



Ongoing Colonisation and Neo-Colonisation of Africa: Why More Action is Required Now

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Abstract

A barrier to advocacy for decolonisation is the argument that colonisation is a thing of the past and that Africa needs to move on from blaming the past. But how can we move on when colonisation and neo-colonisation persist? We expose the ongoing colonisation and neocolonisation in and of Africa to create knowledge and consciousness about the issues and the urgent and ongoing need for true decolonisation. Our goal is to demonstrate how decolonisation is still an unfinished business since *the last* (indigenous Africans) have not yet become *the first* in their own continent. We discuss classical and settler colonialism in South Africa and the Chagos Archipelago; ecocide in Nigeria; colonial debt and tax and the CFA franc currency in West Africa; neo-colonisation by international organisations; and colonisation and neo-colonisation in research. Fixing

these issues goes beyond decolonisation of self or mind to structural decolonisation, whereby the colonisers must take responsibility to repay, return, restore, and renounce their colonisation loot.

Key words: Africa; colonisation; neocolonisation, decolonisation

Introduction

The dismissal of colonisation as a thing of the past that is outmoded is a significant barrier to decolonisation efforts in Africa and worldwide (Grosz-Ngate, 2020). People with such arguments often tell the colonised ‘to move on from the past’ or to stop blaming the past for whatever is happening in the present or future (Bulhan, 2015; Tusasiirwe, 2022; 2023). These claims are made even amidst our very own African Sankofa philosophy which highlights that the past, present, and future are in principle interconnected and interdependent (Kramer, 2023). There is a continued denial of ongoing colonisation and its social, economic, and political legacies still manifesting in Africa and worldwide, that erases the required responsibility and accountability to fix them (Agbakoba, 2023). This paper discusses the different expressions of ongoing colonisation that are currently manifesting in Africa with the goal of building awareness and consciousness to inform the ongoing debate on neo-colonisation and decolonisation. Decolonisation “implies the urgent need to thoroughly challenge the colonial situation” (Fanon, 2001, p.2). We analyse manifestations of neo-colonisation in the following areas: classical and settler colonialism; ecocide in Africa; colonial debt and tax and the CFA franc currency; neo-colonisation by international organisations; colonisation and neo-colonisation in research.

In analysing ongoing colonisation in and of Africa, the discussion is influenced by Frantz Fanon’s work and his urge for Africans to always be questioning the status-quo to come up with strategies and approaches that are more relevant to their culture and context. Fanon argues that decolonisation “starts from the very first day with the basic claims of the colonised” (Fanon, 2001 p.1) and the authors consider themselves as among the colonised. This paper is written by Africans who have lived most of their lives in different African countries, experienced colonisation daily in different systems such as education, health, political, social, and economic sectors. These Africans have lived in the diaspora too, where colonisation and colonialism has had its roots for several years. Therefore, the authors have a lived experience of

growing up in countries that were colonised and are living in countries with a colonisation approach.

In the words of Fanon (2001, p.4), the authors have grown up in the colonised quarters where “you are born anywhere, anyhow. You die anywhere, from anything”; and in the diaspora, the authors have seen the colonists’ sector “protected by solid shoes in a sector where the streets are clean and smooth, without a pothole, without a stone”. This double consciousness forces the authors to share the manifestations of ongoing colonisation to draw the attention of Africans and colonialists to these open secrets and the need to dismantle institutionalised colonisation to realise real decolonisation.

Fanon (2001) uses the words “the last shall be the first” to define what true decolonisation is about. We argue that in Africa, we still see circumstances, policies, modes of operation, agendas, systems, where the last (indigenous Africans) are not put first. Colonialism and particularly the “ism” denotes beliefs and ideology while colonisation is “the act of colonising: invading, conquering, moving in, then taking over another people’s land, resources, wealth, culture, and identity” (Ife, 2016, p.185). The impetus of colonialism and colonisation is domination, subjugation, and impoverishment of the colonised at the enrichment of the colonisers.

