THE IMPACT OF WESTERN COLONIAL EDUCATION ON ZIMBABWE'S TRADITIONAL AND POSTCOLONIAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM(S)

by

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Contents

Declaration

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I declare that **The Impact of Western Colonial Education on Zimbabwe's Traditional and Postcolonial Educational System(s)** is my own work and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Dennis Masaka   20 January 2016

Dedication

The study is dedicated to Lilian, MacGrath, Garreth, my brothers and sisters, and those who have undertaken to reassert the humanity of the colonised people.

Acknowledgements

Summary

In this study, we employ the theory of deconstruction to challenge and reject the contention that a knowledge paradigm was non-existent among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. This is necessary because the imposition of the colonisers' knowledge paradigm was premised on the supposed absence of an epistemology among the indigenous people. In defending the thesis that education and indeed an epistemology was in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, we submit that education is part of any given culture. In the light of this, it becomes untenable to deny the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. Knowledge ceases to be the exclusive preserve of the colonisers. It must be noted that the imposition of the colonisers' knowledge paradigm was accompanied by the suppression and partial destruction of the epistemology of the indigenous people.

The suppression and partial destruction of the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm is called epistemicide. The epistemicide that the colonisers inflicted on the indigenous people led to the exclusive dominance of their knowledge paradigm in the school curriculum at the expense of that of the indigenous people. In the light of this *status quo*, we present transformation and Africanisation as corrective to the unjustified dominance of the present day curriculum by the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers. We argue that despite the commendable proposals contained in the Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999: 24)[1] to

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[1] The "Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training" shall simply be referred to as the "Report" in this study unless where it is necessary to state it in full.

change the curriculum so that *unhu/ubuntu* becomes its organising principle and to allow the co-existence of the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm and others, in practice the dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm remains in place. We submit that the Africanisation of the curriculum is a matter of justice that demands the end of the dominance of the knowledge paradigm of the colonisers and the co-existence of the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm and others.

Key Terms
Education, Zimbabwe, Africa, Postcolonial, Afrocentricity, Epistemicide, Colonisers, Africanisation, Philosophy, Reason, Epistemology, Proverbs.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this introduction is to present an overview of the thesis that is defended in this study. It has three sections. In the first section, the "statement of the problem" of this study is presented. In the second section, the thesis advanced in this study is stated. The last section of this introduction presents an outline of the chapters to be written in defense of the thesis of this study.

Statement of the Problem

The colonisers denied the existence of an epistemology among the indigenous people that was at the level of parity with their own (Ramose, 1998: iv-v; Lebakeng, 2010: 24). This position is contestable. The imposition of the colonisers' education paradigm translated to the imposition of their epistemological paradigm and the destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 8). According to Jeater (2005: 2), there was a useful metaphor within the colonial establishment that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe in their state of civilisation were more like children. For Jeater (2005: 2), this metaphor "...allowed for the possibility of Africans 'catching up' with the demands of an industrial society, but inscribed the white people as paternalistically responsible for African education and employment." The contributions of the indigenous people to philosophy and the production of knowledge were thus denied (Wiredu, 2004a: 1).

The assumed primitiveness of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Bourdillon, 1976: 9-10) supposedly prevented them from producing knowledge that was at the level of parity with that of the colonisers (Peck, 1966: 54). So, the colonisers considered it as their

"burden" to "civilise" (Peck, 1966: 52; Gelfand, 1968: 65-66; Gelfand, 1981: 61) the indigenous people of Zimbabwe by way of imposing their own epistemological paradigm. The colonial experience was taken to be of benefit to the colonised people (Shropshire, 1933: 410; Birchenough, 1936: 5; Huggins, 1953: 625). The supposed superiority of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers has been maintained into the present day Zimbabwe through the school curriculum that is still dominated by content derived from the colonisers' epistemological paradigm.

The imposition of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm was based on the supposed "right of conquest" that the colonisers held (Ramose, 2004: 138). It is our submission that the supposed dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers which was promoted through colonial education must be rejected. It must be rejected because it is based on the colonisers' false entitlement to define what knowledge is (Ramose, 1999: iii). We concur with Okere, Njoku and Devisch's (2005: 3) position that knowledge is first of all local. On the basis of this view of knowledge, it becomes untenable for the colonisers' own particular understanding of knowledge to claim transcultural application. The position we advance in this study is that the colonisers' claim to exclusive entitlement to the production of knowledge must be rejected because it is without basis. Rejecting this claim would enable the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to consider their own epistemological paradigm as one among other epistemological paradigms. In our view, this is important in reversing colonial epistemicide through ensuring the co-existence of the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm and other epistemologies.

Thesis

The focus of this study is to consider the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. It argues that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were denied an epistemology through colonial education that considered the colonial paradigm of philosophy and knowledge as superior. The indigenous people were, as of necessity, mandated to adopt the supposedly superior colonial paradigm. By denying them a philosophy, the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were also considered as people without reason (Gelfand, 1968: viii) because reason is part of philosophy. Such a colonial myth was imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe through colonial education (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 7-8). In our view, the assumed inferiority or non-existence of an epistemology among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is untenable and must be rejected. This is necessary in order to resuscitate the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe that was denigrated and considered inferior or non-existent by the colonisers. By denying the indigenous people of Zimbabwe the ability to create knowledge as they understood it, colonisers considered themselves as its exclusive and authentic producers.

The colonial system of education created the impression that concepts such as education, philosophy and knowledge must be understood in the way colonisers understood them. The tendency was to take their provincial understanding of such terms as having transcultural appeal (Gelfand, 1981: 61-62; Dussel, 2011: 18; Grosfoguel, 2012: 95). The colonisers considered their own paradigm of education, philosophy and epistemology as standards upon which others must be judged. In the light of this thinking, the indigenous

people of Zimbabwe's system of education was considered inferior or at worst non-existent (Peck, 1966: 67).

The colonisers assigned to themselves the prerogative to define terms such as education, philosophy and knowledge. We submit that contexts give meanings to terms. The way terms are understood in one cultural context may not apply to the next cultural context. It becomes untenable to reject the existence of a system of education, philosophy and epistemology among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe on the basis of the colonisers' particular understandings of these terms. In this study, we argue that the reversal of the suppression and partial destruction that colonial education inflicted on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's knowledge paradigm must involve the rejection of their monolithic understanding of terms and the claim that they are the only producers of genuine philosophy and knowledge. We argue that the indigenous people have contributed to the production of knowledge that can be placed at the level of parity with the epistemological paradigms from other geopolitical centres (Ramose, 1998: vi).

The colonisers' supposed exclusive entitlement to the production of philosophy and knowledge implied that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe did not have a philosophy and an epistemology. The indigenous people were also denied reason. It was taken as absent among them. The colonised people were excluded from the genus of rational people (Ramose, 1999: 1). The imposition of colonial education was primarily an epistemological issue in that it constituted the partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and the inauguration of the colonisers'

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epistemological paradigm. This is known as epistemicide. It involved the partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. We argue that this was an act of injustice which must be reversed through the change of the curriculum so that the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm is allowed to co-exist with other epistemologies in the new curriculum. This is necessary because the education that the colonisers imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe largely lacked significance to their existential situation. Besides its lack of grounding on the existential situation of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it was meant to make the indigenous people of Zimbabwe governable and subservient to the colonial interests (Mlambo, 1998: 123). It was not meant to promote their creative potential. For Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 41), the indigenous people were relegated to "…objects of white civilisation rather than rational and active historical actors". It is in light of such a deficiency of colonial education that we argue for a paradigm change (Ramose, 2003a: 137) in respect to the curriculum in present day Zimbabwe. It is our submission that a realistic paradigm change in respect to the curriculum must reverse the effects of colonial epistemicide so that the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other knowledge paradigms co-exist and inform the content of the new curriculum. We argue that some of the indigenous people's proverbs are a source of their philosophy. This is evidence enough to reject the colonisers' claim to exclusive entitlement to the production of philosophy and knowledge and membership to the genus of rational beings.

Structure of the Thesis

This study consists of six chapters. In chapter 1, we analyse the contestations surrounding the concept of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe and how such contestations provided the colonisers with a justification to impose their own epistemological paradigm. We argue that even though the colonisers rejected the existence of a system of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe which was comparable to their own, it is necessary to establish the accuracy of such a claim. In doing so, we argue that if one accepts that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a culture before the arrival of the colonisers, it becomes unreasonable to deny the existence of a system of education among them because education is part of culture. It must be noted that the colonisers considered the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as having an inferior culture and at worst as without culture at all. This translated to the non-existence of education among the indigenous people. We reject this contention. The colonisers did not have a rational basis for denying the indigenous people of Zimbabwe a culture because it is apparent that culture is very much found where there are people.

When the colonisers accepted the existence of education among the indigenous people, they curiously regarded it as "traditional" while that which the colonisers imposed was considered as "modern". In regard to "modernity" and "tradition", we argue that these are categories that have been created and defined by the colonisers in order to serve their own interests. The colonisers considered themselves as "modern" and thus supposedly superior to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe who were considered as "traditional". We conclude the chapter by arguing that the colonisers' claim to the superiority of their

epistemological paradigm over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is rationally indefensible.

The focus of chapter 2 is to analyse the interplay of culture and education. We submit that it is unreasonable to deny that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a system of education before the arrival of the colonisers once we accept that they had a culture. On the basis of this position, we argue that education predates the arrival of the colonisers. In the light of the symbiotic relationship between culture and education, we argue that the imposition of colonial education translated to the imposition of the colonisers' culture. Colonial education was principally meant to make the indigenous people of Zimbabwe useful in serving the interests of the colonisers (Shamuyarira, 1975: 57; Austin, 1975: 43; Zvobgo, 1981: 13; Mungazi, 1989: 269). It also alienated them from their culture and epistemological paradigm. In the light of this historical injustice, we appeal to the Afrocentric approach to education in order to assert the agency of the indigenous people in regard to knowledge production.

In chapter 3, we focus on the challenges that are encountered in bringing into recognition the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people through the education system. We argue that colonial education led to the distortion and partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. We note that the realisation of "independence" from direct colonial rule has not been accompanied by genuine curriculum change (Shizha, 2006: 21) that seeks the co-existence of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people and other epistemologies. We submit

that the imposition of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is pre-eminently an epistemological issue. In this light, the reversal of colonial epistemicide must necessarily involve the rejection of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm as the sole paradigm that must inform the curriculum in present day Zimbabwe. It is our submission that though the changes to the curriculum as proposed in the Report (1999) are commendable, in practice such changes have not been substantially implemented.

Chapter 4 calls for the Africanisation of education in Zimbabwe. In our opinion, this is necessary if the content of the curriculum is to be significant to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. We argue that the Africanisation of the curriculum must be done at all levels of education so that the content of the curriculum is informed by the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm and others. In arguing for the Africanisation of the curriculum, we are aware of the difficulties that one encounters in defining the term "Africanisation". We thus attempt to define the term "Africanisation". In our view, Africanisation must be a corrective to the problems that colonial epistemicide created. It seeks to bring into recognition the colonised people's epistemologies so that they, together with other epistemologies, inform the transformed curriculum.

In chapter 5, we defend the existence of reason among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe by noting their proverbial lore as one source of their philosophy. This position negates the colonisers' claim that reason was not in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to their arrival. We make reference to some proverbs of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe that have philosophical content. On the basis of this

reasoning, we argue that philosophy and indeed reason were in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. The colonisers' mythic and curious "burden" to "introduce" philosophy to the indigenous people is without basis and must be rejected. Chapter 6 is the conclusion of the study. It summarises the position defended in this study.

CHAPTER 1: THE CONTESTED NATURE OF EDUCATION IN PRE-COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

1.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses the contestations surrounding the concept of education in pre-colonial[2] Zimbabwe and how such contestations provided a justification for the imposition of colonial education[3], philosophy and epistemology[4]. It argues that even though the existence of African[5] traditional[6] education[7] among the indigenous people of

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[2]By "pre-colonial", we mean the period prior to the conquest in the unjust wars of colonisation of Zimbabwe by people of a European descent. However, it must be noted that African states were conquered by the Arabs prior to their conquest by people of European descent (Kennedy, 2007: 218).

[3]In this study, the term "colonial education" refers to the education that the colonisers imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This education was not the same as that which was given to the colonisers but was specifically meant to ensure that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe remained subservient and loyal to the colonial oppressors (Austin, 1975: 45). The imposition of colonial education, as of necessity, involved the imposition of colonial culture. Colonial culture, according to this study, included education, philosophy and epistemology of the colonisers.

[4]Epistemology is defined as a theory of knowledge. Knowledge is not value-free and its meaning is primarily determined by the one who defines it and the objectives for such a definition. Since education leads to the production of knowledge, the colonisers' denial of the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe would, as of necessity, lead to the denial of knowledge arising from them. It is contentious to deny the existence of an epistemology among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe on the basis of the Eurocentric understanding of knowledge. It is the position of this study that epistemology or knowledge has pre-existed the advent of the colonisers. While accepting that "knowledge by acquaintance" and "knowledge how" can be called "African" or "indigenous", Kistner (2008: 97) denies that propositional knowledge (knowledge that) can be indigenous or "African". This leads us then into questioning the source of propositional knowledge given that such knowledge, according Kistner (2008: 97), cannot be "African". The unjustified Eurocentric belief that "there can be no others" with respect to knowledge production outside Europe disregards the possibility of other geopolitical spaces as genuine sources of knowledge (Mignolo, 2008: 227). In this regard, it is imperative to argue that we do not have one epistemology and the claim to dominance of the Eurocentric model of knowledge is unjustifiable and ought to be rejected.

[5] The term "Africa" does not have a single and widely accepted meaning and origin. Historically, it has not been used consistently to refer to a particular geographical space and a given group of people. In terms of its etymology, it has been argued that "in antiquity, the Greeks are said to have called the continent Libya and the Romans to have called it Africa, perhaps from the Latin *aprica* ("sunny"), or the Greek *aphrike* ("without cold"). The name Africa, however, was chiefly applied to the northern coast of the continent, which was, in effect, regarded as a southern extension of Europe. The Romans, who for a long time ruled the North African coast, are also said to have called the area south of their settlements Afriga, or the Land of the Afrigs-the name of a Berber community south of Carthage" (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 13, 1986: 40). According to the same source, the term "Africa" was also used to refer to a productive part of what is now known as Tunisia and stood for "Ears of Corn". What can be discerned from the above quotations is that the term "Africa/African" somehow has a foreign origin. The fact that historically the term "Africa" has a foreign origin and definition makes it susceptible to misrepresentations about the people and geographical space that it is supposed to denote. It is a term that has contrasting historical origins and meanings. In opposing the position that the term "Africa" has a foreign origin, Akhan (2008: 6)

Zimbabwe is contested, it is vital to try and expose the authenticity of such contestations. This task is worthwhile and necessary because the colonisers' knowledge paradigm continues to be the dominant one even after the attainment of political independence (Ramose, 2004: 139).

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argues that the term "Africa" has a Kamit (ancient Egyptian) origin. For him (2008: 6), Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Hindus or any other foreign people did not create the term "Africa". For him, the suffix "ca" means land and "Afri" refers to a Berber tribe, Aourigha that is often written as "Afarik", who occupied the land when the Romans invaded it. Akhan (2008: 7) goes on to argue that the terms "Afri" and "afarik" predate the existence of whites and their succeeding generations on the continent. However, Akhan (2008: 6) appears to contradict his thesis when he argues that "The arab version *ifriqia* comes from the roman corruption *africa*." This admission appears to confirm the argument that the term "Africa" could have had a foreign origin and that at some point in its history it did not refer to the rest of the continent but a specific group of people that occupied a small portion of this continent. There might be a point in the argument that the term "Africa" has a foreign influence mainly because of the fact that various groups of people in this continent that assumed some level of autonomy from each other, could not have coined such a name for this continent. For Hallett (1974: 4), the partition of the known world into distinct continents was initiated by Greek geographers in the fifth century and "thus "Africa" began as a purely European concept." This leads us to infer that the term "Africa" has a foreign origin. The foreign origin and meaning of the term "Africa" requires that the term be used with caution.

