



Globalisation, Decoloniality and the Question of Knowledge Production in Africa: A Critical Discourse

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Abstract

Globalisation entails the process of production and exchange at the planetary level, making the world a global village. At global epistemic levels, it has been dominated by Eurocentrism and Western knowledge production paradigms and platforms. Characterised by asymmetrical and superior-inferior relationships between the global North generally and global South, in Africa in particular, virtually all facets of knowledge production, utilisation and transfer have been dominated by the West. In Africa, the process of knowledge production has been muddled, supplanted and ultimately made subservient to orthodox Western education forms and structures of colonial authorities. The global political economy of knowledge production has consigned indigenous knowledge to being regarded as traditional, unscientific and value-laden. Using philosophical logical reasoning and secondary data, the article critically engages with these issues, especially those that pertain to decolonisation of knowledge production in Africa in the age of globalisation. It provides an examination of pedagogical issues, especially teaching and learning methodologies. It also interrogates the knowledge of culture, mind, and self in knowledge production in Africa within the global context. In addition, it appraises research methodological platforms that inhibit Africanist solutions with global applicability. This is with a view to suggesting interventions that demonstrate the applicability of alternative frameworks of knowledge production in Africa.

Résumé

La mondialisation implique le processus de production et d'échange au niveau planétaire, faisant du monde un village planétaire. Aux niveaux épistémiques

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mondiaux, elle a été dominée par l'eurocentrisme et les paradigmes et plate-formes de production de connaissances occidentales. Caractérisée par des relations asymétriques supérieur-subalterne entre le Nord global en général et le Sud global, en Afrique en particulier, pratiquement toutes les facettes de la production, de l'utilisation et du transfert des connaissances ont été dominées par l'Occident. En Afrique, le processus de production de connaissances a été brouillé, supplanté et finalement asservi aux formes d'éducation occidentales orthodoxes et aux structures des autorités coloniales. L'économie politique mondiale de la production de connaissances a relégué les connaissances autochtones à être perçues comme traditionnelles, non scientifiques et chargées de valeurs. Utilisant un raisonnement logique philosophique et des données secondaires, l'article aborde, de manière critique, ces questions, en particulier celles de la décolonisation de la production de connaissances en Afrique à l'ère de la mondialisation. Il fournit un examen des questions pédagogiques, en particulier des méthodologies d'enseignement et d'apprentissage. Il interroge également la connaissance de la culture, de l'esprit et de soi dans la production de connaissances en Afrique dans le contexte mondial. En plus, il évalue les plateformes méthodologiques de recherche qui inhibent les solutions africanistes d'applicabilité mondiale. Ceci dans le but de suggérer des interventions qui démontrent l'applicabilité de cadres alternatifs de production de connaissances en Afrique.

Introduction

Globalisation entails the process of production and exchange at the planetary level, making the world a global village. Global epistemology has been dominated by Eurocentrism and Western knowledge production paradigms and platforms. Characterised by asymmetrical and superior-inferior relationships between the global North generally and the global South, particularly in Africa, virtually all facets of knowledge production, use and transfer have been dominated by this relationship. In Africa, the process of knowledge production has been muddled, supplanted and ultimately made subservient to the orthodox Western education forms and structures established by colonial authorities. These 'imposed' forms and structures of Western knowledge production have been maintained by conscious but subtle cultural changes effected by Western-led philosophical justifications, notably in language, translation, methods, equivalence and conceptualisation (Afolabi 2017).

Given that globalisation runs on the fulcrum of ideas, values and principles that privileges the North over the South (Mimiko & Afolabi 2012), the global political economy of knowledge production has

consigned indigenous knowledge to being traditional, unscientific and value-laden. Western knowledge has been prioritised over traditional means of knowledge acquisition. Western relics, forms and values – products of continuous and sustained domination of Africa and its intellect, especially in knowledge production – are regularly justified and sustained by petty African intellectual bourgeoisie.

