Part I

Colonial Matrix of Power

1

Introduction

A Neocolonized Africa

> One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to the decolonization of the world. This led to the myth of a 'postcolonial' world. The heterogeneous and multiple global structures put in place over a period of 450 years did not evaporate with the juridical-political decolonization of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same 'colonial power matrix.' With juridical-political decolonization we moved from a period of 'global colonialism' to the current period of 'global coloniality.'
>
> (Ramon Grosfoguel 2007: 219)

This book deals with the predicament of Africans in a 'postcolonial neocolonized world' that was created by the negative processes of Western modernity as it spread across the world. The term 'postcolonial neocolonized world' is used to capture the structural, systemic, cultural, discursive, and epistemological pattern of domination and exploitation that has engulfed Africans since the Conquest (with a capital 'C' to signify it as a multifaceted process rather than an event and to underline its foundational influence on the domination of modern African history by global (i.e., Western) history. Spivak (1990: 166) used the term 'postcolonial neocolonized world' to describe the problematic terrain in which the ex-colonies operated with the Western world that occupied the apex of global power hierarchy while the developing world languished at the subaltern bottom. Since that time, the colonies have found it hard to climb on ladder of global power hierarchy and have thus remained at the bottom where norms and rules are routinely handed down to them from the metropolitan capitals of the industrial North. The term 'postcolonial

neocolonized world' thus captures an entangled situation where the African and the Western world meet under highly racialized, hegemonic, hierarchical and unequal terms.

While the term 'postcolonial neocolonial world' might sound convoluted, it best captures a complex situation of truncated African liberation project that gave birth to a problematic and fragile African nation-building process. It encapsulates an African state of 'becoming' that never materialized. The envisaged new African postcolonial world and a new African humanity that were expected to be borne by the decolonization struggle were soon captured and engulfed by strong neocolonial imperatives that shaped the African liberatory process into emancipatory reformism. Therefore, at the centre of the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' are the delicate issues of African liberation and freedom as well as African development and knowledge production which were never fully realized beyond some emancipatory pretensions. The main weakness of emancipatory projects is that they do not question the core logic of Western modernity that globalized Euro-American views of the world and that constructed a racialized, hierarchical, hegemonic, patriarchal and capitalist global social system. Part one of this book discusses the colonial matrices of power including how Euro-American hegemonic knowledge banished alternative epistemologies from Africa and other parts of the Global South to the barbarian margins of society and out of the global intellectual space. It also articulates and elaborates on the core differences between emancipation and liberation as utopiane registers of freedom and explains why decolonization became a terrain of myths of independence and illusions of freedom.

Within Africa, the envisaged 'postcolonial' dispensation was submerged and engulfed by the 'neocolonial' world. Eventually the aspired for African 'postcolonial' world and the existing 'neocolonial' world have been panel-beaten into a cul-de-sac, better described as the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' by invisible colonial matrices of power underpinning the current unequal world social order. The 'postcolonial' and the 'neocolonial' as states of being were forced into an uneasy and abnormal coexistence where they had to interact tendentiously, with the latter policing and preventing the former from fully emerging and disengaging from debilitating colonial matrix of power.

This book, therefore, returns to one of the foundational moments in the development of modern African history whose implications for the postcolonial African present and future are far-reaching. Most African scholars

have largely studied and articulated this monumental but negative process from a restrictive political economy perspective where it is commonly reduced to a problem of economic underdevelopment and inequalities.

While analyses of the economic predicament of Africa are important, they focus on only one key trap that disabled the birth of a brave postcolonial African world after 1945. What this book demonstrates is that the global neocolonial snares, otherwise known as colonial matrix of power were a complete package with social, economic, cultural, ideological, aesthetic and epistemological contours that combined to reduce, silence, dominate, oppress, exploit and overshadow the non-Western world. Throughout the book an attempt is made to read and interpret modernity from the perspective of the Global South in general, and Africa in particular, and to produce knowledge on Africa from a decolonized perspective.

One of the strategies that have sustained the hegemony of the Euro-American-constructed world order is its ability to make African intellectuals and academics socially located in Africa and on the oppressed side to think and speak epistemically and linguistically like the Euro-American intellectuals and academics on the dominant side. This trap has made it very difficult for African intellectuals and academics to sustain a robust and critical perspective of Euro-American hegemonic knowledge and the asymmetrical power relations it enables. In this book the hidden Euro-American epistemological locus is unmasked with a view to reveal how Euro-American colonial expansion and domination was able to construct a 'hierarchy of superior and inferior knowledge and, thus, of superior and inferior people around the world' (Grosfoguel 2007: 214). What African intellectuals and academics must do is to strive to shift the location from which the hegemonic paradigms are enunciated and in the process read and interpret African history from a critical African and Global South perspective.

Already such African scholars as Muiu and Martin (2009) have initiated a new reading of African history and African postcolonial present from what they termed 'Fundi wa Africa' (close English equivalents of the Kiswahili word 'fundi' would be 'tailor', 'builder', 'mechanic' or 'repairer'). Their intervention takes the form of a new paradigm of the African state informed by the simple principle that the 'core of the state is the people who reside within its boundaries' whom it must serve (Muiu and Martin 2009: 191). What these scholars have done is to try and unearth the values that underpinned what they term the 'indigenous Africa' that existed from ninth century BCE (before the Christian era) to AD 1500 (the onset of the trans-Atlantic slave trade).

Muiu and Martin (2009) trace the history and cultural unity of Africa from as far back as Egypt and Kush in the ninth century BCE without necessarily falling into romanticization of African history as glorious and dominated by pristine village and state democracies. Far from it. Rather, they reveal diversity of political systems, social stratification, economic inequalities and a variety of African religious beliefs and languages. In short, the 'Fundi wa Africa' theory is indeed one of the emerging knowledge systems poised to contest Euro-American hegemonic knowledge, which has consistently denied the existence of an orderly and progressive Africa prior to the colonial Conquest.

The locus of enunciation of African history from the 'Fundi wa Africa' perspective is clearly African, interdisciplinary and historical. It is also clear on the fact that the Westphalian template of the state that was imposed on Africa by colonial modernity and carried over into the postcolonial African present does not work well for Africans. Hence the need to reconstitution of the postcolonial state with a view to grounding it within positive African values, embedding it within African society and imbuing it with indigenous institutions. This approach is indeed laudable and this book brings another angle to complement these constructivist paradigms on the African state.

My entry point is clear. On top of recovering 'indigenous' institutions, values and systems, there is further need to understand the history of colonial conquest from AD 1500 to the present moment because it is the era that covers the dark aspects of modernity, including such reprehensible practices as exploitative mercantilism, slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid and neocolonialism wrecked havoc on indigenous histories, institutions, values and systems, creating the fundamental problems of the neocolonial Africa we live in today. It was during this period that the ideas of race and racism were unleashed on Africa and used to construct and 'organize the world's population into a hierarchical order of superior and inferior people that becomes an organizing principle of the international division of labour and of the global patriarchal system' (Grosfoguel 2007: 217).

In my opinion, before we can even begin to suggest reconstitution of the postcolonial state on the basis of indigenous African values, institutions and systems that have been unearthed by Muiu and Martin (2009), we need a thorough knowledge of the operations of the present-day colonial matrix of power that made it impossible for decolonization to be carried to its logical conclusion of creating a new Africa imbued with new humanism and inhabited by truly free and liberated African people. It is not enough to argue that the founding fathers of African postcolonial states did not restructure inherited

colonial states to make them accountable to the African people. The difficult question is how feasible was this option within a postcolonial neocolonized world?

There is need for new intellectual and academic interventions that transcend the twentieth century mythology of a decolonized African world. The decolonization standpoint obscured the continuities between the colonial past and current global colonial, racial, patriarchal and hegemonic hierarchies and, in the process, contributed towards continuities of 'invisibility of "coloniality" today' (Grosfoguel 2007: 220). These observations led me to revisit whole issues about empire, new imperialism and coloniality with a view to elaborating on the neocolonization of Africa world. But my approach does not in any way foreclose possibilities of radical alternatives to colonial modernity as well as initiatives to de-Europeanize modernity of its alleged Greek genealogy through studies that explain such earlier African civilizations and cultures as those of Carthage, Egypt and Kush dated to the ninth century BCE. For Africa, therefore, the terrible and long-lasting consequences of colonial modernity unfolded from the onset and process of colonial conquest.