[6] In this study, the term "traditional" is going to be used under protest given its often controversial characterisation as an antithesis of "modernity". The term "traditional" has often been defined in reference to culture, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as that which is unchanging, backward and unscientific while "modernity", which is identified with the Western world, has been regarded as a stage of human development characterised by scientific thinking and progress (Gyekye, 1997: 217). Mungwini (2011a: 1) argues that the term "traditional" ought to be used with caution because as it was used in colonial "Africa", it was intended to denigrate "African" culture. He (2011a: 1) argues that its continued usage in the "postcolonial" period to refer to "African" culture tends to legitimise and maintain Western domination of "African" thought. Even though this study is aware of the problems associated with the continued usage of the term "traditional" to refer to culture, education philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it argues that the supposed distinction between tradition and modernity is overemphasised because that which is modern now is to a greater extent shaped by the past tradition and may also turns out to be tradition for generations to come. As a result of its problematic colonial meaning, this study takes Gyekye's (1997: 217) understanding of "traditional" as that which is handed down from the past but at the same time open to changes over time as dictated by the existential circumstances of a given people.

[7] Use of the concept "African traditional education" to refer to the educational system of the indigenous people of this continent is problematical for some reasons. The terms that constitutes it are not easy to define and have often been defined by outsiders in a manner that misrepresents and degrades the indigenous people of this continent. It is argued that various groups of indigenous people of "Africa" did not have exactly the same system of education. In this regard, it becomes difficult to speak of "African traditional education" when referring to the education system of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe given that education is primarily a reflection of the prevailing circumstances of a given people. However, if we assume that the education systems of the indigenous people of "Africa" share certain similarities that would therefore make it possible to speak of "African traditional education", then the concept can be used in this study to refer to the education system of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This is, however, done taking into account the problems encountered in reducing the educational systems of varied indigenous people of "Africa" to one system of education.

The chapter is made up of six sections. The first section gives a theoretical grounding for the study. It is important to note that the colonisers considered the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as uncivilised[8] (Bourdillon, 1976: 23), without culture and history except that which the colonisers imposed on them (Nhundu and Makoni, 1999: 23; Hegel, 1975: 190; Hoskins, 1992: 248). They were regarded as incapable of culture creation (Bamidele, 2006: 610). At times the colonisers[9] accepted the existence of culture among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe but considered it inferior compared to their own (Gelfand, 1981: 62; M'bow, 1985: xix; Amato, 1997: 76; Bamidele, 2006: 610). By denying that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had culture prior to their arrival, the colonisers also, by the same reasoning, denied them a system of education because education is part of culture.

Using the theory of deconstruction, the chapter argues that the colonisers' denial of the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe[10] prior to their arrival

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[8] The colonisers' claim to exclusive entitlement to civilisation must be rejected because civilisation is very much part of every group of people. For Huntington (1993: 24), "a civilization is...the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species. It is defined both by common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people." In the light of such an understanding of civilisation, one can argue that any given group of people has its own civilisation that it identifies with. The imposition of one group of people's civilisation on the other group becomes an act injustice because this leads to suppression and partial destruction of that group's civilisation. It was thus an act of injustice for the colonisers to apportion to themselves the "burden" to "introduce" civilisation to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe when they had their own civilisation. It becomes necessary to use the term "civilisation" with caution.

[9] The colonisers used the supposed inferiority of the culture of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to impose their own culture on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

[10] Zimbabwe is made up of a number of ethnic and linguistic dialect groups whose cultures share some similarities. This study assumes that the general outline of the indigenous education systems of these various ethnic and linguistic groups share significant similarities. This would, therefore, make it possible to collectively look at the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's indigenous education system while at the same time acknowledging the existence of certain cultural particularities of the indigenous ethnic and linguistic dialect groups. In this study, we focus on Shona proverbial lore in defense of the position that philosophy and indeed reason was in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to the arrival of the

in the country needs to be critically challenged. This is necessary because the very existence of education among indigenous people of Zimbabwe is in doubt. The second section of the chapter analyses the validity of the colonisers' attempts to deny the existence of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe as reflected in colonial thinking. The purpose here is to show that such a denial cannot be scientifically proven. The third section of the chapter defines culture, "tradition" and "modernity". With respect to "tradition" and "modernity", it is argued that these terms have been used to create a myth of the dominance of the colonisers' culture, education, philosophy and epistemology which are regarded as "modern" while the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are regarded as "traditional". The fourth section shows how oral "tradition" as a historical source to reconstruct the past of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is often doubted as a reliable source of history while emphasis is given to the written word. We submit that oral "tradition" is indeed a reliable source to reconstruct the history of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In the fifth section, we argue that the colonisers' claim to supremacy with respect to culture, education, philosophy[11] and epistemology cannot be reasonably defended. The sixth section is the conclusion of the chapter.

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colonisers. The focus on Shona proverbial lore is solely on the basis of familiarity of the language and not prejudice.

[11]The existence of philosophy among the indigenous people of "Africa" prior to the arrival of the colonisers has been doubted (Ikuenobe, 2006: 35). It is instructive to note that those who doubted the existence of philosophy among the indigenous people of this continent took it as their burden to 'introduce' the same to the indigenous people of this continent. Before attempting to define "African philosophy", it is necessary to note that both terms "African" and "Philosophy" are not easy to ascribe definitions that are widely accepted. These terms have often been understood from the standpoint of outsiders. As argued above, the term "Africa" was invented by outsiders who so named this continent primarily on the basis of how they understood its certain geographic features than the specific attributes of the indigenous people of this continent. It becomes imperative to use the term "African" in "African philosophy" with caution (Ramose, 2003b: 113). The term "philosophy" has also been defined from a Eurocentric standpoint and in such a way that "African" philosophy becomes a subject of doubt. From a Eurocentric standpoint, philosophy is understood as involving the highest exercise of the faculty of reason (Eze, 1997: 11). This

1.1 Theoretical Framework

It is important that we question the validity of the colonisers' long held claim that education as they understood it was absent in pre-colonial Zimbabwe prior to their arrival (Murray, 1929: viii), and that it was their primary responsibility to introduce it to the colonised people. We argue that, contrary to this Eurocentric[12] claim, education whose roots can be traced to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was and still exists among them. There is no single education system (that has worldwide appeal) which comes from one geopolitical centre as Europe wants to claim (Dussel and Ibarra-Colado, 2006: 491).

In this respect, the study makes use of the theory of deconstruction to challenge the colonial myth that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had no system of education. Deconstruction involves criticism of the given determinations of culture, of institutions, not in order to destroy them or simply cancel them, but in order to break and transform them (Derrida, 1997: 10& 18). For Outlaw (2003: 138), "one of the objectives of deconstruction is to critique and displace the absolutist metaphysics and epistemology which are thought to identify and provide knowledge of a rational order of axioms, first principles, and postulates that are the foundation of all that is, and of knowing what is." It

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explains why the colonisers deny the existence of "African" philosophy because they have systematically denied the existence of reason in "Africa". Oguejiofor and Onah (2005: ix) argue that the definition of philosophy is not yet a settled matter the world over. Ramose (2003b: 115) argues that "…particularity must be accorded precedence over universality with regard to talk about "African philosophy". This is necessitated by the fact that experience is the basis for philosophy. But experience is always bound to time and space in the first place." In this regard, "African" philosophy asks fundamental questions about the "African" condition in order to understand it better (Oguejiofor and Onah, 2005: ix). If it is accepted that philosophy is defined by the specific situations and experiences of a given people (Dussel, 2009b: 510), it becomes possible to talk about "African" philosophy.

[12]Eurocentrism is a belief in the dominance of Europe in various spheres of human concern such as culture, education, philosophy and epistemology while at the same time believing that the rest of the world must, as of necessity, learn from Europe. It tries to elevate its own particular way of looking at the world to the level of worldwide application (Dussel, 2009a: 62; 2006: 494). In this regard, "it has always had a certain degree of blindness toward global alterity" (Dussel, 2011: 18). This refusal to accept that there are other ways of looking at the world other than that of Europe, has been shown by coercive methods that Europe has used in order to "modernize" the colonised people (Dussel, 2000: 472).

refs to the unmasking of a construct because of its apparent inadequacies and controversies. In this regard, Bohannan and Curtin (1971: 3) argue that:

> Africa has, for generations now, been viewed through a web of myth so pervasive and so glib that understanding it becomes a twofold task: the task of clarifying the myth and the separate task of examining whatever reality has been hidden behind it. Only as it is stated and told can the myth be stripped away. Only if the myth is stripped away can the reality of Africa emerge.

The colonial construct that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe did not have a concept of education prior to the advent of colonial settlers in Zimbabwe needs to be critiqued and rejected on the grounds that it is logically contradictory to deny a system of education to people who have culture. It becomes necessary to consider why the existence of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe is in doubt as is shown in colonial literature (Peck, 1966: 52-75). In view of the fact that the lowly view of pre-colonial Zimbabwe had much to do with the outsiders than the way the indigenous people of Zimbabwe saw themselves, we argue that such a colonial construct needs to be critically questioned. In this regard, it is imperative to consider possible reasons why the existence of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe was and is still in doubt from the point of view of the adherents to the position that there was no education system in pre-colonial Zimbabwe. We now focus on the contestations regarding the existence of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

1.2 Education: A Contested Concept in pre-colonial Zimbabwe

The colonisers denied that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a system of education primarily because they were people without reason and "civilisation" (Austin, 1975: 28).Such a false perspective was imposed on the colonised people by the colonisers through colonial education (Curtin, 1981: 54). The colonisers falsely claimed that the

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education and knowledge that they imposed on the colonised people of Zimbabwe was of a superior kind. Lebakeng (2010: 24) rightly notes that:

> a major intellectual fallacy of our time is the continued fatuous assertion that knowledge systems were introduced to the African continent through colonialism. The incontrovertible fact is that colonialism introduced western knowledge systems, as a particular form of knowledge, through imposition and systematic attempt to destroy indigenous knowledge systems.

The fact that the colonisers imposed their own culture, education, philosophy and epistemology to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe does not at all prove that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe did not have the same prior to the arrival of the colonisers.

Scientific research has actually shown "Africa" to be the cradle of human civilisation, culture and education (James, 2009: 24; Diop, 1984: 23; Asante, 2007: 1). It has also been established that the widely acclaimed Greek philosophy has an "African" origin (James, 2009: 23).The Greeks are among people from various parts of the ancient world that benefited from Egypt's well developed education system (James, 2009: 33). Ancient Egypt was regarded as the greatest education centre of the ancient world (Pappademos, 1984: 98; James, 2009: 24; Davidson, 1991: 25). Van Sertima (1994: 3-4) has noted that recent findings at Katanga and Ishango in northeastern Zaire[13] show that technology moved northwards through the Nile Valley from the interior of "Africa" to pre-dynastic Egypt. In this light, one can argue that the discoveries of aspects of technological advances in the interior of "Africa" some of which predate ancient Egyptian civilisation

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[13] The then "Zaire" was renamed the "Democratic Republic of Congo" after the fall of the president Mobutu Seseko's government.

show that "African" people in general contributed significantly to world civilisation (Diop, 1984: 27; Obenga, 2004: 32).

The supposed separation of ancient Egypt from the rest of "Africa" is not supported by facts (Obenga, 1981: 80; Davidson, 1991: 25-26). Such a supposed separation of Egypt from the rest of "Africa" was intended to justify the colonisers' thesis that the rest of "Africa" or "Africa proper" had no civilisation and thus deserves to be characterised as primitive. This is the thesis that is defended by Hegel (1975: 175-176). The mythic separation is not supported by concrete evidence and must be rejected. Despite the fact that pre-colonial "African" societies had culture, education, philosophy and epistemology, and had contributed significantly to world civilisation (Bohannan and Curtin, 1971: 264), the colonisers conveniently denied them these attributes (Clements, 1969: 8). In fact, the colonisers sought to impose their own culture, education, philosophy and epistemology on the indigenous people of "Africa". The colonisers' strategy was to externally project good intention of their supposed "civilising" mission when in fact they wanted to destroy the cultures and epistemological paradigms of the colonised people (Dussel, 2006: 490).

The colonisers mentally conditioned the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to see no value in their own culture, education, philosophy and epistemology (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 8-9; Chung and Ngara, 1985: 74) while at the same time regarding the colonisers' own culture, education, philosophy and epistemology as universal[14] models. In fact, the

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[14]The term "universal" is not value-free. It is a term that takes a one-sided view of issues and wrongly claiming this to be representative of all (Taiwo, 1998: 4-5; Grosfoguel, 2012: 100). It is a term that tends to

colonisers argued that it was in the best interest of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to adopt christianity[15] (Gelfand, 1968: ix; Chitando, 2005: 182), Western education and manners (Gelfand, 1981: 62; Bohannan and Curtin, 1971: 330).

For Dussel and Ibarra-Colado (2006: 490; Outlaw, 2003: 141), Europeans considered themselves the rightful heirs of the age of "reason" and, therefore, in a superior position compared to other races. In light of this Eurocentric myth, the possibility of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe has been the subject of debate. Anything that did and still does not measure up to the Eurocentric model of culture, education, philosophy and knowledge is dismissed as primitive, uncivilised, backward and not genuine (Boaduo and Gumbi, 2010: 45). Given the understanding of education as a wholesome process of human learning by which knowledge is generated and passed on

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legitimise the possibility of one given people ascribing themselves the responsibility of defining the world. In this regard, the term "universe" would then only represent Europe and not the whole planet. This is true of how the colonisers have taken their own culture, philosophy and epistemology as "universal" models when in actual fact they are particular and regional perspectives that are not legitimately reflective of culture, philosophy and epistemology of the other people. In respect to the Eurocentric usage and meaning of the term "universal", Dussel (2009a: 64, 2000: 473; Dussel, 1995: 12-13) argues for the possibility of a transmodern pluriverse or transversal world that would ensure alterity whereby various philosophical traditions are given due recognition. This possibility would put to question the myth that the Eurocentric paradigm is representative of all people and cultures of this world. It strives to put to the fore other cultures that were suppressed through the "universalisation" of the Eurocentric paradigm (Dussel, 2009b: 499). Pluriversality rejects the claims to worldwide dominance of Eurocentric philosophical modernity. This new order must also take into account that there are various "modernities" and not one "modernity", that is, European "modernity", as Europe would want to argue. A transmodern world which takes the plurality of "modernities" becomes necessary and "the aim is to build a *pluriverse* (not a universe) in which every culture can conserve its own identity and, at the same time, assimilate the developments of this globalising modernity" (Dussel and Ibarra-Colado, 2006: 505). The change from a "universe" to a "pluriverse" would afford an opportunity for the previously suppressed cultures, education systems, philosophies and epistemologies to be recognised. Given the problems encountered in the usage of the term "universe", it is imperative that the term be used in this study with caution.

[15]Since we are arguing for the equality of religions, we accept Soyinka's (1999: 32) position that the use of the capital letter "C" for "Christianity" and indeed the other so-called major religions must be rescinded and replaced with small letter "c". This is necessary because other religions and their gods are not written with capital letters (Soyinka, 1999: 32). In the light of this reasoning, the term "christianity" will be written with a small "c" in this study.

from one generation to another, it becomes untenable to question its presence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers.

1.3 The Meaning of Culture, "Tradition" and "Modernity"

The colonisers denied that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a culture and at times accepted its existence but regarded it as inferior. The colonisers' denial that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a culture as they understood it, would as of necessity mean that they also lacked a system of education, philosophy and epistemology. In this regard, it becomes imperative to define the term "culture" in order to establish whether the indigenous people of Zimbabwe indeed had a culture prior to the arrival of the colonisers.

In this study, culture is defined as a way of life of a given people as a whole (Oruka, 2003: 58, Bourdillon, 1993: 7). It includes the whole distinctive complex of spiritual, material, intellectual, ethical and emotional features which constitute the heritage of a society or social group (Abraham, 1992: 13; Ball, 2008: 25; Lemmer, Meirer and van Wyk, 2012: 20-21). Education, philosophy, epistemology and a whole host of belief systems are part of culture.

In the view of the colonisers, the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were "traditional" while the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the colonisers were "modern". The concept of "tradition" is a contested one as it is understood by the colonisers in reference to the

history of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. "Tradition" is often contrasted with "modernity" (Rodriguez, 2001: 55). Just like "tradition", "modernity" is equally a contested concept (Larmore, 1996: 1; Rengger, 2000: 3) especially as it is understood as solely a product of Europe and as an opposite of "tradition". It is often used to refer to the so-called age of reason in the European continent (Dussel and Ibarra-Colado, 2006: 490).

