2

In the Snare of Colonial Matrix of Power

Introduction

> The repression fell, above all, over the modes of knowing, of producing knowledge, of producing perspectives, images and systems of images, symbols, modes of signification, over the resources, patterns, and instruments of formalised and objectivised expression, intellectual or visual. It was followed by the imposition of the use of the rulers' own patterns of expression, and of their beliefs and images with reference to the supernatural. [...] The colonisers also imposed a mystified image of their own patterns of producing knowledge and meaning. At first, they placed these patterns far out of reach of the dominated. Later, they taught them in a partial and selective way, in order to co-opt some of the dominated into their own power institutions. Then European culture was made seductive: it gave access to power. After all, beyond repression, the main instrument of all power is its seduction. [...] European culture became a universal cultural model. The imaginary in the non-European cultures could hardly exist today and, above all, reproduce itself outside of these relations.
>
> (Anibal Quijano 2007: 169)

Africa is still entangled and trapped within the snares of the colonial matrix of power. Quijano (2007: 168-178) identified the key contours of the colonial matrix of power as consisting of four interrelated domains: control of economy; control of authority, control of gender and sexuality; and, control of subjectivity and knowledge. This chapter deals with the impact of this colonial order on the African continent and the African minds since the onset of colonial encounters. Frantz Fanon correctly noted that colonialism was never simply contented with imposing of its grammar and logic upon the 'present and the future of a dominated country'. Colonialism was also not simply satisfied with merely holding the colonized people in its grip and emptying 'the native's brain of all form and content'. Rather, 'By a kind of

perverse logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts it, disfigures and destroys it' (Fanon 1961: 67).

It is therefore important to track the mechanics and manifestations of the inscription of hegemonic Western forms of knowledge and coloniality of power and to unpack how colonial modernity succeeded in pushing African forms of knowledge into the barbarian margins; and by that fact depriving African people of initiative and agency to take control of their destinies. The chapter focuses on the processes of universalizing Western particularism through epistemological colonization (colonization of the mind) that de-centred pre-existing African knowledge systems. It posits that the worst form of colonization of a people is that which created epistemological mimicry and intellectual dependency. As Quijano (2007: 169) observes,, this 'colonization of the imagination of the dominated' remains the worst form as it dealt with and shaped people's consciousness and identity. Our concern here is the manifestation of 'coloniality' rather than 'colonialism'. Nelson Maldonado-Torres has differentiated coloniality and colonialism in this way:

> Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of people, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and everyday (Maldonad-Torres 2007: 243).

Toyin Falola (2001: 262) also emphasized this same point by admitting that the impact of the West 'is even more direct'. What began as colonial encounters in the fifteenth century produced both historical and intellectual realities mediated by inferior-superior relations.

> As a historical reality, Africa was integrated into an international system on terms defined by the West. African intellectuals cannot escape the reality of this integration. Neither can they escape the fact that the ideology that drives scholarship is controlled by the West nor that what African scholars have done is primarily to respond. For instance, nationalist historiography was a response; so was cultural nationalism before it, and both faced the challenge of countering negative Eurocentric ideas about Africa (Falola 2001: 262).

Mapping the key contours of colonial matrix of power

The colonial encounters of the fifteenth century set in motion a new constitution of the world order as Western modernity exported its darker aspects to the non-Western world. The initial peaceful colonial encounters were soon followed by direct political, social and cultural domination that engulfed the African continent mediated principally by force of arms and evangelism that mollified and softened African imagination and consciousness while stealing their souls and destroying their sense of being. A lot has already been written about colonization of Africa and how Africans resisted being dominated and there is no need to venture into that terrain here. What needs to be further analysed though is how colonialism has continued to wreck havoc on the mind of the ex-colonized after the end of direct colonialism. One of the enduring legacies of colonialism was its ability to universalize Western particularism. Ernesto Laclau captures this point quite well:

> The crucial issue here is that there was no intellectual means of distinguishing between European particularism and the universal functions that it was supposed to incarnate, given that European universalism had constructed its identity precisely through the cancellation of the logic of incarnation and, as a result, through the universalisation of its own particularism. So, European imperialist expansion had to be presented in terms of a universal civilizing function, modernisation and so forth. The resistances of other cultures were, as a result, presented not as struggles between particular identities and cultures, but as part of an all-embracing and epochal struggle between universality and particularisms—the notion of people without history expressing precisely their incapacity to represent the universal (Laclau, 1996: 24).

What began as violent colonization was accompanied by various epistemological interventions, some religious and others secular. Therefore, any systematic mapping of the making of the colonial world and inscription of the colonial modernity in Africa is basically a study of the history of global power construction whose structure and framework continues to shape social and political relations across the globe. Quijano (2007: 168-9) has correctly noted that:

> [...] it is very clear that the large majority of the exploited, the dominated, the discriminated against, are precisely the members of the 'races,' 'ethnies,' or 'nations' into which the colonized populations, were categorised in the formative process of that world power, from the conquest of America and onward.

One of the terrible consequences of the colonialism was to destroy the full gamut of alternative modernities together with alternative imaginations of the world that were not necessarily influenced and unleashed by Protestantism, European Renaissance, Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution.

Independent African contribution to the shaping of global cultural order was denied by colonialism. Instead, human history in general became hostage to the Western worldview and ultimately, what we know as Europe, America, Latin America, Asia, Oceania, Caribbean and Africa became largely social and political creations of Europeans. Global history became conceived as a continuum running from:

> [...] the primitive to the civilised; from the traditional to the modern; from the savage to the rational; from pro-capitalism to capitalism [...] And Europe thought of itself as the mirror of the future of all the other societies and cultures; as the advanced form of the history of the entire species. What does not cease to surprise, however, is that Europe succeeded in imposing that 'mirage' upon the practical totality of the cultures that it colonised; and, much more, that this chimera is still so attractive to so many (Quijano 2007: 196).

Europe and America have appropriated human ideas of progress, civilization and developmentalism as exclusive virtues of Western modernity that had to be exported to other parts of the world.

Idea of progress and developmentalism

The idea of progress rooted in Enlightenment became a gift that Europe had power to export to the non-Western World. This idea became lodged within the notion of the civilizing mission and its justification of violent colonial conquest of the non-Western world in general, and Africa in particular -- which was christened as pacification of barbarous tribes and taming of savages. The idea of progress asserted the possibility of a conscious rational reform of society based on virtues of science and other secular knowledges. Within Europe the idea of progress treated each individual as a free-centred-subject with rational control over his or her destiny. European nation-states were considered sovereign and free to control their progressive development and shape their destinies rationally. The non-Western world, on the other hand, was said to lack rationality; and progress and this lack was used to justify imperialism and colonialism. The African historian, Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, had this to say about colonial developmentalism:

> As an ideology of colonial and neo-colonial modernity, developmentalism was born during the Great Depression and bred into a hegemonic discourse in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The seeds were sown with the 1929 British Colonial and Welfare Act. They turned into sturdy developmentalist weeds under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945. It was in colonial Africa that most of these seeds and weeds were nurtured. It was there that

> the term development lost its naturalistic innocence and acquired the conceited meaning of economic growth modelled on the West (Zeleza 1997: 218).