This has led to Western knowledge being seen as ‘normal’ with the continuous production of African intellectuals through the Western education grid, with resulting outputs unable to understand Africa’s social realities and offer solutions to its problems (Afolabi 2020a). The problems of Western globalisation of ideas and knowledge are felt more in the humanities and social sciences, especially in the social construction of the individual and social realities of Africans. This is because Western ideas are culturally incongruent with African social realities. To argue that colonisation has no effect on the sociology of knowledge is to ignore the enforced knowledge acquisition mandated by the colonial authorities. The very basis of such ignorance, doubt and argument, especially by African academics, shows the success of the embedded liberal ideology and knowledge entrapment of colonialism. The current domination of knowledge production in Africa is sustained by and steeped in the idea and practice of globalisation, an offshoot of capitalism. Knowledge is seen as a commodity that can be sold and bought. This, in essence, is the commodification of knowledge. The commodification of knowledge has been championed by Western financial institutions and adopted in several ways within Africa’s educational systems, particularly with the introduction of exorbitant school fees and the rationalisation of academic staff.

World Bank loan conditionalities (Structural Adjustment Programmes then and now) are founded on the same commodification of knowledge and are the principal vehicles to achieve the institution’s objectives, an abnormality within the African context. It is the abnormality and dysfunctional issues in liberal knowledge production in Africa that this paper engages with and seeks answers to. The paper is divided into six sections. The first is this introduction, followed by attempt to situate knowledge production between globalisation and decoloniality. The third section examines epistemicide and the disarticulation of knowledge in Africa, and the following section looks at African scholarship towards knowledge production. The next section presents the drivers of knowledge production systems in Africa, while the final section provides a conclusion by examining the possibility and feasibility of Africa breaking the dominance of Western knowledge production in a globalised world.

Situating Knowledge Production between Globalisation and Decoloniality: Establishing the Linkages

The idea of globalisation references the interconnectedness of economies, states and cultures. It is a process that connects and integrates people, governments and other non-state actors. While primarily economic in nature, globalisation is driven by liberal ideas and knowledge of how the world should be shaped. This fits in with Nazombe's definition of globalisation as the 'interlocking of national economies into an interdependent global economy and the development of a shared set of global images' (1995:2). This set of global images is conditioned and promoted by Western values and ideas that are taught and instilled in Western and non-Western societies as natural (localised) orthodox knowledge production systems. The direct relationship between globalised economic systems and dominated African knowledge enterprises is best seen in the works of Harvey (2004), who believed that land dispossession lies at the root of capital accumulation.

While land dispossession and forceful occupation of African societies were the initial efforts (forays) of globalisation in Africa (colonialisation); continued economic exploitation of African economies has been made possible by dominated African epistemologies (Hall & Tandon 2017) through Western knowledge production in Africa.

In view of the history of Africa, concepts such as colonialisation, decolonisation and decoloniality reflect the lived and shared experiences of Africans. Colonialism, as used in this study, refers to a forceful subjugation and occupation of a territory by another state or political power which imposes its will and administration on that territory, known as a colony. In knowledge production, colonial authorities imposed their preferred method of education on the colonised territories, principally through Western missionaries and colonial administrators/paid educators. Decolonisation is needed to eradicate the effects of colonialisation. Therefore, decolonisation involves doing away with the structures, values, and vestiges of colonialisation. It is apt to state from the onset that issues of colonialisation and decolonisation are steeped in controversy and are affected by ideology, race, culture, history and knowledge. This is in turn affected by different societal nuances and mediations that shape the conception and production of knowledge. However, decoloniality goes beyond decolonisation as it argues that coloniality still exists, must be understood in its modern form (coloniality) and must be dismantled for the global South to develop. Associated with Mignolo (2011), the concept of decoloniality has come to be associated with various structures, forms and vestiges of coloniality that continually shape African images of self, identity and memory. Therefore, 'decoloniality is born out of a realisation that ours is

an asymmetrical world order that is sustained not only by colonial matrices of power but also by pedagogies and epistemologies of equilibrium that continue to produce alienated Africans who are socialised into hating the Africa that produced them, and liking the Europe and America that rejects them' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:11).

