namely 1) *Respect*, entailing minimum requirement for participation, going beyond tolerance

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[30] Insights from the International Seminar on Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilisation, 20-22 March 2019, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

and paternalism and clear modalities for research outcomes to be disseminated 2) *Reciprocity*, which sets clear negotiation frameworks within the entire research cycle – allocation of specific roles; 3) *Reliability*, which entails elements of negotiation about research paradigms and processes, requisite research skills, ownership, and benefits for research. These principles relate to the need to provide optimal social-political environments to facilitate negotiations about research protocols and parameters to birth mutually respectful and beneficial collaborations/partnerships in Indigenous research.

GLIMPSES OF HOPE – EMERGING LESSONS AND EXPERIENCES ON INDIGENOUS RESEARCH

The challenges highlighted above with respect to experiences of Maasai Indigenous communities in Kenya in their interaction with Indigenous research undertaken within their territories all came to the fore during the *International Seminar on Indigenous Engagement, Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilisation*, held on 20-22 March 2019, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil[31], and from the case studies presented.

Key lessons reported from the seminar included the dynamics of the imbalance of political power, minimal tangible benefits left for communities post the research exercise, the need for interdisciplinarity in Indigenous research methodologies, the need for rethinking ways of citing and referencing Indigenous research sources, amongst other lessons. The urgent need to embrace interdisciplinarity in approaches to knowledge generation in the context Indigenous research was acknowledged and highly recommended.

The studies underlined the need for co-design, co-production and co-ownership of the process and outcomes of research projects. The reflections from all the case studies emphasised the urgent need to invest in building partnerships and relations of mutual trust and understanding. The said relationship needs to be institutionalised through creatively inclusive infrastructure within and across research institutions/ universities and funding bodies to ensure responsive and open solidarity frameworks amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies across scales.

The participants at the Rio seminar recognised the need to problematise our current perception of what constitutes 'good research' – essentially that associated with traditional publication. The concept of reflexivity in research, particularly in the context of Indigenous research, should be meaningfully and substantially supported, including creating room for failure while experimenting with new ways of knowing and doing.

In addition, there was a clarion call for 'keeping people at the front' and allowing for flexibility in existing rules and regulations around grant management, and administrative services around Indigenous research.

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31 https://peoplespalaceprojects.org.uk/en/projects/indigenous-research-methods/

The Resilient Pastoralism: Towards Sustainable Futures in Rangelands project[32], undertaken in Maasailand, Narok, Kenya, was one of the projects supported under this initiative. In many ways, the project made deliberate efforts to depart from the flawed historical approaches to Indigenous research.

Firstly, there was notable determination to involve the participating Indigenous community members in the entire research cycle – from design of methodologies, tools, and instruments for data collection, synthesis of the data generations, and ownership of research outputs. Secondly, there was use of Indigenous peoples-friendly approaches to data collection, such as 'resilience stories' and 'Photovoice'[33], which were employed to optimise engagement and capture Indigenous peoples' perspectives on the research question.

In addition, the use of technology-based tools in data collection, such as 'remote Sensing', triggered interdisciplinary collaborative work, helping to debunk myths around Indigenous communities' inability to effectively interact with and apply innovative technologies in their day-to-day activities. Importantly, the pastoral resilience project integrated support for translation of research material into the local Indigenous Maa language, which made it possible for participants without formal education to effectively engage in the research process and outcomes.

RETHINKING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH: CRAFTING A DESIRED FUTURE

There is an urgent need to appreciate and distinguish research done by 'outsider' scholars, often on their terms and for their own purposes or those of their institutions, from Indigenous research done on Indigenous terms and collaborative/joint Indigenous research. Research undertaken on Indigenous terms entails strengthening of Indigenous societies, use of their language on different levels, including research and education, incorporation of Indigenous knowledge in sustainable resource management, reproduction, and intergenerational transmission of knowledge. These approaches entail providing opportunities for Indigenous peoples to get in touch with their own capacities as change agents, including tapping from their own identities, values, and abilities so as to collectively articulate what really matters for them in research.

Such an approach will occasion opportunities for Indigenous peoples to 'decolonise' theories, elaborate Indigenous methodologies, and use Indigenous epistemologies (theories of knowledge) to make visible what is special and necessary, and what is meaningful and logical – essentially allow Indigenous research to break free from the frames of Western theories of knowledge. The envisioned approaches should help respond to questions on how to move from a co-opted, key informer and volunteer

32 https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/geography/research/projects/resilient-pastoralism

33 https://photovoice.org/

participant research paradigm into proactive originators, questioners, influencers, opinion-shapers and owner/co-owners of research process and outcomes.