As a cultural programme, "modernity" has been imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe through the educational and administrative institutions of the colonisers (Mungwini, 2011b: 775-776) at the expense of the indigenous people's educational, philosophical and epistemological models. The purpose is to devalue these indigenous educational, philosophical and epistemological models while at the same time elevating the colonisers' educational, philosophical and epistemological models as "modern". Europe considered itself as the fountain of ideal culture, progress, order and civilisation that "Africans" had to be assimilated to (Bourdillon, 1998: xvii). As a result, a distinction between the supposedly "modern" and the "traditional" societies was created. This supposed distinction between the "modern" and the "traditional" is problematical and ought to be critiqued. We now turn to the critique.

Western "modernity" brought new cultural models into "African" societies that have led to the undermining of indigenous cultural models and value systems which the colonisers regarded as "traditional" and backward (Dussel, 2000: 472). In fact "modernity" is mistakenly identified with colonialism as if pre-colonial "African" cultures did not have their own internal modernising attributes. Afigbo (1985: 487) has shown that

modernisation was indeed operational in pre-colonial "Africa" and was a continuous process. One can, therefore, refute this supposed polarity between "tradition" and "modernity" on the ground that "modernity" is informed by "tradition" and certain elements of "tradition" remain as part of "modernity". For Gyekye (1997: 217), "the truth of the assertion that every society in the modern world inherits ancestral cultural values implies that modernity is not always a rejection of the past, but it also casts serious doubts on the appropriateness of perceiving tradition and modernity as polar opposites." "Tradition" can be understood as a body of values that have been passed on from past generations to succeeding generations with some amendments that reflect the prevailing situation in a given social group.[16] In this light, Gross (1992: 4) argues that:

> many traditions continue on in the nooks and crannies of modern life. They exist privately even where they have eroded publicly. Some survive by going underground, others by reconstituting themselves in such a way as to live on in new forms and guises.

On the basis of Gross's argument, the supposed opposition between "tradition" and "modernity" becomes untenable. "Tradition" is not static but it in fact changes in line with the changes taking place within the receiving generation (Gross, 1992: 13-4, Ramadan, 2010: 146).

This study makes use of the term "tradition" not as an antithesis of "modernity" but as closely related with "modernity". The reasoning here is that "tradition", to some

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[16] The terms "tradition" and "culture" might appear to be one and the same thing if we are to consider their definitions. However, upon critical analysis one would come to the conclusion that they are in fact distinct from each other though related in some important respect (Gyekye, 1997: 220-221). For Gyekye (1997: 221), "tradition" refers to aspects of culture that have persisted over generations while "culture" can be understood as the content of a given "tradition". "Culture" provides the content that is handed down from generation to generation in order for it to become "tradition". This implies that we cannot reasonably talk of a "tradition" without talking about a "culture" from which "tradition" evolves.

significant extent, informs "modernity". "Modernity" must not be conceived of as rootless but must be considered as a quest to transform an existing "tradition" so that it becomes relevant to the prevailing situation in a given society. Makang (1997: 325) argues that "traditions are not frozen in time, but are in continual development, adapting themselves to new historical circumstances." In fact there is no "tradition" which is incapable of being critically questioned and studied by the human mind. In this regard, Pieper (1958: 474) argues that:

> tradition in an absolute sense, tradition that can never be resolved and replaced through the progress of science cannot be imagined unless it be assumed that there are *tradita* which by their very nature cannot be tested by experience and argument, cannot be verified.

The thinking that "modernity" is totally separate from "tradition" is untenable. However, it must be noted that the "tradition"-"modernity" distinction is a colonially constructed one with the intention of portraying the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the colonised people as "traditional" and, therefore, backward, unscientific and pre-modern while culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the Western world are seen as modern, scientific and dynamic. Given the colonisers' understanding of the term "tradition" (Mungwini, 2011a: 2), its continued usage in the postcolonial[17] era to refer to

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[17]The meaning of the term "postcolonial" is contested. It is a conjunction of two words "post" and "colonial". Colonialism is understood as a historical period in which "African" people suffered physical, cultural and mental subjugation at the hands of the European world and it spans from the mid-fifteenth century to the 1990s when all conquered "African" countries gained political independence (Eze, 1997: 4). Prefixing the term "colonial" with the term "post" would give the impression that colonialism has ended by virtue of the fact that "African" countries have now become politically independent from the unjust grip of the European conquerors. However, in reality, colonialism "survived" decolonisation as reflected by a "postcolonial" educational paradigm in the so-called independent "African" countries such as Zimbabwe that is substantially rooted in Eurocentric models of culture, philosophy and epistemology. Battiste (2004: 1) might be right in arguing that the term "postcolonial" is one term which is difficult to ascribe a definition which is widely acceptable. For Battiste (2004: 1), "postcolonial" does not refer to a time after colonialism *per se*, but rather represents more of an ambition which is yet to be fully realised. Given the apparently superficial nature of independence of "African" countries from cultural colonisation by the European

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the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe becomes problematic. The colonial stereotypes that the term "tradition" carries must be rejected so that we use it simply to refer to the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people.

The fact that the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe differed from those of the colonisers, as primarily shown by the indigenous people's resistance to colonial rule, might show that "modernities" vary from country to country and are primarily reflective of the specific circumstances of a given country (Chatterjee, 1997: 3). Hallett (1974: 8) argues that "every human society possesses its own innate dynamism." The colonisers' desire to bring "modernity" to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was based on the idea that "modernity" is one and had a Eurocentric origin. This study critically questions this understanding of "modernity". Eurocentric "modernity" also doubted the reliability of oral "tradition" as a valid source of historiography. We now turn to the reliability of oral "tradition" as a valid source of historiography.

1.4 Oral "Tradition" as a valid source of Historiography

The denial of alterity or otherness which is characteristic of Eurocentric "modernity" (Dussel, 1995: 12) can as well be reflected in the manner in which oral "tradition" as a legitimate source for the reconstruction of history has been viewed by the colonisers. There has been a tendency to take the written word as superior to oral "tradition"

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conquerors, this study subscribes to Battiste's argument that genuine independence of "Africa" from colonial bondage is still to be realistically achieved.

(Vansina, 1981: 142). The written word has been associated with "modernity" while oral "tradition" has been associated with "tradition". It becomes necessary to establish whether we can legitimately use oral "tradition" as an authentic source of history for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This is important given attempts by the colonisers to deny history to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe on the basis that they were not gifted with the art of writing prior to the arrival of the colonisers (Brock-Utne, 2000: 143).

Oral "tradition" is a term which is difficult to ascribe a widely acceptable meaning. For Vansina (2009: 1), "oral traditions are historical sources of a special nature" in that they are transmitted through the word of mouth and their preservation is dependent on the ability of successive generations to memorise them. One key feature of oral "tradition" is that it covers sources that are passed from one person to the other through the use of a language (Vansina, 2009: 19-20). Oral "tradition" consists of narratives that one has learnt through listening. This understanding of oral "tradition" would exclude eyewitness accounts and rumours because both do not constitute the past (Vansina, 2009: 20). The understanding of oral "tradition" as listening leads one to question its reliability as a historical source given the possibility of distortions and misrepresentations that might characterise it.

Oral "tradition" is often considered as an antithesis of a written source. A written source can be defined as a manuscript, a title or a tablet (Vansina, 1981: 143). Oral "tradition" can be used as a source for the written record. Oral "tradition" and written sources can be considered as complementary for the reason that oral "tradition" can provide the source

for the written sources. In this light, oral "tradition" can be used as a source to reconstruct the history of the societies that were in the past regarded as non-writing societies. In arguing for the legitimacy of oral "tradition" in the study of "African" history, Bhebe (2002: 7) advices that an overreliance on written sources at the expense of oral sources is methodologically untenable. Oral "tradition" has now gained acceptance as another reliable source of studying "African" history.

The legitimacy of oral "tradition" as a historical source of academic discourse is often in doubt because of the supposedly inherent limitations that it has especially when it is compared to written sources. The difference between oral "tradition" and a written source is overemphasised for the reason that oral "tradition" is a source for some written sources (Vansina, 2009: 1). It becomes problematic to regard written sources as authentic historical sources while rejecting oral "tradition" as a valid source of history.

On the basis of the supposed superiority of writing, the claim to parity between the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers and that of the indigenous people has been rejected by some. For instance, Appiah (2003) takes those "traditions" that have the skill of writing as fundamentally superior to those that are oral. In the view of Appiah (2003: 340), though all societies may be credited with philosophy, those societies that have in their "tradition" the skill of writing can be considered to have a philosophy which is much more systematic than those that have an oral "tradition". Appiah (2003: 340) understands Western philosophy as "formal philosophy" while the philosophy of other cultures is understood as "folk philosophy".

Western philosophy is considered as formal, systematic, adversarial and is preserved in written records while the philosophy of other cultures is considered "folk" because it is unwritten, unsystematic and lacks the adversarial character. For (Appiah, 2003: 342), the adversarial aspect of Western philosophy enables people to question established views and those who hold these views to provide what they consider to be reasoned arguments in their defence. On the other hand, other cultures are regarded as accommodative in that they do not question, for example, the inconsistencies of their systems of beliefs and that of others (Appiah, 2003: 342). In our view, the failure by Appiah to identify in other cultures what he takes as the marks of "formal" philosophy from the Western vantage point, does not at all point to the inferiority of the so-called oral societies. Olúwolé (1997: 8) advices that:

> basically, oral tradition, whichever way we look at it, is the creation of individual minds even if ideas expressed in them later become accepted as norms and principles by the society. Such views, in all probability, must have been listened to, analysed, criticised and rationalised by many thinkers before they were socially accepted. This intellectual process may, of course, not be recorded.

One can thus doubt the validity of the position that writing makes philosophy systematic and adversarial while oral "tradition" stifles debate and treats knowledge which is passed on as authoritative and not subject to questioning and analysis.

The absence of writing among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was considered as one sign of their state of barbarism (Parker, 1960: 174).This position can be rejected because there are some prominent philosophers in Western "tradition" whose thoughts were not written down (Olúwolé, 1997: 12). Brown (2004: vi) argues that "were we to be

consistent and hold that traditional African thought cannot be philosophical, because philosophical thought is thought that is written or is non-sagacious in character, we could not count Socrates, Buddha, or Jesus as having engaged in philosophical thought."

It must also be noted that a given oral "tradition" has meaning within a given cultural context and geographical boundary. In the context of this understanding of oral "tradition", one can argue that oral "tradition" remains an authentic window through which the history of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can be reconstructed and understood. In our view, the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the pre-colonial indigenous people of Zimbabwe can be reconstructed by appealing to their oral "tradition". Reconstruction is necessary because the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's culture, education, philosophy and epistemology have undergone transformation (Bourdillon, 1993: 16) primarily because of the unjust imposition of the colonisers' culture, education, philosophy and epistemology. Bâ (1981: 166) is of the opinion that African "tradition" or history can be equated to oral "tradition". For Bâ (1981: 166), "…no attempt at penetrating the history and spirit of the African peoples is valid unless it relies on the heritage of knowledge of every kind patiently transmitted from mouth to ear, from master to disciple, down through ages." Such oral "tradition" can be used to illustrate the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe even though oral "tradition" is often doubted as a genuine source of a people's history compared to written sources. For Vansina (1981: 142):

> it would be wrong to reduce the civilization of the spoken word to a merely
> negative absence of writing and to perpetuate the inborn contempt of the literate for
> the illiterate which is found in so many sayings, such as the Chinese proverb 'The

palest ink is to be preferred to the strongest word.' To do so would show total ignorance of the nature of these oral civilizations.

In fact, written sources are as well susceptible to falsification, forgeries and unintended alterations (Bâ, 1981: 167). The criticism of oral "tradition" as an unreliable source of history is not wholly justified because other prominent sources of a people's history such as archaeology and written sources share similar limitations (Ki-Zerbo, 1981: 8).

Ramose (2004: 144) similarly defends oral "tradition" as a genuine source of knowledge when he critiqued the controversial separation of oral "tradition" and written sources:

> the fundamental point is that all writing, that is, the sign used by the signifier, is ultimately the representation of thought. In this sense writing is like the spoken word or language since the many languages that exist do not have the same sounds yet each one is capable of grasping, interpreting and communicating its experience.

What is surprising is that while oral "tradition" is accepted as a genuine and valid source of history for ancient Greece, "African" oral "tradition" is dismissed as largely unreliable. M'bow (1981: xvii) argues that "although the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were rightly regarded as essential sources for the history of ancient Greece, African oral "tradition", the collective memory of peoples which holds the thread of many events marking their lives, was rejected as worthless." It is our contention that oral "tradition" can be legitimately used as a genuine historical source to reconstruct and indicate the presence of a system of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe in pre-colonial times.

For Bhebe (2002: 3), the value of oral "tradition" as a source in the study of "African" history is no longer contestable. In fact oral "tradition" in Southern "Africa" is now seen as both a source for historical studies as well as an instrument to forge an "African"

identity. What is spoken precedes what is written (Ramose, 1998: vi) and if ever there is reason to doubt oral evidence as an authentic source for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's pre-colonial culture, education, philosophy and epistemology, then the same could be said about written sources because written sources (Bâ, 1981: 166) are derived from oral sources. One ought to be careful of confusing "writing" and "knowledge" because the two are not synonymous words.

Knowledge is found in both oral and written "traditions" and it is not true that people without writing lack knowledge. Eurocentric biases that tended to doubt oral "tradition" as an authentic source of knowledge cannot, therefore, be sustained given that "nothing proves *apriori* that writing gives a more faithful account of a reality than oral evidence handed down from generation to generation" (Bâ, 1981: 167). The recognition of oral "tradition" as a legitimate source of history of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can be used as a basis to reconstruct their culture, education, philosophy and epistemology. Though Vansina (2009: 172) regards oral "tradition" as limited by virtue of the fact that it is defined by the society in which it is found and is limited in time to a given society's generation depth, one can argue that in some significant sense, the geographical nature of oral "tradition" makes it an important historical source in reconstructing the history of a given people. It is the argument of this study that despite the geographical nature of oral "tradition" that makes it spatially limited, it still provides us with a significantly reliable source to reconstruct and bring into recognition the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

The supposed superior position of the colonisers was primarily based on the questionable claim that they were rational while the conquered people were not (Ramose, 1999: 1). It was partly because of such thinking that Europe's mission to "civilise" the conquered people largely disregarded the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the conquered people. The indigenous people of Zimbabwe were deemed as people without reason who could benefit from the "civilising" mission that the colonisers were carrying out (Parker, 1960: 174).

Reason became a racialised construct. The colonisers gave the impression that if they were to pull out of the colonised regions of "Africa", the indigenous people of "Africa" would fall back into their primitive past (Fanon, 1996: 238). The myth of the supremacy of the colonisers' model of culture, education, philosophy and knowledge over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was used as justification for the imposition of their model. The result of such a scheme was to create a sense of identity crisis among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe because the colonisers' way of life was largely at variance with their existential circumstances. Eze (1997: 12) argues that the identities that were imposed on "Africans" by the European colonisers were contested identities and ought to be seriously questioned. These identities undermined the indigenous people's confidence in their own cultures, educational systems, philosophies and epistemologies. For Kenyatta (1961: 125), the "new civilisation" that the "African" was supposed to acquire from the colonisers "…neither prepares him for the proper functions of a European mode of life nor for African life; he is left floundering between the two social forces." While Eze (1997: 12) focuses on how the colonisers succeeded in imposing

contested identities on "Africans", Kenyatta (1961: 125) argues that the "civilisation" that the colonisers pretended to be bringing to "Africa" created a crisis of identity in the colonised. What can be concluded from Eze (1997) and Kenyatta's (1961) analysis of the mission of the colonisers in "Africa" is that the colonisers wanted to degrade the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of "Africa". We now turn to a discussion on the nature of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

1.5 The nature of Education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe

One can argue that indigenous people of Zimbabwe's proverbs, riddles, taboos, folktales and apprenticeship system were and are still educative and contain their philosophy. Since education in the "African" sense is tied with the circumstances of life (Bâ, 1981: 179), it is a kind of education that empowers one to fully comprehend and be integrated into the way of life of one's society. An educated person in the "African" sense can be regarded as a person who has comprehended the thought systems, philosophy, epistemology and values of his/her society that would make him/her a worthy member of the group. The education that one receives must also make one critical of it and where necessary suggest changes that respond to challenges and aspirations of the day. Education in the "African" sense is a life-long process and, for Bâ (1981: 193), actually "life itself was education." One can still maintain that education in the "African" sense continues to be a life-long concern since it always has to respond to the challenges that a given society or an individual experiences at a given historical period. Being educated in the "African" sense involves a mastery of the various aspects of one's culture and not necessarily the mastery of foreign cultures (Wiredu, 2004b: 18). The colonisers have

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tended to think, in regard to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, that real education involves mastery of Eurocentric models of education.