Beyond its colonial roots, developmentalism, just like the idea of progress; is a child of Enlightenment and modernity. Grosfoguel (2000: 348-349) argued that: 'Developmentalism is linked to liberal ideology and to the idea of progress. [...] Developmentalism became a global ideology of the capitalist world-economy'. At the same time, developmentalism became another lever of justifying Western intervention and interference in the internal affairs of Africa. Within Eurocentric thinking, development and modernization were conflated into one thing. The lack of Western modernization was therefore equated with the lack of development. But it was after the Second World War that the term 'underdevelopment' was used by President Harry Truman of the United States of America in his speech of 1949 to describe the non-Western part of the world. Critical scholars like Wolfgang Sachs (1992) described the representation of the non-Western world as another form of 'Othering' of Africa as a humanitarian case that deserved Western intervention.

The idea of development of non-Western countries became subject to various debates since its emergence alongside colonial modernity. One problem was that as an idea that originated with Eurocentrism, it implied that development of any kind could only take place within the parameters of the capitalist world system that manifested its ugly face within the non-Western world in terms of the slave trade, imperialism and colonialism. The idea of development assumed hegemonic tendencies whereby it denied other imaginations of progress and development not rooted in Enlightenment and Western modernity. There was no tolerance for precolonial notions of development that did not resemble those of the Western world. In short, anything that did not resemble what the Western world knew was dismissed as not yet developed or dismissed outright as a relic of barbarism.

In the 1970s, such critical scholars as Andre Gunder Frank (1976), Samir Amin (1974), and Walter Rodney (1973) were concerned with explaining the problems of underdevelopment that were manifest within the formerly colonised parts of the world. Their intellectual interventions grappled with the impact of the colonial matrix of power on development within peripheral societies. They interrogated the dialectics of the centre-periphery relations that were created by colonial modernity and located the roots of underdevelopment in this exploitative relationship within which the ex-colonial powers continued to reap economic benefits from the former colonial world to develop their nations at the expense of the ex-colonized peoples.

These scholars revealed that such processes as mercantilism, the slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism and globalization had the enduring effect of creating development in the North while generating underdevelopment in the South. There is no doubt that colonialism created dependency of the ex-colonized societies on finished products manufactured by ex-colonial powers. African consumption patterns, tastes and values were drastically shaped by colonial modernity to resemble those of the West.

While dependency scholars were criticised for privileging external structural factors in their explanation of underdevelopment of Africa at the expense of internal ones, but there is no denying that they correctly unearthed a particular and important economic dimension of the colonial matrix of power that continued to wreck havoc on Africa and other formerly colonized parts of the world. It is also becoming clear that any analysis of the fundamental contradiction of the capital-labour question in Africa cannot be fully understood without a clear understanding of the principal contradiction of the centre-periphery problem created by imperialism, colonialism and capitalism.

I, therefore, do not see the value of criticizing the dependency theory for being pessimistic on the future development prospects of Africa. For instance, Leys' (1996) criticism of dependency theory for not being clear on the definition of 'development'; for being unclear on the question of oppression and exploitation of the masses in underdeveloped countries; for being economistic and too broad; for treating imperialism as an 'extra'; for being vague on its central unit of analysis; and, for not explaining why more capital was not invested and accumulated in the Third World, is not convincing and does not succeed in disqualifying the contribution of dependency theory to the understanding of the African and Third world predicaments as emanating from its links with the world capitalist system. To expect a single theory to answer all these questions is in fact to be unrealistic. Theories are not answer-books but attempts to explain problems from various perspectives.

Leys also ignores the fact that interventions of dependency theorists of various schools of thought competed from start to finish with the imperial-inspired modernization paradigm well represented by Walt W. Rostow (1960:2) and his stages of modernization. Modernization theory interpreted the processes of economic and social development as a natural phenomenon that followed evolutionary path from traditional society to capitalist development. Modernization thinking was deeply Eurocentric and it put the Northern nations at the apex of the economic development ladder and Africa

at the lowest level. Within the modernization discourse, Africa was in the traditional stage of development and its path of development was to follow the steps that were taken by European and American nations. Historical peculiarities and particularities that explained the condition of the African continent were ignored.

The key crisis in the modernization paradigm was its assumption of a 'universalistic, neutral, objective point of view' that was informed by hiding the locale (locus of enunciation) of its analysis (Grosfoguel 2007: 213). Within the modernization paradigm in its many guises and variants, Africa's problem was that it was not yet like Europe. Development was assumed to be a linear process with clearly identifiable stages. Within mainstream discourses of development, modernization continues to influence thinking while hiding dangers of colonial matrices of power. There is need to unveil the 'naked emperor' hidden within discourses of development has been assuming new names and vocabularies of deception since the end of the Second World War. Cornwell (2010) has engaged in a fruitful exercise of deconstructing the development discourse with a view to unveiling what is hidden behind 'buzzwords' and 'fuzzwords'. Cornwell (2010: 16) correctly noted that 'reflections on the language of development evoke bigger questions about the world-making projects that they define and describe'.

On the other hand dependency scholars blamed the global South's relative underdevelopment and problems on such broad processes as mercantilism, imperialism and colonialism. They also alerted the world on how Africa and Africans were frog-marched as they fought, kicked and screamed into the evolving capitalist world system, without being allowed to make any choices of their own. The world economic accumulation system a core target of critical analysis unmasked the colonial matrix of power in the process. This dependency theorists' locus of enunciation of development was the South where economic progress was problematic. Unless one looks at the problem of the African continent from the right location in the spectrum of global power relations, Africans will continue to be blamed for the crisis in which they find themselves.

While dependency scholarship managed to bring forth some new ideas explaining the African condition from a radical perspective that was very critical of Western modernity and the power relations it introduced into Africa, it also blundered on many accounts. In the first place, the thinking was trapped in the Western modernist-developmentalist ideology which made the boundaries of its interventions limited epistemologically. At least Grosfoguel's

(2000: 361) criticism of the epistemological poverty of dependency theory is well taken. He noted that:

> Dependency questions were trapped in the problematic of modernity. [...] Dependency assumed the modernist idea that progress was possible through a rational organization of society, where each nation-state could achieve an autonomous national development through the conscious, sovereign, and free control of their destiny.