While decoloniality does not subscribe to a single school of thought, it is however premised on three ideas. First is the concept of coloniality of power. This explains the construction of the current 'global political' order and the international power structure. Second is the idea of coloniality of knowledge that interrogates epistemological issues, knowledge generation politics and the source, basis and purpose of knowledge. Third is the idea of coloniality of being, emphasising questions of who an individual is, subjectivity versus objectivity, colonised versus coloniser, with answers in the negative for Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). This negativity is seen in the commodification/objectification of Africans within the global production system of knowledge, economies and development. Decoloniality seeks to 'epistemologically transcend, decolonise the Western canon and epistemology' (Grosfoguel 2007:211). Decoloniality is a platform and indeed an Africanist agenda that seeks to transform various methods, pedagogies and socio-cultural influences that render Africans second-class citizens in a globalised world.

Epistemicide and Knowledge Disarticulation in Africa

Every tribe, race and nation has its own epistemic foundation on which its values, ideas and educational systems are founded. Whether called traditional or modern, value-free or value-laden, the reality is that each society is run based on the knowledge system to which it subscribes. But that is more theoretical than practical. In Africa, through formal colonialism and informal coloniality, Western knowledge system dominance has resulted in the debasement and near extinction of African knowledge systems. Indigenous knowledge systems in Africa have been relegated to second-class because of Western pretensions about epistemic diversity and the insistence on its knowledge system as being scientific, universal and monolithic (Musila 2017). For Achille Mbembe, the Western knowledge system is encased in the Eurocentric canon that "attributes truth only to the Western way of knowledge production. It is a canon that disregards other knowledge traditions' (Mbembe 2015:9). The Western knowledge system views African knowledge production as primitive, barbaric and descriptive.

The effect of this has been to downgrade African epistemologies during the colonial era and, through what we have earlier referred to as the coloniality of knowledge, to actively create knowledge disarticulation in African knowledge

systems. Disarticulation of knowledge or knowledge disarticulation occurs when the main activities of knowledge and its end products such as enlightenment and development are contradictory to and divorced from learners' social realities. In most cases, disarticulation of knowledge results in irrelevant knowledge that is disassociated from the needed trajectories of development in Africa. Disarticulation has continued apace as

African Studies frequently neglects to conduct serious investigations into the origins of disciplines, into epistemicides, into how knowledge has been used to assist imperialism and colonialism and into how knowledge has remained Euro-American centric. Endogenous and indigenous knowledges have been pushed to the margins of society. Africa is today saddled with irrelevant knowledge that disempowers rather than empowers individuals and communities (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:11).

Beyond this is the argument that:

The relational dichotomy that colonialism and imperialism has engendered has not only been racial and psychological (black and white, as in South Africa), but produced a class structure that is not only well developed, but also found among Africans of different classes, influenced by access to and cordiality with coloniality and imperialism (Afolabi 2020a:220).

Epistemological foundations in Africa were also destroyed by the continuous denial of the suitability and usefulness of African knowledge systems. Enforced knowledge production became the acceptable way of life through cultural assimilation and the labelling as unscientific of indigenous knowledge systems. This created a colonised 'power of knowledge' relationship where the values and ideas of Euro-American systems were in an asymmetrical superior–inferior nexus with African systems. Having created this demarcation between possessors of knowledge and ignoramuses, through the force of conquest, an unequal relationship developed and has been nurtured by acts of neo-coloniality. It was easy to demonise and condemn other knowledge bases as irrelevant, bad and in many cases, superstitious. This rhymes with Hall and Tandon (2017:8), who posit that:

The act of creating Oxford and the other medieval universities was an act of enclosing knowledge, limiting access to knowledge, exerting a form of control over knowledge and providing a means for a small elite to acquire this knowledge for the purposes of leadership of a spiritual, governance or cultural nature. Those within the walls became knowers; those outside the walls became non-knowers. Knowledge was removed from the land and from the relationships of those sharing the land. The enclosing of the academy dispossessed the vast majority of knowledge keepers, forever relegating their knowledge to witchcraft, tradition, superstition, folkways or, at best, some form of common sense.

The evils of disarticulating African knowledge systems are still prevalent today as African traditional philosophies are seen as inferior as well as viewed with suspicion and disdain by mentally colonized Africans and the West. This shows the importance of decoloniality to Africa's emancipation from its dominated position in a globalised world. The economics of globalisation have played a prominent role in maintaining the epistemicide of African knowledge and its usefulness. Even when efforts are made to challenge the epistemic enterprise of Western scholars by launching a philosophical inquiry into the usefulness of all knowledge systems, such efforts are rebuffed by both local intellectuals who are ignorant of the dynamics of the power relations of knowledge between the global North and South and by Western scholars who describe such efforts as unscientific, lacking in universality and, therefore, sub-standard.