Balogun (2008: 117) gives a philosophical appraisal of the idea of an educated person in contemporary "African" thought. He (2008: 117) rejects the contemporary "African" understanding of an educated person as one who is schooled and literate for being philosophically inadequate. For Balogun (2008: 117), education goes beyond mere schooling because the idea of an educated person in "traditional""Africa" is holistic and, therefore, worthwhile to one's life situations. Balogun (2008: 121) argues that the concept of an educated person in the "African" worldview:

> …has cultural colourations, and as a result of this, the Western conception of an educated person should neither be a paradigm for Africa, nor can an African paradigm be a yardstick for the West. Education is as varied in its content and method, as there are different societies in the world. Thus, the superimposition of a Western conceptual model on the African notion of an educated person is bound to be futile; and one of the major avenues for this superimposition has been our pattern of education tailored towards the Western model.

Education in the "African" sense has the goal of moulding a holistic individual who becomes a worthy member of his/her society.

For Marah (2006:15), the process of "traditional" education in "Africa" was closely integrated with the social, cultural, artistic, religious, and recreational life of the ethnic group. This means that education in "Africa" was not separated from other spheres of life. Such a system of education ensured that it became a lifelong process and closely responded to the needs and expectations of not only its apprentices, but also most importantly, society in general. However, this is not to say that the definition of education

is not in dispute. The way education has often been defined and understood especially from a Eurocentric standpoint is meant to exclude the educational systems of the colonised people from what the colonisers regard as genuine education. The purpose of chapter 2 is, therefore, to question this Eurocentric position by arguing that once we accept that indigenous people of Zimbabwe had and have a culture, we cannot realistically deny them a system of education since education is an agent of cultural transmission and change. In chapter 2, we argue that the denial of the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers cannot be legitimately defended.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the contested nature of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe. We argued that even though the colonisers doubted the existence and authenticity of the culture, education, philosophy and epistemology of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe there is scientific evidence that culture, education, philosophy and epistemology predate the colonisation of Zimbabwe. The chapter also argued that the fact that the colonisers imposed their own models of culture, education, philosophy and epistemology on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, does not at all give a scientific grounding for their denial of the existence of the same among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In this regard, it becomes necessary to argue that the contestation about the existence of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe cannot be rationally sustained given that culture presupposes a system of education. This is going to be the subject matter of chapter 2.

Once it is accepted that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a culture in pre-colonial times; it becomes logically impossible to deny them a system of education.

CHAPTER 2: A PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INTERPLAY OF CULTURE AND EDUCATION

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, our main objective is to analyse the interplay of culture and education. We argue that it is unreasonable to deny that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had a system of education prior to the arrival of the colonisers. Such a denial cannot be reasonably sustained if it is accepted that all people have a culture and that education is a constituent part of culture. This chapter builds on this relationship between culture and education in order to defend the thesis that the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe predates the arrival of the colonisers. It argues that the imposition of the colonisers' education paradigm on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe translates to the imposition of the colonisers' culture (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 7). In the light of this, the Afrocentric approach is employed in order to reassert the agency of the indigenous people in matters of knowledge production and contribution to human civilisation.

The chapter has six sections. The first section defines culture. In the second section, education is defined. The third section discusses the interplay of culture and education. In this regard, we argue that the imposition of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe also meant the imposition of the culture of the colonisers. In the fourth section, we argue that the colonisers' curriculum was used to alienate the indigenous people of Zimbabwe from their cultural framework. In the fifth section, Afrocentricity is discussed as a possible solution to the alienation that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe

have suffered as a result of the colonial experience. In the last section, we argue that an Afrocentric curriculum is required in Zimbabwe in order to reassert the agency of the indigenous people so that they can speak for and of themselves. This is a necessary step in liberating the curriculum from its dominance by the colonisers' educational paradigm given that the colonisers subordinated the indigenous people's educational paradigm to their own.

2.1 Culture Defined

Defining culture is not a simple task. This is partly because the term "culture" has been defined from the standpoint of various disciplines and geopolitical centres. This has led to some confusion on its content and meaning. Despite these difficulties, various definitions of culture tend to have a common meaning (Ajayi, 2005: 2). Adeleke (2003: 49) argues that almost all definitions of culture are inspired by E. B. Tylor's anthropological definition of culture. According to Tylor (1871: 1), "culture or civilisation, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

Culture has been defined as a shared way of life in a given society (Stenhouse, 1967:53; Mbiti, 1981: 7; Oruka, 2003: 58). It is made up of ideas and practices that are generally accepted within a given society. It is a dynamic institution within and through which individuals make contact with each other. This is made possible by a system of education.

However, there is no agreement with respect to what constitutes a way of life of a given people. The colonisers have tended to regard the conquered people's ways of life as inferior to their own.

Some definitions of culture exclude what other societies consider as "culture" while other definitions are exclusive to people from a certain geopolitical centre. This is true of how the colonisers understood culture in relation to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Bourdillon, 1976: 25). They were regarded as a people with an inferior culture and at worst as a people without culture. Bamidele (2006: 612) notes the problems encountered in defining culture when he argues that "the term culture cannot be put into proper perspective without identifying the underlying ideology that forms the world outlook of the perspective into which it is placed." This means that cultures reflect the historical and prevailing situations which give rise to them. A monolithic understanding of culture becomes untenable. For Weiss and Hoover (1960: 128), "to assume that our culture is preferable to others is a classic example of unconscious projection." The reasoning here is that every culture is relevant to the people who give rise to it. In the light of the above, one can argue that the colonisers were not justified to regard their culture as superior to that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. For the purposes of this study, culture is understood as a people's way of life that includes their educational system and philosophy.

Part of the myth that the colonisers upheld was that they had a "burden" to introduce education to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Gelfand, 1968: 66). They believed that

education was non-existent among the indigenous people (Peck, 1966: 67; White, 1996: 10). This myth was influenced by their understanding of education. However, it has been shown by way of our definition of culture that every culture has a system of education which preserves and transmits it from generation to generation and makes changes that reflect the prevailing situation in a given society. An attempt to define education is therefore necessary.

2.2 Education Defined

The term "education" defies a single and transcultural definition. It is a term which is open to contradictory interpretations (Balogun, 2008: 119). This is because the term has tended to mean different things to different people. For the purposes of this study, education is understood as a wholesome process of human learning by which knowledge is generated and passed on from one generation to another. It is a lifelong process that ensures that culture is preserved, transmitted and changed in line with the prevailing situation in a given society (Kneller, 1963: 50; Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003:426).

Our argument is that education goes beyond what colonisers thought of. The colonisers equated education with schooling. They credited themselves for introducing education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe through schooling (Peck, 1966: 67). It has, however, been argued that education transcends schooling to include what goes on outside the colonial school system. Education is an important aspect of all human societies. It must not be narrowly understood (Bond, 1982: 251).

The point that this understanding of education makes is that it was indeed in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to the arrival of the colonisers (Peresuh, 1999: 7). One can argue that since the term "education" is open to contradictory interpretations, it is untenable for the colonisers to take their definition as having transcultural application. The validity of colonisers' monolithic understanding of education becomes questionable. We now turn our focus to the relationship between culture and education.

2.3 Culture and Education

An analysis of the relationship between culture and education is important in our attempt to argue a case for the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. There is a dual relationship between culture and education. While culture influences and shapes education, education in turn influences and shapes culture (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 2; Mbiti, 1981: 7, ter Haar, 1990: 20). For Mbiti (1981: 7), the term "culture" embraces the term "education". One cannot think of a culture that lacks a system of education.

Johnson (1982: 214) makes an important observation with respect to the relationship between culture and education when he argues that:

> in all societies education fulfills some of the same basic functions. It transmits culture, trains people for specialized roles, and is simultaneously a force of continuity and change. How these functions are fulfilled varies from society to society and even at different times within the same society depending upon the character of the economy, the family, the political organization, and the religion.

Johnson's (1982: 214) position with respect to the function of education is important because it shows that its functions may vary from society to society. This attribute of education would thus expose the fallacy of the colonisers' claim that education is reducible to what they conceive it to be. According to this line of reasoning, every culture, despite its level of civilisation has an education system that ensures that it is transmitted, perpetuated and changed in line with prevailing conditions within a given social group.

The interplay of culture and education brings to question the colonisers' denial of the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. The existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can thus be proved on the basis of this symbiotic relationship of culture and education. Since education is a component of culture (Stevens, 2008: 97), it becomes possible to talk of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before their contact with the colonisers. Hilliard III (1978: 110) identifies the strategy that the colonisers used in order to dominate and create a sense of inferiority in the colonised people. This involves destroying or distorting the culture and education of the dominated people. For Hilliard III (1978: 110), "this enables an oppressor to hold a view of the oppressed which will justify self-serving interventions by the oppressor. It also serves the function of confusing the oppressed group regarding its own identity and resources, thus limiting its ability to respond to oppression."

The colonisers noted that control of the indigenous people would not be possible without the use of military force and an education system that made them accept colonialism in a

positive light (Nhundu and Makoni, 1999: 22). The colonisers thus systematically undertook to destroy the culture and education of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and replace them with colonial culture and education (Clements, 1969: 48; Chung and Ngara, 1985: 74-75). To some extent, this worked to their advantage. For Nhundu and Makoni (1999: 23; Brock-Utne, 2000: 111), the imposition of an education system that supported colonial interests was in accord with the spirit of military conquest. The imposition of colonial education meant that the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers became the dominant epistemology while that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was systematically denigrated and suppressed. This unjust imposition of the epistemology of the colonisers did not, however, lead to the total excision of the epistemology of the indigenous people (Ramose, 2010: 7) of Zimbabwe. Colonial epistemicide[18] disturbed the progression of knowledge production among the indigenous people.

In line with the colonisers' negative stereotypes about the indigenous people, Parker (1960: 174) argues that "sixty-nine years ago, when the white man first came to this area, Africans were in a barbaric state, without writing and without the use of the simple wheel." The indigenous people's contribution to knowledge production and civilisation was thus unjustifiably denied. This was effected through the imposition of the colonisers' knowledge paradigm and the suppression of that of the indigenous people (Parker, 1960: 174; Austin, 1975: 35). We now focus on the use of the curriculum by the colonisers to effect epistemicide.

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[18]Epistemicide refers to the partial destruction of the epistemology of the oppressed and colonised people.

2.4 Curriculum and imposition of the Colonisers' Culture and Education

In light of the interplay of culture and education, it is important to establish the extent to which the imposition of the colonisers' system of education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe affected their culture. According to Zvobgo (1997: 51), the curriculum is a reflection of the culture and ideology of its designer. This was true of the curriculum in Southern Rhodesia[19]. However, before we discuss the content of the curriculum that the colonisers imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it is necessary that we define the term "curriculum".

2.4.1 Curriculum Defined

There is no agreement among scholars with respect to the meaning of the term "curriculum" (Stenhouse, 1975: 4; Gatawa, 1990: 5; Smith and Lovat, 1998: 1). In terms of its etymology, the term "curriculum" derives from a Latin word *curro* meaning 'I run' or *currere* meaning 'to be running' (Smith and Lovat, 1998: 8). Ancient Greeks used the term "curriculum" to refer to the running track that athletes used as they competed (Smith and Lovat, 1998: 8). In the light of the etymology of the term "curriculum", it becomes difficult to have an understanding of curriculum which has transcultural appeal.

Stenhouse (1975: 5) defines a curriculum as an attempt to put into practice an educational proposal. From this understanding of the term "curriculum", one may be interested in knowing the one who has the mandate to select the content of a given curriculum. This is

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[19]The present day Zimbabwe was known as "Southern Rhodesia" during the colonial times. The term "Rhodesia" referred to its two parts partitioned by the Zambezi river, that is, "Southern Rhodesia" and "Northern Rhodesia". The term "Rhodesia" derives from the leader of the British South Africa Company Cecil John Rhodes. The British South Africa Company imposed company rule on the present day Zimbabwe from 1890 to 1923 when it was annexed by Britain.

necessary especially in the light of the imposition of the colonisers' system of education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Questions on the significance of the content of the curriculum to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe would arise.

Gatawa (1990: 6) defines the term "curriculum" as the totality of experiences of children[20] administered by schools. Children can have these experiences as individuals or groups. These experiences can take place at school and outside school. For Gatawa (1990: 8), this definition of the term "curriculum" rejects the understanding of curriculum that limits it to what goes on in the school with the purpose of preparing children for examinations. What can be concluded from the definitions given above is that there is a general lack of agreement with regard to the meaning of the term "curriculum". Our understanding of the term "curriculum" takes what is taught at home and society in general as important sites of knowledge in themselves. This understanding of the term "curriculum" would thus include what is taught outside the school as genuinely educational. In addition, associating education with schooling is problematic because schooling is associated with the arrival of the colonisers. This understanding of the term "curriculum" serves as a critique of the colonisers' understanding of this term in that it regards what is taught outside the colonisers' school system as equally educational. We now turn our focus to the influence that the ideology of the colonisers exerted to the curriculum.

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[20]Gatawa's definition of the term "curriculum" is limited to children's experiences. The implication is that children are the only recipients of education. This is a narrow scope of education. In reality, the curriculum must be defined not only in reference to children, but also youths, adults and the aged. This is necessary because education is not limited to children only.

2.4.2 The Curriculum as reflective of the Ideology of the Colonisers

The nature and content of a given education curriculum in use in a given state is primarily a reflection of the culture and ideology of its designers (Baylies and Bujra, 1990: 4). We agree with Zvobgo's (1997: xi) position that "the curriculum is a reflection of the power struggles which characterise all societies. It reflects the ideology of the ruling elite." An ideology, with respect to the curriculum, is the thinking that shapes and influences its content. Since ideology is unjustly dominated by the views of those in power, it is designed in such a way that it protects and advances the interests of its designers. It is meant to define the relations between those in power and the ruled. The ruled are supposed to regard state ideology as given. This was true of the relationship between the colonisers and the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. It is thus necessary to discuss how the colonisers used the education curriculum in order to control the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

The education that the colonisers imparted prepared the indigenous people of Zimbabwe for inferior roles[21] in the colonial state (Zvobgo, 1994: 3). In regard to this aspect of colonial education, Murray (1935: 234) writes that:

> if the Native is to be considered as always an inferior being, always to be governed by an alien race, his status and his education for that status will be different from what they would be if he is looked on as capable of an independent political future in the modern world.

The colonisers' education curriculum left the indigenous people in a state of cultural crisis. This was so because the cultural values that it introduced differed from those of the

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[21] Atkinson (1982: 78) notes that the first academic schools for "Africans" were established at Goromonzi in Mashonaland in 1946 and Fletcher in Midlands in 1954. For Atkinson (1982: 78), "these schools, and a small number of similar institutions founded during the two or three decades which followed, had a curriculum which was broadly similar to that of secondary schools for white pupils."

indigenous people (Clements, 1969: 48) of Zimbabwe. For example, the colonisers forced the indigenous people to abandon their religious beliefs and imposed christianity on them (Bourdillon, 1976: 23; Clements, 1969: 48; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999: 143). This was considered civilising (Murray, 1970: 275). In respect to the colonisers' false sense of generosity in bringing "civilisation" to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, Gelfand (1981: 62) argues that "the Black man never asked for this 'civilisation' but was expected to receive it with open hands." This involved the imposition of the colonial culture, religion and education.