Pure greed, self-aggrandisement and exploitation drove Western nations to scramble and partition Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1884 and these motivations have never changed and continue to drive the neocolonisation of Africa post-independence (Arukwe, 2010; Boateng, 2010; Bulhan, 2015; Gareth, 2010; Okafor, 2022; Shanguhyia & Falola, 2018; Ziltener & Kunzler, 2013). The historical Western nations that colonised African countries, notably Britain, France, Spain, Netherlands, Belgium, German, among others have sustained their interventions in most African nations, appropriating minerals, crops, human labour, artifacts, cultures and other resources at the expense of African communities particularly black indigenous Africans (Okafor, 2022).

Colonialism is driven by the belief in cultural and racial superiority of the colonisers and inhumanity of the colonised, where the coloniser made the colonised to believe that they are inferior, their culture was ‘primitive’, they had no knowledge and had nothing to contribute to knowledge production (Mbiti, 1969). This colonisation of the mind stifles imagination and has characterised most Africa-Northern/Western nations’ interactions

and relationships which are centred on inferior-superior hierarchical relations, pursuing the interests of the North/West (Hlatshwayo & Alexander, 2021, Fanon, 2001). In these colonial relations, the colonised were and are still not seen as human beings but as disposable excesses (Fanon, 2001). Neocolonialism or the return of the colonisers through the backdoor includes those “ways in which former colonizers (joined by the United States and the USSR) control behind the scenes economic, social, cultural, and political power” of the colonised (Bulhan, 2015, p.243).

Through neocolonialism, the former colonisers continue to exploit material resources of their former colonies and continue to impose policies that serve the interests of the colonisers (Agbakoba, 2023). Neocolonialism concept is said to have been pioneered by Ghanaian former president Kwame Nkrumah to denote a situation where governments are technically independent but their economic systems and therefore their political policies are influenced and controlled from outside (Nkrumah, 1965). Kwame Nkrumah emphasizes that the most common and powerful tool for neocolonial control is the use of economic or monetary means and the case studies we analyse in this paper, all demonstrate the direct and indirect way this is manifesting in Africa. We share the concern that Nkrumah raised that neocolonialism breeds exploitation and impoverishment of the colonised instead of their development and it is responsible for widening the gap between the so-called poor and rich countries of the world. The neocolonial control may be exercised by former colonisers or another country or a consortium of international financial interests who use foreign investments and financial power to impoverish the colonised. The scope of this paper is limited to exposing ongoing colonisation in Africa and highlights selected case studies. It is organised as follows. The forms of ongoing colonisation and neocolonisation are discussed in the next section, followed by a conclusion in which the implications or required strategies are discussed.

Classical and Settler Colonialism: South Africa and the Chagos Archipelago

African scholar Bulhan (2015) highlights classical colonialism, a form of colonialism that is relevant for this paper given its focus on ongoing colonisation. Classical colonialism which accelerated in Africa in the 19th century involved “the occupation of land by force of arms”, thus leading to loss of land and identity that is attached to land by the colonised population (Bulhan, 2015, p.242). Loss of land plus related resources and thus denying

the African population means of production paved the way for exploitation of people (Bulhan, 2015). Subsequently indigenous Africans were used as cheap or free labour, for them to get access to food and other resources related to land. Additionally, loss of land led to a sense of identity loss given that the identity of indigenous Africans is deeply rooted in land and the seasons associated with land such as planting and harvesting (Fanon, 2001). As it unfolded in Africa, classical colonialism is about “holding the population captive in their own land, forcing them to serve the same economic, racial and self-aggrandizing motives that gave rise to and sustained the Atlantic Slave Trade” (Bulhan, 2015, p.243).

While Bulhan (2015) presents classical colonialism as seeming to have ended in Africa, particularly with independence and control of land, we argue that classical colonialism is alive and well today in African countries like South Africa and Chagos, where Europeans continue to hold captive indigenous Africans on their own land. As Boehmer (2011, p.257) notes,

the one claim that the settler, by definition, is not able to make, is the claim to indigeneity, to ancestral belonging: to having inhabited the land from time immemorial [instead] the settler colony attempts to found its claims to the land by erasing, repressing, or fencing away those people with prior claims.