Dependency thought also reproduced the myths and illusions that even within the periphery, autonomous development and rational economic organization could be achieved under the control of the nation-state. Remember Kwame Nkrumah's dictum of 'seek ye the political kingdom and all will be added on it'. Dependency theorists tended to minimize the fundamental reality that all so-called postcolonial African nation-states were not free from structures of the capitalist world system. Delinking rooted in revolutionary processes taking place within individual states is a myth. Grosfoguel (2000: 362) described this myth by saying, 'Therefore, a global problem cannot have a national solution.' The solution must also be pitched at the global level spearheaded by transnational radical social movements of the people of the South such as the World Social Forum.

But the works of dependency scholars like Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto contributed new concepts to the development discourse some of which still make a lot of sense as analytical categories today. These include 'dependency' that referred to the conditions of being remotely controlled and dominated from a particular centre; 'periphery' that referred to the subordinated role underdeveloped economies played in the international markets; and 'underdevelopment' that referred to a situation of economic poverty created by capitalist operations outside Europe (Cardoso 1979). While the coining of these terms went hand-in-hand with the myth of dependent nation-states being able to develop sustainable economic systems without having an autonomous control over the decision-making process, they extended frontiers of knowledge in the field of development studies.

The other useful terms and typologies produced by dependency thinkers include: 'autonomous-developed centres' as a reference to Western nations; 'dependent-developed peripheral centres' as a reference to countries like Brazil and Argentina in the 1970s; 'autonomous-underdeveloped non-peripheral states' that included Cuba and China; 'dependent-underdeveloped peripheral states' that included the entire African states and others in Latin America and other ex-colonized parts of the world. If used with care these typologies are not really useless. All countries of the postcolonial neocolonized world suffer from various forms of dependent-development (Cardoso 1979).

But how do we explain the ability of countries like Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa that are doing far much better economically than the rest of Africa on the development index? Are they free from the chains of dependent-development or are they shining examples of possibilities of dependent-development? Grosfoguel (2000: 371) provided part of the answer when he argued that: 'The capitalist world-system gains credibility by developing a few successful semi-peripheral cases. These are civilizational and cultural strategies to gain consent and to demonstrate the "superiority" of the "West".' The West does this by favouring a few countries in the non-Western world to showcase as success stories while in the process reproducing its hegemony through the developmentalist ideology. Such showcases often received disproportionately large sums of foreign aid and flexible terms to pay their debts. Outside Africa, examples of showcases included Taiwan and South Korea. This argument, however, must not be used to deny the ingenuity of some non-Western states that enabled them to forge ahead economically even within the debilitating effects of the colonial matrix of power.

In the 1980s, new researchers emerged who sought to explain the African condition through postcolonial theoretical interventions of different types, ranging from post-structuralism, postmodernism and postcolonialism. While some of the theoretical interventions of postcolonial theorists have extended the frontiers of knowledge on the African condition and deepened our understanding of the postcolonial world, the main problem is that the focus on hybridities, negotiations, blending, syncretism, mimicry, and borderlands end up overshadowing the deeply negative and violent structural rather than agential processes that were unleashed by the spreading of European modernity through mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism. These processes were never peaceful to the extent of inscribing themselves on the African continent through sharing of cultures and negotiation of discursive spaces (Chakrabarty 1992; Bhabha 1994; Appiah 1992; Spivak 1990; Mbembe 2001; Mbembe 2002).

At another level, the 'posts' (post-structuralism, postmodernism and postcolonialism) were accused of depicting Western modernity's spread from its centre in Europe via mercantilism, imperialism and colonialism as mainly mediated by the blending of cultures leading to the emergence of hybridities and for minimizing the negative impact of these processes that led Africa to occupy a subaltern position within world history and the world capitalist accumulation system (Zeleza 2003; Zeleza 2007; Parry 1995). Paul Zeleza noted that:

> However, the posts emerged, or were named as discursive systems, in northern institutional locations. The production and promotion of the posts in the 1970s and 1980s as Northern intellectual fads gave them a distinctly Western accent, if not grammar, that did not resonate well with the intellectual and ideological languages of the South, even though, as is true of postcolonial theory, some of the leading theorists hailed from the South and were only translocated in the North (Zeleza 2003: 1).

What is made poignant here is the locus of enunciation of the African experience. As articulated by Grosfoguel (2007) the key problem is that even those socially located in the oppressed and exploited side of global power and colonial difference, end up thinking epistemically like those on dominant side of global power relations. This is considered to be one of the key weaknesses of the 'posts'. Zeleza (2006b: 89-129) has engaged with what he termed the 'troubled encounter between postcolonialism and African history' rooted in ideological and ethical imperatives as well as 'apparent intellectual and epistemic incongruities'. Zeleza (2006b: 89) is one of the strongest advocates and defenders of 'nationalist humanism in the African imaginary' and the 'historic agendas of African historiography'.

Zeleza provided a series of criticism of the 'posts'. His first critique is that the 'posts' emerged in the Anglo-American academy in the mid-1980s in the wake of the rise of post-structuralism and postmodernism. Their roots were not African. Key postcolonial theorists like Homi Bhabha and others were said to be located in the citadels of capitalism where they were beneficiaries rather than victims of the capitalist exploitative system. As such their post-colonialism was seen as aimed at avoiding making deep sense of the African crisis that originated in structures of global capitalism. Zeleza's argument is supported by Ahmad (1992) who categorized the 'posts' as part of imperialism's ideological armoury to weaken and decentre African struggles for liberation, democracy and socialism. Ahmad accused the 'posts' of 'having mystified the ways in which totalising structures persist in the midst of apparent disintegration and fluidity' (Ahmad 1992: 315).

Zeleza is of the idea that the 'posts' have abandoned categories of nation and class through mischievous celebration of hybridity and borderlands and in the process encouraging 'the sanitization and depiction of imperialism and colonialism as shared cultures, negotiated discursive spaces' (Zeleza 2006b: 124; Dirk 2000). One of Zeleza's key interventions is that:

> The multiplication of identities, memories, and resistances surely must not be used to forget that larger contexts, the hierarchies of power between the coloniser and the colonised, Europe and Africa, the unequal impact of empire had and left behind for

> the metropoles and the colonies, the fact that imperial power was upheld by physical force not simply ideas and images, that it was underpinned by material structures not simply ideological constructs, by political economy not simply by discursive economy. The erasures of revolution, nation, class, history, and reality turn the 'posts', even if they may have started as critiques, into legitimating ideologies of contemporary global configurations of power and production (Zeleza 2006b: 124).

Zeleza (2006b: 125) is worried that postcolonialism's fixation on colonialism might result in the re-inscription of 'Eurocentrism back on the pedestal' despite the years of efforts by African historians to install African nationalist historiography in its place since the 1960s. His concern is to 'recentre African history by deepening and globalising it in its temporary scope and spatial scale, taking seriously the place of Africa in world history' (Zeleza 2006b: 128). My position on this is that the 'posts' and political economy must be forced to speak to each other, complement each other and reinforce each other's intervention if the African condition is to be clearly understood.