Culture is considered as an important factor that influences curriculum decisions with respect to its content. It becomes necessary to establish the culture that is handed down through the curriculum. In the context of Southern Rhodesia, cultural conflicts arose between the indigenous people and the colonisers because the colonisers imposed their own system of education and culture on the colonised people (Gelfand, 1981: 62). For Peck (1966: 67), "in regard to education, the African has everything to gain and nothing to lose-his forebears had no schooling whatsoever, and any schooling he does receive is progress; but the European has centuries of tradition to lose, nothing to gain." The colonisers used the curriculum in order to impose their own epistemological paradigm on the indigenous people. The curriculum thus became a tool to oppress the indigenous people through content that was meant to make them subservient to the colonisers. Colonial education was designed in such a way that it promoted the colonisers' socioeconomic and political interests (Mungazi, 1989: 469). In regard to the character of colonial education meant for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, Austin (1975: 43)

argues that "the educational system trains Africans to provide efficient service at lower levels while ensuring for Europeans a superiority designed to confirm a racial mythology in which they are cast as a perpetual leadership élite who alone can ensure continued 'standards of civilization'."

The myth of the superiority of the colonisers was taken as a fact. This myth was imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Bourdillon, 1976: 15; Tangri, 1990: 294) through colonial education. Commenting on colonial education, Zvobgo (1997: 19) argues that "the European ruled by it[22], thrived by it and oppressed by it." In order to force the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to accept colonial education, a number of measures were taken. These measures included land dispossessions (Nkomo, 1959: 31; Report, 1999: 2) that eventually impoverished them. Since land is a source of livelihood for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, such dispossessions made them economically vulnerable (Austin, 1975: 31). Those indigenous people who successfully pursued colonial education lived a materially better life compared to those who did not. This forced the colonised people to pursue the education that the colonisers imposed on them. In reality, the indigenous people of Zimbabwe did not suffer because they lacked education but because of the circumstances that the colonisers created in order to force them to take up colonial education. The prohibitive cost of colonial education and the lack of sufficient financial support from the colonial governments made it less accessible to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Zvobgo, 1981: 13; Zvobgo, 1994: 3). We now turn to a discussion on the character of colonial education.

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[22]By "it", Zvobgo (1997: 19) is referring to education.

2.4.3 Character of the Colonisers' Education

The colonisers of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe implemented and maintained a racially divided system of education (Richardson, 1959: 20; Parker, 1959: 28, Parker, 1960: 175; Dorsey, 1989: 41; Gatawa, 1990: 14; Lemon, 1995: 102; Kapfunde, 1999: 39; Nhundu and Makoni, 1999: 24). The colonial education meant for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was referred to as "African education" (Austin, 1975: 43). This was meant to distinguish it from the education which was given to the colonisers. This education was referred to as "European education" (Austin, 1975: 43). The term "African education" is not to be confused with the education system of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to the arrival of the colonisers. "African education"[23] was used to refer to the type of education that the colonisers imposed on them.

The education that was offered to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was considered inferior to the one given to the colonisers (Maravanyika, 1990: 11). Dorsey (1989: 41) notes that "the differences in the regulations and budgetary provisions for the two systems resulted in restricted provision and a lower quality of education for blacks relative to that provided for whites." The education for the colonisers was made compulsory while the same was not done in respect to education for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This is shown by Whaley (1973: 36) when he argues that:

> education is and always has been compulsory for Europeans, presently up to the age of 15 years. For financial reasons the same compulsion cannot be brought to bear on Africans. Since education began in Rhodesia, much more has been spent on the education of each European child than on each African child. Limitations of finance prevent the same expenditure on each African child, but more is being spent on Africans collectively each year. The

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[23] For ter Haar (1990: 42), "those who use the expression rarely specify what they mean by it other than education in Africa, leaving its implicit racist notions unquestioned".

European system would not function were the finances available to education to be distributed between each African and each European child equally.

The colonial government funded the colonisers' education while the education for the indigenous people was largely funded by missionaries (Rhodesia before 1920: 29). But the funding was not sufficient (Mungazi, 1999: 109; Bassey, 1999: 27) to make them attain quality education and go beyond rudimentary levels of education. In light of this, Murray (1935: 230) argues that:

it is clear at once that we must take for granted a wide extension of simple education on the lines of the village school. The "three R's," hygiene, agriculture, and-shall we say?- Scripture (seeing that elementary education is in the hands of the missions) will for many years be enough and more than enough for the great part of the population.

In addition, teachers at schools that were meant for indigenous people were poorly trained for the job. Parker (1960: 177) argues that the two years of teacher training that "African teachers" underwent were inadequate to enable them to gain requisite teaching skills.

Some of the teachers were not trained for the job at all (Parker, 1960: 176). In commenting on the disparities between teachers of the indigenous people and those of the colonisers, Austin (1975: 48) notes that:

teachers' qualifications are also significantly worse in the African sector. In 1972 of 18,538 teachers in that sector, 11,874 had no more than the T4 (2 years' infant teacher training) qualification. Whereas all teachers in European education are qualified and certificated, only 1,l08 African education teachers were qualified (but not certificated), and almost half (481) of these were employed in mission schools. Indeed in the same year there were still 264 untrained teachers in African education.

It is on the basis of the above that we argue that the colonial education that was offered to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was inferior both in terms of content and quality.

On the other hand, the education that was offered to the colonisers was considered of a superior kind. It was a well-funded education compared to that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Barber, 1967: 87). Mungazi (1985: 198) exposes the disparities in the funding of education for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and the colonisers when he notes that "…in 1964-65, government expenditures for education were $197.30 per white student and $18.40 per black student. In 1965-66, it spent $206.00 per white student compared to $18.90 per black student." This shows that education for the indigenous people received significantly less funding compared to that of the colonisers. Schools for the colonisers were well equipped. The curriculum in these schools prepared the colonisers for the practical world of work (Report, 1999: 2). According to the Report (1999: 2), "this educational apartheid facilitated the provision of a highly privileged and advanced education for European children geared to prepare young whites for economic, political and technological dominance and leadership."

In light of the colonisers' justificatory reasoning about the inferiority or non-existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it is our argument that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe must speak of their own system of education. By this, we mean that they must determine for themselves what they consider to be educational outside what the colonisers prescribed. It is for this reason that an Afrocentric approach to education becomes necessary.

2.5 An Afrocentric Approach to Education

We argue that the Afrocentric approach to the understanding of education is necessary in the light of the colonisers' misrepresentations about its existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. An Afrocentric approach to the question of the presence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe would give us an alternative perspective on this issue. Since Afrocentricity is a response to the erroneous perspective of Eurocentrism, it is imperative to define the term "Eurocentrism".

2.5.1 Eurocentrism Defined

Defining the term "Eurocentrism" is not an easy task (Amin, 1989: 106). Despite the challenges of defining Eurocentrism, there are certain features which are identifiable with it. These features will enable us to have an idea of what it means. What is apparent in Eurocentrism is an attempt to portray particular achievements and worldviews of Europe as having transcultural scope and dominance (Amin, 1989: 89; Oruka, 2003: 61). This thinking is informed by the myth of the dominance of Europe over people from other geopolitical centres. The civilisations from other geopolitical centres, for example, are regarded as inferior. Their inferiority would thus justify Europe's quest to impose its own civilisation on other peoples on the pretext of uplifting them to the level of Europe (Austin, 1975: 43). The civilisation of Europe is taken as the ideal standard which the colonised people are supposed to conform to (Serequeberhan, 1997:145).

For Amin (1989: 89), the mythic construction of Europe as a dominant force in the world has an equally mythic "other" who is supposed to recognise the dominance of Europe. This would justify Europe's self-imposed mandate to judge others (Amin, 1989: 101). For Amin (1989: 102):

complementary to the right of Europeans to analyze others is the equal right of others to analyze the West. The universal right to analyze and critique entails dangers, to be sure, whose risk must nevertheless be assumed. Not only the danger of being mistaken, due to ignorance or conceptual shortcomings. But also the danger of not knowing how to take the exact measure of the various sensibilities engaged by any given statement and, as a consequence, the danger of becoming involved in false debates where vigorous polemics mask a mutual lack of understanding and impede the advancement of ideas.

Van de Walt (1997: 53) considers Eurocentrism as unacceptable because it takes a particular culture as having transcultural application. With respect to education, Eurocentrism regards efforts to ensure that the "postcolonial" education curriculum is relevant to the needs of the indigenous people as leading to the lowering of standards (Van de Walt, 1997: 53). Making the education system relevant to indigenous realities is also considered problematic. Van de Walt (1997: 54) argues that:

> …neither the one-sided emphasis on Western standards (excellence) nor the emphasis on African relevance (applicability) will bring us closer to a solution. We may not absolutise either of the two.

In our view, while Van de Walt (1997: 1997: 54) is justified in criticising Eurocentrism for its one-sidedness and absolutisation, he is not justified in arguing that efforts to make "postcolonial" education relevant to indigenous realities also lead to one-sidedness and absolutisation. Unlike Eurocentrism which seeks to portray a particular system of education as having transcultural application, efforts to change the education system in "postcolonial" times are simply intended to make it significant to the cultural experiences of the indigenous people without portraying this education as having transcultural application. One can argue that both excellence and relevance can be found in an education system that is informed by the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people and other epistemologies. It is problematic to identify excellence with colonial

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education only. By arguing that "…excellence and relevance need not exclude each other", Van de Walt (1997: 54) implies that colonial education is important in enriching the education system of the indigenous people. This is so because he does not reject the Eurocentric view that excellence is an attribute found in Western education but curiously absent in the education system of the indigenous people.

In this study, Eurocentrism is understood as the attempt to present a European, in particular, West European understanding of reality as having transcultural application. In the light of the false Eurocentric ideas about the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it is imperative to consider how they can be liberated from Eurocentrism. Amin (1989: 116) calls this process "delinking". The quest to delink our understanding of the education system of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe through an Afrocentric approach provides the basis to put to question the Eurocentric perspective of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

2.5.2 Afrocentricity Defined

Afrocentricity[24] is a term that cannot be ascribed a single definition. In addition, it has a number of versions. According to Karenga (1995: 43):

> …when one speaks of the Afrocentric project, one should always keep in mind that one is not talking about a monolithic position but rather a general conceptual orientation among Africana studies scholars whose fundamental point of departure and intellectual concerns and views are centered in the African experience.

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[24] Asante (1998: 2) defines Afrocentricity as "...literally, placing African ideals at the center of any analysis that involves African culture and behaviour." In his elaboration of Afrocentrcity, Asante emphasises the "agency" of the "African".

There is a sense in which various versions of Afrocentricity share one thing in common, that is, to give agency to indigenous people of "Africa" and "Africans" in the Diaspora so that they can speak for and of themselves. It in fact, calls for the "African agency", that is, to place the "African experience" as the fundamental point of departure. On this basis, "Africans" become the subjects in their interaction with other peoples (Asante, 1998: 21). African agency requires that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe should be subjects in the study of their own history. The indigenous people of Zimbabwe must seek to present their own cultural experiences independent of what the colonisers have presented and written about them. "Independent" here may not be misconstrued to mean total and complete disregard for what the colonisers said or wrote about the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In this regard, the existence of education among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers must be a question that they must address.

The term "centricity" as it is applied in the field of education requires that students be taught from the standpoint of their cultural context (Asante, 1991: 171). This is important in order to relate what is learnt to their culture (Asante, 1991: 171). In the light of the interplay of culture and education, it is imperative for the curriculum in present day Zimbabwe to be informed by the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people in addition to those from other geopolitical centres. Asante (1991: 171) also argues that "centricity" is applicable to any culture. This implies that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can have a curriculum that is also centred on their cultural references.

Mazama (2001: 390) reinforces Asante's understanding of Afrocentricity and its liberative dimension. Mazama (2001: 390) understands Afrocentricity as a paradigm[25]. In regarding it as a paradigm, she infuses the functional aspect[26] to the discourse on Afrocentricity (Asante, 2007: 14). As a result of this functional aspect that Mazama (2001: 390) infuses to Afrocentricity, Asante (2007: 16) remarks that:

> I have defined Afrocentricity as a consciousness, a quality of thought, and an analytical process based on Africans viewing themselves as subjects, that is, agents in the world, but with the intervention of Mazama it now becomes clear that there has to be a functional component to the concept. *Afrocentricity is therefore a consciousness, a quality of thought, mode of analysis, and an actionable perspective where Africans seek, from agency, to reassert subject place within the context of African history.*

Afrocentricity must not be conceived as simply a perspective but must be action-oriented. It must seek to liberate the oppressed by fostering agency in them so that they can change their lives from the standpoint of their own cultural location. In this regard, Asante (2007: 15) takes Afrocentricity as revolutionary because "...it casts ideas, concepts, events, personalities, and political and economic processes in the context of black people as subjects and not as objects, basing all knowledge on the authentic interrogation of location."

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[25]For Kuhn (1970: 175), the term "paradigm" "...stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community. On the other, it denotes one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science." However, this does not mean that the definition of the term "paradigm" is a settled matter (Kuhn, 1970: 175; Mazama, 2001:390). It does not have a single definition. Mazama (2001: 390) regards it as an ambiguous term.

[26]The functional aspect requires that Afrocentricity must lead to the liberation of the colonised people from the dominance of the colonisers. It must not be merely an intellectual exercise. Afrocentricity must make a practical difference in the condition of the oppressed people. In this regard, "from an Afrocentric perspective, where knowledge can never be produced for the sake of it but always for the sake of our liberation, a paradigm must activate our consciousness to be of any use to us…The ultimate test will be our praxis" (Mazama, 2001: 392).

The above arguments are critical in the light of the attempts to change the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. We argue that the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe still fundamentally reflects colonial thinking. For example, an analysis of Divinity 9154 Advanced level syllabus for 2013 to 2018 (Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), 2013: 2) shows that it is still exclusively focusing on christianity which is a foreign religion. Under "assessment objectives" (Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), 2013: 2), it is stated that:

> the examination will assess candidates' ability to: demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some key religious issues and teachings in the Old Testament and their chosen area of the New Testament; analyse, interpret, organise and present information, ideas, descriptions, arguments clearly and logically; evaluate issues that arise from a consideration of academic study in their chosen area; apply what they have learnt to the Zimbabwean context.

The religions of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are not part of this syllabus. Under aims of this syllabus, candidates are required to "demonstrate application of major lessons or issues learnt to the Zimbabwean context" (Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC), 2013: 2). This requirement can be regarded as an attempt at "changing" the curriculum so that it can have relevance to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. However, such a "change" is deceptive. Merely requiring candidates to apply lessons learnt from a foreign religion to the Zimbabwean context is not constitutive of curriculum change in the sense of the actual inclusion of the religions of the indigenous people in the changed curriculum. Even though some indigenous people of Zimbabwe have converted to christianity by coercion (Zvobgo, 1976: 41-44; Zvobgo, 1986: 44) from the colonisers initially and subsequently by tradition (Zvobgo, 1976: 46; Bourdillon, 1998: 286; Wiredu, 1998: 21), it is imperative for the changed curriculum to include religions of the indigenous people besides foreign religions.

Some of the content of this curriculum must derive from the religions of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe such as those of the Shona, Ndebele and Venda people. It must focus on the study of the fundamental aspects of these religions. This is important in order to ensure that the indigenous people have a thorough understanding and appreciation of their own religions as well. It is important to teach the students that christianity was imposed by the colonisers on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe leading to the suppression and denigration of the indigenous religions (Chavhunduka, 1977: 134; Chavhunduka, 2001: 3; wa Thiong'o, 1981: 9). However, the colonisers did not succeed completely in destroying the religions of the indigenous people (Chavhunduka, 2001: 3). The focus must thus be on ensuring that the indigenous people understand that their religions ought as well to be taught at the same level with foreign religions. Religions from other geopolitical centres can be studied but not at the detriment of the religions of the indigenous people. We now turn to the critique of the Afrocentric approach to education.

2.6 Critique of the Afrocentric Approach to Education

Asante's argument for an Afrocentric approach to education and its emphasis on multiculturalism has been criticised. For Wortham[27] (1995: 2), multiculturalism[28]

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[27]It is important to note that Wortham is criticising "Afrocentrism" and not "Afrocentricity". This error of misnaming Afrocentricity is common among its critics. Asante writes of Afrocentricity and not Afrocentrism. Asante (2007: 18) was aware of deliberate moves by his critics to confuse Afrocentricity with Afrocentrism. Wortham commits this error. She makes reference to Asante's supposed Afrocentrism and not Afrocentricity. For Asante, those who refer to Afrocentricity as Afrocentrism do so in order to easily attack it.