Therefore, to gain a deeper and complete understanding of the neocolonization of Africa, this book draws conceptual and theoretical tools from the critical coloniality perspective. This is a perspective articulated by radical Latin American scholars operating under the Modernity/Coloniality Research Programme that seeks to construct a 'de-colonial thinking' that refracted and transcended the present problematic 'postcolonial neocolonized world' underpinned by Western epistemologies of domination and exploitation. As defined by the Anibal Quijano:

> Coloniality is one of the specific and constitutive elements of global model of capitalist power. It is based on the imposition of a racial/ethnic classification of the global population as the cornerstone of that model of power, and it operates on every level, in every arena and dimension (both material and subjective) of everyday social existence, and does so on a societal scale (Quijano 2000: 342).

The book focuses on three main concepts of coloniality: coloniality of power; coloniality of knowledge; and coloniality of being. These are useful analytical tools enabling a deeper understanding of the roots of African predicaments and dilemmas, be they political, social, ideological, economic or epistemological. Briefly stated, coloniality of power confronts and speaks directly to the four constitutive elements of Western domination and exploitation of the non-Western world. The first being control of African economies, including land expropriations, and exploitation of labour and natural resources. The second

aspect was the usurpation and control of African kingly and chiefly authority and power by colonizers. This process entailed the reduction of defeated African chiefs into lowest-ranking colonial officials responsible for supervision of Africans as providers of cheap labour and taxpayers. The third lever is control of gender and sexuality together with influencing the structuring of African families and forms of education. The final contour is control of subjectivity and knowledge, including imposition of Western epistemology and shaping the formative processes of development of black subjectivity.

Coloniality of power articulates continuities of colonial mentalities, psychologies and worldviews into the so-called 'postcolonial era' and highlights the social hierarchical relationships of exploitation and domination between Westerners and Africans that has its roots in centuries of European colonial expansion but currently continuing through cultural, social and political power relations (Quijano 2007; Grosfoguel 2007).

On the other hand, coloniality of knowledge addresses the epistemological questions of how colonial modernity interfered with African modes of knowing, social meaning-making, imagining, seeing and knowledge production, and their replacement with Eurocentric epistemologies that assumed the character of objective, scientific, neutral, universal and only truthful knowledges (Escobar 2007). Since the time of the European Renaissance and Enlightenment, Westerners worked tirelessly to make their knowledge the only truthful and universal knowledge and ceaselessly spread it through Christianity and other means across the world, in the process appropriating and displacing existing African knowledges. Western knowledge and imperial power worked together to inscribe coloniality across the African continent and other parts of the non-Western world. That way, Western domination and Eurocentrism assumed universality (Quijano 2000).

Coloniality of being is another useful analytical tool that helps to analyse the realities of dehumanization and depersonalization of colonized Africans into *damnes* (the condemned people and the wretched of the earth) (Fanon 1968a; Maldonado-Torres 2007). Under colonialism, colonized Africans endured hellish life experiences informed by existing racialized hierarchies of power that prevented any humane coexistence between the black colonized Africans and white colonizers. The world of the colonized became a domain of violence, war, rape, diseases, death and mourning as they were denied full humanity and reduced to non-beings who subsisted and lived within the underworld of coloniality (Mignolo 2007; Quijano 2007; Grosfoguel 2007; Maldonado-Torres 2007; Escobar 2007).

Life in the informal settlements (shacks) of South Africa provides a good example of a hellish life as an underworld of coloniality of being where human beings live in unearthed shacks without protection from lightning. There are no toilets and no sources of clean water. Violence is endemic. Poverty has become an identity itself. Social peace and human security is perpetually absent. The South Africa experience is discussed in detail in chapters five and six of this book.

Samir Amin, the Egyptian political economist, is one of those African scholars who have consistently engaged with the problems of neocolonialism, imperialism, globalization and neoliberalism from a world systems perspective (Amin 1989, 1991, 1997, 1998, 2000). Amin is well-known for his 'delinking thesis' among his other various important intellectual interventions and contributions to the agenda of Third World liberation. As a political economist his ideas have an economic slant. He is also a strong believer in socialism as a universal alternative to capitalism. In presenting delinking as a pre-requisite and transitional strategy to socialism. Amin articulated four propositions in justifying delinking:

> First, the necessity of delinking is the logical political outcome of the unequal character of the development of capitalism […] Unequal development, in this sense, is the origin of essential social, political and ideological evolutions […] Second, delinking is a necessary condition of any socialist advance, in the North and in the South. This proposition is, in our view, essential for a reading of Marxism that genuinely takes into account the unequal character of capitalist development. Third, the potential advances that become available through delinking will not 'guarantee' certainty of further evolution towards a pre-defined 'socialism.' Socialism is a future that must be built. And fourthly, the option for delinking must be discussed in political terms. This proposition derives from a reading according to which economic constraints are absolute only for those who accept the commodity alienation intrinsic to capitalism, and turn it into an historical system of eternal validity (Amin 1990: xiv).

The delinking Amin has in mind is a careful and strategic one that takes the form of a transition during which underdeveloped countries would adopt new market strategies and values that are different from those of the developed nations. He also uses delinking to mean a consistent refusal to bow to the dominant logic of the world capitalist system (Amin 2006: 27). To Amin, therefore, delinking means 'the pursuit of a system of rational criteria for economic options founded on a law of value on a national basis with popular relevance, independent of such criteria of economic rationality as flow from the dominance of capitalist

law of value operating on a world scale' (Amin 1990: 62). In short, delinking should involve placing less emphasis on comparative advantage, and playing more attention to the introduction of economic, social and political reforms in the interest of the underdeveloped countries.

The key weakness in the delinking thesis, however, is the belief that a major problem like economic underdevelopment can be solved through piecemeal national interventions. How can a global problem be solved through national or local solutions? Chapter Two of this book provides a detailed interrogation of the limits of some of the solutions dependency theorists offered to the African problems of economic development and political domination. It was Amin who identified 'five monopolies' used by the dominant Western world to keep the developing world in a subjugated position. These are the monopoly of technology, including military superiority of the dominant nations; monopoly over global finances; the monopoly of access to natural resources; monopoly over international communication and the media; and the monopoly of the military means of mass destruction (Amin 2000). If African and other developing nations were trapped in this exploitative and dominating monopolies, how then could delinking premised on individual nations be a solution?

At another level, Amin (2009) meticulously dealt with the problem of Eurocentrism as a core component of the present world. He defined 'Eurocentrism' as a world view fabricated by the domination of Western capitalism that claimed that European cultures reflected the unique and progressive manifestation of the metaphysical order of history. To Amin, Eurocentrism is nothing but an ideological distortion of reality, an incredible mythology as well as a historical and moral travesty based on appropriation of Greek rationality and Christianity to create, legitimize and justify the exploitative capitalist social order together with the conquest of the non-Western world (Amin 2009: 160-175). In this way, Amin was engaging in a worthwhile deconstruction of the making of a dominant Western world which today masquerades as a divinely-ordained scheme of the world. Amin has revealed that 'Europe' is nothing but a culturalist construction that masquerades as universal (Amin 2009: 165).

Two warnings were flagged in Amin's analysis of Eurocentrism relating to how non-Europeans were reacting to it. The first is the common navel-gazing attempts at returning to the ancient cultural roots, a position that informed some Islamic religious and African nationalist fundamentalisms. To Amin, this is a reactionary, blind and unprofitable rejection of the scientific view

of the world and the progress made so far. The second involves attempts to project socio-economic diversities and pluralism as the basis of difference. To Amin, this response is inappropriate because its provincialism invites inevitable and insoluble conflicts among nations (Amin 2009). He concluded his interrogation of Eurocentrism with a legitimate call for a 'Non-Eurocentric View of History and a Non-Eurocentric Social Theory'.

The key problem with Amin's suggested solutions to Eurocentrism is that they fall into the same Eurocentric emancipatory option that believes that in spite of its myriad of problems, capitalism reflected a certain universal rationality that must be accepted by the developing world. Emphasis on rationality is in itself a reflection of the extent of how interpellated by Western epistemologies some of Amin's articulations are. Therefore, his call for 'the socialist universalism' founded on non-European, universal and rational world order able to overcome the contradiction inherent in capitalist universalism, is informed by political economic thought that is itself not freed from Western epistemology.