Park (2021) describes South Africa as a settler colony democratising without decolonising. South Africa has been talked about from the apartheid lens, alienated from settler colonialism yet apartheid should be “understood as an expression of settler colonialism” (Park, 2021, p.217). The colonial present of South Africa must be theorised. Settler colonialism refers to those circumstances or countries where the colonisers never left, they came to stay (Park, 2021; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Colonisers dispossessed the ‘natives’ of their land and exploited their labour. Land dispossession is coupled with labour exploitation, racialised impoverishment and elimination of stable communities. In South Africa, majority of land is still owned by white settlers despite them being demographically few (Park, 2021). Kirsten and Sihlobo (2022) reported that white commercial farmers own 50% of all land in South Africa, and yet white South Africans constitute well under 10% of the country’s population. As Fanon (2001, p.9) highlights:

For a colonised people, the most essential value, because it is the most meaningful, is first and foremost the land: the land, which must provide bread and, naturally, dignity. But this dignity has nothing to do with “human” dignity. The colonised subject has never heard of such an ideal. All he has seen on his land is that he can be arrested, beaten, and starved with impunity; and no sermoniser on morals, no priest has ever stepped in to bear the blows in his place or share his bread.

The negative effects of land dispossession are numerous, as the indigenous landowners continue to experience a range of injustices because of losing their land (Park, 2021). South African based writer Lindy Heineken (2020, n.p) highlights the indirect, silent structural violence behind the direct or personal violence experienced by black South Africans, giving an example of higher education where “participation rate is just 15.6% for black South Africans, while for Indian and white people (aged 20–24) it is 49.3% and 52.8%, respectively (Heineken, 2020). Trauma from land dispossession makes it challenging for communities to settle and experience development milestones as individuals and communities (Heineken, 2020). The widening social and economic inequality originally arising from land dispossession fuels violent crime, protests and direct police violence and brutality. We agree with authors Tuck & Yang, that in settler colonies, “decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p.1).

Another example of settler colonisation is the case of Chagossians, who are still fighting for their independence from United Kingdom (UK) and United States of America (USA), who are still colonising the island after the denial that there were any permanent or indigenous inhabitants of Chagos Island (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Chagossians are indigenous Africans who are descendants of the slaves that were forced to work in coconut plantations on the island under the French and British colonial rule. They were forcibly displaced by UK and USA governments to Mauritius or Seychelles to pave way for the military base which continues to benefit these Western countries as Chagossians are still prevented from returning to live permanently on their homeland. The right to reparations for the forced expulsion and displacement of Chagossians and the abuse from the British colonisers is yet to be fulfilled by the UK and USA governments in this era.

Ecocide in Africa: The Nigerian Case

As one of the dimensions of African existence, natural environment is an inalienable part of survival of humanity. This is particularly so for Africa's indigenous peoples whose daily life is directly connected to their natural environment that includes land, water, air, and the whole of the ecosystem within the geography of Africa (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services-IPBES, 2018; Kumar & Yashiro, 2018). As part of the ongoing colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa, the natural environment has been subjected to constant attacks and abuses resulting in ecocide by the colonialists and the neocolonialists whose interests are in the natural resources domicile in the countries within the continent (Wise, 2021; Branch & Minkova, 2023). We use ecocide here to mean the destruction of natural environment, which for the case of Africa is being spearheaded by foreign companies that plough back profits and raw materials to their home countries leaving African communities impoverished. In Nigeria in particular, the colonialists started the ecocide mission by administratively hijacking the basic natural resources outlets such as the forest reserves, liquid and solid mineral resources located in different geopolitical regions in Nigeria as well as the water ways and industrial institutions (Ujor, 2018; Hellermann, 2012; Egboh, 1985; Nwodim & Adah, 2021).

Ecocide, as a complex process of anthropogenic activities generating toxic impacts on the elements of natural environment and eliminating ecological harmony, was initiated in Nigeria by the colonialists and the neocolonialists who turned Nigeria into their backyard for their heavy carbon footprint, while making their nations the hub of consumption of the natural resources exploited from the colonial and neocolonial empires (Palarczyk, 2023; Obeng-Odoom, 2021; McIntyre-Mills et al., 2023). Evidence of this situation is visible in how the colonialists and neocolonialists through their teleguided multinational corporations applied and continue to apply environmentally unfriendly technologies and strategies in the extraction of their needed resources without considering the environmental impacts on the host communities (Brown & Okogbule, 2020; Lynch et al., 2021; Atutu, 2018). For instance, in Niger Delta region of Nigeria, the exploitation of the available oil and gas deposits by Shell BP, Agip, Elf, Chevron, ARAMCO oil, Mobil oil, etc., has resulted in the elimination of many indigenous communities whose population are now living as refugees in other communities due to loss of farmland, fishing rivers, residential areas as well

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as ecological floras and faunas, which had sustained the people for centuries before colonial and neocolonial incursions (Oshienemen et al., 2018; Ordinioha & Brisibe, 2013; Babatunde, 2014).