[28]Multiculturalism in education refers to an approach whereby recognition is extended to the rest of humanity as contributors of genuine knowledge. For Asante (1991: 172), "multiculturalism in education is a nonhierarchical approach that respects and celebrates a variety of cultural perspectives on world

disregards the necessity of individual freedoms as it seeks to maintain ethnic and cultural differences. Asante (1991: 172) argued that a multicultural approach to education would have to recognise the fact that all humans have contributed something to human civilisation. Therefore, a multicultural curriculum must reflect the cultural diversity of learners. However, Wortham (1995: 3) finds problems with Asante's claim that a curriculum that is based on Western civilisation is identifiable with people of Western origin and therefore not relevant to the indigenous people of Africa. Wortham (1995: 3) argues that "clearly then, Afrocentrists assume that culture and civilization are racially determined. They identify Western civilization with a certain type of people, namely white Europeans and their white descendants." We argue that civilisation is determined by the existential situation of a given people. It is therefore necessary to reject attempts to portray Western civilisation and education as having unqualified transcultural relevance.

It is problematical to deny that civilisation is significantly racially oriented and defined by geography while at the same time accepting that Western civilisation has transcultural application. This is the thinking that Wortham (1995: 4) gives when she argues that "Afrocentrists harm black children when they teach them that they cannot have pride in themselves unless they first have pride in their African origins." For Wortham, black people have to be thankful to the success that they are enjoying as a result of Western civilisation. Wortham (1995: 4) argues that:

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phenomena." This approach to education is contrary to the Eurocentric approach to education where other approaches to education from other geopolitical centres are disregarded. The Eurocentric approach to education recognises the existence of other approaches to education but relegates them to the periphery. Multiculturalism in education seeks to reject the idea of regarding Eurocentric approach to education as the only one available. A multicultural approach to education in Zimbabwe would thus allow indigenous site of knowledge to be recognised as one among other sites of knowledge in the curriculum.

they need to own up to their debt to the ideas and values that made such success possible, rather than diverting the attention of black children to traditions, beliefs, and values of ancestors whose way of life is irrelevant to the contemporary world, and left much to be desired in its own time and place.

Since Wortham (1995: 4) is criticising Afrocentrists and not Afrocentricists, her criticism is not applicable to the position that Asante and Mazama defend-a position that we subscribe to. In fact, Wortham (1995: 4) emphasises the benefits of a material nature that black people have "benefited" from Western civilisation. In our view, such "benefits" have come at the expense of their humanity.

Reisman (1990: 370) also criticises the Afrocentric approach to education for negatively affecting the standard of education. Reisman (1990: 365) regards Western civilisation as representing the laws of logic, mathematics and science, the power of reason and the concept of causality. Western civilisation is regarded as unbounded by geography. For Reisman (1990: 365), "any individual, any society, is potentially capable of adopting it and thereby becoming 'Westernized'." It is taken as open to everyone (Reisman, 1990: 365) meaning that anyone from outside the Western world can adopt Western civilisation. Reisman's (1990: 365) position is that since the vital aspects of "Western" civilisation were borrowed from various civilisations, it is open to everyone. One can argue that if this civilisation is not bounded by geography, there are no reasonable grounds to call it "Western".

Afrocentricity is also criticised for advocating for the equality of civilisations. Afrocentricity is a quest to bring into recognition the civilisations of the people of

"African" origin so that they can compete with those of other geopolitical centres. This quest has been taken as an attempt to make the civilisations "equal". Reisman (1990: 368) is opposed to such attempts. For Reisman (1990: 368):

> now such a program means the explicit obliteration of distinction among levels of civilization, and between civilization and savagery. It presents ignorance as equivalent of knowledge, and superstition as the equivalent of science. Everything-logic, philosophy, science, law, technology-is to be ignored, and culture limited to the level of making dugout canoes is to be regarded as the equivalent of one capable of launching space ships. And all this is for the alleged sake of not offending anyone who supposedly must feel inferior if such a monumental fraud is not committed.

One can argue that ranking civilisations in terms of sophistications and importance is problematical. It must be noted that civilisations are a response to the existential situation of a given group of people. In the light of the different situations that give rise to civilisations, it is expected that the civilisations that emerge from these situations are significantly different from each other. Human inventions are driven by need. So, it is not proper to try and rank civilisations on the basis of their sophistication and importance when it is apparent that the situations from which these civilisations emerge are significantly different. It can be argued that civilisations can be regarded as "equal" with respect to their importance to the people who create them. One can thus question the colonisers' claim that their civilisation was more important than that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. It is in regard to this understanding of equality of civilisations that we argue that the imposition of the colonisers' civilisation on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe through education was unjustified.

2.7 The need of an Afrocentric Curriculum in Zimbabwe

It is apparent that the colonisers imposed an education system on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe that was outside their cultural context. The curriculum currently has content that primarily extols the values of the colonisers and not those of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. The Presidential commission of inquiry into education and training (1999: xxvi) was established in 1998 with the primary objective of addressing the problems that the imposed colonial curriculum posed to "postcolonial" Zimbabwe.

According to the Report (1999: 24), the curriculum must take into account Zimbabwe's diverse cultures given that Zimbabwe is a multicultural society. The new education system was supposed to recognise this. The Report (1999: 24) also states:

> that education should be based on the people's beliefs in *Unhu/Ubuntu*, starting at pre-school level and incorporating diverse cultures for national identity. That the new Zimbabwean philosophy should be imbedded in *Unhu/Ubuntu* which has withstood the corrosion of time and the tempest of history. *Unhu/Ubuntu* should be the energising spirit in education, the family, in nation building and in international relations.

In this Report, emphasis is placed on the need to center Zimbabwe's education on *unhu/ubuntu*. It is important to establish the sense in which *unhu/ubuntu* is understood in this Report. The Report (1999: 26) gives an idea of how the term is understood when it states that "the Commission agrees that the education philosophy should be based on *Unhu/Ubuntu* which implies a good person morally with such values as honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, accountability, respect for other people and elders, harmony and hospitality." In the Report (1999: 26), the term "*unhu/ubuntu*" is used to refer to moral values. The Report (1999: 26) argues that the new education system should be anchored on moral values of the indigenous people.

The term "morality" as used in the Report (1999: 33), particularly in the light of our quest for the liberation of the curriculum from colonial epistemicide, is problematic for the following reasons. It gives the idea of moral values as being immutable and unchangeable. In this regard, we appeal to Dussel's (1988: 28) understanding of morality as "…any "practical" (from "praxis") system of the prevailing, established order, the order now in place." It is understood as the prescription of the standards of human conduct specifying the desirable courses of action to pursue and the undesirable courses of action to avoid (Norman, 1986: 1). For Dussel (1988: 28), morality understood in this way would place the individual in the existing condition of domination. This leads us to consider the term "ethics" as a more suited alternative to the term "moral" as the preferred basis for the new curriculum that seeks liberation of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe from colonial epistemicide. For Dussel (1988: 28), "by "ethics (ethical," and so on) - of Greek derivation-I denote the future order of liberation, the demands of justice with respect to the poor, the oppressed, and their project…of salvation." In our view, *unhu/ubuntu must* be understood as containing ethical values and not moral values.

Unhu/ubuntu contains ethical values and includes the ontology and epistemology of the indigenous people. For Ramose (2004: 149), a philosophical analysis of the term *ubuntu* requires that it be considered as a hyphenated word, that is, *ubu-ntu*. In this regard, the prefix *ubu-* points at be-ing in general while stem *ntu-* is the concretisation of *ubu-*. However, in reality there is no distinction between *ubu-* and *ntu-* (Ramose, 2004: 149). This is so because *ubu-* manifests itself in *–ntu*. For Ramose (2004: 149), "in this sense

ubuntu as one word is the expression of be-ing as a one-ness; an indivisible whole-ness."

The concept *ubuntu* is closely linked to the word *umu-ntu* which at abstract level refers to

a human being in general while in concrete form it refers to a specific human being

(Ramose, 2004: 149). *Umuntu* is expected to lead a life of *ubuntu*, that is, a life of

humanness. This is a life that is directed at the pursuit of good actions and avoidance of

bad actions.

Ramose (2004: 150) understands *ubuntu* as a –ness and not an –ism. In light of this

understanding of *ubuntu*, its proper English translation becomes humanness and not

humanism (Ramose, 2004: 150). Understood as humanness, *ubuntu* cannot claim

immutability and unchangeability as is the case with *ubuntu* understood as humanism.

For Ramose (2004: 150), "humanness is the ontological condition of be-ing a human

being whereas humaneness is the ethical dimension of humanness. Humaneness is to be

practiced in community life." Though *ubuntu* has transcultural thrust in so far as it is

understood in its abstract form, in its concrete form it has particular meaning according to

the context and geography in which it is used (Ramose, 2004: 150). For Ramose (2004:

150):

> few would quarrel with this claim to the universal validity and application of
> ethical values provided the ethical values in question are empty, that is, they
> are general and abstract. Contention and discord arise as soon as the
> emptiness of values is filled in with meaning and content derived from
> concrete situations. This underscores the insight that universality is always
> with a difference. It is another way of recognising the importance of the
> distinction between abstract and concrete universality in general and, with
> particular reference to ethical issues.

In this light, ethical values have "universal" validity in so far as they are conceived in

their abstract form. The moment that they are filled with content and meaning derived

from specific concrete situations, they cease to assume transcultural application (Ramose, 2004: 150). When understood in its concrete form, *ubuntu* has particular meaning that derives from the context and geography in which it is applied. For Ramose (2004: 150), history and context is important in the construction of meaning. This makes ethical values particular to a certain concrete situation. One can, therefore, legitimately talk of ethical values that are particular to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

In our view, the call for *unhu/ubuntu* to be taught at all levels of the education system is out of the realisation that ethical values derive their meaning from concrete situations. Ethical values that colonial education imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can be understood as inappropriate to the concrete situations of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. *Unhu/ubuntu* in its ethical character would thus ensure that the ethical values that the "postcolonial" education system in Zimbabwe imparts to students are also derived from their lived experiences. In the so-called "global village", it is necessary for the indigenous people to live by *unhu/ubuntu* because it identifies with their lived experiences. In the light of the fact that history and context gives meaning to abstract concepts such as *ubuntu* (Ramose, 2004: 150), it remains necessary to ensure that particularity is given a place even in the so-called "global village". It must be noted that the claim to "universality" of ethical values, is a creation of the dominant forces in the "global village" meant to excise ethical values that are particular to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and impose their own particular ethical paradigm. The Report's (1999: : 24) proposal that the new education system should be anchored in the philosophy of *unhu/ubuntu* is important in ensuring that this education system consider the

epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as one among other knowledge paradigms that must inform the new curriculum.

2.8 Conclusion

Our main purpose in this chapter was to argue that the interplay of culture and education would show that education was present among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. We have argued that the curriculum that the colonisers imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was meant to alienate and dominate them. It was meant to make them accept the colonial experience as necessary. In light of this situation, Afrocentricity was proposed as a way through which the indigenous people of Zimbabwe can reassert their agency in matters of knowledge production. This in itself is an act of liberation from colonisers' false perspective that they introduced culture and education to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In chapter 3, the impact of colonial education on the education of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is discussed in detail. This is necessary in order to come to terms with the challenges that Zimbabwe face in trying to establish parity between the colonisers' epistemological paradigm and that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 3: CHALLENGES IN PLACING EDUCATION OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE INTO THE "POSTCOLONIAL" CURRICULUM

3.0 Introduction

In 2.5 of chapter 2, we considered the Afrocentric approach to education as a possible solution to the problem of dislocation that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe have suffered as a result of being educated outside their cultural experiences. In this chapter, the focus is on the challenges that are encountered in bringing into recognition the education of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe after "independence" from colonial rule. The extent of the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is critical to consider in this respect. Despite the commendable proposal of the Report (1999: 24) that *unhu/ubuntu* must become the organising principle of the new curriculum; insignificant changes have been made to the curriculum. This can be taken as evidence of the impact of colonial epistemicide. The realisation of "independence" from colonial rule has not been accompanied by a realistic change in the focus of the curriculum from the colonial one. In this regard, we discuss the challenges that "postcolonial" Zimbabwe faces with respect to ensuring that its education curriculum allows the co-existence of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other epistemologies.

The imposition of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is preeminently an epistemological issue in that it has led to the partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people. Our focus in the first section is on the extent to which colonial epistemicide affected the epistemology of the indigenous

people of Zimbabwe. In the second section, we discuss the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In the third section, we consider measures that Zimbabwe took after "independence" in order to change an education system that was modelled on racial lines. It is our view that the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe should have content that derives from the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's epistemological paradigm and other knowledge paradigms. This is necessary in order to reverse colonial epistemicide.

3.1 The Philosophical Dimension of Epistemicide

The colonisers' conquest of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe involved the imposition of their education system which is an epistemological issue. The imposition of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers led to the denigration and partial[29] demise of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people (Sall and Bangirana, 2010: 1; Lebakeng, 2010: 24; Ocitti, 1994: 69; Grosfoguel, 2013: 74). This is called "epistemicide". Santos (1998: 103) defines epistemicide as "...the murder of knowledge." Santos (1998: 103) elaborates that:

> unequal exchanges among cultures have always implied the death of the knowledge of the subordinated culture, and hence the death of the social groups that possessed it. In the most extreme cases, as that of European expansion, epistemicide was one of the conditions of genocide.

In the light of Santos' understanding of epistemicide, it can be noted that it was intended to destroy both the culture and the epistemological paradigm of the colonised. This move was of strategic importance in alienating the colonised people from their epistemological

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[29] An example of an indigenous cultural practice that the colonisers failed to completely destroy is polygamy (Bujo, 1998: 112,114). Some indigenous people resisted the colonisers' move to ban polygamy and replace it with strictly monogamous marriages because they considered it an important aspect of their cultural experiences (Zvobgo, 1976: 47; Zvobgo, 1986:49).

paradigm thereby making it easier for the colonisers to impose their own epistemological paradigm. Nyamnjoh (2012: 129) understands epistemicide as "…the decimation or near complete killing and replacement of endogenous epistemologies with the epistemological paradigm of the conqueror." Nyamnjoh's (2012: 129) understanding of epistemicide is similar to Santos' (1998: 103). In this study, the term "epistemicide" is understood as the unjust partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm (Nyamjoh, 2012: 129) of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe by the colonisers. In the light of this understanding of epistemicide, it is necessary to point out its impact on the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

Colonial epistemicide did not only partially destroy the epistemological paradigm of the colonised people. It also led to the partial destruction of their cultural experiences. This is so because knowledge is context-bound meaning to say that it is informed by a given cultural experience (Okere, 2005; 20-21; Okere, Njoku and Devisch, 2005: 3). So, the partial destruction of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe also meant the partial destruction of their culture.

The insensitivity of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm to that of the indigenous people meant that it was prevented from flourishing. This was necessary in order to ensure that the colonisers' epistemological paradigm became the dominant one. We now turn to the impact of colonial education on the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

3.2 Impact of Colonial Education

Colonial education had a number of effects on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Its introduction changed the organisation of society (Bowman, 1973: 9; Cilliers, 1985: 1) and the indigenous people's view of their culture and education. The colonisers realised that the control of the indigenous people could be effectively achieved by way of systematic denigration and destruction of their culture and systems of education (Bacchus, 1993: 63). They gave less consideration to the fact that education predated their arrival among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (White, 1996: 10; Zulu, 2006: 35). This was informed by their cultural background (Jeater, 2005: 1; Gelfand, 1968: 65). The education system of the indigenous people was taken as inferior and in need of replacement by a supposedly superior system of education (Murray, 1929: 84; Challiss, 1979: 220; Gelfand, 1968: 66-67). This superior education was deemed to be the education system of the colonisers.