African Scholarship Towards Knowledge Production

It is noteworthy that knowledge production is not all about gloom and a bleak future. Africans have contributed immensely to charting a new course in knowledge production discourse within the continent. This is evident in the abundance of scholarly works on African knowledge production; there is a plethora of scholars committed to the pursuit of indigenous production of knowledge, including the late Abiola Irele, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Simon Gikandi.

Some academics believe that the turning point for African knowledge production happened at the time of the meeting of worlds in which one subordinated or eviscerated the other. Hountondji (1995:2) believes that the shortcomings of scientific and technological activity as practiced in Africa today can be traced back to the history of the integration and subordination of traditional knowledge to world systems of knowledge. Olufemi (1993:893) corroborated this, saying that knowledge production existed in Nigeria's remote past before the advent of the alien historical movements which disrupted their capacity for autochthony. Autochthony here denotes the condition of originating knowledge in a natural setting. Against this background, it is established that the mode of African knowledge production is not a new or emerging concept. Some contributions of African scholars to the production of African knowledge are discussed below.

Pio Zirimu and Austin Bukenya's Orature

The term oral literature denotes forms of oral art such as folktales, epic poems, songs, myth spells, proverbs, riddles etc. which are transmitted orally. Ugandan scholar Pio Zirimu and his student Austin Bukenya coined the term Orature in 1977 to describe the use of utterance as a means of literary expression.

This presupposes that literature is fluid and can be verbal. Pio Zirimu's contributions to the production of African knowledge are also evident in his efforts to bring about the curricular legitimization of African literature as an academic discipline at the Makerere University in Uganda (Bukenyu 2020).

Micere Githae Mugo: *African Orature and Human Rights* (1991)

In her 1991 paper, Micere Githae Mugo attempted to establish a nexus between African orature and human rights. Mugo believes that orature is a tool used by Africans, especially peasants and workers, and is the product of a socio-economic and philosophical environment. She uses the Agikuyu people of Kenya as a model to explain the composition and structure of orature and the emergence of human rights. She uses the example of the right to education and connects it to how non-formal education employed orature as a medium of knowledge transmission. The basic argument in Mugo's paper is that orature conveys the human experience, which also includes human rights concerns.

Chiekh Anta Diop: *Pre-Colonial Black Africa: a comparative study of the political and social systems of Europe and Black Africa, from antiquity to the formation of modern states* (1987)

Diop's book is a magnifying lens through which Africa can be reimagined outside of the colonial gaze. The book decolonises the history of Africa while stressing that Africa is not a product of Western imperialism. It offers instead an African-centred gaze into the narratives of pre-colonial Africa and its societal structures in which great kingdoms of Mali, Songhai and Ghana were urban centres of civilisation. What Diop has done is to construct the evolution of African history in tandem with European history. This is monumental because African history has always been in the shadows of the West and is almost always a victim of Eurocentricity. The caste system as conceived by Diop can be likened to the European bourgeoisie and proletariat system or that of feudal lords and the serfs. The difference in the African caste system and in its European counterpart was that the superior caste had a duty towards the lower caste in which they were not expected to materially exploit them (Diop 1987).

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o: *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (1981)

Ngũgĩ's book marks his final departure from writing in English. The central theme of the book is language. Ngũgĩ believed that language has a dual

character. It is a means of communication and also a carrier of culture (1981:15) and both are products of each other. Language, particularly through orature, carries culture and culture carries language, with both transmitting the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world (1981:15-16). African languages have long assumed the role of 'the other' in relation to the English language which has become the standard of communication between and among cultures in African society. Many individuals who received their education in Africa can attest to the depiction of African languages as 'vernacular' in relation to the English language. Ngugi believes that language, the English language, is a legacy of colonialism. Ngugi's book is persuasive in its message of decolonising language in the African setting; but it also provides a deeper understanding of how in the past the colonial languages drew an invisible barrier between the colonialists and Africans, and how in the present that barrier exists between educated, literate Africans and those who cannot read, write or speak in those languages. While accepting the importance of Ngugi's return to his linguistic roots, one is tempted to ask if in doing so, he is not also marginalising other Africans who cannot understand his Gikuyu language. Additionally, will he not also run the risk of having his writings decontextualised in the process of translation to English?