In Northern and Western Nigeria, excavation of gold, tin, iron ore, etc by the colonialists and the neocolonialists multinational corporations such as Mines Geotechniques Nig. Ltd., an Australian firm, Northern Numero Resources Ltd. from the UK, Segilola Nigeria Ltd. from Australia, KCM Mining from Australia, etc. has rendered many communities vulnerable to countless environmentally induced health complications as well as destroying the nearby ecosystem. Nigerian forest reserves have been permanently captured as the source for the colonialists and the neocolonialist's much needed forest resources first, through the colonial administrative laws and currently uncontrollable illegal logging and similar activities, of which the products end up in the colonialists and neocolonialist's markets overseas (Adeyinka et al., 2019; Mamodu et al., 2018).

The industrial institution in Nigeria captures the policy dimension of what is produced, how it is produced, whom it is produced for and the humanitarian/environmental safety of the industrial process and activities. In Nigeria, the colonial administrative policies and the neocolonial proxy policy influence have technically made Nigeria the hub for cheap production by the colonialists and neocolonialists for the multinational corporations with its ecological implications as the activities of these industries contribute heavily to air, land, and water pollutions capable of ecological disasters. And this is the exportation of heavy carbon footprints to Africa and other developing nations where poverty and illiteracy have conditioned the population as some waste bins. Colonialism and neocolonialism in Africa are manifested in not only the land dispossession and natural resources exploitation but also direct theft of Africa's financial resources as the case is with West African French colonies.

Colonial Debt and Taxation: the CFA in West Africa

The historical and ongoing impoverishment and exploitation of the colonised driven by greed of the colonisers is still manifesting in West African 'former' French colonies where economic colonisation persists post-independence. France continues to openly exploit resources of its African colonies, consequently developing itself, as it impoverishes its colonies that remain characterised as least developed as the masses are consumed by

extreme poverty. France is continually forcing 14 African countries to pay it money/finances and to maintain reserves in its banks, in addition to monetary dependence. In other words, France charges a colonial tax which the countries have paid since the 1960s. A total of fourteen (14) African countries which are former French colonies annually pay a colonial tax amounting to \$500 billion to France. These countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Togo, Cameroon, Senegal, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Congo, and Chad (Egbunike & Lichtenstein, 2019; Thomo, 2023; Koutonin, 2014).

Economic colonisation of these African countries continues with France appropriating over 85% of the annual income of these African countries. The countries must put 85% of their foreign reserves into France Central Bank (reserves of the 14 countries have been held since 1961). It is alleged that any refusal by an African country to pay France leads to a coup led by France or even death of the president leading (Koutonin, 2014). In addition, the countries must use the France colonial currency (the Franc), follow its education system, and use French as an official language. The other conditions include France having the right to first refusal on any raw or natural resources discovered in these countries, priority in public procurement processes and public bidding, supply of military equipment, the obligation to send France annual balance and reserve reports (Koutonin, 2014).

This same strategy of colonial debt and tax or independence debt was used by France to impoverish Haiti after the slaves won the 12-year war to defeat their French masters. Haiti was forced by France to pay over 150 million Francs (over 23 million USD) from 1804 to 1947 (Salt, 2018). It is unsurprising that Haiti is still described as the poorest nation in the Western hemisphere yet the contribution of France to its impoverishment is often mumbled or not even acknowledged at all.