As a result, the indigenous people lost control of the organisation of their society, lives and resources (Chung and Ngara, 1985: 51-52; Bonello, 2010: 341). They became subservient to the colonial structures (Carnoy, 1974: 3; Warhurst, 1973: 19; West, 2002: 40). Society became organised in such a way that it promoted the interests of the colonisers (Baker, 1979: 245). For example, the education that was imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe ensured that they assumed subservient roles in the colonial state (Kanyongo, 2005: 65). The colonised people had to work for the colonisers in order to sustain themselves and to pay repressive colonial taxes in the new economic order (Rhodesia before 1920, 1975: 29). The indigenous people of Zimbabwe became physically and mentally subservient to the colonisers as a result of the military and

epistemological conquest that the colonisers inflicted on them. As Shizha and Kariwo (2011: 13) write, "for nearly a century, when Zimbabwe was under colonial rule, the majority of indigenous people had no say in or influence on government policies and political decisions that affected the education system". The power of decision-making in the colonial society became the prerogative of the colonisers. This was achieved through state repression (Kinloch, 2003: 251; Zvobgo, 1994: 5) and epistemicide (Lebakeng, 2004: 30). The colonisers turned some chiefs into collaborators in order to effect their total control of the colonised people (Murray, 1970: 274). For Zvobgo (1994: 6), "colonial Rhodesia had to ensure that Africans saw themselves as a distinct section of the society that did not qualify for the same rights and privileges as white Rhodesians."

The changes that colonialism brought to the organisation of society affected the appeal of indigenous system of education. The introduction of their money based exchange economy forced the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to pursue colonial education (Kanyongo, 2005: 65; Dorsey, 1989: 40; Bacchus, 1993: 62-63; West, 2002: 36) at the expense of their own system of education. This led to the devaluation of the indigenous people's system of education. The epistemological paradigm that the colonisers imposed on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was considered to be suited to the money-based exchange economy. Those who were able to successfully acquire colonial education were able to live a comparatively better life in the money based exchange economy. For Kanyongo (2005: 65), "as demand for more education among Africans was increasing, the colonial government stepped in to control the provision of education and ensure that missionaries would not 'overeducate' them."

In "postcolonial" Zimbabwe, efforts to change the curriculum have failed to foster the coexistence of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and that of the colonisers. Though the Report (1999: 24) can be commended for proposing that the new curriculum must be embedded in *unhu/ubuntu*, its emphasis on ensuring that the new curriculum must conform to the needs of the "global village"[30] must be treated with caution. In our view, it becomes problematic if this requirement is fulfilled at the expense of the needs and aspirations of the indigenous people.

The problem with the move to align the proposed curriculum with the demands of the "global village" is that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe would retain an education system which is alien to their cultural experiences. This is so because the proposed changes to the colonial education system in order to make it relevant to the realities of the "global village" meant that the new education system would remain fundamentally disconnected from the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In our view, the starting point was supposed to be a move to ensure that the education system in Zimbabwe is significant to them in the sense of being informed by the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm and others. The efforts to make the new

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[30]The term "global village" is not innocent of meaning. It must not be taken for granted. One may want to know who the "village head" is and whose epistemological paradigm should prevail in this "global village". Globalisation is an attempt to establish a uniform understanding of reality. This would mean establishing, for example, one epistemological paradigm for the "global village". The problem with globalisation is that it seeks to give planetary application to the epistemological paradigm of one geopolitical centre, that is, the Western world at the expense of those of other geopolitical centres. Globalisation of knowledge is thus a form of colonisation which must be resisted. This is so because it suppresses the knowledge paradigms of the assumed less influential geopolitical centres. In this regard, the call by the Report (1999) to prepare the new education curriculum in the light of the reality of the "global village" becomes problematic in the light of the unjust dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm over other epistemological paradigms.

education system simply relevant to the realities of the "global village" are inappropriate without the recognition and indeed inclusion of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people in the new curriculum. This is not to say that the proposed education system should ignore changes taking place elsewhere in the world. Our view is that the proposed changes to curriculum were supposed to ensure that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe viewed the world from their own perspective (Nkrumah, 1964: 63).

It can be noted that though, on paper, attempts at curriculum change as proposed in the Report (1999) are commendable; in practice these commendable efforts have not been completely implemented as reflected in the present day curriculum. In this regard, Zvobgo (1997: 72) argues that "Zimbabwean education is not education for liberation but for the preservation of the status quo." For example, a critical analysis of the textbook used by advanced level students in Zimbabwe, *David Waugh, Geography: An Integrated Approach (2009)*, shows that the physical and human and economic geography components of the book cite examples and case studies that are not indigenous. This is expected given its foreign authorship. Though it is necessary for the students to have an insight of examples and case studies from other geopolitical centres, it is untenable for the students to be exclusively exposed to such a book that does not, in the least, relate to their lived experiences. The topics on plate tectonics, earthquakes and volcanoes, weathering and slopes, drainage basins and rivers, rock types and landforms, weather and climates, and soils (Waugh, 2009: 8-279) are given case studies that are alien to the lived experiences of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Even though the possibility of travel of the indigenous people to some of these foreign places is possible in the present times

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thereby by rendering such knowledge necessary, we regard the co-existence of the other knowledge paradigms and that of the indigenous people in the new curriculum as imperative. Our view is that since this book is foreign authored and its content situated in a knowledge paradigm that is alien to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, it is not wholly suited to the circumstances of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe in respect to its contents, case studies and examples cited.[31]

Since "independence", government policy has been focused on ensuring that the education system is changed so that it reflects the new socio-economic and political realities in the country. However, policy has not been strictly followed with practice. In this regard, Shizha (2006: 20) argues that:

> in postcolonial states, like Zimbabwe, the reification of Eurocentric knowledge, which promotes the "superiority" of Western knowledge, is still perpetuated by the education system and schooling practices that negate ideals on cross-cultural education and the role of indigenous knowledge in students' school experiences.

This is a cause for concern in the light of the use of colonial education by the colonisers in order to maintain their unjust control of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Jansen (1991: 77; Jansen, 1990: 31) identifies two aspects that have affected efforts to change the curriculum in Zimbabwe. These are curriculum continuity and legitimation. For

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[31] However, there are exceptions to this trend in the present day curriculum in Zimbabwe. A case in point is that of the Junior Secondary school textbook authored by E. M. Munowenyu (2001) titled *Step Ahead, Junior Secondary Geography: A Comprehensive textbook. Harare: Longman Zimbabwe (Pvt) Limited.* This is a book which is locally authored and its content speaks to the experiences that are familiar to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Reference to Zimbabwe's rainfall relief region (page 12), vegetation (page 28), cases of cattle rearing in Zimbabwe (page 72), topographical maps in Zimbabwe (page 136), provinces of neighbouring countries (page 151) and major rivers and dams (page 152) makes the content relevant to the experiences of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Even though knowledge of geographical features of other geopolitical centres is necessary, it is imperative to ensure that knowledge relevant to the experiences of the indigenous people is equally taught. This cited example shows that there are attempts being made to align the curriculum content to the lived experiences of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

Jansen (1991: 77), curriculum continuity points at "…the relative stability in the colonial curriculum content (as codified in textbooks, syllabi, and examinations) during the postcolonial period." Despite the presence of policies in most "postcolonial" "African" states that seek to radically change the colonial curriculum, "today, in almost every post-colonial nation, there is evidence of greater continuity with the colonial curriculum than the radical change envisaged by official policy" (Jansen, 1991: 77). This is apparent in attempts at curriculum change in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. Changes to the curriculum that seek to rid it of its entrenched colonial content have been insignificant.

For Nyambe (1997: 42), "the present"[32] curriculum in "African" countries is failing to prepare its graduates for the realities of their future. Much of what is taught at schools is intended to create job seekers who must be inspired to leave behind the rural life in search for the promised "modern" life in towns and cities (Nyambe, 1997: 43). This education is not intended to produce job creators. According to Nyambe (1997: 43):

> throughout their stay in school, learners are consistently promised a modern Western type self-image. Anything related to rural life is rendered primitive and backward and it should be eradicated from the child. The degree of education received is measured in terms of how close one gets to a Western self-image. Secondly, the modern sector or urban type of life has consistently been inculcated in the minds of the learners as the promised land for their newly acquired modern, Western self-image.

However, for Nyambe (1997: 43), since the majority of people in "Africa" live in rural areas, such an education becomes largely irrelevant to them because it is designed with

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[32] In our view, "the present" of Nyambe has indeed been overtaken by the prevailing situation. This is so because, the shift from humanities to "...expert knowledge and advanced technological skills" (Nyambe, 1997: 42) is necessary to prepare the graduates for their future realities. The content of the curriculum must as of necessity, be in accord with the present and the future circumstances of the graduates (Bridges and Jonathan, 2003: 129).

the objective of making its recipients workers in "modern" urban centres and not entrepreneurs in their own communities. Despite these limitations of the colonial curriculum, it is still in existence in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. The epistemological paradigm of the colonisers is still the dominant paradigm that informs the "postcolonial" curriculum. Jansen (1990: 13) refers to the desire for legitimation as a reason for the curriculum's continued domination by content identifiable with the erstwhile colonisers in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. The idea of being considered as maintaining colonial era's supposedly "high standards" in education has, in practice, resulted in token changes to the colonial curriculum.

Besides the call to ensure that *unhu/ubuntu* becomes the organising principle of the proposed curriculum (Report, 1999: 26), in practice the continued dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe has not been seriously challenged. The "end" of colonial rule has not been accompanied by the end of the dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm of the curriculum.

This shows that "colonialism was not only a political imposition, but also a cultural one. Gravely affected, or even perhaps infected, were our religions and systems of education" (Wiredu, 1998: 17). It becomes necessary to deconstruct these colonial relics and to ensure that "postcolonial" education system is also informed by the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people besides others from outside. This is a challenging task

given the extent to which the colonisers have denigrated and distorted the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

The dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe also meant the imposition of the colonisers' christian religion (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 9). The imposition of christian religion on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe alienated them from their religion (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 9-10; Mbakogu, 2004: 39) and education. For example, the veneration of *midzimu* ('the living dead') was considered pagan (Gelfand, 1981: 41). It was mistakenly understood as "ancestors worship" (Gelfand, 1981: 45) and thus strongly condemned. However, the term "ancestors"[33]does not capture the meaning of *midzimu*. Unlike the term "ancestors" that simply points at the lineage of the family that stretches into the spiritual realm, *midzimu* are not simply spirits in the family lineage but are very active in the lives of the family members still existing in this physical world. The imposition of christianity was met with resistance from the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Gelfand, 1968: 71; Zvobgo, 1986: 43). The indigenous people doubted the intentions of the colonisers in imposing their own religion under the guise of "civilising" them (Gelfand, 1968: 72).

The missionaries, aided by the colonial government (Gelfand, 1968: 72; Mackenzie, 1993: 46; Zvobgo, 1994: 13), provided education that extolled the supposed superiority of colonial culture, education and religion (Bude, 1983: 351; Brelsford, 1960: 487) over those of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. For Parker (1960: 175), "believing that one

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[33] Gelfand (1981: 45) erroneously refers to *midzimu* as "dead ancestors" because this has the implication that they are no longer in existence.

missionary was worth fifty policemen in his influence for good upon Africans, Rhodes gave ten mission societies 325,730 acres for mission stations before 1900." Parker's (1960: 175) comment shows that the colonisers and missionaries complemented each other in imposing colonial education, culture and religion on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This is contrary to the position that missionaries were in favour of providing education to the indigenous people while colonisers were against exposing more indigenous people to colonial education (Mackenzie, 1993: 52). Both colonisers and missionaries educated the indigenous people of Zimbabwe so that they would become subservient to the colonial authorities (Gelfand, 1968: 72). In seeking to convert the indigenous people to christianity, missionaries showed lack of respect to the religion and culture of the indigenous people. We now focus on the attempts that the "postcolonial" government has made at changing the colonial education system.

3.3 "Independence" and the challenge to change the Imposed Education System

When Zimbabwe attained political "independence" in 1980, it adopted an education system that was designed to serve the interests of the colonisers at the expense of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Zindi, 1996: 44; Mungazi, 1985: 208). It had to deal with an education system that was structured on racial lines. It was imperative for the new government to eliminate these inequalities and imbalances in the education sector (Report, 1999: 1). The purpose was to ensure that the education system reflected the national goals of "independent" Zimbabwe. Efforts to make major changes to the adopted education system proved to be a big challenge than what the government had initially thought of (Mungazi, 1985: 199; Basung, 2002: 50). The changes that the

government instituted at "independence" with respect to expansion of education to "all" and the attempts at ending segregation in education provision failed to dislodge the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers from its position of dominance and ensure that it co-existed with the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. For instance, the expansion of education to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe at "independence" proceeded without ensuring that the curriculum content was also informed by the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm. The overreliance of the "postcolonial" curriculum on the colonial textbooks, syllabi and examinations (Jansen, 1991: 77) meant that the dominance of the knowledge paradigm of the colonisers remained in force. In our view, the reversal of colonial epistemicide is a historical and ethical necessity that would genuinely confirm the independence of Zimbabwe from colonial dominance. We now turn to the aspects of colonial education that the government attempted to change after independence.

3.3.1 Racial education System

The new government took measures to ensure that education was administered and structured in a non-racial way as opposed to the colonial education system that was organised on racial lines (Richardson, 1959: 20; Lemon, 1995: 105; Zindi, 1996: 43). This was necessary especially in the light of strict discriminatory policies (UNESCO, 1965: 2; White, 1996: 19; Parker, 1959: 28; Whitehead, 1960: 196) in the education sector. Education for the indigenous people was administered by the Native[34] Education

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[34]In the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council, 20th October, 1898 (1898: 4), the term "Native' means any person not of European descent who is a native of South Africa, or of Central Africa." In its usage in reference to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, the term "native" is thus not innocent of meaning. Colonisers used it in order to show the racial inferiority of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Steele,

Department (Zvobgo, 1994: 32; Kramer, 1997: 168) while the education for the colonisers was administered by the Education Department (Kramer, 1997: 167; Hungwe, 1994: 25-26). Kay (1980: 96) regards segregation as the mainstay of supremacy. Colonisers were determined to maintain their supremacy by creating two departments of education and a curriculum for each of these departments (Whaley, 1973: 36).

In order to ensure that the indigenous people did not attend schools meant for colonisers, the zoning system was enforced (Atkinson, 1982: 81; Zindi, 1996: 44). Since colonisers lived in affluent suburbs compared to those of the indigenous people, it was stipulated that people were to attend schools within their zones. That meant that the indigenous people would attend schools within their localities which were poorly funded by the colonial government (Zindi, 1996: 44). The quality of education was poor at these schools given their financial and structural challenges. So, the new government relaxed the zoning system to allow students to enrol outside their respective zones (Kapfunde, 1999: 43).

According to the Education Act of 1987, "subject to subsection (5), no child in Zimbabwe shall— (a) be refused admission to any school; or (b) be discriminated against by the imposition of onerous terms and conditions in regard to his admission to any school; on the grounds of his race, tribe, place of origin, national or ethnic origin,

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1972: xiii). Colonial education for the "natives" was thus of an inferior kind compared to that which was given to colonisers. The "native" was regarded as uncivilised, primitive and inferior to the colonisers (Jeater, 2001: 449). Such a colonial stereotype as represented by the understanding of a "native" was intended to justify the unjust treatment of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In reference to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, Taylor (1923: 2) argues that "the native tribes are in what may be termed the early and elementary stages of the process of human development, and our actions should be regulated by gentleness, by a sense of discipline and justice-to rule, one must be irreproachable." It is thus necessary to use the term "native" with caution.

political opinions, colour, creed or gender." Although such measures were taken to ensure that these discriminatory practices in the education sector were abandoned, this did not lead to their total abandonment. To the present day, zoning system is still in place. Students from high density suburbs are in most cases discouraged from enrolling at schools in affluent suburbs most of which were formerly dominated by the colonisers.[35] This is despite of years of "independence" from direct colonial rule. However, one notable success of attempts at changing the education system in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe was that one system of education was designed for all races as opposed to the scenario under colonial rule when it was based on racial lines. In this regard, the colonisers' privileges in education were significantly abolished.

3.3.2 Education for "all"

Access to colonial education for the indigenous people was systematically restricted[36] by the colonisers. Poor funding of the education for the indigenous people meant that fewer of them were able to access it. For Zvogbo (1981: 14):

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[35] It must be noted that these schools benefited a lot in terms infrastructural development during the colonial era compared to those meant for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. They continue to be better equipped in terms of learning resources compared to schools in high density suburbs.