Future Indigenous research work should integrate approaches that debunk the myth that answers to Indigenous peoples most critical questions lie outside their own knowledge base or capacity. The Indigenous research enterprise has essentially remained a hegemonic one in which power relations are tipped towards the Global Northern and Western traditional researchers and higher institutions of learning. Such an approach should help Indigenous peoples break loose from the hegemonic outsider stranglehold on the research enterprise – process, content, outputs, and resources.

Future Indigenous research approaches should integrate strategies that would help to fairly and inclusively redistribute the 'authoritative voice', and trigger and sustain a research space and practice that will allow Indigenous peoples to weave their own narratives and to tell stories in their own voices.

Future Indigenous research approaches should facilitate Indigenous peoples tap into their own values, ability, and commitment as change agents. There is need for affirmative action to enable qualified Indigenous human resources to succeed in Indigenous research and development processes which are conducted on their terms.

Deliberately targeted and sustained efforts towards promotion of synergetic actions of the diverse knowledge systems through mobilisation and pooling of expertise from diverse science fields to enable collaborative work within inter/cross-disciplinary teams to move towards broadening societal intellectual foundations, including mutually respectful understating of Indigenous peoples' knowledge, is essential and urgent.

It is also critical that those who are designing Indigenous research create research financing protocols that are fair and equitable to enable accommodation of the unique circumstances in the context of Indigenous peoples.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH TAKUMĀ KUIKURO

Indigenous Filmmaker and president of IFAX, Brazil

Thiago Jesus

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THIAGO JESUS

At the various events People's Palace Projects has held with you, we introduce you in different ways: as an artist, filmmaker, activist, and Indigenous leader. For some time now, you have also introduced yourself as a researcher. I would like to know what it means to you to be a researcher. What is it like to be an Indigenous researcher?

TAKUMÃ KUIKURO

I wonder if I really am a filmmaker, or a researcher, or just a person from the village. Until I was 15, I believed that we would never forget my people's culture, our history, our customs, our knowledge, and that studying them would not bring me anything new. I was interested in what was different, studying in the city, learning Portuguese, getting to know white man's culture. Today I see that things aren't quite like that.

When I started in the audiovisual field, I didn't consider myself a researcher.

During the immersive production process for my documentary *Pele de Branco* (Kagaiha Atipügü, 2012) everything changed. We wanted to get to know the history of our people and record it. For this, we dived into our reality with an investigative angle. We watched, talked, looked for information. The stories we told through the documentary made me realise the wealth of people's knowledge and the importance of each people's culture. During the filming, we encouraged people to value their own language, our ways of making and living. That's when I understood that we cannot forget our culture, our history, and leave it behind. We have to know and appreciate it. It's everything we have, who we really are. Our origins, our spirituality are where we were born, grew up, lived, learned from our parents and

grandparents. Our way of life, what we eat, how we fish, where and what we build our homes from, how we make our crafts are who we really are. How can I forget all this and turn into a white man now?

Starting there, I began to understand my role as a researcher and, more than that, as an Indigenous researcher within my village. I'm interested to know how my ancestors lived in the past when we didn't have pans, knives, no technology, how they carried out their activities. I'm an Indigenous researcher, an activist for my culture, an environmental activist and a documentary filmmaker. I am currently part of our volunteer fire brigade, because I am concerned about the forest fires on our land – even though fire is part of our way of cultivating the land. If fires are affecting our village, destroying our own homes, then we need to worry, reflect on it and act.

Cultural assimilation within

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODS: PARTNERSHIPS, ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILISATION

our community worries me. For example, the conversion to Catholicism of Indigenous people within the village. This does not correspond to our way of life, it clashes with our spirituality, it has a very large negative cultural impact. Today, my job is to study, record, and disseminate the values of our own culture, such as shamanism, prayers, traditional medicines, and so many other things. Searching and preserving the memory of and for my people.

There are still people who think like I thought when I was younger. To them, I say that we have to learn and value both things. Our culture and non-Indigenous culture. Thus, aware of who we are, our wealth and the place we rightfully occupy, we can actively occupy other spaces. Educational institutions, for example, as students, educators, researchers, and tellers of our own stories and knowledge. Decision-making spaces.