Biodun Jeyifo: *The Nature of Things: Arrested Decolonization and Critical Theory* (1990)

Biodun Jeyifo's work focuses mainly on the emergence of African literature as an academic discipline and the traditions of critical discourse on African literature which we have inherited – the traditions whose premises, frames of intelligibility and conditions of possibility have been yoked to foreign historical perspectives. Jeyifo writes that a decolonisation of African literature has taken place in which African literature has emerged from the woodwork into the academic curriculum in African universities and schools. However, this has led to the emergence of two distinct groups of scholars: the nationalists and the Africanists. The nationalists emphasise extra-literary and non-literary concerns and argue that African literature has to go through a three-stage process where it takes on an apprentice role in European traditions: protests, romanticisms and idyllic nostalgia; and a revolutionary phase of fighting literature. (1990:43). The Africanists on the other hand are ideological and are concerned with objectivity, rigour, formalism and literary norms of evaluation. Jeyifo writes that the Africanists have become the purveyors of African literature and that African literature emerging from the decolonisation processes has mostly catered

to the foreign gaze. As Simon Gikandi attested in an interview with *Brittle Paper*, African writers living in Africa often believe that validation of their writings must come from outside, not from within the continent (Jefferess & Gikandi 2005).

Arjun Appadurai: *Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy* (1990)

Arjun Appadurai's essay looks at the world through a single system with complex subsystems. He believes that the problem of globalisation is the tension between homogenisation and heterogenisation. Appadurai's global world consists of five main 'scapes' of global culture which are interdependent and influence each other in fundamental ways: ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes. Each scape, Appadurai believes, represents a particular dimension of global flows which are at the same time disjunctive, interdependent and interrelated. The term ethnoscapes describes the flow of ethnicities; technoscapes refer to the flow of technology; finanscapes looks at the fluidity and flow of capital; mediascapes and ideoscapes describe the flow of images, symbols and ideas in the context of entertainment and enlightenment respectively. However unlike the three scapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes build on the disjunctions of the others. The flows are not only disjunctive but also chaotic in character.

V.Y. Mudimbe: *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and The Order of Knowledge* (1988)

Mudimbe's contribution to African knowledge production is his famous work *The Invention of Africa* which examines the foundations of African philosophy as constructed by the West and appropriated by African critics and scholars within the continent. The book poses fundamental questions: What does it mean to be African? Is philosophy an African concept? Over the course of five chapters, he traces the history of African religion and philosophy from Herodotus to Western history, missionary rhetoric, anthropology and contemporary developments. His major thesis identifies African philosophy as gnosis, that is, methods of inquiry and knowing which emphasise a higher and esoteric knowledge under specific procedures for its use as well as transmission (1981:9). He challenges the Western discourse by Western and African scholars on African worlds which attempts to distort African modalities through the use of non-African languages.

Henry Odera Oruka: *Sage Philosophy: Indigenous Thinkers and Modern Debate on African Philosophy* (1990)

This project analyses the role of individual thinkers in the historical development of African thought. For Oruka, sage philosophy is the expressed thoughts of wise men and women in any given community and is a way of thinking and explaining the world which fluctuates between popular wisdom (well-known communal maxims, aphorisms and general common sense) and didactic wisdom (an expounded wisdom and the rational thoughts of given individuals within a community). The folk sage represents the former while the philosophic sage is a symbol of the latter. Oruka's work is geared towards the preservation of African indigenous thought which is why he separated the philosophic sage from other sages. He believed that the philosophic sages are the reservoirs of the indigenous intellectual integrity of African heritage. What Oruka has tried to do is decolonise the concept of philosophy away from the Western thinkers and to show that African philosophy and philosophers have always existed. It might be reductive to limit sage philosophers to the pre-literate in the traditional community. Does it mean that an educated African philosopher does not qualify as a sage because of his/her Western links?