Pal Ahluwalia, is an ardent defender of postcolonial theory is critical of scholars who casually link postcolonial theory with post-structuralism and post-modernism. He says:

> Such a reading denigrates the authenticity of post-colonial theory and renders it subservient and theoretically vulnerable to charges levelled at post-structuralism and postmodernism (Ahluwalia 2001: 1).

Ahluwalia argues for differentiation between postcolonialism and other 'posts'. To him, postcolonialism's core pre-occupation is 'about understanding the dilemmas of modernization and the manner in which African states negotiate their way through complexities that have grown out of the colonial experience' (Ahluwalia 2001: 1). According to him, postcolonialism is a counter-discourse which seeks to disrupt the cultural hegemony of the modern West with all its imperial structures of feeling and knowledge. On the other hand, postmodernism is primarily a counter-discourse against modernism (Ahluwalia 2001: 6). In short, postcolonialism as a theory recognizes that colonialism is an ongoing process and is not antagonistic to nationalist historiographies and pan-Africanism.

The tragedy of the African continent and its people is that of forced 'dependency' and reduction of Africans to 'copycats' of other people. Africans were bundled, entangled, woven, and entrapped into the colonial matrix of global power that is tilted in favour of the Northern industrialized nations economically and politically. This entanglement is underpinned by what Mignolo (2007: 159) correctly termed 'tyranny of abstract universals'. The

dependency I am talking about is an epistemological one that is at the base of all African economic, political and social problems. It is a result of imperial and colonial processes of silencing, decentring, and relegating of African epistemologies to barbarian margins.

This tragedy stands as an indictment on Western modernity, particularly the way it forced itself violently on the African continent and on the African people's lives. It is well captured by Hubert Vilakazi in these words:

> The peculiar situation here is that knowledge of the principles and patterns of African civilisation remained with ordinary, uncertified men and women, especially of those in rural areas. The tragedy of African civilisation is that Western-educated Africans became lost and irrelevant as intellectuals who could develop African civilisation further. Historically, intellectuals of any civilisation are the voices of that civilisation to the rest of the world; they are the instruments of the development of the higher culture of that civilisation. The tragedy of Africa, after conquest by the West, is that her intellectuals, by and large, absconded and abdicated their role as developers, minstrels and trumpeters of African civilisation. African civilisation then stagnated; what remained alive in the minds of languages of the overwhelming majority of Africans remained undeveloped. Uncertified Africans are denied respect and opportunities for development; they could not sing out, articulate and develop the unique patterns of African civilisation (Vilakazi 1999: 203).

What is celebrated in some circles today as universalism or global or 'common interests' were not arrived at through peaceful means of cultural negotiations, mutual borrowings or gradual cross-cultural blending as some postcolonial theorists want us to believe. Conquest, violence and exploitation dominated the relations between Africa and that part of the world today calling itself the 'civilized world' or the 'free world'. If there is indeed a 'free world' then there is an 'un-free world' and Africa is part of the latter.

In the first place, Africans and their continent are 'un-free' because they were drawn into the evolving world capitalist system fighting, crying and kicking from the time of the slave trade to the present global age (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007: 160-189). In the second place, Africa is 'un-free' because its power to determine its economic, political and social destiny is circumscribed by global power dynamics and unequal world economic order that unfolded from the slave trade, through imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism up to the current global information age that radiates from the western metropolitan centres.

While the dawn of Western modernity bequeathed on the West new technologies that gave it the political, economic and military power to dominate the world, this same process unleashed havoc on the African continent such

as imperial capitalism, slavery, colonialism, apartheid, neo-colonialism and neoliberalism. However hard some apologists of colonialism try to say the exploitative processes of slavery, imperialism, and colonialism were behind us as Africans, the truth remains that since the dawn of modernity, the African continent has never gained freedom to take control of its economic, political and social destiny.

Taken together, these processes have all been negative on Africa—the negative impact far outweighed their incidental and accidental positive impacts. It was within these processes that 'epistemological dependency' was created. Within this set of things, the West eventually emerged as representing the 'haves' in terms of democracy in abundance to export to other parts of the globe; civilization in abundance to embark on 'civilizing mission' in Africa, progressive religion in abundance to export Christianity to Africa, and economic development in abundance to lecture Africans on efficient management of economies, ethics in abundance to lecture Africans on corruption. On the other hand, Africa emerged as representing the 'have nots' and this is well put by Grosfoguel (2007: 214):

> We went from the sixteenth century characterisation of 'people without writing' to eighteenth and nineteenth century characterisation of 'people without history,' to the twentieth century characterisation of 'people without development' and more recently, to the early twenty-first century of 'people without democracy.'

This was the discourse of construction of epistemological dependency within which Africans were marked by lack and deficiencies whereas the West was said to be progressing very well from the 'rights of people', in the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century 'rights of man' and to late twentieth century 'human rights' (Grosfoguel 2007: 214). Quijano provides a comprehensive and useful genealogical unfolding of epistemological colonization of the dominated peoples:

> In the beginning colonialism was a product of a systematic repression, not only of specific beliefs, ideas, images, symbols or knowledge that were not useful to global colonial domination, while at the same time the colonisers were expropriating from the colonised their knowledge, especially in mining, agriculture, engineering, as well as their products and work (Quijano 2007: 169).

The implications were dangerous and have endured to this day. The colonizers became the originators of progressive knowledge (science) and Africans became producers of fatalistic superstitions and mythologies (Wiredu 1980). Western ideation systems mystified themselves and were pitched far above the reach of the dominated Africans except for very few individuals that were trained to

assist with colonial administration. The Western way of life and culture was made seductive as the only gate-way to power, dignity and full humanism. It was transformed into a 'civilization standard'. Western culture assumed universality, becoming a standard bearer of development. Quijano (2007: 169) rightly noted that, 'The imaginary in the non-European cultures could hardly exist today and, above all, reproduce itself outside of these relations.' In short, the Africa that exists today is the creation of Western hegemonic thought that subordinated everything in Africa as they pushed Europe and North America into the top level end of the civilization and development ladder.

Coloniality and the limits of decolonization

The path to decolonization was rough. It passed through reverses and compromises and was sabotaged by those within and external to it. It was, therefore, never taken to its logical conclusion. And because of the miscarriage of decolonization, Africa has never been afforded any space to recapture the power to decide the course of its destiny. Whenever Africans tried to capture and put the destiny of their nations into their own hands, the powerful forces of the colonial matrix of power were quicker to interrupt, de-centre and discipline the initiatives. Nothing was ever subjected to as much disciplining as African nationalism and pan-Africanism. Their true champions suffered isolation, sanctions, assassinations and coups (see Chapter 1).