Amin seems to be concerned about how to remove Eurocentrism from the modernist project. Which he believes to be tainted by European culturalism, thus preventing it from becoming a progressive universal project (Amin 2009: 17). What is however not clear in Amin's analysis is what constitute universal values. He calls for what he termed 'modernity critical of modernity' (Amin 2009: 17). It is also not clear whether this 'modernity critical of modernity' is a reformist agenda or a call for alternative modernity informed by African thinking and imagination of the world. But this critique of Amin's interventions is not meant to diminish his overall contribution to progressive thinking about how the developing world might free itself from the snares of global matrices of power, which are fully discussed in Chapter Two of this book. Amin remains one of the most consistent and unwavering critics of Western domination of Africa in particular and the developing world in general.

This book builds on the extensive literature on neocolonialism, Eurocentrism and globalization, focusing specifically on how the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' was created and how its structures and modes of power continue to impinge on African identity formations, nation-building projects, and politics of knowledge production; as well as how the poorest Africans have remained the worst victims of the racially-constructed world build by Western modernity..

Neocolonialism is studied not as the last stage of imperialism as Kwame Nkrumah (1965) would have us believe, but as the present global condition

within which subsists the 'postcolonial African world' as a disciplined and shattered imagination of freedom. Neocolonialism today underpins global coloniality which currently flexes its muscles in the form of globalization through which Western particularistic ideas, values and traditions are being spread across the world as global norms of governance. Global coloniality refers to the continuities of colonial practices and imaginations across space and time on a global scale (Grosfoguel 2004:315-336). It helps our understanding of the global power imbalances between Africans and Europeans in and out of the continent.

When we think along these lines, it becomes clear that the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' is a domain of myths of decolonization and illusions of freedom and a terrain of unfinished nation-building, fragmented identities and failing economic development. At its centre is the reign of epistemological colonization. The 'postcolonial neocolonized world' lacks coherence, essence and life of its own. It is an arena of frustrated dreams and shattered visions. In short, it is a world that is overseen and controlled remotely by global coloniality through invisible colonial matrices of power. It is this depressing situation that forced the Marxist revolutionary Che Guevara (1965:10) to argues that. 'As long as imperialism exists it will, by definition, exert its domination over other countries. Today that domination is called neocolonialism.'

The implication of this is that the postcolonial African world exists only as that which is absent. It exists as an African idea of liberation and an aspiration for freedom. This is an idea for which some Africans have paid the ultimate price, while others were incarcerated for a long time, including Nelson Mandela who was jailed for 27 years. Despite the sacrifice of these people postcolonial Africa is still far from being truly freen; if anything, it has merely entered into another phase in the colonial continuum. Kwame Nkrumah was quite right in describing neocolonialism as the 'last stage of imperialism'. His further remark on the subject is equally instructive. According to him:

> In place of colonialism as that main instrument of imperialism we have today neo-colonialism. […] Neo-colonialism, like colonialism, is an attempt to export the social conflicts of the capitalist countries. […] The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neo-colonialism increases the gap between the rich and the poor countries rather than decreasing the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world (Nkrumah 1965: 8).

In place of the imagined postcolonial world, there exists a 'postcolonial neocolonized world' as a problematic terrain of emptiness, illusions, myths and shadows of being free and decolonized. Within this 'postcolonial neocolonized world', African leaders have no power and freedom to decide on the course of any development of their countries without approval from Washington, London, Paris and other Western capitals.. Those who try to defy this logic of dependence are severely disciplined, if not eliminated. African scholarship has also becomehostage to Western epistemological hegemony installed by what is called 'Enlightenment'. All these problems are rooted in what Chabal and Daloz (1999) call 'a crisis of modernity'.'

It must be surprising to some that this book is focusing on the problems of neocolonialism some fifty years after the end of colonial empires. My quick response is that a postcolonial African world has not yet been fully realized and there is need to explain why this is the case and dispel some dangerous myths of decolonization and illusions of freedom that compelled and induced Africans to relax and postpone the liberation struggles before achievement of its set goals. The second response is given by the leading Nigerian historian, Toyin Falola, who had this to say:

> […] how can one theory replace another so fast, how can scholarship resemble fashion and weather, changing so rapidly? Why should scholars of Africa follow and accept all fast-changing academic trends, if their conditions are either constant or changing for worse? Why should they keep replacing one mode of analysis with another if they are yet to overcome their own limitations, both practical and intellectual? They can do so in order to participate in the debate in a 'global academy,' but they must consider the consequences for Africa (Falola 2001: 20).

The twentieth century dream of decolonization was only partially accomplished. Africans continue to live in a neocolony dominated by the 'coloniality of power'. Grosfoguel (2007: 217) has defined 'coloniality of power' as an entanglement of multiple and heterogeneous global hierarchies and heterarchies of sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploitation where the racial/ethnic hierarchy of the European/non-European divide transversally reconfigured all of the global power structures.

In simple terms, the concept of 'coloniality of power' is useful in capturing colonial experience and epistemologies even now that direct colonial adminis-trations have been rolled back. The coloniality of power that is addressed in this book manifests itself in the cultural, political, sexual, spiritual, epistemic and economic spheres. Grosfoguel (2007: 220) is correct in arguing that

decolonization discourse has obscured the continuities between the colonial past and current global colonial/racial hierarchies and, therefore, contributed to the invisibility of coloniality today. Abiola Irele is in full agreement with this, arguing that the West has exerted so much pressure on the African experience to the extent that 'it is no exaggeration to say that all forms of modern African expression have been conditioned by it' (Irele 1991: 58)..

What Africans celebrated as independence was a myth taken for reality as invisible snares of coloniality of power were ignored, thereby denying the birth of a truly postcolonial African world. In other words, the authentic postcolonial era is still part of unfulfilled African aspirations. The postcolonial African world is an imagined space of freedom and identity reconstruction that is still being fought for. It forms a major part of African aspirations that emerged from the terrain of colonial encounters of the 15th century which Comaroff and Comaroff describe in the following terms:

> The colonial encounter also had the effect of reinforcing some features of indigenous lifeways, altering or effacing others, and leaving yet others unengaged. Along the way, too, new hybrids came into being: new aesthetic styles and material arrangements, new divisions of wealth and sense of identity, new notions of peoplehood, politics and history (Comaroffs 1997: 8-9).

The Comaroffs further argue that colonization was multifaceted from its beginning. It was as much a cultural as a political enterprise. It was as much about cartography and counting. It was as much about the practical logic of capitalism as about bodily regimes. It was also about the brute extraction of labour power 'as much as anything else about inscribing in the social world a new conception of space, new forms of personhood, and a new means of manufacturing the real' (Comaroffs 1997: 16-17).

A postcolonial African world was expected to be a terrain of African rebirth and socio-political recreation of African selfhood that had been affected by alienating forces of colonialism. A new African consciousness of being free from colonialism was expected to dominate and shape the postcolonial African world. A series of struggles were fought to achieve this objective. These struggles ranged from the primary resistance of the nineteenth century, through the pan-Africanist congresses that began in 1900, the Negritude movement of the 1930s, the anti-colonial liberation wars of the 1950s and 1960s, struggles for economic development of the 1970s and 1980s that were torpedoed by the Washington Consensus-inspired Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and civil society-spearheaded struggles for democracy of the 1990s right up to the revived pan-Africanist initiatives galvanized by the millennial African Renaissance.

The envisaged end product was supposed to be a new and brave African postcolonial world and a new humanity where African agency, dignity and identity have been restored after years of colonial and neocolonial domination. But this African dream has not yet materialized. The African postcolonial world remains an aspiration rather than a reality. Ashcroft (1997) has argued that the term 'postcolonial' was does not refer to 'after colonialism'. On the contrary, he posited that postcolonialism began when the colonizers arrived and did not vanish when the colonialists rolled back direct colonial administrations after 1945. To him, postcolonial analysis examined the full range of responses to colonialism. The term thus describes 'a society continuously responding in all its myriad ways to the experience of colonial contact' (Ashcroft 1997: 21). But in this book, the term 'postcolonial' African world is extended to also depict an imagined independent African future without colonialism that the decolonization process was expected to achieve but failed.

Therefore, what exists as the African postcolonial world is characterized by a lack of essence. The African crisis of essence had to do with the fact that instead of African revolutionaries taking full and effective charge of the birth of a fully liberated and confident African political baby, the decolonization process became overseen by the erstwhile colonial masters who were bent on building a neocolonial world rather than an African postcolonial world. For the 'Anglophone' world, Lancaster House became the political maternity ward for the delivery of truncated African re-birth with British and American powers overseeing the overall process and channelling it straight into a neocolonial direction. The situation was worse for the 'Francophone' countries on the continent where the former colonial power (France) was embraced as an innocent father figure and decolonization was interpreted in simplistic terms of 'democratization' under the tutelage of France. Leopold Sedar Senghor, the founding father of Senegal, expressed the pathetic view of decolonization of the Francophone countries when he said:

> In Africa, when children have grown up they leave their parents' hut, and build a hut of their own by its side. Believe me; we don't want to leave the French compound. We have grown up in it and it is good to be alive in it. We simply want to build our own huts (Senghor 1957:13).