Simon Gikandi: *African Literature and the Colonial Factor* (2000)

Simon Gikandi offers an extensive overview of the interconnectedness between African literature, colonialism and decolonisation. Gikandi writes that modern African literature is a product of colonialism. This is because modern African writers who established the tradition of what is known as African writing – both in indigenous and European languages – were trained and nurtured by colonial institutions. Gikandi's essay highlights the existence of pre-modern African literature which did not come in contact with colonial institutions. These existed in oral literature or better put, orature, and precolonial writing in Arabic, Swahili and other African languages. Gikandi believes that this points to the existence of a thriving literary tradition in precolonial Africa. However, modern literature, which is now considered the heart of African literature, has its identity tied around the traumatic encounter between Africa and Europe. Why is it so? Founders of modern African literature were not only trained by colonial institutions, they were also colonial subjects and this informed their worldview. This is why colonialism and decolonisation has occupied a central theme in African literature discourse.

Globalisation, Coloniality and Drivers of Western Knowledge Production Systems in Africa

It is necessary to point out that the Western knowledge system has its drivers in Africa and many parts of the global South, without which it could not have been sustained. This, as explained, is referred to as coloniality or neo-colonial structures and values in the continent after Africa's so-called independence. The structures and values of coloniality come in different forms and include socio-cultural associations such as the Commonwealth for Anglophone Africa and *Communauté français* (French Community) for Francophone Africa. This is in addition to other Western-led financial and economic organisations to which Africa belongs. In the beginning, colonial authorities imposed their preferred method of education on the colonised territories (Mart 2011). We talk of the colonisation of knowledge, or Western education in Africa after independence, as being the basis of neo-colonialism in Africa. The period after independence has since metamorphosed into the continuation of dominance through the production of Western values and knowledge. The neo-colonial dominance (coloniality) of the West over African knowledge production has continued and even accelerated due to globalisation (modernity) in a number of ways, especially in Africa's ivory towers. The following are the drivers:

- a) Journals and publishing firms are classified and rated in a way that imposes Western and capitalist standards. The works of non-Western scholars that do not meet these ideological standards – that is, works that are critical of the West and put forward a socialist perspective are often rejected for publication on the basis of non-conformity with the journal's ethos.
- b) The preference of some foreign institutions to establish African research institutes and centres outside Africa, mostly headed by non-Africans. These institutions often hide behind unfounded superiority over African research centres, believing that the generous funding they receive from their home countries gives them the platform to dictate how knowledge is generated, produced and used on the continent.
- c) Research funding that creates incentives to produce knowledge that does not understand nor proffer solutions to African realities. Often, such knowledge production is out of touch with Africa's needs in terms of poverty alleviation, reducing child and mother fatality, development, communal cooperative economic growth, and 'space for Africa's own thinking' (CODESRIA 2002).

- d) Reliance on Western research methodologies that are tools of gate-keeping (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). Much of the data generated, using Western developed tools, are adopted and used uncritically in Africa. For instance, scholars in Africa have used Western knowledge production methodology ethics which fail to take cognisance of African cultures and peculiarities, such as communalism and extensive social networks. This renders it unable to provide useful explanations of and solutions to Africa's problems (Afolabi 2020b; Onimode 1988).
- e) Methodologies that are inappropriate for understanding African problems through faulty research/data gathering methodologies that miss the cultural, linguistic and conceptual contexts in Africa. This includes the problems of language, teaching, communication, abstraction and interpretation (Owusu-Ansah & Mji 2013). Western methods of gathering data, communicating and imparting knowledge present a challenge.

In essence, these drivers have served to sustain the structures of coloniality or neo-colonialism in Africa. However, more than this is the realisation that the solutions put forward by Western knowledge production systems, by Western scholars and their African academic collaborators, are often ideologically coloured and bear little or no resemblance to individual and social realities. Solutions prescribed and offered are mostly unable to address Africa's problems as they are out of touch with African realities. They therefore provide little or no solution towards Africa's development. In knowledge production, this failure is traceable mainly to the adoption of Western curriculums, its methodologies and the teaching of these in African universities (Mbembe 2016). The interlink between the old colonialism and the modern ways of dominating Africa and much of the global South through coloniality has served to ensure and preserve the continuities between the colonial and the post-independence periods through the commodification of knowledge and objectification of humans outside the Western knowledge systems. Hence, neo-colonialism/coloniality points to a new form of colonisation that is maintained even after colonies gained formal independence. Old colonial powers continue to dominate former colonies (now independent) in economic, political, cultural and educational spheres with the aid of globalisation that has tied African economies to the dictates and influences of the Western economies in what could be argued is an associated dominated relationship. The associated dominated relationship only permits knowledge production that reflects the West dominant epistemologies and not Africa's dominated and much deride philosophies.