Mental colonization is the hardest part to decolonize and the worst form of colonialism. It stole the African souls, invaded their consciousness, destroyed and distorted their imagination of the future. This crisis was well captured by Zeleza (2006: 124) when he posited that: 'Foreclosed are the possibilities of visioning a world beyond the present, imagining alternatives to capitalist modernity.' It was so terrible that even those Africans who initiated the political decolonization of the continent were the worst affected by mental colonialism. All of the founding fathers of postcolonial Africa were graduates from colonial schools and Western universities.

No wonder then that what they fought for was initially simply part of their desire to be included within the colonial state. It was only after they were not accepted that they then mobilized workers and peasants to fight against the colonial state. But they never lost the terrible tendency of standing astride the African world they were taught and socialized to hate, and the European world they were seduced to aspire to and to like. The founding fathers of African nations had deeply bifurcated consciousness that made them dream in both European and African languages. This analysis is very important because it reveals the epistemological roots of the

limits of decolonization. According Ramon Grosfoguel:

> One of the most powerful myths of the twentieth century was the notion that the elimination of colonial administrations amounted to decolonisation 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 decolonisation of the periphery over the past 50 years. We continue to live under the same 'colonial power matrix.' With juridical-political decolonisation, we moved from a period of 'global colonialism' to the current period of 'global coloniality.' Although 'colonial administrations' have been almost entirely eradicated and the majority of the periphery is politically organised into independent states, non-European people are still living under crude European/Euro-American exploitation and domination (Grosfoguel 2007: 219).

The crucial point here is to emphasize the distinction between 'colonialism' and 'coloniality.' Grosfoguel further makes this distinction clearer:

> Coloniality allows us to understand the continuity of colonial forms of domination after the end of colonial administrations, produced by colonial cultures and structures in the modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system. 'Coloniality of power' refers to a crucial structuring process in the modern/colonial world-system that articulates peripheral locations in the international labour division with the global racial/ethnic hierarchy and Third World migrants' inscription in the racial/ethnic hierarchy of metropolitan global cities. In this sense, there is a periphery outside and inside the core zones and there is a core inside and outside the peripheral regions (Grosfoguel 2007: 219-220).

What Grosfoguel is saying is what is generally referred to as 'neo-colonialism' in Africa. He uses a more fitting term 'global coloniality' that is currently imposed through and maintained via the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank conditionalities and trade regimes. It is high time Africans woke up from the mythology about decolonization of the continent because, as Grosfoguel says, this mythology only obscures the terrible continuities between the colonial past and current global colonial/racial hierarchies (Grosfoguel 2007: 220). Believing in the mythology of decolonization contributes to the hiding and 'invisibility' of coloniality today. As long as coloniality continues, then independence of Africa is just an illusion.

In an article entitled 'A Battle for Global Values', the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair urged the Western and American powers to intensify the globalization of their values systems and traditions as global norms. To him, Euro-American/Anglo-Saxon values represented humanity's progress throughout the ages. In his justification of the 'war against terror' and occupation

of Iraq, Blair stated that these values were fought for and defended over time. The key task of the 'civilised' world, according to him, was to demonstrate that Euro-American values were not. 'Western, still less American or Anglo-Saxon, but values in the common ownership of humanity, universal values that should be the right of the global citizen' (Blair 2007: 3-4).

Knowledge production has continued to reinforce Western hegemony over the African continent; and the schools, colleges and universities continue to contribute towards universalization of Western values. There is need for an African epistemological rebellion entailing putting the African experience at the centre of intellectualism and the African taking a leading role in the production of situated and relevant knowledge.

Towards African epistemological freedom

Knowledge production in Africa is deeply ensnared within the colonial matrix of power and reproduces Western ideational domination on the African continent. What is needed in Africa is a decolonization of knowledge consisting of a double movement of consistently deconstructing and fracturing Euro-American 'geo-political location of theology, secular philosophy and scientific reason' while at the same time 'simultaneously affirming the modes and principles of knowledge that have been denied by the rhetoric of Christianisation, civilisation, progress, development, market democracy' (Mignolo 2007: 463). Zeleza (2003: 97) emphasized the need for African universities and African intellectuals to overcome dependence, to Africanize global scholarship and global African scholarship, to produce knowledge that address and explain the problems and possibilities facing the peoples, economies, societies and cultures of Africa.

But the key to African success in decolonizing knowledge is dependent on successfully fighting for political and economic autonomy. Power and knowledge, as Michel Foucault made clear, are inextricably intertwined. Foucault elaborated on the genealogical birth of human and social sciences as part of Western culture, emphasizing that the epistemological field 'traversed by the human sciences was not laid down in advance' as there was 'no philosophy, no political or moral option, no empirical science of any kind, no observation of the human body, no analysis of sensation, imagination, or the passions' ever encountered in the seventeenth century (Foucault 1972: 344). According to him, the historical emergence of each one of the human sciences was occasioned by a problem and necessity as well as the new norms imposed by industrial society upon individuals (Foucault 1972: 344-345). In the same

manner, African academics and intellectuals must engage in the production of knowledge that addresses the current African problems created by colonial modernity.

At the centre of colonial modernity that introduced Western epistemology to the African continent were three key variables: knowledge, racism and capital. Mignolo (2007: 477-478) says:

> As a matter of fact, the modern/colonial world cannot be conceived except as simultaneously capitalist. The logic of coloniality is, indeed, the implementation of capitalist appropriation of land, exploitation of labour and accumulation of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. [...] The control of knowledge in Western Christendom belonged to Western Christian men, which meant the world would be conceived only from the perspective of Western Christian Men (emphasis in the original source).

Imperial knowledge was deployed to repress colonized subjectivities and the process proceeded from there to construct structures of knowledge informed by experiences of African humiliation and marginalization. Consequently, African people have continued to be major consumers of ideas generated in the West and tested on the African soil and on African minds. This reality has forced some African scholars to call for a liberatory Afrocentric epistemology as a remedy to the hegemonic Western epistemology. According to Archie Mafeje:

> Afrocentrism is nothing more than a legitimate demand that African scholars study their society from inside and cease to be purveyors of an alienated intellectual discourse […] when Africans speak for themselves and about themselves, the world will hear the authentic voice, and will be forced to come to terms with it in the long-run […]. If we are adequately Afrocentric the international implications will not be lost on others (Mafeje 2000: 66-67).

What the African struggle for a decolonized knowledge involved is not only engagement with fundamentalist socio-economic and political processes like imperialism but also with paradigms, theories, perspectives and methodologies that 'inferorize, misrepresent, and oversimplify African experiences, conditions, and realities' (Zeleza 2003: 97). Contributing to the debate on the decolonization of the African mind through de-westernization of the social sciences, Claude Ake said:

> Every prognostication indicates that Western social science continues to play a major role in keeping us subordinate and underdeveloped; it continues to inhibit our understanding of the problems of our world, to feed us noxious values and false hopes, to make us pursue policies which undermine our competitive strength

> and guarantee our permanent underdevelopment and dependence. It is becoming increasingly clear that we cannot overcome our underdevelopment and dependence unless we try to understand the imperialist character of Western social science and to exorcise the attitudes of mind which it inculcates (Ake 1979: ii).