We argue that CFA franc is a neocolonial instrument maintaining France as guardian of its former colonies in Africa, deliberately stifling monetary independence. The 1960s were years of hope and a positive outlook on the future for many West African countries, the years of independence and liberation from colonialism (Mokube, 2012). These times were called the 'Year of Africa' as 17 nations received independence (Mokube, 2012). It is crucial to outline the words received and not achieved here, as many people might think Africans were getting rid of colonisers, but some colonisers wanted to leave not out of goodwill but because they knew they could

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remotely sustain colonisation (Harshé, 2019). Between the 1950s and 70s, the British, the Germans, the Portuguese, the Spanish, and the French were active in their discourse of retreating from African countries and allowing African people to govern themselves politically (Shanguhya & Falola, 2018). General Charle de Gaulle, the President of France at the time, campaigned fiercely to propose independence to French African states with the conditions of limited autonomy under French supervision or complete freedom from France (Amin et al., 2022). However, the two countries, Guinea, and Mali, challenged the coloniser, showing courage and bravery by saying *NO* to General de Gaulle (Amin et al., 2022). Thus, under Ahmed Segou Toure's leadership, Guinea Conakry refused De Gaulle's proposition and decided to have their full autonomy after a referendum in September 1958 and Guinea was proclaimed independent two years earlier than most French African States. Ahmed Segou Toure famously stated, 'We prefer poverty in freedom to riches in slavery' (Amin et al., 2022. p. 130). Mali, also under Modiba Keita's leadership, refused de Gaulle's proposition and opted for complete autonomy, and they received their independence in June 1960 (Amin et al., 2022). Thus, one of de Gaulle's conditions for French West African independence was the currency question because all African states in the French Community used the CFA Franc (Franc of French Colonies in Africa) pre-independence (Shanguhya & Falola, 2018).

Therefore, full autonomy meant political, social, and economic freedom from France, so Guinea and Mali created their currency, the Guinea Franc (GNF) and Malian Franc (MLF) (Amin et al., 2022). However, as was to be expected, France applied severe pressure on these countries who dared to ask for full autonomy, and Guinea showed resilience by maintaining the currency, but Mali returned to the CFA Franc in 1984 (Harshé, 2019).

The CFA Franc, *Franc des Colonies Françaises d'Afrique* (FCFA), was created in December 1945, placing France at the epicentre of any transaction between the CFA zone and the world (Taylor, 2019). France made sure to peg the CFA to the French Franc, which the Euro replaced (Nabakwe, 2002). Thus, due to the post-world war New World Order, the American dollar-dominated global trade which means any export and import by the CFA countries must be transacted in the US dollar with the French Franc acting as the intermediary (Taylor, 2019). Thus, from 1945 to the 'year of Africa' or the independence years, any export or import regarding the land of West Africa was 100% managed and controlled overtly by France

(Shanguhya & Falola, 2018). As part of the deal, upon which General de Gaulle agreed to give independence to their African colonies despite the lucrative nature of their colonial practice, the CFA Franc was to remain unchanged (Gazeley, 2022). Thus, France will be seen as a nation of human rights principles for giving back to its colonies their humanity and dignity, but, they continued impoverishing Africa and its people through neocolonialism discourse and practice (Harshé, 2019; Mokube, 2012).

At the dawn of independence, the French community zone was divided into two areas, with different banks designed to oversee currency management (Sylla, 2021). Another evidence of colonial hegemony here is divide to conquer. The *Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (BCEAO) was established in West Africa and the *Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique Equatoriale et du Cameroun* (BCEAEC) was established in Central Africa (Shanguhya & Falola, 2018). It is necessary to mention that although these two banks have African directors and managers, France has veto power that influences any executive proceeding that impacts the banks and, consequently, the CFA Franc (Internationalist, 2022). Furthermore, on top of everything we covered regarding the neocolonial nature of France's relationship with its former colonies, the CFA Franc is printed by the Banque de France in Chamalieres in France and then distributed by the two central banks mentioned above, with France having veto power on the executive process (Amin et al., 2022). There are legitimate sovereignty questions here, as many African scholars argue that whoever has the monetary power, controls the political and developmental process (Mokube, 2012).