French neocolonialism operated under what became known as *Francafrique* or *Francophonie*, concepts that captured a false decolonization where the colonial power (France) continued to dominate the French West African countries (Whiteman 1997). Some African leaders like Senghor, Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Gnassigbe Eyadema of

Togo, Denis Sassou-Ngesso of the Republic of Congo, Idris Deby of Chad and Hamani Diori of Niger celebrated this neocolonialism as a sign of continuation of good relations between France and Africa. Consequently, what was expected to be postcolonial states and nations became mere small huts within the bigger neocolonial houses that managed the economic affairs and influenced the political trajectory of the continent!

This compels a new book that captures the reality of the African postcolonial world as a terrain of truncated visions and frustrated aspirations. The book provides a new critical interpretation of African history and politics predicated on a discursive reading of dominant narratives of the trajectories of the making of the African continent and African identities. The coloniality perspective is employed in unpacking the politics lying behind the idea of Africa in general and the construction of African identities in particular. This approach to African history and politics takes full account of the role of power and its epistemology in constructions of identities and institutions as well as inscription of particular forms of knowing and knowledge on Africa. In this new reading of African history and politics, the African postcolonial world is discussed as existing but absent. What exists is the 'postcolonial neocolonial world' which Africans continue to contest as they struggle for freedom and strive to reconstruct their identities.

The coloniality perspective privileges the subaltern side of colonial difference as it critiques and challenges hegemonic European paradigms that have assumed 'a universalistic, neutral, objective point of view' (Grosfoguel 2007: 213). The concept of coloniality is different from colonialism as it refers to the longstanding patterns of power that emerged from colonialism and continue to define culture, labour, intersubjective relations and knowledge production, long after the end of direct colonialism. It is that continuing dominating phenomenon that survived colonialism. It is hidden in discourses, books, cultures, common sense, academic performances, and even self-images of Africans (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243). Africans have breathed and lived coloniality since their colonial encounters and it continues to shape their everyday life today.

Coloniality emerged as the darker side of Western modernity that unfolded in terms of racial classification of human population as new identities were created such as European, white, Indian, black, African, Negro, mestizo and others. At the centre of this classification was the birth of Eurocentrism as an identity forming process that proceeded through binaries and dichotomies of inferior-superior, irrational-rational, primitive-civilized, and traditional-

modern (Quijano 2000: 348). These binaries enabled a shift from the Cartesian notion of cogito ego sum (I think, therefore I am) to the imperial motto of ego *coquiro/ego conquistus* (I conquer, therefore I am) that legitimized all sorts of colonial conquests and violence against those considered non-Western people (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 245).

The ideological life-spring of colonial conquest and colonial violence was the questioning of the very humanity of colonized people. It was this questioning of the humanity of the colonized people that authorized slavery and other forms of abuse, repression, exploitation and domination of Africans in particular and other ex-colonized people in general. Within this imperialist scheme, colonized and racialized subjects were considered dispensable beings of very questionable humanity. To crown it all, a Western conception of human history emerged which ran from state of nature to Europe as the centre of world civilization, creator and exporter of modernity (Mignolo 1995; Quijano 2000). One of the core logics of coloniality and the colonizer's model of the non-Western world is the notion of emptiness which Blaut aptly expressed in the following words:

> This proposition of emptiness makes a series of claims, each layered upon the others: (i) A non-European region is empty or nearly empty of people (hence settlement by Europeans does not displace any native peoples). (ii) The region is empty of settled population: the inhabitants are mobile, nomadic, wanderers (hence European settlement violates no political sovereignty, since wanderers make no claim to territory). (iii) The cultures of this region do not possess any understanding of private property—that is, the region is empty of property rights and claims (hence colonial occupiers can freely give land to settlers since no one owns it). The final layer, applied to all of the Outside sector, is an emptiness of intellectual creativity and spiritual values, sometimes described by Europeans as an absence of 'rationality' (Blaut 1993: 15).

South Africa is one country where white settlers once claimed that they did not dispossess the Africans of land since they found the land depopulated by the devastating black-on-black violence initiated and directed by King Shaka of the Zulu Kingdom. This view has, however, been countered by modern historians like Julian Cobbing (1988) who argued that the notion of Mfecane (traditionally dubbed Shakan wars of conquest) that caused depopulation of the interior regions of South Africa was an alibi for white invasion, conquest and occupation of African lands (see also Etherington 2001). A detailed case study of South African discourse in this regard is given in Chapter Six of this book. The chapter also details the dynamics of race politics, including

mobilization of scientific racism to justify the exclusion of Africans/blacks from the nation and to re-identify them as uncivilized natives whose course of development could not be pitched at the same level with white trajectories of development. Blacks were only wanted within the racially fenced white space as providers of cheap labour to the white-owned farms, factories and mines.

At the centre of the imperial/colonial world in general, race classification and control of labour complimented each other, resulting in the colonized peoples being reduced to unpaid and unwaged labour forces with paid labour reserved for whites. The racial inferiority of Africans/blacks constructed by colonial modernity implied that they were not worth any wages. Quijano has observed that:

> Thus, in the control of labour and its resources and products, it is the capitalist enterprise; in the control of sex and its resources and products, the bourgeois family; in the control of authority and its resources and products, the nation-state; in the control of intersubjectivity, Eurocentrism (Quijano 2000: 545).

Coloniality of power is, therefore, one of the main levers of colonial modernity and has continued to sustain the notions of inferior-superior motif in the intersubjective relations of whites and blacks. The concept of coloniality of power speaks directly to the entanglement and entrapment of Africa and other ex-colonized parts of the world in the ever-present colonial matrix of power of the modern/colonial world (Mignolo 2007: 158). It is a global hegemonic model of power established since the colonial encounters that articulated race and labour, as well as space and peoples, according to the needs of capital and to the benefit of white European peoples. Thus, the neoliberal democracy that currently masquerades as a global salvation for the multitudes only hides coloniality of power that maintains the hierarchies of races created in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as Europe constructed itself as the centre of the world civilization and whites put themselves at the apex of the human development ladder while pushing Africa into a permanent subaltern position.

Ramon Grosfoguel (2007: 216) has distilled nine contours of coloniality of power that underpin the current world order. The first is the formation of a particular global class formation where various forms of labour (slavery, serfdom, wage labour to petty-commodity production and many others) were co-existing and being organized by capital as a source of production of surplus value through the selling of commodities for profit in the world market. The second contour was the international division of labour of the core and periphery, where in the periphery coercion and authoritarian forms

predominated. The third contour was the creation of an inter-state system of politico-military organizations manned by European and American males and ready to discipline deviant states like Iraq and others (Grosfoguel 2007: 216).

The fourth contour was an elaborate global racial/ethnic hierarchy that privileges Western people over non-Western ones. The fifth strand is an equally elaborate global gender hierarchy that privileges males over females and Western patriarchy over other forms of gender relations (Spivak 1988). This strand is related to the next one of a sexual hierarchy that privileged heterosexuals over homosexuals and lesbians, invariably feeding into some politics of homophobic ideologies that are noticeable in countries like Zimbabwe, an ex-British colony that seems to adhere strongly to idea of heterosexuality as the norm. The seventh contour is that of privileging Christianity over all other non-Christian/non-Western spiritualities.

The eighth contour is an epistemic hegemony that privileges Western knowledge and cosmology over non-Western knowledge and cosmologies that is evident in universities across the world. The final strand is a linguistic hierarchy between Western languages and non-Western ones leading to the pushing of African languages to the barbarian margins of folklores (Grosfoguel 2007: 216-217). The concept of coloniality is very useful as it enables ex-colonized peoples to understand why the present racial/ethnic hierarchy of the capitalist world system continues to be constituted on a cultural criterion whose origins lie in colonial encounters and colonial relations. It enables historians to historicize and explain why some human beings were at the bottom of the ethnic/racial hierarchy while the Anglo-Saxons remained dominant at the top of the world. Quijano summarized the situation very well when he said:

> Racism and ethnicisation were initially produced in the Americas and then expanded to the rest of the colonial world as the foundation of the specific power relations between Europe and the populations of the rest of the world. After five hundred years, they still are the basic components of power relations across the world. Once colonialism became extinct as a formal political system, social power is still constituted on criteria originated in colonial relations. In other words, coloniality has not ceased to be the central character of today's social power […] Since then, in the intersubjective relations and in the social practices of power, there emerged, on the one hand, the idea that non-Europeans have biological structure not only different from Europeans; but, above all, belonging to an 'inferior' level or type. On the other hand, the idea that cultural differences are associated to such biological inequalities […] These ideas have configured a deep

> and persistent cultural formation, a matrix of ideas, images, values, attitudes, and social practices, that do not cease to be implicated in relationships among people, even when colonial political relations have been eradicated (Quijano cited in Grosfoguel 2004: 326).

