


Chapter 5

White Supremacism and Global Colonial Continuities

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines why decolonising knowledge production remains necessary to confront white supremacy in Africa. It is a truism that Africa's epistemic landscape remains entrapped within the undertones of white supremacist logic even as the continent now boasts of almost 70 years after the first African states' attainment of independence from colonial rule. Africans must begin to question the efficacy of the erstwhile colonisers' education system in pushing for Africa's development. Africa's epistemological foundations remain deliberately positioned to sustain white supremacy perennially. The epistemological landscape is one characterised by discrimination and marginalisation of African epistemology. This chapter is a deliberate modest attempt to expose the fallacy of white supremacy and burst the myths of the global colonial continuities attempting to sustain a Eurocentric normative epistemological landscape.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has witnessed the resurgence of decolonisation discourses across the continent of Africa. These have been more apparent following global apartheid system exposed by Covid 19 which saw effective discrimination of the global south in general and Africa in particular in accessing vaccinations (Rusero, Mashavira, & Mawere, 2021). The pandemic thus undressed the injustices of the world towards the global south (Rusero, Mashavira, & Mawere, 2021). Decolonization has become a focal point of discussion in different debates by Afrocentric scholarship. They have become so forceful to the extent of challenging the existing knowledge infrastructure in Africa which is not as natural as it appears but deliberately designed to sustain global colonial continuities (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). Ghana's first president and pan- Africanist leader Kwame Nkrumah established the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana and this became a landmark step towards attempts of decolonization

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of education in Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). However, as this chapter argues, Nkrumah's priceless effort in the emancipation of Africa's epistemic landscape in similar fashion to her political landscape remains as elusive dream.

This chapter analyses the current implications of the current debates on decolonisation. It outlines why decolonisation of white supremacy remains an important phenomenon and what can possibly be done in the context of Africa. The aspects of power inequalities and injustices are critical in trying to unmask the dominance of whites. The first part of this article outlines the argument informing this study as well as its objectives. The second part focuses on colonial legacies of knowledge production and epistemic landscape, followed by the role of global institutions in the reservation of imperial designs. The chapter also proffers a fusion of two theoretical notions of Pan-Africanism and Decolonisation as the viable alternative in revitalizing Africa's agency and dismantle White supremacy. Lastly the chapter explores lively cases of South Africa, in its quest to confront white supremacy and global colonial continuities prevalent in its higher education system.

THE ARGUMENT

The argument we sustain in this paper is that colonialism is not over but all over at least as fully expressed by the colonial imprints of Africa's epistemological landscape. Malcom X's famous dictum "Education is our passport to the future for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare it today" could have made more sense to Africa's educational landscape had it been allowed to develop and grow with the specific aim of servicing and serving its own needs – hence the locus of enunciation (Chisita & Rusero, 2016). Nevertheless, the preparation of Africa's future, as we argue in this chapter, has had a false start precisely because the political decolonisation project which Africa has been ceased with to date has not transcended to the cognitive and epistemic decolonisation (Chisita & Rusero, 2016). It becomes a paradox that Africa's heavy investment in challenging white supremacy politically has not transcended to the confrontation of the same to such critical aspects of Africa's knowledge system – hence the sustained global colonial continuities. We thus build on the arguments already sustained elsewhere that Africa's epistemologies and its knowledge architecture have not considerably shifted much (Grosfoguel, 2007; Mapara, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Poole, 2008; Fanon, 1968) . Instead, what persistently continues are the legacies of colonial western world views that are still prevalent in Africa's university system and for most of the time placed on the attic of the menu of world epistemological framework. Education played and continue to play a role in the promotion of white supremacy. There is not much of a better future for Africa as envisaged by Malcom X, because education has remained a potent weapon effectively deployed to preserve white supremacy. Colonial education has thus remained a subtle and invisible buffer zone that exposes the limitations of decolonisation in dismantling the super structure of white supremacy. To further interrogate these underlying themes, this chapter is informed by the following objectives:

- To explore the colonial legacies of knowledge production and Africa's epistemic landscape
- To assess the prevalence of global institutions and the preservation of imperial designs
- To outline a relevant theoretical framework in making sense of global colonial continuities and white supremacy

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