This means that the African struggle for decolonization had to extend to the realm of ideas where colonialism remained hanging and dominant like a nightmare on the minds of Africans long after direct colonial administration was defeated. While some African intellectuals have begun the struggle to challenge and question the legitimacy, truths and relevance of knowledge emanating from the West for Africa together with its grammar of alterity and thematics of neutral, objective, universal, monolithic, timeless and abstract knowledge, there is no substantial change on the ground (Mlambo 2006; Obi 2001).

At the centre of the African search for self-knowing are six core concerns which are about complete African self-rule, self-regeneration, self-understanding, self-definition, self-knowing, and self-articulation of African issues after centuries of domination and de-oracization/silencing. Unlike Achille Mbembe (2002a, 2002b), who dismisses these legitimate African concerns as nativism and Afro-radicalism, these aspirations form a core part of quests for freedom, development and identity, in a world still dominated by Western particularistic worldviews that have been universalized and globalized.

In an essay on the 125th Anniversary of the Berlin Conference, the Ghanaian novelist Ayi Kweyi Armah used the term 'Berlin consensus' to describe a process rather than an event through which Europeans configured African space and time in ways beneficial to themselves. He used the term 'Berlin consensus' metaphorically to refer to one of the nerve centres of 'coloniality of power'—that global hegemonic model of power in place since the partition and conquest of Africa that articulated race and labour, space and peoples, according to the needs of capital and to the benefit of European peoples. The process has postdated direct colonial administration. Armah prefers to characterize the Berlin consensus as a process of 'dismemberment of Africa'. He likened the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 to the 'butchering of a huge elephant for sharing among jubilant hunter kin' (Armah 2010: 5).

Within this scheme of things, the Bible and Christianity played a central role in the inscription of Western epistemology, giving it a moral touch and divine dimension. Biblical teaching tempered with African spiritualities wrecked havoc on the development of African consciousness and identity.

In the words of Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2005), Christianity became a grand re-naming ritual in Africa, with those Africans who converted to it being given European names as part of violating and destroying their being and reconstructing it in European terms.

At the present moment, Africans are torn apart between resignation to the Berlin consensus including the neoliberal call for Africans to board the globalization train as quickly as possible if they are to develop to the levels of the Westerners, and the struggle to embrace the African Renaissance that seeks to re-assert the primacy of African ideas as key weapons in the struggle to reverse the imperatives of the Berlin consensus and replace it with the African consensus. The construction of the African consensus has been a long, painstaking and complex pedigree that began with anti-slavery slave revolts, primary resistance, initiatives such as Ethiopianism, Garveyism, Negritude, Pan-Africanism right through to the post-1945 decolonization struggles. The construction of the African consensus has taken the form of 're-membering Africa' after centuries of 'dismembering' imperatives of the Berlin consensus (Ngugi 2010).

As defined by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2010) the process and struggle for 're-membering Africa' took various forms of imagination, visions, and deliberate initiatives dating back to the Egyptian stories of Osiris that spoke directly to the African quest for 'wholeness'. Some of the well-known 're-membering visions' included the grandest religio-secular eschatologies aimed at reconnecting the dismembered continent. African struggles aimed at scrapping the Berlin consensus are still being waged at different intellectual, cultural, ideological and political levels.

The key challenge is that the ghost of Berlin obstinately persists in resurrecting every time Africans bury it. It has managed to hide behind global structures and institutions of governance and among languages and discourses such as liberal democracy, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism and globalization. It has managed to perch itself on the wings of universalism as well. It has also managed to hide behind paradigms and epistemologies that assume truthful, universalistic, neutral, objective point of view.

As noted by Zeleza (2003: 97), African intellectuals, as a professional formation, have complex histories that need deep reflection and systematic research. What can be said for now is that there are many African producers of knowledge that have mounted pressure on Western epistemologies through mimicry, counter-factualization of dominant discourses and other means. These include what Toyin Falola (2001: 3) termed the 'traditional intellectuals/ traditional elites' that comprised priests, kings, chiefs, magicians, praise poets,

and merchants. These people produced mainly oral knowledge that drove precolonial African societies and it is their knowledge that was pushed into the barbarian margins under colonial modernity. The next set of knowledge producers consisted of Christianized ex-slaves and 'creoles' of Sierra Leone and Liberia that had imbibed Western thought and experienced the Western life style from the traumatic experiences of bondage. These early African knowledge producers drove inspiration from revival of Christian teaching and the rising liberal humanitarianism that swept across Europe and America (July 1968). The key crisis here was that these early African intellectuals operated within the colonial episteme.

The third group of African intellectuals consisted of early educated African elites consisting of evangelists, bishops, reverends, doctors and teachers. Examples included Tiyo Soga in South Africa and the leading cultural nationalist Edward Wilmot Blyden. Their ranks increased due to the production of 'evolues/assimilados/mulattoes' by the French colonial system of assimilation. They were dominant mainly in the four communes of St Louis, Goree, Rufisque and Dakar (July 1968: 155-176). The well known representative of this group was Blaise Diane who believed in the redemptive potential of French colonial system of assimilation and dreamt of the extension of French citizenship to the whole of French West Africa.

The fourth group consisted of 'intellectual activists/intellectual revolutionaries' that included Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, Patrice Lumumba, Agostihno Neto, Eduardo Mondlane, Albert Luthuli, Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Jomo Kenyatta, Tom Mboya, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, Amilcar Cabral, Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Sekou Toure and many others. These 'intellectuals' were united by their adherence to African nationalism and Pan-Africanism.

They produced and instrumentalized knowledge to fight against imperialism and colonialism. These worked side-by-side with 'scholar-activists' like Cheikh Anta Diop, Walter Rodney, Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Ali Mazrui, Bernard Magubane, Kwesi Wiredu, and many others. A later cohort of scholars belonging to the first or second generation of African scholars includes Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, Thandika Mkandawire, Claude Ake, Issa G. Shivji, Sam Moyo, Ibbo Mandaza, Brian Raftopoulos, Achille Mbembe, Fantu Cheru, Ngwabi Bhebe, Adebayo Olukoshi, Mahmood Mamdani, Dani Nabudere, Archibald Mafeje, Paulin Hountodji, Herbert Vilakazi and many others who were also concerned about colonialism, underdevelopment, social and economic justice as well as democracy. It was from among this group

that some intellectuals and academics began to lose faith in the emancipatory and liberatory potential of the postcolonial state due to its entrapment in neocolonialism and corruption.