Coloniality of power is closely linked with coloniality of knowledge which is another important concept that is very useful in any understanding of the dilemmas of the 'postcolonial African neocolonized world'. Coloniality of knowledge directly addresses the crucial question of how Western modernity spread through displacing other cultures, subordinating others and colonizing the imagination of the colonized peoples. This took the form of repression of existing African beliefs, ideas, images, symbols and forms of knowledge that were found to be repugnant to global colonial domination (Quijano 2007: 169). The other strategy was to expropriate and siphon from the colonized their knowledge that was found useful to the global colonial agenda.

Having done this, Westerners then imposed their own forms of knowledge, which they mystified and placed far out of reach of the generality of the colonized population. They made it seductive and only accessible to a few colonized people who were expected to provide service to the colonial projects. The teaching of Western culture and knowledge was done for the purposes of reproduction of colonial domination (Quijano 2000: 541). The African continent has not managed to free itself from epistemological, cognitive and colonization of the mind and imagination, as detailed in Chapter Two of this book.

Another long-lasting impact of the underside of modernity in the non-Western world is what Maldonado-Torres termed coloniality of being which clearly encapsulates the lived experiences of colonized people during and after direct colonialism. It grapples with the question of effects of coloniality on the lived experience of the colonized and ex-colonized ordinary people. As noted by Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) imperialism and colonialism were underpinned by a racist/imperial Manichean misanthropic scepticism as a form of imperial/colonial attitude that questioned the very humanity of the colonized people and doubted whether they had souls.

This imperial/colonial attitude was a deliberate strategy that opened the door to all forms of abuse, including killing, enslaving and raping and use of various forms of violence that could not be inflicted on Western people. The colonized people experienced not only alienation but also depersonalization as they were stripped of humanity. Race played a central role to create what Frantz Fanon (1961) termed damne as a conquered being deprived of their

humanity. Colonized people became the condemned of the earth. Maldonado-Torres (2007: 255) had this to say on the coloniality of being:

> Hellish existence in the colonial world carries with it both the racial and the gendered aspects of the naturalization of the no-ethics of war. *Indeed, coloniality of Being primarily refers to the normalization of the extraordinary events that take place in war*. While in war there is murder and rape, in the hell of the colonial world murder and rape become day to day occurrences and menaces. 'Killability' and 'repeability' are inscribed into the images of the colonial bodies. Lacking real authority, colonized men are permanently feminized (emphasis in the original source).

The key problem is that this colonial psyche reproduced itself in African nationalists as products of colonial rule and the authoritarian and violent streak has continued into the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' where, in countries like Zimbabwe, the dominant nationalist party (the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front-ZANU-PF) that professes to have liberated Africans from settler colonialism has subjected Africans to the worst forms of violence and death. (A detailed case study of Zimbabwe is provided in Chapter seven of this book).

The other important point emerging from deployment of coloniality perspective towards understanding the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' is that of 'locus of enunciation'. This concept reveals that all writers, thinkers and speakers write, think and speak from a particular location in the power structures:

> Nobody escapes the class, sexual, gender, spiritual, linguistic, geographical, and racial hierarchies of the modern/colonial/capitalist/patriarchal world-system (Mignolo 2000: 54).

The fact is that all knowledges and worldviews are always situated. It is, therefore, important to analyse the 'locus of enunciation' of thinkers and writers on African issues if one is to gain a deeper understanding of the African world. The 'locus of enunciation' refers to 'the geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks' (Grosfoguel 2007: 213). What is challenging is that often thinkers and dominant Western paradigms tend to hide their locus of enunciation. A major crisis in the imagination of an African postcolonial world was that some of those socially located in the oppressed side of power relations did not openly think from a subordinate epistemic location.

Colonial interpellation and neocolonial imperatives forced some Africans that were socially located on the oppressed side of the colonial difference, to

think and speak epistemically like those on the dominant positions. Others fell into epistemic populism that was never translated into concrete emancipatory projects. Writing about this African crisis Ngugi wa Thiong'o had this to say:

> Is an African renaissance possible when we keepers of memory have to work outside our own linguistic memory? And within the prison house of European linguistic memory? Often drawing from our own experiences and history to enrich the already very rich European memory? If we think of the intelligentsia as generals in the intellectual army of Africa including foot soldiers, can we expect this army to conquer when its generals are captured and held prisoner? And it is worse when they revel in their fate as captives (Ngugi wa Thiong'o 2009: 92).

Therefore, while not losing sight of the disempowering effects of colonial modernity that enabled such crippling processes as the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, neocolonialism and globalization on the African continent, the book is equally concerned about the problematics of African struggles aimed at transcending negative aspects of colonial modernity as well as attempts to domesticate the positive aspects of modernity if not launching a new form of African modernity that is liberating and empowering. The immanent logic of colonial modernity has deeply interpellated African imaginations of liberation and continues to shape African worldviews.

Pratt (1992) and Ahluwalia (2001) introduced the notions of 'contact zones' and 'African inflections' which help in gaining a deeper understating of the making of the 'postcolonial neocolonized world' and how Africans have consistently responded to its challenges and discursive constraints. The making of the African postcolonial world emerged within complex contact zones imposed on the world by accidents as well as a combination of deliberate imperial/colonial interventions unleashed by western modernity.

Pratt's concept of 'contact zones' covers the process of how people who were geographically and historically remote from each other came into contact with one another through such processes as navigation, migration, the slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism and evangelism resulting in some measure of peaceful co-existence, conquest, coercion and violence as well as blending and conflict. At the centre of contact zones exists 'radically asymmetrical relations of power' (Pratt 1992: 7). The African postcolonial world has remained hostage to these radically asymmetrical power relations that developed during the colonial encounters of the fifteenth century.

There is no doubt that what exist as the African postcolonial world reflects the paradoxes and contradictions of the past. The reality was captured by the Comaroffs who argued that:

> […] how many features of the present have emerged out of the paradoxes and contradictions of the past; out of the tensions, endemic to the colonial out-reach, between 'universal truths' and 'parochial cultures,' between a society founded on individual rights and one characterized by racial (dis)enfranchisement, between the world of the free citizen and that of the colonial subject. These tensions suffused the encounter between Africans and Europeans, animating histories that eluded easy control by their dramatis personae, histories carved out of the dialectics of exchange, appropriation, accommodation, struggle (Comaroffs 1997: xv).

Africans have been struggling since then to extricate themselves from the complex and sometimes invisible snares of colonial matrix of power bequeathed them by colonial modernity. Colonial modernity is not reducible to the events of colonialism and the post-Berlin Conference scramble and partition of Africa. It is read discursively as a broad worldview that was underpinned by strong epistemological interventions that culminated in the colonization and transformation of African consciousness. The broader meaning and implication of colonial modernity for Africa was well captured by Mudimbe (1988: 2) as 'the domination of physical space, the reformation of natives' minds, and the integration of local economic histories into Western perspective.'

This book, however, does not reduce all present-day African problems to what Mudimbe (1988: 6) termed the 'colonializing structure.' Africans themselves have also exercised their agency not only to resist colonial modernity but to create new forms of oppression and exploitation of one another. Ahluwalia's (2001) concept of 'African inflections' is important in that it provides a critical lens of reading how African societies have constructed and reconstructed themselves through engagement with western and colonial modernity. In this book the overarching theme is that of how Africans have confronted legacies of colonialism and present-day snares of colonial modernity while trying to define and shape a postcolonial future.

What is often ignored in existing accounts of the making of the African postcolonial world together with its problems of fragmented identities is that colonial modernity delayed the processes of state-building and nation-building up until the 1960s for West, East and Central Africa and until the 1980s and 1990s for Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. It was not until the end of the Second World War in 1945 that the decolonization project was embraced globally as human progress and Africans were accepted as a people who deserved national self-determination. Consequently, the decolonization of Africa launched into the international political landscape a coterie of the youngest, weakest, poor and artificial states that had to masquerade as nations soon after birth (Clapham 1996).