As the renowned Ivoirian economist Nicholas Agbohohou argues, France has complete control of the CFA currency and of the countries forced to use it but unfortunately this receives insufficient interest from the international community (Nabakwe, 2002). Another African, Ndongo Samba Sylla, a Senegalese development economist, argues that CFA currency is designed to maintain Africa and African people in third-world economic conditions (Sylla, 2021). Sylla (2021), stated that the term neocolonial is outdated as the neocolonial system is now promoting a new word, Afro-liberalism; but, in essence, it is a neocolonialist method because African elites are signing trading deals with trans-multinationals against the interests of the African people. The CFA currency is the most significant pillar sustaining the neocolonial project in contemporary French Africa (Nabakwe, 2002). It is used to subjugate and exploit the global South natural resources, intellect, human resources, and cultural knowledge for their benefit and to

advance the global North's sciences and civilization (Boateng, 2010; Shanguhya & Falola, 2018). Agbohohou argues that France's total control of the CFA makes it impossible for African businesses to access credit to develop their scientific ideas and innovations and as result most African inventors die with their ideas or lend them to their white counterparts who have access to bank credits (Nabakwe, 2002). One thing is sufficiently clear: neocolonialism is perpetuated by the CFA currency and the only way to real development and self-determination for Africa and its people is to get rid of the colonial instrument- the CFA- and create a common currency owned and managed by Africans for Africans.

Neocolonisation by International Organisations

The international organisations, including the governmental and nongovernmental organisations in the earlier and current history are institutionalized colonialist and neocolonialist structures in exogenous and endogenous dispositions. Exogenously, all the United Nations allied bodies and the Bretton Woods institutions were founded and continue to operate in the upward infinitum of relating with African nations as colonial and neocolonial materials, that receive demeaning treatment in every strategic decision and execution of collective agreements (Okafor, 2020). Technically, African nations are grouped in the United Nations as the group of nations that cannot contribute to critical and strategic decision making but are the ones whose future and resources constitute the object of interests in critical and strategic decisions. They only receive abiding decisions in the areas of health, economy, culture, environment, geopolitics, etc., which covertly subjugate African human and natural resources for exploitation by the league of colonialists and neocolonialists. This is found in the logical framework of policy making in the developing nations of which the majority are found in Africa, who design their domestic socioeconomic policies following the template of the United Nations solely designed by the powerful (veto powers) league of colonialists and neocolonialists manning the institution (Okafor, 2022; Odijie, 2022; Watson, 2013; Murphy & Zhu, 2012). The African continent with her plurality (54 member nations) in the United Nations cannot access the resources contributed to in the United Nations except if the resources are spent according to the prescription of the neocolonialists who use such avenues to impose their interests on the African nations for continuous subjugation. For instance, virtually all the money borrowed from

the World Bank, IMF, Paris Club, and donations from the allied bodies of the United Nations are permanently used to condition the African nations to champion the European and American socioeconomic interest to the detriment of the African population.

Endogenously, virtually all the nongovernmental organizations originating from Europe, America, Canada, Australia, Asia, etc., and even the African regional organizations, are unconsciously metamorphosing and operating as conduit for colonial and neocolonial programs visible in the type of agenda and programs they focus on, how and where such programs are specifically carried out (Eneasato, 2020; Okafor, 2020; Segell, 2019; Ziai, 2020; Tusasiirwe, 2023). Regional organizations in Africa, beginning from the African Union, have become the mouthpiece of the colonialists and neocolonialists who find their way into the nuke and crannies of the continent via gifts, donations, loans, and vertical bilateral relations. At each stage, these organizations function effectively as tools in the hands of the colonial and neocolonial League of Nations in subjugating and subsuming the African nations into the cloud of colonial and neocolonial domination.

International agencies continue to pursue their own interests and agenda in Africa under the cover of aid and donations. Aid is disguised as an act of responsibility former colonisers are taking to address the colonial legacies of their impoverished colonies and thus aid is given with the attitude of pity and white saviour for the poor African nations. However contrary to this colonial narrative presented by neocolonialists, the truth remains that aid agencies and international institutions like IMF and World Bank thrive on creating debt cycle for the so-called least developed countries. The lucrative business of lending money explains why these international institutions give aid in terms debt cancellation but add new debts/loans for these countries (Yadav et al, 2023). In the words of Dambisa Moyo (2009) systematic aid from international agencies is dead aid for Africa but very lucrative/profitable for neocolonialists who use it as a tool of entry, control, domination, conditionalities, and exploitation of African nations. Despite decades of aid from neocolonialists, indigenous Africans continue to plunge in absolute poverty and suffering as African governments are given conditionalities to cut social spending on basic services for the masses like health care, housing, water, and sanitation.