The current political context needs to be understood, the agendas proposed for laws created by government officials, so that we can question and fight against political projects that exclude, make invisible, or negatively affect Indigenous peoples. More and more, we Indigenous people are understanding the great impact that political decisions outside the villages bring to our communities and we are mobilising to defend our rights, our lives, our culture.

It's very interesting to hear you talk about your audiovisual production as research methodology inside and outside the village. Indigenous audiovisual production has become stronger in the last two decades in Brazil. Many villages and towns have their own filmmakers, and they occupy spaces of leadership and prestige within communities. How do you understand the role of film production in preserving Indigenous cultures?

I don't call my productions 'films'. I divide my productions into two distinct types: There are documentaries, with a constructed narrative, to be shown in universities, film clubs, festivals, etc. Records, on the other hand, are recordings that document community actions and activities, such as rituals, for example, and circulate only in villages.

As I said above, audiovisual work brought us the opportunity to recover our culture and introduce the reality of our communities to many people. The importance of this tool in our hands lies in its power to expand the reach of our words, the words of our Indigenous leaders. In this way, we have been able to send our souls far away from our villages, carrying the message of the community and fighting for our rights farther away. Through it, we are connecting with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in

other parts of the world. This video call of ours, for example, is audiovisual: you're in London and I'm in Canarana. I see the same power in other technologies, like the cell phone, the internet. As Indigenous teachers say, we have to know how to use new technologies in the village. They can bring benefits or harm to the community, depending on how we use them.

I have seen many Indigenous people producing their own films in their villages. Guaranis, Kaiowás, Tupinambás, Pataxós, amongst others, are producing their own material. Each one representing its people, its culture, in its own language. Indigenous researchers and filmmakers have been recognised for the importance of their work. We realise that our work allows us to tell our own stories. We no longer want to be portrayed just through someone else's viewpoint. The struggle of Indigenous peoples, today, in the audiovisual field or in any other area of work, is for us to become the protagonists of our own stories. In recent years, we have been able to see the benefits brought to Indigenous communities by audiovisual work. They gained visibility, and the film production market itself grew in the villages. We are increasingly occupying this market and I think it is very good that we can do this work, due to the prominence I mentioned above.

As well as research projects carried out by the Kuikuro people in partnership with People's Palace Projects and Queen Mary University of London, you also have very solid partnerships with university researchers in Brazil and in the USA in several disciplines: anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, health, amongst others. How important are these partnerships and this academic research for your people?

These partnerships and research projects are important not only for the Kuikuro people, but for the Xingu peoples and other Indigenous peoples in Brazil as well. Because researchers who study our way of life, aspects of our culture, in general, help us defend our rights outside the village. The studies and research that we produce together are disseminated in universities and in other spaces. Thus, it allows non-Indigenous people who have never set foot on our land, in our home, to know and recognise the importance of our culture.

It is essential that researchers and partners come to our territory, step on the earth, bathe in the river, paint themselves with *annatto* and *jenipapo*[34], really live our reality. Through this experience, they can do their work more truthfully. We feel that this way they value the exchange, and we can get to know and genuinely contribute to the work they propose. We often don't understand when researchers come here, do their research, and leave, taking all the knowledge they deem necessary, never to return. They no longer stay in touch. This kind of partnership is not interesting for us. But, there are others that bring things to the community in return, benefits, such as the exchange of knowledge, collaborative work, an exchange of perspectives. This is the kind of partnership we want.

Personally, I say that the greatest benefit that universities and other partners have brought us has been knowledge. Their strength and their power. These connections facilitate exchanges of knowledge. They open the way for us to introduce ourselves to other spaces and territories. They are important because they allow us to know and be known in other parts of Brazil and the world. Thus, we can say who the Kuikuro are, our culture, our work, our struggles. That's the big benefit. The thing about money is it runs out.

The COVID-19 pandemic was – and continues to be – a great threat to the integrity of Brazil's Indigenous communities. According to APIB (Brazil's Indigenous People Articulation), by the end of August 2021 there had been 1,190 Indigenous deaths, and 163 peoples had been infected across the country. The Kuikuro managed to liaise internally and delay the virus's arrival at the villages. When the contamination happened – which was inevitable – you had put in place a series of measures and protocols to minimise the possibility of there being tragic scenes in the community. Unfortunately the same can't be said for many peoples. Were your artistic and academic partnerships important in the Kuikuro people's response in tackling the pandemic?