Jackson (1990) described these young and fragile African postcolonial states as 'quasi-states'. These were states which were readily recognized as sovereign and independent units by other states within the post-1945 normative terms of the international system, while in reality they did not meet the demands of 'empirical statehood' (Jackson 1990). The criteria for 'empirical statehood' entailed the capacity to exercise effective power within their own territories and the ability to defend themselves against external attack. Christopher Clapham (1996: 15) argued that postcolonial African states enjoyed negative sovereignty ascribed to them by other states rather than positive sovereignty rooted inside and manifested in effective internal control and popular acceptability.

At the centre of African struggles to define and shape a postcolonial future, the challenges of nation-building and identity formation loom large. Nation-building continues to be contentious work-in-progress alongside the pan-African politics of forging continental unity. The celebrated anti-colonial nationalisms of the 1960s failed to create stable postcolonial nation-states. Ethnicity and regionalism have remained strong forces reverberating beneath weak and fragile African nationalisms.

The current African postcolonial world suffers terribly from weak nationalisms that camouflage ethnicity and regionalism even when they may be serving as state ideologies. The result has been manifest in state weakness and even state failure that has created theatres of conflict, war and violence. Weak and fragile nationalisms were rooted in poor and skewed social base of imaginations of the nation that had to carefully navigate and synthesize complex precolonial histories into usable past, contested myths of foundations of the nation that hardly agreed to hang together, unresolved definition of authentic subjects of the nation, unclear criteria of belonging and citizenship, contested and undefined sources of political legitimacy as well as rules of political succession to political office.

But at another level, African leaders have since the beginning of the new millennium been busy with building pan-African institutions as part of the resolution of past problems. These initiatives have witnessed the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU), the establishment of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the adoption of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the construction and adoption of the innovative African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and many other AU institutions such as the African Standby Force that is meant to deal with the problems of conflict and security on the continent.

Kwame Nkrumah's long deferred dream of a United States of Africa gained new resonance, this time galvanized by the philosophy of African Renaissance. At the launch of African Renaissance Institute on 11 October 1999, the then president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, proclaimed that the 21st century was to be 'Africa's Century' (Mbeki 1999). The AU was expected to concretize this African dream. Hence Kay Mathews argument that the establishment of the AU in July 2002 was the most important development in the trajectory of the African future (Mathews 2008: 25). The AU's *2004 to 2007 Strategic Framework of the African Union Commission* spelt out the AU vision as 'Africa integrated, prosperous and peaceful, an Africa driven by its own citizens, a dynamic force in the global arena' (African Union Commission 2004: 7).

However, beneath these noble initiatives and millennial optimism, conflicts continue to haunt the African continent with devastating impact on economic development, human security and social peace. Such areas as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), Northern Uganda, Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and Zimbabwe have become flies inside the pan-African ointment spoiling everything and becoming speed traps tied to the wheels of pan-Africanism. South Africa, whose post-apartheid leaders Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki articulated the philosophies of 'ubuntu' (African humanism) and the African Renaissance, was engulfed in embarrassing xenophobic violence in May 2008 that shocked the continent. Can we read these conflicts positively as signs of the violent death of the old order bequeathed on the continent by colonial modernity?

It is not easy to say whether the continent is experiencing a Gramscian interregnum characterized by the traumatic but slow death of the old order bequeathed on it by colonial modernity as a darker side of Western modernity on the one hand, and a violent re-birth characterized by washing away of the old order with the blood of martyrs, on the other. Only time will tell. This book, which grapples with the complex question of the current trajectory and future direction of the African continent, however, cannot ignore the complex questions of discursive formation of African identities and the conflict-laden nation-building processes together with issues of power and epistemology that are at the core of the African predicament. These issues are posed and interrogated over a long time, from the time of the cartographic construction of the continent itself to the present.

But Fantu Cheru has already warned us about flaws of Thabo Mbeki's version of African Renaissance. He noted that it was merely an 'expression of desire, need and hope rather than a plan for the future.' He also lamented 'the

absence of any coherent, continent-wide agenda or framework for change' (Cheru 2002: xii). The key crisis in Mbeki's vision of African Renaissance is that it is 'in line with the much-discredited neoliberal project of the 'Washington Consensus' than what the idea actually implies' (Cheru 2002: xii-xiii).

As a way forward for Africa, Cheru suggested that African leaders must understand globalization as an irreversible process that needed to be navigated carefully. He dismissed radical counter-hegemonic strategies to global neo-liberalism as 'unthinkable in the near future' (Cheru 2002: xiii). What African leaders must work towards is to try and appropriate and 'manage globalization to their own levels, without heavy-handed intervention by the institutions of the world system' (Cheru 2002: xiii). Cheru suggested the following as the future-oriented strategy for Africa: '*a guided embrace of globalization with a commitment to resist* through pre-emptive national or regional development strategies and economic policy coordination' (emphasis is in the original source) (Cheru 2002: xv).

While Cheru's strategy is attractive to a pan-African audience, its implementation is impossible within a continent that is still deeply ensnared by colonial matrix of power. Chapters 3 and 4 of this book explore in detail the invisible snares of colonial matrix of power that make it very difficult for the African people to enjoy self-determination over economic and political development of their continent. But the trajectory and future of the African continent has continued to pre-occupy academics and intellectuals, including Ali A. Mazrui who:

> The ancestors of Africa are angry. For those who believe in the power of ancestors, the proof of their anger is all around us. For those who do not believe in ancestors, the proof of their anger is given another name […] But what is the proof of the curse of the ancestors? Things are not working in Africa. From Dakar to Dar es Salaam, from Marrakesh to Maputo, institutions are decaying, structures are rusting away. It is as if the ancestors had pronounced the curse of cultural sabotage (Mazrui 1986: 11).

In a recent preface entitled 'Black Berlin and the Curse of Fragmentation: From Bismarck to Barack' in Adekeye Adebajo's book *The Curse of Berlin: Africa after the Cold War*, Mazrui reiterated his deep concern about making sense of the current developments taking place within the African continent. This time around he exposed his anguish through a series of rhetorical questions:

> Are we facing birth-pangs or death-pangs in the present crisis of boundaries of identity? Are we witnessing the real bloody forces of decolonization—as the

> colonial structures within arbitrary borders are decaying or collapsing? Is the post-Berlin colonial slate being washed clean with the blood of victims, villains and martyrs? Are the refugees victims of a dying order, or are they traumatized witnesses to an epoch-making rebirth? […] Is this blood from the womb of history giving painful birth to a new order? (Mazrui 2010: xxii).

Not only Mazrui was concerned about understanding the trajectories of the African continent. Terence Ranger, one of the fathers of African nationalist historiography, and Olufemi Vaughan, also added their voices to the debate:

> At its beginning African states were indicted before the bar of 'world opinion,' first by humanitarians and missionaries and then conquerors and colonizers. Halfway through the process, colonial states were indicted before the bar of an enlarged world opinion by nationalists and humanitarians and, increasingly, by missionaries. Today it is African states once again who find themselves on trial for rapacity and authoritarianism. The indictments are brought by humanitarians, church leaders, and the sort of young Africans who would once have been nationalists and are now democrats […] whatever else this irony tells us, it abundantly reveals that the problem of legitimacy has been central to the state in late nineteenth and twentieth-century Africa (Ranger and Vaughan 1993:1).

Indeed, the question of legitimacy continues to generate conflicts in postcolonial Africa and these are taking the form of what is often termed election-related violence or post-election violence that rocked Kenya, Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast recently. It seems the post-Cold War global neo-liberal values that privileged elections as a source of legitimacy were locking horns with resilient and intolerant one-party mentalities and psychologies that dominated the African ideological landscape in the 1960s and 1970s. Election time has often become a terrible period of violence rather than a peaceful opportunity for the electorate to choose their preferred candidates for political office.

The interpretation of election time in war terms has been clearly manifested by the experience of Zimbabweans where violence has been part of electioneering process since the country became an independent state in 1980. In Zimbabwe, liberation war credentials rather than elections were viewed by the ruling Zimbabwe African Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) as the main source of political legitimacy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Muzondidya 2011). Chapter Seven of this book provides a detailed analysis of the Zimbabwean crisis as rooted in the formulation of the idea of Zimbabwe in the 1960s.