What distinguished African intellectuals and academics was that they never produced knowledge just for mere intellectual enjoyment and mere professional vocation. The activist aspect was embedded through and through (Arowosegbe 2008). Modern African intellectuals have always operated as theorists, empiricists, ideologists, and activists simultaneously. Even intellectual-cum-politicians like Leopold Senghor, Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda and others became 'philosopher-kings' and formulated various discourses of liberation such as Negritude, Consciencism, African Socialism, African Humanism and so on as they struggled to counter the imperatives of the Berlin consensus and its epistemological outreach on the African continent.

What is disturbing though is that even after African intellectuals have produced numerous books and journal articles speaking directly on pertinent issues of freedom, development and democracy, their work has not fully succeeded in reaching the same heights as that of Western theorists such as Plato, Machiavelli, Michael Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Max Weber, Karl Marx and others. African intellectual productions have not yet assumed dominance in local and global knowledge in the way that Marx, Derrida, Foucault and others' ideas are doing currently. This reality perhaps vindicates Pieter Boele van Hensbroek's argument that:

> The history of African political ideas is a neglected field of study. […] The study of African intellectual creations, in particular political thought, however, remains quite marginal. No comprehensive history of Europe or the United States, for instance, would fail to discuss the ideas of Locke, Montesquieu, Jefferson, Dewey, or Marx, but when it comes to Africa apparently one can do almost without African intellectuals. […] Within Africanist scholarship the African intellectual remains an anomaly (Hensbroek 1999: 1).

This means that the African academies and universities have remained a conduit of inculcation of Western knowledge, values, ways of knowing and worldviews that are often taught as universal values and scientific knowledge. The African continent is still stuck with the problem of 'the place that Western thought occupies in non-Western discursive formations' (Diawara 1990: 79). Mudimbe called for reformulation of this discourse in these words:

> We Africans must invest in the sciences, beginning with the human and social sciences. We must reanalyze the claims of these sciences for our own benefit;

> evaluate the risks they contain, and their discursive spaces. We must reanalyze for our benefit the contingent supports and the areas of enunciation in order to know what new meaning and what road to propose for our quest so that our discourse can justify us as singular beings engaged in a history that is itself special (cited in Diawara 1990: 87-88).

Such traumatic experiences as the slave trade, colonialism and apartheid influenced the way Africans imagined freedom and shaped the content of African intellectual interventions. Africa is a continent that suffered and experienced multiple levels of subjugations and denigrations that affected its identity formation and ways of knowing. Its traumatic experiences date back to the Punic Wars of 264-146 BC which pitted 'African Carthage against European Rome' (Mbeki 2010).

This was followed by other violent-laden processes and events such as mercantilism, slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid and neocolonialism. These historical processes influenced and shaped the character of intellectual interventions and epistemological development across the 'three generations' of African intellectuals identified by Mkandawire (1995). Thuynsma 19998) has explained why issues such as freedom, development and democracy have pre-occupied the African intellectual minds and African struggles for epistemological freedom. He words:

> Africanists have never been able to afford scholarship for its luxury. In whatever field, we have worked with an unwritten command to tell our people about our people. We have had to work our way out from under a number of historical boulders rolled over us by foreign interests (emphasis in the original source) (Thuynsma 1998: 185).

Once one understood the core factors that drove African intellectual interventions, it is not surprising that some of their works sounded deeply polemical if not aggressive. Toyin Falola explains why:

> Reading the works of Africans or listening to their lectures, you may form an impression that they are polemical or defensive, bitter or apologetic. Yes, you are right! However, you need to know the reason for this. Scholarship in Africa has been conditioned to respond to a reality and epistemology created for it by outsiders, a confrontation with imperialism, the power of capitalism, and the knowledge that others have constructed for Africa. The African intelligentsia does not write in a vacuum but in world saturated with others' statements, usually negative about its members and their continent. Even when this intelligentsia seeks the means to intrude itself into the modern world, modernity has been defined for it and presented to it in a fragmented manner (Falola 2001: 17).

For Africans, the themes of freedom, development, and identity permeate the greater part of their imagination, visions, trajectories, and eschatologies. This is so, precisely because, of experiences of slavery, colonialism, and apartheid that underpinned underdevelopment and impoverishment of the continent. Amartya Sen (1999): defined 'development as freedom.' To him, attainment of freedom is the primary end and principal means of development. To Sen, 'Development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedom that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency' (Sen 1999: xii).

For Africa, the problem is that since the expansion of Western modernity into the continent, via the slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism and colonialism, 'reasoned agency' became truncated and the search to capture it is still ongoing. African intellectuals together with some African leaders have consistently sought for various ways through which a formerly colonized continent and its people could regain lost confidence, dignity, and control of destiny. This intellectual intervention is taking place against bedrock of lost African epistemological freedom. The key challenge is how to break from the snares of the global colonial matrix of power that consistently subordinated African voices and cries for freedom.

The other challenge for the African struggle for epistemological freedom is that most of the leading African intellectuals that are expected to spearhead this struggle were produced in Europe and America. Most of the leading African intellectuals of today have stationed themselves either in Europe or in America. This means that African intellectualism and knowledge production is deeply situated within Western epistemology, orientation and pedigree.

Inevitably, African ideas are not free from Western ideas. The key conundrum has been how to turn and influence an African intellectual community that has for years been taught and trained along Western lines to rebel against the Western episteme and at minimum work towards domestication and deployment of Western ideas to serve African purposes and, at maximum, construct a new African episteme informed by realities of the subjugated peoples of Africa.

Chakrabarty (2000) argued in favour of the appropriation and adaptation of Western thought to help solve non-Western problems. He acknowledged that colonialists preached a humanism that they denied in practice in Africa and that Western secular and theological vision 'have historically provided a strong foundation on which to erect – both in Europe and outside – critiques of socially unjust practices' (Chakrabarty 2000: 4). Chakrabarty further proposes

appropriation of Western epistemologies and thoughts rather than rejection. This he calls 'decentering' and 'provincialising' Europe and European thought (2000: 16). Indeed, what is being fought for is not a total rejection of Euro-American knowledge but a democratization of this hegemonic knowledge so that it recognizes other knowledges from the ex-colonized world as equally important and relevant.

At another level, Africans have been disillusioned by the failure of decolonization project to culminate in decolonization of the mind as advocated by Steve Bantu Biko's Black Consciousness Movement and Ngugi wa Thiong'o in *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986). Even such strong believers in the redemptive and progressive aspects of African nationalism such as Issa Shivji (2009) had to ask the key question: 'where is Uhuru? (Where is freedom?), reflecting their disillusionment with both the first phase of political liberation that failed to achieve decolonization of African minds and economic empowerment of ex-colonized peoples.

The struggle to decolonize knowledge and minds of ex-colonized peoples has also been fought by black Diaspora scholars like Molefi Asante who came up with what they have termed 'Afrocentric thought' or 'Afrocentricity' (Asante 1988; Asante 1987; Gray 2001). Afrocentricity is defined as 'the belief in the centrality of Africans in post-modern history' and a 'critical perspective placing African ideals at the center of any analysis that involves African culture or behavior' (Asante 1988: 6). The bottom line in this epistemological initiative is how to transcend Eurocentrism embedded in conventional thinking and pedagogy. Asante and others whose intellectual interventions have been informed by Afrocentric thought have indeed succeeded in reading and interpreting the human story from an African perspective and to mainstream African agency in the making of global history.