Faced with the scenario of the great pandemic in the world, our partners were worried for us. They looked to the village and thought about how they could help us to organise ourselves in a preventative way. They shared with us their knowledge and information about the disease, contamination, and care. We even created a campaign to buy equipment, medicines, and food before the virus arrived in the village so that we could isolate the community. We really prepared well for the arrival of the virus because of this support. Partnerships were important because they helped us save lives.

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34 Annatto is an orange-red condiment and food coloring derived from the seeds of the achiote tree (Bixa orellana), native to tropical regions from Mexico to Brazil. Jenipapo is a fruit found in large parts of the Brazilian territory and is characterised by a brown, wrinkly shell.

The pandemic caused the process of going digital to really speed up. People who can are working from home, adapting projects, and keeping connected through electronic devices and video calls like the one we're having now. You often say that there's a constant tension in the village between the desire to become more and more integrated into the digital world of new technologies, and the importance of resisting, to preserve traditional culture. What has this challenge been like: of only being able to gather on digital platforms during the pandemic?

During the pandemic, everything became very individualised. The jobs, the research, are no longer really collective. People don't share in the same way within the community. We and the researchers are at home, and no one really listens or knows what's going on. Before this, researchers would arrive in the village and introduce themselves early on, in the centre of the village. Everyone knew what was going to happen, who would be interviewed, who would work with what. We could have conversations with people. It was good.

Nowadays, I participate in festivals, debates, meetings, which take place through video conferences. I'm on the computer all the time and it makes me tired. When it's over, you stay at your house, have a cup of coffee, and do the same things again. The head does not relax. This is, for me, a big challenge in pandemic times. I prefer to go places, present my work in person, be able to rouse people. When you meet and talk to other people, you are happier for the exchange. The head relaxes when you hug, kiss. Do you know what I mean? Nowadays, there is no longer that kiss, that hug, when you meet someone. It was really cool to be able to lay the table with people around, speak into the microphone to everyone. After the activity was over, you could talk, drink, wander.

I see social media and its good use as a great challenge. When I talk to young people in the community, I talk about not using their profiles on social media to post nonsense: taking advantage of that space for professional use. Because on social networks, it's not just us and our close friends who are seeing what is posted. The whole world has access, other people you don't even know. So, it is important to learn how to make good use of them and publicise cool things that are done within the village.

We are undergoing a moment of great crisis and strong resistance in Indigenous communities in Brazil against a controversial ruling over land, in defence of the right to quality public health services, against land invasions and illegal exploration on lands, against the effects of climate change. You are battling on many fronts. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges for Brazilian Indigenous peoples over the next 10 years?

We Indigenous people are living in a difficult situation. The current scenario puts us in a tough place. We are constantly fighting to defend our lives and the demarcation of our lands, against the backsliding attempts that threaten our rights guaranteed by the constitution. 'Demarcation now!', 'No to the Timeframe!', 'No to PL490!':[35] the cries of our resistance are many. When our lives are at stake, even if there is a pandemic and we know how serious it is, we cannot just stay in our villages. We have to go and fight, we have to mobilise. We ask ourselves: 'Are we going to die fighting or die in our village, seeing everything that is happening

35 Important Indigenous mobilisations and demonstrations are being held in Brasília and several other Brazilian cities to claim territorial rights for Indigenous peoples, and oppose new parliamentary proposals: the *Marco Temporal* (Timeframe) is a legal argument that Indigenous claims for protective demarcation of a territory should only be valid if it can be proven that the Indigenous people in question were living on that land at the date of the implementation of the Brazilian Constitution, on October 5, 1988. This fails to take into account the way the country's first inhabitants were forced off their lands between 1500 and 1988 through violence: mass exterminations, slavery, epidemics, murders. Among other measures, Bill PL490/2007 aims to bring the Timeframe thesis into law, not only making the demarcation of further Indigenous lands very unlikely but opening up lands already demarcated to a wide range of economic enterprises, such as agribusiness, mining, and the construction of hydroelectric plants on rivers.

and affecting us?'. And we already know the answer.

And how can universities serve Indigenous communities?