Africa in a Globalised World: Concluding Remarks

As earlier pointed out, decolonisation has to do with the conscious and deliberate dismantling of colonial structures and values, while decolonisation of knowledge is at the core of this endeavour. Neo-colonialism/coloniality is maintained through the continued teaching and production of Western orthodoxy. Therefore, the question of Africa reviving its fortunes and breaking free from the stranglehold of Western knowledge systems raises the issue of the possibility, seriousness and restructuring of knowledge production platforms in Africa. To answer the question of whether Africa can break from its dominated state, one would first need to acknowledge the dominated state of the continent in a globalised world. Second, we must acknowledge the continued coloniality of self, knowledge and identity. The seriousness of this quest it appears to be modest, as most of the issues of knowledge production are buried in the politics and economics of survival. These modest signs of serious intent diminish the prospects of restructuring. With African governments devoting less than 3 per cent of their combined budgets to education, it is not yet *uhuru*. More worrisome is the lack of government investment in and commitment to education and knowledge production through research encouragement and funding. There is, however, some hope of the possibility of engaging in epistemic discussion of the havoc wrought by Western knowledge systems on knowledge production in Africa with the epistemic pursuits of why and how knowledge is produced on the continent.

While South African universities and colleges have imbibed this possibility, and have focused on decolonisation, particular on decolonising the curriculum, there is not much activity in this regard in other African countries. The decolonisation effort in reshaping the curriculum in South Africa is both welcome and desirable. But, examined deeply, even this amounts to a scratch on the surface, as implementation is poor (Idowu 2021, forthcoming in this issue). Beneath this effort are questions of what is taught, what we learn, as well as the question of how we learn and research – the question of methods, methodology and research ethics. These questions are germane to as seek a decolonised knowledge production in Africa. The efforts by African scholars and writers in engaging in and espousing various ideas of indigenous knowledge production is a step in the right direction and showcase robust African interventions in the decolonised knowledge production debate.

When thinking about decolonising methodology, we need to consider methods of gathering data (Smith 1999), teaching environment (Orion, Hofstein, Tamir and Giddings 1997) and language of instruction (Taylor

& Coetzee 2013). For example, is the classroom setting the best space to impart knowledge, given the superior-inferior teacher-student relationship (Bovy 2015)? Indeed, the globalised practice of teacher-student hierarchy as an economic transaction of sellers and buyers in the stratified marketplace of knowledge has denied access to many Africans who do not have the economic power to transact money for knowledge. Such individuals have been alienated from the process of self-discovery and knowledge acquisition by the monetised nature of Western knowledge production systems. Greater still, for those who can afford it, or who have been afforded the opportunity of education, the knowledge acquired has served to alienate them from their African roots through epistemicide and incomplete Eurocentric knowledge that promotes Western orthodoxy, while demonising African knowledge systems as superstitious, primitive and barbaric. At present, African languages are seen as vernacular and are taught as such to African students. Thus, African languages as mother-tongues are forbidden within many school premises, at the pain of punishment, especially in many primary and secondary schools across Africa.

There is also the need to critically engage more in questioning the philosophical foundations of orthodox methodologies in Africa. For instance, are Western methodologies, particularly ethnography, appropriate instruments of data gathering, given its noted problems (Owusu 1978) of reliability, validity and cultural relativism? When we examine pertinent questions of globalisation and coloniality in Africa, as has been done in China and Japan (examples in Asia) and in Brazil in Latin America, then we can start the process of creating enabling environments and frameworks for knowledge production that are beneficial for Africa's development. This should be the starting point of the discussion on Africa disentangling itself from its dominated state in a globalised world. The feat of decolonising African knowledge production systems is achievable and in fact present efforts in this regard can build upon past works, in spite of the current situation on the continent.

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