Achille Mbembe, a leading African postcolonial theorist, has also offered his own interpretation of the trajectory of postcolonial Africa. He says:

> African social formations are not necessarily converging towards a single point, trend or cycle. They harbour the possibility of a variety of trajectories neither convergent nor divergent but interlocked, paradoxically. More philosophically, it may be supposed that the present as experience of a time is precisely that moment when different forms of absence become mixed together: absence of those presences that are no longer so and that one remembers (the past), and absence of those others that are yet to come and are anticipated (the future) (Mbembe 2001: 16).

To Mbembe, postcolonial Africa which he termed the 'postcolony' is manifesting a complex sedimentation of the past, present and the future in one moment of time, creating what he termed an entanglement. What Mbembe (2001: 14) termed the postcolony enclosed 'multiple durees made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another; an entanglement'. The concept of entanglement was further deployed by Sarah Nuttall to unpack and understand the trajectory of post-apartheid South Africa, one of the case studies explored in this book:

> Entanglement offers […] a rubric in terms of which we can begin to meet the challenge of the 'after apartheid.' It is a means by which to draw into our analyses those sites in which what was once thought of as separate—identities, spaces, histories—come together or find points of intersection in unexpected ways. It is an idea which signals largely unexplored terrains of mutuality, wrought from a common, though often coercive and confrontational, experience. It enables a complex temporality of past, present and future; one which points away from a time of resistance towards a more ambivalent moment in which the time of potential, both latent and actively surfacing in South Africa, exists in complex tandem with new kinds of closure and opposition. It also signals a move away from an apartheid optic and temporal lens towards one which reifies neither the past nor the exceptionality of South African life (Nuttall 2009:11).

Chapter six of this book deals directly with the genealogy of the idea of South Africa tracing it from its emergence within the context of destruction of the precolonial African order and the inscription of colonialism. Nuttall's intervention becomes very relevant as it speaks of the 'need for a utopian horizon'. In short, the significance of Nuttall's deployment of concept of entanglement lies in her bold pre-occupation with a future-oriented politics. One of the key challenges in Africa is how to enable African people move forward beyond colonial mindset and the neurosis of victimhood inflicted on Africans by a combination of exploitative and demeaning processes of the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism and apartheid.

Recently, a leading pan-African scholar, Mahmood Mamdani, also reflected on how the trajectories of the African continent were imagined by African

intellectuals since the 1970s from the comfort of the University of Dar es Salaam, that once vibrant centre of pan-Africanist and nationalist thinking. This is how he put it:

> There were times when we were sure ourselves: we knew what we were up against, and we knew where we were going. We were against monarchy, against dictatorship, against neo-colonialism, against imperialism. And we were for socialism, sometimes for democracy, but always for socialism. Socialism had become a language in which we spoke to one another. For some, it was a badge; for others, it was a brand name. We were the first generation of post-independence African intellectuals. We thought in historical terms. We knew that history was moving, more or less like a train, heading to a known destination, and none of us had any doubt that we were on that train. We were certain that the future would be better than the past, much better. If there would be violence, it would be revolutionary, the violence of the poor against the rich, the oppressor against the oppressed. Good revolutionary violence would do away with bad counter-revolutionary violence (Mamdani 2010:48).

Here Mamdani was being nostalgic, reflecting on a time when Africans were enveloped by the euphoria of independence and were clear on the trajectory they were following and their ultimate destination. Two destinations lay ahead --socialism and pan-African unity. But Africans have not yet achieved or reached this destination. The train was derailed by a combination of selfish and visionless leaders as well as by external forces of neocolonialism that did not want to see confident Africans taking charge of their political, economic and social destiny, away from the world constructed by exploitative colonial modernity. Gilbert Khadiagala lent credence to this argument when he said:

> There is yet another instructive paradox in this regard: leaders that have ideas with some coherence and force of action have seldom survived, while those with neither credible philosophic standing nor kingly dispositions have had more staying power (Khadiagala 2010: 376).

This situation was further complicated by the fact that, since 1945, Africa became a proxy theatre in the Cold War that pitted the Western capitalist world led by the United States of America against the communist world led by the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (now Commonwealth of Independent States). Within that period some cruel and visionless leaders such as Idi Amin Dada in Uganda and Mobutu Seseko in Zaire were parachuted into power just as Mozambique and Angola plunged into civil war soon after gaining independence in 1975. Also, military coups rocked East and West Africa while Visionary leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba

and Thomas Sankara became victims of coups and assassinations. The short golden age was over in no time. Mamdani summed up his reflection on this crisis in the following words:

> Two decades later, we found ourselves in a world for which we were least prepared. Not only was it a world drenched in blood, but the battle lines were hardly inspiring. There was little revolutionary about the violence around us: instead of the poor rising up against the rich, we could see the poor pitted against poor, and rich against rich. This was hardly the final struggle promised in the International—*la lute finale*—beyond which would lie the rosy dawn of socialism. It seemed more like the fires of hell. The most fitting metaphor for that quagmire was the Rwanda genocide of 1994 (Mamdani 2010: 48).

Optimistic pan-Africanists were not only shocked by the Rwandan genocide of 1994 but also by the xenophobic violence that engulfed South Africa in May 2008. Added to these disappointing events was the fall of Kenya from being the centre of stability within a volatile Eastern Africa and the Horn into violence in 2007/8. In Southern Africa, Zimbabwe's rapid degeneration into unprecedented crisis did not help matters. Taken together, these events disturbed the optimism that greeted the third millennium.

Some new appraisals of the trajectory of the African continent had to be made. Mamdani argued that the post-apartheid and post-genocide Rwanda had the impact of changing intellectual prognoses—'we realized that history is not a story with predestination' and that 'History is not just a train set out on a fixed journey' (Mamdani 2010: 48). It is clear that the current generation of Africans need to do more work to imagine different futures. One of Mamdani's core messages to the students of Addis Ababa University was:

> [T]oday more than ever, we need the capacity to imagine different futures. In 1973, in Dar and in Addis, we thought of ourselves as being in transition to an already known destination, first it was a transition to socialism; after the fall of Soviet Union, the convention was to think of a transition to democracy; after 9/11, it became a transition to modernity. […] Experience has taught us that there is no given destination. The destination is negotiable. Keep in mind that the journey you will embark on has no fixed destination. Where you will go will depend on you and those around you. The better you understand the nature of forces defining your choices, the more you will be able to gather in your own hands possibilities of forging the future. I wish you the best in the journey ahead (Mamdani 2010: 49).

This message has a deep meaning for the African continent as a whole. Is there any destination for Africa beyond the neoliberal democracy mantra largely

imposed from the West? How is Africa negotiating its destiny within a global village? Has Africa reached the TINA (There Is No Alternative) mode? Is the destiny of Africa separable from global human emancipatory struggle in general?

This book responds to these complex questions in a variety of ways. It transverses the complex terrain dominated by what Gramsci (1971) described as pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will. He argued that, 'It is necessary to direct one's attention violently towards the present as it is, if one wishes to transform it' (Gramsci 1971: 175). As elaborated by Hume (2010), pessimism of the intellect does not mean the intellectual enterprise of always looking for the worst-case scenarios. It means approaching world issues as they are; refusal to accept anything at face value; questioning existing narratives; and transcending fantasies. Pessimism of the intellect also questions existing Afro-pessimism and doom-mongering scares that humanity is on the verge of climatic destruction.

Throughout this book, pessimism of intellect is counterbalanced with optimism of the will. Optimism of the will means a secular belief in the human ability and capacity to meet the new challenges of history, overcoming them and creating new forms of society and humanism. In short, this book is not a treatise in lost faith in human ability to make history even under circumstances not of their own choosing. The book speaks consistently to historical realities, human ingenuity, human inventiveness, human agency and ceaseless human struggles to recreate the world.

Scope and organization of the book

This book is organized into three parts. Part I deals with what I call the Colonial Matrix of Power; while Part II covers the discursive constructions. Part III focuses essentially on case Studies and broadly interrogates the postcolonial and liberation predicament; the crisis of dependence (cultural and economic) in relation to ideological explanations; and interpretive conflicts concerning Eurocentrism, decolonization, and politics of integration. The book also discusses three main African problems, namely: the grammar of decolonization, including the question of what is and who is an African; the operationaly mode of coloniality that sustains Western global dominance; and explanations of the entanglement of the 'postcolonial' and 'neocolonial' in present-day Africa. The book also provides deep reflections on the realities of the postcolonial oppressive state and postcolonial realities; African structural contradictions and the problem of epistemology. It is clear from the book

how African identity has remained hostage to a modernist grammar and how current autochthonous discourses have their deep roots in African colonial experience traceable to the time of the colonial encounters. Throughout the book, an attempt is made to explain the recurrent logic of violence from a historical perspective.