I think that in the next 10, 20 years, we must strengthen our partnerships even more. Researchers and universities must come together to promote projects that guarantee the representation of Indigenous people within government and academic institutions – so that we can defend our rights and demands. Encouraging the creation of an Indigenous party so that we can become federal and state deputies, for example. Creating scholarships for us to study at the best universities in Brazil and the world, scholarships to study English. This is our idea of partnerships to serve Indigenous communities, going forward.

In the last decade, the number of Indigenous and *quilombola*[36] students in public and private universities in Brazil has grown year on year. This is the result of several factors, including advances in Indigenous school education and public policies. The challenges these students face are enormous: relocation to other cities or states, financial difficulties, prejudice, et cetera. But, today, we are starting to

see Indigenous doctors, journalists, lawyers, teachers, politicians. We know that this reality is very recent and the experiences of Indigenous peoples are multiple, so I would like to ask: how important is it for young Kuikuros to go to university?

Older leaders, such as Ailton Krenak, Davi Kopenawa, Raoni, Megaron Txucarramão, fought for us and lived in Brasília. Recently, their role and importance has really come home to me. They fought to guarantee that our rights were included in the 1988 Federal Constitution, for Indigenous quotas in universities, amongst other important policies for us. But we can still expand this access. That's why I tell our partners who work in these institutions: If we understand how they work, it is easier for them to be in dialogue with us, to serve this cause, so our young people could study medicine, law, and other areas of interest to Indigenous peoples.

Young people in the community want to study. The use of new technologies and connectivity have made it easier for them to access knowledge and information instantly. These young people and children already realise the importance of preserving their cultures and preserving the environment. They understand about the laws that govern

us, they know about the new laws being created, they follow the movement of Indigenous peoples in Brazil. The strength of this new generation is cultural exchange – whether at a distance through technology or in person through meeting leaders, travelling, going to school. This exchange helps us recognise the struggle of other Indigenous peoples and support each other in our struggles.

You have four children yourself, aged from six to 15. Do you imagine they will study at university?

Yes. I mainly tell my son Mayupe that he needs to study so that one day we can put him in university, and he can become a doctor or any other profession he wants to do, so he can see the world. I explain to him that my father didn't study or go to the city, he just learned about our culture, fishing, farming. I didn't study until I was 15. But he has had the opportunity to study since he was little. He can go to school and learn to speak Portuguese. He can learn English. We already visit cities so that he can see and get to know other realities. One day, he could become an important representative of our culture, our history, our land. He will be able to see the world, communicate skilfully, fight for our rights.

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36 *Quilombo* is the Brazilian term for a community founded by escaped formerly enslaved people, an important part of the resistance to slavery in Brazil. Estimates of the number of Black Africans trafficked to Brazil between 1501 and 1888 vary from 4.9 million to 10.9 million. Indigenous and mixed race people also joined *quilombos*.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND VISUAL ARTISTS

Aislan Pankararu

Aislan Pankararu is a visual artist from the Pankararu people, natural from Petrolândia, state of Pernambuco, in northeastern Brazil.

He currently lives and works in Brasília, where he is a doctor who graduated from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Brasília (UnB). His artwork is born out of his nostalgia for his origins and the need to connect deeply with his ancestry.

For Aislan, art is an artistic and therapeutic embrace that allows him to affirm his struggle and belonging in the spaces he occupies. In 2020, in partnership with the Humanization Commission of the University Hospital in Brasília, he held his first exhibition, "Abá Pukuá" (Sky Man), exploring his key issues. In his works, made mainly on kraft paper, the colour white and circular lines predominate, recreating the typical matrices of his people. In 2021, he opened the show "Yeposanóng" at the Memorial dos Povos Indígenas, in Brasília.