Statistics show an increase in aid flows to Africa and Asia with former colonisers like the United Kingdom among the top ten bilateral donors

since the 1970s (OECD, 2018). It is not a coincidence that the proliferation of aid agencies in Africa coincided with African countries obtaining ‘technical independence from colonisers for example Uganda joined United Nations, 16 days after its ‘independence’ from the British colonisers and with UK being among the nations with veto powers in the UN and Uganda does not, the power of decision making still lies in former colonisers. As Higgins (2016, p.162) argues, most of the UN conventions and protocols arise out of a limited cultural frame of reference achieved by compromises and assumptions that effectively reinforce hegemonic tendencies”. With aid agencies comes a unidirectional flow of experts from the global North to the global South. It is extremely rare to find an equal flow of expatriates from the global South to the North. Some of the expatriates ‘follow or come with the money’. An example is the British expatriates who oversee the Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE), a donor-led cash transfer programme targeting older people in Uganda. Despite the existing human resources in Uganda, SAGE’s pilot program was led by Maxwell Stamp, a British private consulting company while its evaluation was led by a team of consultants from Oxford Policy Management. It is indeed expensive to pay these expatriates, buy them insurance, rent them first class housing, buy cars, and rent posh offices. It is unsurprising that older people, the targeted beneficiaries receive \$10 dollars while the lion share of the budget goes into administrative costs of running the programme (Tusasiirwe, 2023). Thus, international aid agencies continue to make a mockery of the extreme poverty indigenous Africans are experiencing as they enrich themselves through control, domination and accumulated interests.

Ongoing Colonisation and Neocolonialism in Research

The knowledge-based economies we currently experience have been shaped by the historical process of colonisation and the intricate mechanics of modern-day global neocolonialism (Connell et al.,2017). During the colonial era, indigenous knowledge holders were killed or inducted to learn Western traditions creating a class of the learned; the teachers, priests, engineers, lawyers, and researchers drawn into the new terms of colonial society. The elite social class became the bearers of the truth, through which knowledge was transferred across generations. The colonialists-built knowledge systems based on their homelands; institutionalised, applied, reproduced, and transformed through schools, and universities. Lal (2004) noted that any conquest is prominently a conquest of knowledge and that the

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effects of colonisation continue through the domination of knowledge. To the present day, the lasting impacts of colonial history affect various areas of knowledge, especially in universities where epistemologies of the South are rooted in knowledge systems and perspectives from non-European societies, thus having complex and strong connections with the epistemologies of the North (Chilisa, 2012). Connections that cannot be isolated or disconnected but deeply established over decades, characterised by tensions, and constantly evolving (Connell et al., 2017), influenced by current western powerful bodies.

International bodies like the World bank, United Nations and World Health Organisation are governed and funded by Western countries and position themselves as ‘knowledge institutions’ (Connell et al., 2017), fronting international research agendas. Collins and Rhoads (2010) criticised the World bank for its neocolonial influence in reproducing Western nations’ hegemony through higher education policies where partnerships with the developing economies are spearheaded by western influential partners fronting their agenda. It is argued that some research paradigms overlook the contextual understanding of the African research populations and areas, fronting a one-size fits all approach in the application of epistemological paradigms and ethical guidelines, with a lack of accommodation of traditional knowledge (Nabbumba, Tusasiirwe and Kansiiime, 2023). Nonetheless, with collaboration and/or sanctions imposed, the so-labelled less developed countries often engage in research delineated and funded by international organisations. Some of the research funded contributes towards world statistics rather than problem solving for the local populations. Consequently, the research paradigms and instrumentations are Eurocentric and western case studies are given more relevance compared to non-western societies (Alvares, 2011).

‘Former’ colonisers also continue to “support” their colonies in funding research projects to fulfil their agenda and show a sense of philanthropic gestures toward colonies. Funding African and regional research remains challenging for developing economies hence many African researchers and universities rely on external and western funding. Research is often formulated in foreign languages to align with the funders’ linguistic contexts. More generally in academia, the concept of colonial heritage is evident where research findings are translated and disseminated in foreign languages to align with the official language of the colonisers, e.g., English, French, and Portuguese (Tonen-Wolyec et al., 2022). The English dominance

in academia is indisputable across the research process and in research publication.

