

Chapter 10

Humanities in the Age of Blockchain Technology and Web 3.0

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ABSTRACT

Although there has been a call for the transformation of the world from the Eurocentric paradigms to a decolonised and decentralised world, the role of technology is still embedded and continues to be at the centre of everything in society. Over the past few years, particularly from 2019 to 2022, since the discovery of the COVID-19 pandemic, the technological interdependency intensified by moving contact spaces to online platforms, private resources to open resources, including the pedagogical space. Despite advances in technology and pedagogy and their relation to education, and the focus on the local and global, the new internet and teaching and learning including its policy still lack serious engagement with blockchain technology and the metaverse, as well as how to effectively utilise it. This chapter address this gap by using Howard Gardner's theory of 'multiple intelligences' to consider the role of blockchain technology and the metaverse as new options for the facilitation of open-ended teaching and learning that has emerged in the age of Web 3.0.

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SURFING THE WAY

It is here where the question of blockchain technology and Web 3.0 are explored concerning the scholarship field of the humanities and thus looking at its potential contribution to teaching and learning cannot be left un-entertained. The wave of Web3.0, its technological development, and solutions should be entertained by the humanities because of the tools and freedom it could offer. At the center of this progress what should also be positioned is the question of access to knowledge which most of the time is presented from a Eurocentric perspective. The Eurocentric perspective is based on distortion, exclusion, and whitewashing of most non-European knowledge systems. Knowledge systems are important for the development of human beings so they can develop the world they are living and operating in. A human being cannot grow without benefiting from the knowledge system of the parents that they have gathered from their culture, experience, and social existence. To think about blockchain technologies and Web 3.0 concerning the humanities is about a decolonized access and production to knowledge that is normally shared under colonial restrictions which are centered around European standards. This is important to grapple with how knowledge systems are restricted, in what is called coloniality of knowledge, to stand the test of colonial boundaries in that they are representations of unexplored knowledge which is left on the periphery of the humanities.

To argue for the inclusion of blockchain technology in academia is not something new. To argue for consideration of blockchain technologies and Web 3.0 to the humanities specifically is to argue for access, originality of knowledge, recognition of location, convenience, and pluriversal knowledge in the humanities. The technology that comes with blockchain, the apparatus that is new and yet untrustworthy, but necessarily needed yet frowned upon, brings to the table convenient ways in which knowledge can be excavated, shared, verified, stored, and utilized. This implies, in an innovative sense, exploring ways of connecting, recording, and licensing knowledge in the humanities that cannot be excluded from benefiting from the solutions that the new technology has to offer. This does not suggest the inclusion of untested technology for the sake of trends, but to explore different options that the modern/colonial world did not offer for the humanities, especially the ones that challenge the Eurocentric/Westernized paradigms. The Eurocentric/Westernized paradigm is the one that closes out the non-Eurocentric indigenous knowledge systems, in the Eurocentric humanities taught in a westernized setting that polices knowledge. This policing of knowledge went as far as arresting indigenous traditional knowledge to present it from a limited perspective and absent technology. The absence of technology means limited ways in which teaching, and learning can be conducted.

It is from this position that the new technology can be embraced as another option that has the potential to decentralize how knowledge is produced, shared, validated,

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