Christopher Smith

Christopher Smith is the Executive Chair of AHRC and International Champion for UKRI. He has taught as a Professor of Ancient History at the University of St Andrews since 2002. At St Andrews, he was also Dean of Arts (2002-2006), Dean of Graduate Studies (2006-2009), and Vice-Principal (2007-2009), before being seconded as Director of the British School at Rome – the UK's leading humanities and creative arts research institute overseas – from 2009 to 2017.
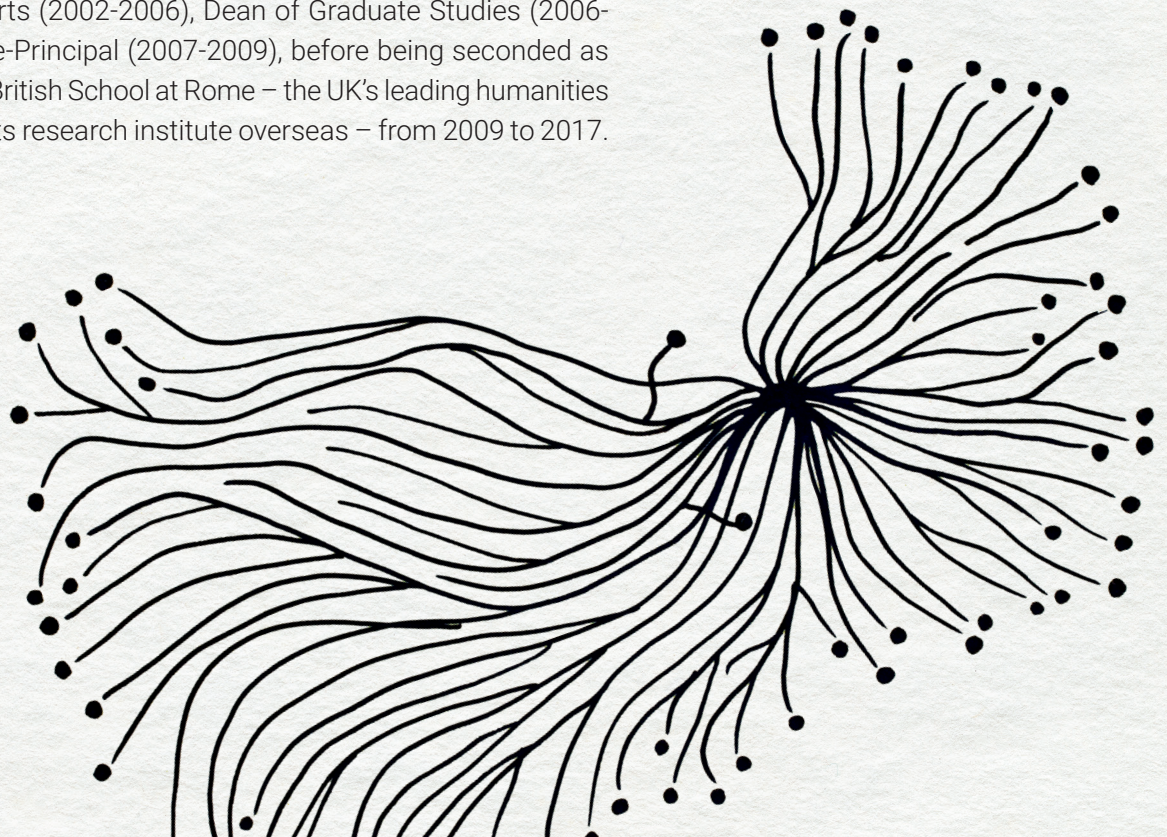
Andrew Livingston

Andrew Livingston hails from Taranaki, New Zealand, and studied Chemical Engineering at the University of Canterbury. After completing a PhD at the University of Cambridge, he joined the Department of Chemical Engineering at Imperial College in 1990, serving as Head of Department from 2008 to 2016. Since 2016 he has been the inaugural Director of the Barrer Centre at Imperial College. He served as interim Academic Lead in 2017 and, in 2019, as interim Director of the new Rosalind Franklin Institute, set up with a £100M investment from the UK Government to carry out ground-breaking research at the interface of engineering, physical sciences, and life sciences. In November 2019, he joined Queen Mary University of London as Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

Paul Heritage

Paul Heritage is Professor of Drama and Performance at Queen Mary University of London and Director of People's Palace Projects. For more than two decades, Paul has created award-winning cultural projects addressing human rights issues in Brazil and in the UK.

Takumã Kuikuro

Takumã Kuikuro is an internationally recognised filmmaker and a member of the Kuikuro people, a community who live in the upper reaches of the Xingu River in the Amazon basin. Trained through Brazil's NGO programme Video in the Villages (*Video nas Aldeias*), he received international acclaim for films including *The Day the Moon Menstruated*, *The Hyperwomen*, and *Kariokas*. In 2015, becoming PPP's Artist in Residence led to the film *London as a Village* (*Londres como Aldeia*), which was screened in the Ipatse and Kalapalo villages in the Xingu territory as part of *The Art of Cultural Exchange,* a research project led by Queen Mary and PPP's Paul Heritage. Since 2019, Takumã has co-curated the *Indigenous Research Methods* seminar series with Paul, and co-curated installations in the UK and US.