This book is further divided into eight chapters. The first introduces the politics of the making of the African postcolonial world predicated on concepts of coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being. It also provides an overview of key imaginations of the trajectory of Africa spawned by both the independence euphoria of the 1960s and the crisis of the 1970s. Finally it explains how the process of decolonization plunged into neocolonialism world producing a 'postcolonial African neocolonial world' rather than an African postcolonial world inhabited by liberated Africans capable of determining their own destiny.

The second chapter deals with how the African continent and its people have remained ensnared in the invisible but strong colonial matrices of power that descended on the continent since the spread of Western modernity into other parts of the world carried on the backs of explorers, missionaries and colonialists. Despite the celebration of decolonization as a milestone in African history of liberation, Africa has not managed to free itself from epistemological colonization inscribed on the continent and its people by mission and secular schools, religious denominations, and other institutions that carried western cultural imperialism.

The central argument of Chapter 2 is that what exist today as schools, colleges and universities continue to be 'Western-oriented institutions' located within the African continent producing Westernized graduates who are alienated from the African society and its African values. The chapter engages with the important problem of epistemologies of alterity that continue to shape the African trajectory in Western terms and in the process reducing postcolonial Africa into a world of myths of decolonization and illusions of freedom. The result of all this has been ideological confusion informed by cognitive colonization within the continent with some Africans dreaming in both African and European languages, others imbibing lock, stock and barrel the neo-liberal thought as salvation for Africa and others degenerating to nativism and essentialness of African identities into very narrow ones that breed various phobias.

The third chapter re-evaluates the often celebrated decolonization process and reveals the myths and illusions of freedom obscured by the idea of

decolonization. Its entry point into unmasking the limits of decolonization is through disentangling the ideas of liberation from those of emancipation as these concepts mean different things if critically examined. It proceeds to analyse how decolonization bequeathed on Africa juridical freedom, that is, freedom for the African state that was enjoyed by those who occupied the positions of the departing white political and economic elites and posits that this juridical freedom did not translate into freedom for the ordinary African people.

The central argument in Chapter 3 is that while those elites who ascended to state power at the time of physical departure of colonial masters celebrated their achievement of freedom and access to wealth as African freedom, the ordinary African citizens had to wage new struggles to either free themselves from the chains of the postcolonial state that became a leviathan or fight to democratize it so as to serve their interests too. The struggle for popular sovereignty is still ongoing in postcolonial Africa, this time ranged against African political elites who have embarked on primitive accumulation of wealth, just like the colonizers, while silencing the citizens. The chapter also captures the complex daily politics of citizens as they struggle to exit, disengage, migrate and evade the postcolonial state that became a new source of oppression and exploitation of citizens. The popular uprisings that rocked the North African region beginning with Tunisia and spreading to Egypt, Libya and others is a testimony of how juridical freedom is being translated by the ordinary people into popular freedom.

The fourth chapter engages the question of the discursive formation of African identities. It begins with interrogation of the construction and development of the idea of Africa beginning with its cartographic origins and the politics of social classification of the world population along racial lines by Europeans using the social Darwinist philosophies and scientific racism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its key argument is that the Africa is not only a social and political construction but also a victim of imposed identities and this reality has made African political trajectories to continue to progress into a ceaseless direction of struggling to negotiate themselves above externally imposed singularities as part of resisting the realities of being 'fenced in' by particular identity markers which they have not chosen for themselves.

The fourth chapter also interrogates the major identity-forming processes such as the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, pan-Africanism, and nationalism which have combined to form the discursive terrain within which

African identities were constructed across history and space. The chapter ends by grappling with the complex question of who is an African, and provides various historically informed definitions of Africanism -- some generous and inclusionary, and others restrictive and exclusionary.

The fifth chapter addresses the question of the logic of violence in Africa and locates its roots within colonial modernity and its reproduction of African subjectivities where race was not only used to condemn black people into *damnes* (the condemned beings) but also to deny their very humanity. The chapter deploys the concepts of coloniality of being and the racist/imperial Manichean misanthropic scepticism about African humanity as lenses to examine the logic of violence and other abuses that were not allowed in Europe. The case studies of the Herero people of Namibia who became victims of German colonial genocide; the Congolese under King Leopold II where violence was the mode of governance; and South Africa where neo-apartheid situation recreated systemic violence that is manifest in the black townships and informal settlements are used to amplify and qualify arguments advanced in this chapter. The other major concern of the chapter is to explain how colonial violence reproduced itself on the psyche of African nationalists to become a major feature of postcolonial governance.

The sixth chapter provides a detailed case study of the genesis and development of the idea of South Africa from the nineteenth century to the present. This case study is important as it reveals the interplay of imperial, colonial and versions of nationalisms that combined to create a unique African national identity called South African at the end of the twentieth century. The chapter interrogates such identity-forming processes as Anglicization and Afrikaner republican nationalism that culminated in the institutionalization of apartheid. It proceeds to examine African nationalism as another layer in the genealogy of the idea of South Africa.

One of the arguments of Chapter 6 is that African nationalism in its various forms that included radical Africanism of 'Africa for Africans' represented by the Pan-African Congress (PAC), the moderate imagination of a multi-racial nation represented by the African National Congress (ANC), Afro-Marxist workers imaginations of South African nation as a socialist republic represented by the South African Communist Party (SACP), the ethno-cultural imagination of the nation represented by Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) as well as the decolonization of the mind project represented by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), benefitted from being able to consistently reflect on the limits of previous imaginations of the nation and synthesizing

these into new ones that culminated in the creation of the current rainbow nation of South Africa in 1994. The chapter ends by reflecting on the current nation-building challenges particularly the efforts at transcending race as an organizing as well as divisive forces in South African society that is striving to re-build itself on principles of non-racial and civic belonging.

The seventh chapter continues the subject of imagination of the nation with a specific focus on the genealogies of the idea of Zimbabwe, another intriguing case study that has attracted international media coverage because of the current socio-economic and political crisis which continues to puzzle policy makers and analysts. This chapter traces the roots of the crisis from politics of the imagination of Zimbabwe in the 1960s where it began from a fallacy that Zimbabwe has primordial roots in the great and noble pre-historic civilization of Great Zimbabwe. The chapter analyse how the liberation struggle itself as a discursive terrain within which the idea of Zimbabwe was being translated from an imaginary phenomenon into reality was not only characterized by retribalization and regional ethnic divisions but also hijacked at the Lancaster House Conference by the British and Americans to produce a neocolonial state of Zimbabwe.

Chapter 7, therefore, begins with the politics of naming of the imagined nation in the 1960s that were imbricated in contesting colonial modernity that denied Africans any respectable past, right through its problematic constructions during the liberation struggle and its formal adoption of the name Zimbabwe as a national identity in 1980. It points to the chequered history of the formation of the idea of Zimbabwe, particularly how it was compromised by forces of ethnicity, regionalism, racism, and neocolonialism resulting in the creation of a deeply tribalized neocolonial state in 1980 and an openly racist state in 2000 as the nationalist leadership struggled to complete the decolonization project, accommodate oppositional forces, and navigate racial and ethnic fault lines.

What has distinguished the Zimbabwe case study from others is not only the crippling politics of violence that has been used to invite different ethnicities and races into a partisanly-imagined nation with little space for pluralism and diversity, but also the fact that it has since 2000 become a direct theatre to stage colonial matrix of power, namely, the disciplining of a small peripheral state for trying to challenge Western hegemony through redistributing land that was owned by the white farming community ('the children of the empire') with roots in Rhodesian settler colonialism. Up till today, the idea of Zimbabwe remains a highly contested one with questions

of belonging and citizenship being mediated by race, ethnicity and access to material resources and continuing to generate political and communal conflicts some thirty years after the end of direct colonialism.

The last chapter looks into the future of Africa through contextualizing the continent's ideological, political and economic challenges, predicaments and dilemmas within the global context where disillusionment with radical politics reigns and where uncertainty is rife about the future trajectory of humanity in general, beyond the current neoliberal meta-narratives. The chapter introduces the concept of phenomenology of uncertainty and utopian registers deployed by Africans and other human beings elsewhere to imagine the future. Utopian registers of civil society and public sphere are interpreted as part of African aspirational politics emerging from the phenomenology of uncertainty.

As part of concluding remarks, the last chapter also revisits African nationalism with a view to revealing its weak social base that made it fail to create stable nations and to prosper as an emancipatory and liberatory force. The chapter further discusses the limits of neo-liberal democracy as an emancipatory project provides glimpses of the future political direction of Africa.