Within the continent such scholars as Dani Nabudere have been vocal on issues of epistemological decolonization that transcended Eurocentrism. Nabudere, in particular, has emphasized that all sources of knowledge were valid within their historical, cultural and social context. He uses the term 'Afrikology' to refer to an Africa-focused epistemology that fully takes into account African history, culture, and context. Such an epistemology is envisaged to put African experience and problems at its centre. Nabudere argued that:

> The construction of the science of Afrikology therefore directly flows from the need for Africans to redefine their world, which can enable them to advance their self-understanding and the world around them based on their cosmologies.

> […] Afrikology must proceed from the proposition that is a true philosophy of knowledge and wisdom based on African cosmologies because it is *Afri-* in that it is inspired by ideas originally produced from the Cradle of Humankind located in Africa. *It is not Afrikology* because it is African but it is *Afri-* because it emanates from the source of the Universal system of knowledge in Africa (emphasis is in the original source) (Nabudere 2011: 17-18).

Broadly speaking, all these initiatives are a response to the logic of the Berlin consensus that has continued to dominate in the realm of epistemology. But some scholars like Mbembe (2002a: 239-273, 2002b: 621-641) and Kwame Anthony Appiah (1993, 2006) who strongly believe in the therapeutic potential of globalization and cosmopolitanism for Africans do not see any redemptive potential in Afrocentric approaches. Such thinking is labelled 'nativism' that strives on essentialization African identity and 'narcissism of minor difference'.

Owing to the pervasive use of race as a construct that underpinned Western's imagination and construction of the world, African deconstructions of Euro-American hegemonic epistemology cannot ignore the complex issue of identity. Santos (2007) has emphasized that modern Western thinking was informed by 'an abyssal' thought which consisted of 'a system of visible and invisible distinctions, the invisible ones being the foundation of visible ones'. What Santos was referring to was how the Western metropolitan side 'visibilized' itself through 'invisibilizing' the non-Western world into a zone of incomprehensible beings. This division of the world of Europeans from the world of non-Europeans was meant to popularize the ideas of 'impossibility of co-presence of the two sides of the line' as well as colonial domination. The zone of Europeans was governed according to ethics, social regulation and imperatives of social emancipation; whereas the African zone was to be governed through appropriation and violence as ethics did not apply (Santos 2007).

No wonder then that one of the enduring legacies of the Berlin consensus is that of fragmenting African identities into contending tribes and ethnicities. The introduction of colonialism and the creation of colonial states were predicated on preventing of African identities from developing and coalescing towards larger national identities. Consequently, there was the issue of who is an African in a postcolonial world where such other identities as Indian, Afrikaner, English and many minority identities also compete for Africanity. Current debates on African freedom and development have to deal with the increasing importance of identity politics and the concomitant issues of shifting and contested belonging and citizenship. What links the politics of knowledge production with politics if identity is that the white race arrogated

all progressive ideas as production of Western civilization and denied any existence of progressive ideas emanating from African civilization. In short, the colonial drive that pushed African knowledges into the barbarian margins of society happened in tandem with denial and alienation of African identity.

The real challenge has been how to ensure ethical conditions of human peaceful coexistence that takes into account the politics of recognition and difference. This politics of recognition is linked with new questions of social justice, ownership of resources and reclamation of subdued African knowledges to make them part of the drivers of the postcolonial African world. It is also linked to the question of who is the authentic subject of the colonially-crafted postcolonial nation-states. Since the end of the Cold War, new issues have arisen linked to the central question of identity. These have taken the form of new politics of nativism, xenophobia, and autochthony that cannot be ignored in any book dealing with ideational issues of freedom, development and democracy in Africa (Geshiere 2009; Comaroffs 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

Cornwall (2009: 471) wrote about how 'words make the world' and for Africa it is Western words and knowledge that continue to take the leading role in influencing the making of the world. The realm of ideas is one area where the Berlin consensus continues to strive and reshape the African world. The situation is worsened by the fact that schools, colleges and universities in Africa have failed to shake off the colonial character of being Western transplants propagating Western and American ideas (Muzvidziwa 2005: 79).

It is within African institutions of learning that the African agenda continues to be lost. These institutions have failed to privilege indigenous knowledge that was pushed to the margins by colonialism and that continues to languish in the margins as a result of the presence of the colonial power matrix. African values and aspirations have remained outside the school, college and university curriculum. These institutions continue to produce 'mimic' men and women. They also led Victor Muzvidziwa to conclude that:

> African universities continue to lag behind as far as rooting their curricula and pedagogy in African settings. Universities in Africa in many ways continue the project designed to uproot Africans from their origins. The greatest battle yet to be won is that of the mind. While the African University is rooted within the African postcolony, it still falls far short of identifying with indegenes and local communities (Muzvidziwa 2005: 88).

African scholars like their continent, their economies and cultures, are still caught up in the snares of the colonial power matrix (Mkandawire 1995;

Vilakazi 2001). Received Western epistemological imports have continued to wreck havoc on the minds of young Africans in schools, colleges and universities. This must not come as a surprise to those whose analysis is informed by de-coloniality thought and who are aware of the continued presence of the colonial power matrix as a guardian of western epistemology.

Conclusions

Unless Africans take a serious leap forward from what Santos termed 'learned ignorance' emanating from the realities of coloniality and understand the operations of the modern racialized, hegemonic, patriarchal and capitalist global world that was created by Western modernity, they may continue to celebrate illusions of decolonization and myths of freedom. The reality of Africa today is that it is deeply ensnared within the strong but invisible colonial matrix of power that does not allow Africans to take control and charge of their social, economic and political destinies. A postcolonial African world is not yet born. This chapter therefore has tracked and unpacked the broader contours of the colonial matrix of power and how it continues to suffocate African initiatives of development and freedom.

What is emphasized in this chapter, therefore, is that the worse form of colonization that has continued to wreck havoc on the continent is the epistemological one (colonization of imagination and the mind) that is hidden in institutions and discourses that govern the modern globe. African universities have not managed to produce knowledge for African freedom and empowerment because they are largely operating as Western institutions located on the continent. African intellectuals continue to operate within the episteme constructed by the West. They have not managed to successfully counter epistemologies of alterity that continue to subordinate and subjugate everything African, if not totally ignoring it. Western ideas have assumed the character of universal values that are said to contribute towards maintenance and stabilization of the existing global order. It is not yet time for Africans to celebrate anything as the struggle for epistemological freedom still needs to be waged on all fronts if a postcolonial African world is to be realized.