Giovanna Fassetta

Giovanna Fassetta is a Senior Lecturer in Social Inclusion at the School of Education, University of Glasgow. She holds a PhD in Sociology and currently leads and teaches MA courses, with a focus on inclusion in formal and informal education in relation to: ethnicity, languages, and culture; social class; gender; and intersectional forms of discrimination. Prior to joining academia, Giovanna worked for more than 20 years as a teacher and language specialist in Italy, Eritrea, and the UK. Giovanna's research portfolio includes projects looking at: migration and education; languages and social justice; conflict transformation; and peace-building. She is currently a Co-Investigator on the Culture for Sustainable and Inclusive Peace Network Plus.
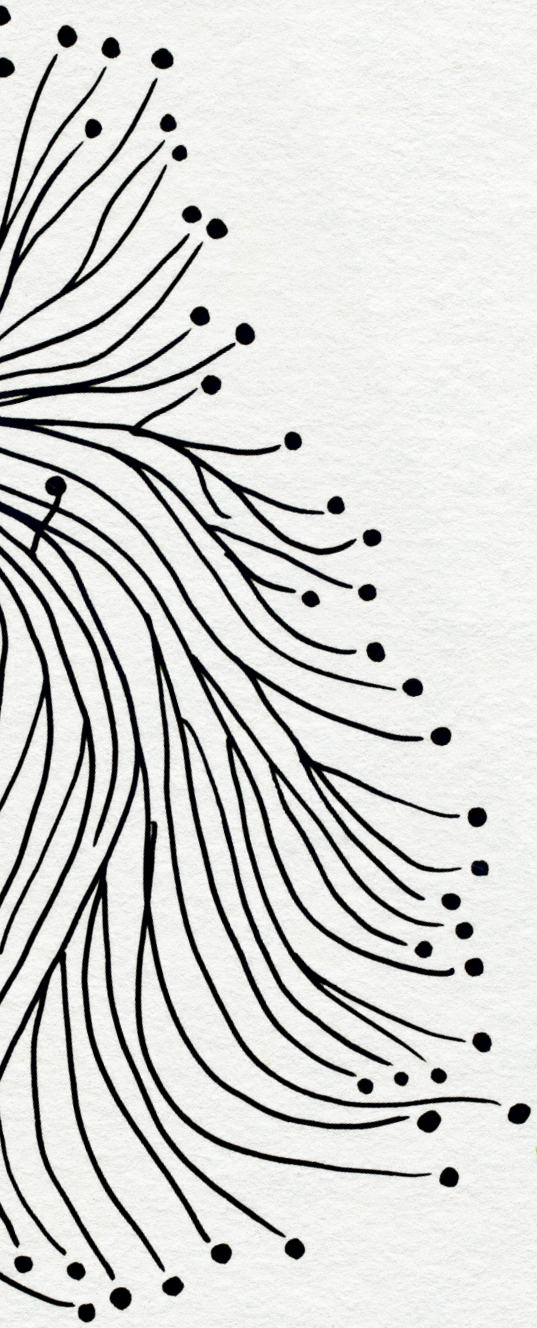
Maria Grazia Imperiale

Maria Grazia Imperiale teaches various postgraduate courses at the School of Education, University of Glasgow. She has conducted research on language education, multilingualism, and intercultural education in several ODA contexts, including contexts of emergencies and protracted crisis such as Palestine, Lebanon, Ethiopia, using decolonising and participatory approaches. She is the Academic Coordinator for the Culture for Sustainable and Inclusive Peace Network Plus, and a member of the UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts. She holds a PhD in Language Education and an MA in Applied Linguistics and Intercultural Communication.