The publication of research is influenced by journal rankings that are viewed to favour the western scholars. Journals published in non-English languages tend to not rank well by common standards. Hence top research journals and articles disproportionately represent authors from Western Europe, North America, and Oceania (Lynch et al., 2021). In their study of neocolonialism in academic journals, Murphy, and Zhu (2012) explain that Western scholars' dominance in journal leadership as journal editors consequently influences the journal's interests, the selection of special issues, networks of reviewers and journal audience and content. Where partnerships are sought out for benefits of internationalisation of higher education, these are mostly between West-West or Eurocentric and Anglo-American collaborations leading to a dominance of Anglo-American scholars in top research journals and the exclusion of most developing regions (Murphy and Zhu, 2012; Tonen-Wolyec et al., 2022). Western scholars as principal investigators on projects in the developing countries contribute to top class journals for benefits of recognition as international scholars (Keim, 2011), and African researchers are less likely to be in esteemed author positions of journal articles (Tonen-Wolyec et al., 2022).

In research on international sociology, Kiem (2011) noted that for African research to be published, it needs to follow the internationalisation, empiricalisation and standardisation prepaid out by journals using Western research concepts and frameworks that appeal to western editors. Quality African research that does not fit these standardisations is often excluded. While African scholars have made efforts to create their own journal and intellectual spaces, the journals are invariably lower ranked, hence scholars continue to question the metrics used, relevance and impact of journal ranking to international research and scholarship (Ozbilgin, 2009; Murphy and Zhu 2012; Tonen-Wolyec et al., 2022). This neocolonial dominance of intellectual production results in international inequity and the transnational power imbalances in intellectual production. Consequently, intellectual property and ownership of research outputs are still left to western entities and scholars, rather than the African scholars. In their study on authorship of COVID 19 research conducted, Tonen-Wolyec et al., (2022) explained that asymmetrical relationships persist between African and non-African partnerships in field research. In Western and African scholar partnerships,

western scholars control the data processes, management, sharing, and digital infrastructures for data production and consumption (Adebe et al., 2021).

Conclusion: A Call to Action

The contribution that this paper seeks to make is to expose ongoing colonisation and neocolonisation in and of Africa to create knowledge and consciousness of masses in Africa and worldwide so that they can strongly pursue the true decolonisation of Africa. We argue that the pity and charity approach dominating in Africa is a pretence and mockery of the continent from colonialists and neocolonialists, as the African proverb states *Enyonyi kurizikurira oburo zikareka kukushekyerera!!* (Possible translation: it is bad enough for birds to eat your millet, but they make it worse by adding ‘laughing at you’ for example through singing their morning songs or singing as they fly away). As a way forward, the authors call strongly for Six Rs: Responsibility; Reparations, Restoration and Return of stolen land and natural resources, Resistance by African masses, and anti-colonialists in the West; Renunciation. Regarding responsibility, most Western nations that colonised and are still neocolonising Africa have never taken responsibility for the colonial legacies and the impoverishment of African people.

We call for honesty and for governments to take responsibility for the past and colonial present characterised by land dispossession, ecocide, financial resources theft and other forms explored earlier. Taking responsibility for colonial legacy and neocolonisation requires the colonialists to start serious reparations, restoration and return of stolen land and natural resources. Reparation, restoration and return of stolen resources is the true decolonisation of Africa. Africans must continue or if not yet started embark on resistance of ongoing colonisation and neocolonisation. Africans need to know that Western Nations have never had the interests of African masses at the centre. These nation states are in Africa to exploit its natural, material, human resources to enrich themselves. Knowing the true interests of colonisers and neocolonialists should stir resistance and not admiration of their presidents and other representatives when they come to Africa. We can learn from current resistance of French colonies of Burkina-Faso, Mali, Niger, Senegal, calling out France and its lies. Finally, we call for Renunciation and complete stop of broad day light theft of financial resources happening in for example the French colonies still paying colonial debt since the 1960s and where the CFA Franc currency remains imposed. Renunciation involves the governments of Western countries, for instance

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calling back their multinational corporations that are perpetuating ecocide and ensuring that the local communities are repaid for the impact of loss of their natural resources and sources of livelihood.

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