Gareth Loudon

Gareth Loudon is Professor of Creativity and Head of Programmes for the MA/MSc in Innovation Design Engineering and MA/MSc in Global Innovation Design at the Royal College of Art in London. Both programmes are run jointly with Imperial College London. Previously, Gareth was Associate Dean (Research) at the Cardiff School of Art and Design. He has also worked for Apple and Ericsson Research in the design and development of new software and computer-embedded products. Gareth's research interests combine ideas from anthropology, psychology, engineering, and design. He has led international transdisciplinary research projects both in academia and industry, and is a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.
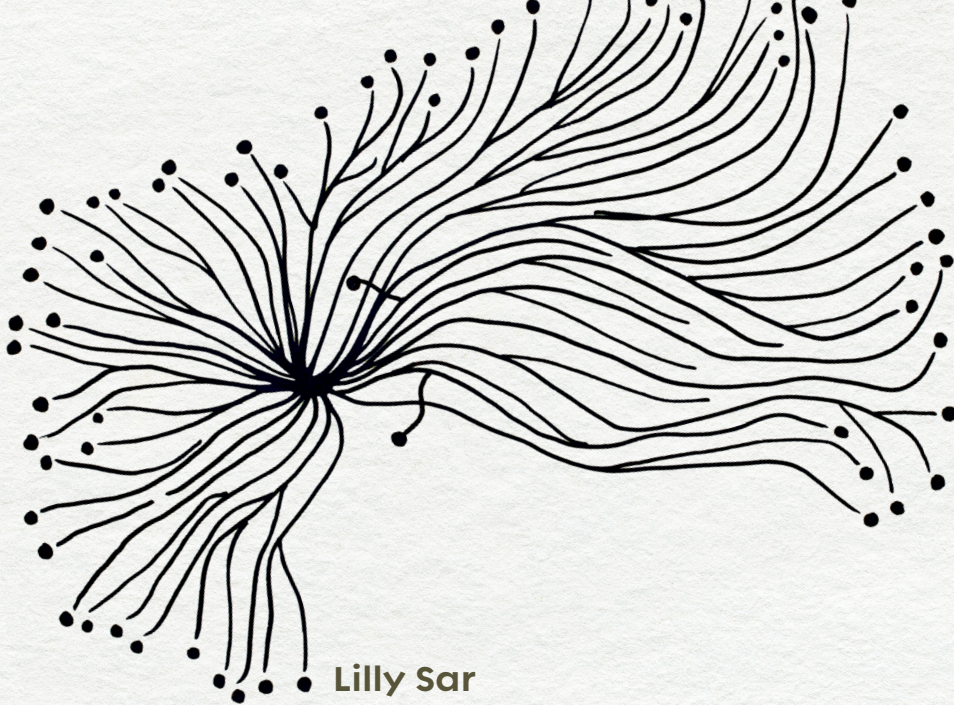
Lilly Sar

Lilly Sar is the Director at the Centre for Social and Creative Media at the University of Goroka, Papua New Guinea. She has worked extensively in rural communities, addressing global issues such as poverty alleviation, food security, environmental sustainability, and gender imbalance. She has diverse experience in utilising communication for social change methods to address development initiatives.

Kimaren ole Riamit

Kimaren ole Riamit is an Indigenous people's leader from the Maasai Pastoralists Community in southern Kenya. He is a Founder-Director of Indigenous Livelihoods Enhancement Partners (ILEPA), a community-based Indigenous peoples' organisation based in Kenya that works on Indigenous Pastoralist communities' concerns. Kimaren holds an MA in Development Anthropology, a postgraduate diploma in Project Planning and Management, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Foods, Nutrition and Dietetics.

Thiago Jesus

Thiago Jesus is a London-based Brazilian creative producer, curator and researcher. He works as Senior Project Manager at People's Palace Projects and leads the Indigenous Exchange and Climate Action programme. Thiago is a Royal Society of Arts fellow, holds a Master's Degree in Visual Culture from the University of Westminster and is currently a PhD Drama candidate at Queen Mary University of London with a London Arts and Humanities Partnership (LAHP) Research Studentship.

In 2019, People's Palace Projects organised the first Indigenous Research Seminar in Rio de Janeiro and gathered Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, activists and artists from all over the world to discuss the past, present and future challenges of Indigenous Research. This initial activity was followed by two online seminars in 2020 and 2021. Now, and coinciding with COP-26 in Glasgow, PPP is launching this thought-provoking original publication that will be presented during the fourth and last international webinar in October and November 2021.

Indigenous Research Methods: Partnerships, Engagement and Knowledge Mobilisation is a compilation of think pieces, reflections and articles from a range of authors from Brazil, Kenya, Papua New Guinea and the UK. It builds upon three years of experiences and exchanges that started in Rio. The aim is that this book contributes to further debates and scholarship around Indigenous identities and heritage, self-determination and empowerment, capacity building and political agency - among other pressing issues. Ultimately, the book seeks to bridge the gaps between different ways of creating, sharing and mobilising knowledge and resources.