[36] Mungazi (1985: 196-197) writes that "for example, April 20, 1966, the Rhodesian minister of education, Arthur P. Smith, announced a number of policy changes in the education of the Africans. Among the changes that irritated the Africans were the following: senior secondary schools would enroll no more than 12.5 percent of the primary graduates, and the junior secondary schools would enroll another 37.5 percent. This new policy was to take effect at the beginning of the school year in 1970. The new policy meant that 50 percent of the primary graduates would no longer have an opportunity for education because they were expected to seek menial employment to help improve the economy. On January 31, 1968, two years after the announcement of the new policy, the same minister announced that the Christian mission schools, which had been providing 90 percent of all schooling in the country, would not be allowed to operate as of 1970. The reason given for this policy was that the African councils that were to be formed would be asked to assume the financial responsibility for the education of black students." This shows that the colonial government wanted to ensure that as few indigenous people as possible were allowed to attain colonial education. Restrictions were put in order to prevent more students from progressing to higher education. Parity in education opportunities between the colonisers and the indigenous people of Zimbabwe was affected as a result of such unjust policy measures.

to limit an influx of African pupils into upper primary and secondary schools, the government introduced a pyramid structure into African education which allowed a large number of pupils to enter primary school and then progressively restricted opportunities as African pupils climbed the educational ladder through secondary school to university.

Those indigenous people, who managed to access it, were educated to accept the inferiority of their own culture and education and at the same time glorifying the imagined superiority of the colonisers and their "civilising" mission. While education for the indigenous people was systematically restricted and controlled by the colonial administration, education for the colonisers was made compulsory (Zvobgo, 1981: 13). Despite the numerical dominance of the indigenous people over the colonisers, more resources were channelled to the colonisers' education compared to that of the indigenous people (Olivier, 1929: 11; Hungwe, 1994: 9; Shizha and Kariwo, 2011: xi). The new government had to deal with this problem of unequal access to and funding of education.

In response to the *status quo* of unequal access to and funding of education, the new government sought to open up education to everyone regardless of race or class. Education was considered a basic "human right" (Dorsey, 1989: 45; Zvobgo, 1994: 94). The indigenous people of Zimbabwe who were previously denied access to colonial education due to the colonisers' restrictive education policies benefited from the opening up of education to everyone irrespective of race (Dorsey, 1989: 40; Report, 1999: 1; McGrath, 1993: 1). Education became accessible to "all".[37] The government worked hard in order to make education accessible to "all" the people of Zimbabwe. As a result, there

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[37]Though in terms of policy, the new government undertook to liberalise education so that it becomes accessible to "all", in reality that was a difficult undertaking given funding challenges. It must be noted that some education facilities were destroyed during the war of liberation. In light of this, the policy of education for "all" was negatively affected by funding challenges (Shizha and Kariwo, 2011: xi).

was notable quantitative expansion on education (Edwards and Tisdell, 1989: 58; National Report on the Status of Education, 2008: 2).

Primary education was made free (Sachikonye and Chung, 1990: 77). This policy move ensured that the majority of the indigenous people got access to basic primary education (Shizha and Kariwo, 2011: xi). Enrolment in both primary and secondary schools increased phenomenally. So, in this regard, success was registered. However, one can question the meaning of the concept "education for all" in the light of the fact that the education that was extended to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe after "independence" was grounded in the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers. English language was and is still used as the principal language of instruction in education.

English continues to be the favoured language of instruction in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. This is done at the detriment of indigenous languages. The continued use of English as the principal language of instruction in education is problematic because a language is embedded in a particular culture. Wiredu (1998: 17) argues that "…a language, most assuredly, is not conceptually neutral; syntax and vocabulary are apt to suggest definite modes of conceptualization." Since language is grounded in a particular culture, it implies that what is formulated using this language is fundamentally influenced by that particular culture. In defending the close connection between language and culture, Broke-Utne (2000: 150) argues that when one learns a new language, one also learns a new culture. The continued usage of English as a language of instruction in education thus leads to cultural alienation (Hameso, 1997: 4). So, the reversal of epistemicide must

be accompanied by the usage of indigenous languages as languages of instruction in education. For Broke-Utne (2000: 141), "the concept 'education for all' becomes a completely empty concept if the linguistic environment of the basic learners is not taken into account."

3.3.3 Curriculum "Reforms"

An education system that fundamentally derived its content from the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers was extended to "all" the people in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. In our view, the government missed the point in ensuring that an education system that was strongly rooted in the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers not only continued to flourish after "independence" but was also extended to "all". The fundamental problem was not about access to colonial education but it was about the significance of the prevailing education system to the cultural contexts of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

The "postcolonial" curriculum remains fundamentally rooted in colonial thinking (Jansen, 1990: 33) even after the Report (1999) recommended the need for curriculum change. This is an epistemological contestation for the following reasons. It shows that the dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe remains in place even after the departure of the colonisers from active political control of the indigenous people (Chung and Ngara, 1985: 51). It is our view that fundamental changes that the Report (1999) proposed must be effected to the curriculum so that the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers co-

exists with that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. This means that the dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers must come to an end if the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are to reverse colonial epistemicide. The failure to implement fundamental changes to the colonial education system translates to the perpetuation of the unjust monopoly of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. Our position in this regard is that it is incorrect to regard the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as inferior to that of the colonisers on the basis of the testimony of the colonisers. It must be evaluated on the basis of what the indigenous people thought about it and not on the colonisers' perspective. This is necessary if the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is to be recognised as one among other epistemological paradigms.

For Jansen (1991: 78-79), "the curriculum becomes a site of conflict and contestation because it embodies the values, norms, objectives, interests, priorities, and directions of the state and other powerful sectors of society." Much still needs to be done in order to make the curriculum significant to the cultural experiences of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In the light of this, it is our view that the Africanisation of the curriculum can be considered as an option to ensure that the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people coexists with other epistemologies in the new curriculum. A discussion on the possibility of the Africanisation of the curriculum is the focus of chapter 4.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the focus was on the challenges encountered in bringing into recognition the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe after "independence" from colonial rule. This was discussed in the light of the extent of the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. It has been noted that the political liberation of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe from colonial rule has not been accompanied by a change in the colonial education system that was centred on achieving the objectives of the colonisers.

In the light of the extent of the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, challenges have been encountered in "postcolonial" attempts to change the curriculum. Colonial stereotypes about the inferiority and at worst nonexistence of an education system among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were imposed on them. The "postcolonial" government retained much of the Eurocentric content of the colonisers' curriculum. As a result, the curriculum remained fundamentally insignificant to individuals and the "postcolonial" government in Zimbabwe. This led government to establish a Commission in 1999 whose task was to ensure that the education system was changed so that it could become relevant to the present needs and aspirations of individuals and government in the "postcolonial" situation. We argued that, in practice, the curriculum still needs to be genuinely changed so that its content derives from the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other epistemologies. Africanisation of the curriculum is the considered option. This is the focus of chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: THE CASE FOR THE AFRICANISATION OF EDUCATION IN "POSTCOLONIAL" ZIMBABWE

4.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to argue for the Africanisation of education in Zimbabwe. This is necessary in the light of failure of "postcolonial" attempts at transforming the education system so that it allows the co-existence of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other epistemologies. It is our view that the Africanisation of the curriculum should be done at all levels.

The first section of this chapter defines Africanisation. We argue that defining Africanisation is not an easy task. In the second section, we present a case for the Africanisation[38] of the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe. In doing so, we argue for the inclusion of the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm into the transformed curriculum. This is necessary in the light of the continued dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm (Mignolo, 2011: 42) and the relegation of the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm to the periphery. In the third section, comments made with respect to the utility of Africanisation of education in bringing into recognition the epistemologies of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are analysed. We argue that the Africanisation of the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe is a corrective to the colonial epistemicide.

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[38]In arguing for the Africanisation of the curriculum as the objective of this chapter, we are aware that Africanisation is a cognate of Afrocentricity that we appealed to in chapter 2 as a way of recognising the contribution of the indigenous people to the production of knowledge. We take Africanisation as the prosaic implementation of the Afrocentric paradigm. For this reason, we regard the Africanisation of the curriculum as a necessary step towards ensuring that the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe also informs and is reflected in the "postcolonial" curriculum content.

4.1 Africanisation Defined

The term "Africanisation" has been ascribed different meanings. These meanings are partly informed by the objectives of those who have attempted to define it. Some scholars want to view it as a necessary historical process of recognising the pride of place of indigenous sites of knowledge among sites of knowledge from other geopolitical centres. Others regard it as an attempt to go back to the "backward days", that is, the time before the arrival of the colonisers[39]. Our focus in this section is to consider the definitions of Africanisation as given by Makgoba (1998) and Ramose (1998) for the reason that they affirm the existence of other sites of knowledge contrary to the colonisers' claim that their own epistemological paradigm is the only one there is. This is the position that we advance in this study.

For Makgoba (1998: 49), "Africanisation is the process or vehicle for defining, interpreting, promoting and transmitting African thought, philosophy, identity and culture. It encompasses an African mind-set or mind set shift from the European to an African paradigm." This position is a response to the colonial situation whereby the indigenous people were educated outside their cultural contexts. Curriculum change is thus necessary. The Eurocentric content of the colonial curriculum is supposed to be replaced with content that derives from the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous

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[39]Such a contradictory understanding of the term "Africanisation" is understandable. Colonisers perpetually want to consider themselves "saviours" of the indigenous people from their supposed primitive, preliterate and pre-logical past. Attempts by the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to recognise the importance of their indigenous ways of knowing as legitimate sites of knowledge are viewed by the colonisers with utmost suspicion.

people and other epistemologies. It is thought that by so doing, the changed education system would become significant to the indigenous people.

Reference to the need to have a "mind set shift" (Makgoba, 1998: 49) in Africanising the colonial education system requires to be critically analysed. One can argue that the term "shift" in reference to the need to Africanise the colonial education system would give rise to token changes to the colonial education system. The term "shift" does not capture the quest for a complete overhaul of the colonial education system and curriculum which the term "Africanisation" implies. What is required is a complete overhaul of the colonial education system so that what is taught reflects both the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm and other paradigms of knowledge. Change of the education system and not a mere "shift" is imperative in order to decolonise the indigenous people from the myths that colonial education fostered with regard to the inferiority of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people. Such a position would give rise to the building of a new curriculum that recognises the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm and others.

In elaborating the term "Africanisation", Makgoba (1998: 49), argues that "Africanisation involves incorporating, adapting, integrating other cultures into and through African visions and interpretations to provide the dynamism, evolution and adaptation that is so essential for survival and success of peoples of African origin in the global village." While it is worthwhile to incorporate and adapt aspects of other knowledge paradigms which the indigenous people consider to be important to them, it is questionable to adopt

and adapt all aspects of other cultures. Doing so leads to the partial destruction of the indigenous people's epistemology. One can thus argue that Africanisation ought not to be a wholesale borrowing and adaptation of an alien epistemological paradigm to local conditions. The focus must be on bringing into recognition and incorporating the indigenous knowledge paradigm as one among other sites of knowledge.

Even though it is important for the indigenous people to learn about other cultures and sites of knowledge as they prepare for the life in the so-called "global village", this must not be done at the expense of their own culture and epistemology. The indigenous people must "enter" the "global village" with an identity which has been and, is different-from time immemorial-from others but at the same time with an appreciation of other cultures and epistemologies from other geopolitical centres. This will enable them to understand themselves and others better. They must not enter into the "global village" from a position of weakness whereby they do not have an identity and epistemological paradigm which they call their own. The same can be said of people from other geopolitical centres. For Makgoba (1998: 49), "by inclusivity, Africanisation is non-racial...Africanisation has evolved over time from the narrow nationalistic intolerant to a global tolerant form." This change in focus of Africanisation can be commended. However, colonisers have not changed their negative view of the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people. They still regard it as inferior and, at worst, as non-existent. In the "global village", the colonisers do not accept that the indigenous people have their epistemological paradigm which can co-exist with their own. As a result, they want to

portray their own epistemological paradigm as the one that must be adopted by all members of the "global village".

The colonisers remain intolerant of the reality of indigenous ways of knowing as legitimate sites of knowledge in the so-called "global village". Thus, Africanisation's recognition of the existence of other ways of knowing is not reciprocated by the colonisers. In the light of such a *status quo*, we propose that the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm must assume a position of parity with other epistemological paradigms (Ramose, 1998: vi). This will, in our view, enable the indigenous people of Zimbabwe to reverse colonial epistemicide through infusing their knowledge paradigm into the changed curriculum.

It is not the objective of Africanisation to impose the pyramid of knowledge of the indigenous people to people from other geopolitical centres (Ramose, 1998: vi). Africanisation is tolerant (Makgoba, 1998: 49) in that it accepts the existence of pyramids of knowledge from other geopolitical centres. It argues for parity of these pyramids of knowledge (Ramose, 1998: vi). Africanisation is different from the Eurocentrism which takes its own knowledge paradigm as the dominant one. This hegemonic posture of the colonisers' epistemology must be rejected.

Colonial education has been used to foster the thinking that the colonisers' own epistemological paradigm must inform the construction of knowledge among the indigenous people (Ramose, 1998: v). The alien paradigm upon which the colonisers'

epistemology is constructed means that its imposition on the indigenous people translates

to the imposition of an alien experience (Gordon, 2011: 97). As a result, such kind of

knowledge lacks significance to the genuine cultural experiences of the indigenous

people. Africanisation has thus been seen as a response to the predicament of the

indigenous people in the light of the continued dominance of the colonial paradigm in the

construction of knowledge. For Ramose (1998: vi), Africanisation:

> …holds that the African experience in its totality is simultaneously the
> foundation and the source for the construction of all forms of knowledge. On
> that basis, it maintains that the African experience is by definition non-
> transferable but nonetheless communicable. Accordingly, it is the African
> who is and must be the primary and principal communicator of the African
> experience. To try and replace the African in this position and role is to
> adhere to the untenable epistemological view that experience is by definition
> transferable.

The emphasis in this understanding of Africanisation is that the "African" experience

must be the basis upon which the indigenous people must construct their knowledge.

Africanisation requires the indigenous people to speak about their own experiences and

not for colonisers to do so for them. This is important in the light of the fact that

colonisers pride themselves as authorities on the experiences of the indigenous people. It

must also be noted that colonial education educated the indigenous people outside their

cultural contexts.

The continued dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers over that of

the indigenous people ought to be questioned. In fact the colonisers' epistemological

paradigm is not the only one there is. For Ramose (1998: vi), Africanisation:

> ...holds that different foundations exist for the construction of pyramids of
> knowledge. It holds further that communication is possible between the

various pyramids. It disclaims the view that any pyramid of knowledge is by
its very nature eminently superior to all the others.

Africanisation's position that various pyramids of knowledge exist is in opposition to the colonisers' questionable claim that their own "pyramid of knowledge" is the only one there is (Ramose, 1999: iii). In this regard, Africanisation can be credited for bringing into recognition "pyramids of knowledge" that the colonisers have sought to disregard or consider as inferior (Mungwini, 2009: 34). It seeks to argue for the parity of "pyramids of knowledge". No "pyramid of knowledge" may be regarded as more important than the other (Ramose, 1998: vi). The colonisers are not willing to accept that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe have their own "pyramid of knowledge" which is independent of the one they imposed. This makes it difficult to enter into dialogue with colonisers with the objective of agreeing on the co-existence of all "pyramids of knowledge". As a result, Africanisation's objective to bring into recognition the indigenous people's "pyramids of knowledge" and to argue for parity of different "pyramids of knowledge" is hampered by colonisers' unwillingness to accept that there are other "pyramids of knowledge" besides their own.

What is apparent in Makgoba (1998: 49 and Ramose's (1998: vi) understanding of Africanisation is that Africanisation seeks to transform the curriculum so that it allows the co-existence of the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm and others. In our view, Africanisation means giving deserved recognition to the indigenous people's participation in the generation of knowledge which must then be part of the "postcolonial" curriculum content in Zimbabwe. We take Ramose's (1998: vi) understanding of Africanisation as our stipulative definition of this term. Our reason for

choosing Ramose's (1998: vi) understanding of Africanisation is that it rejects the view that any knowledge paradigm is superior by definition to other knowledge paradigms (Ramose, 1998: vi). This is the position we defend in this study. Transformation of education becomes an important aspect in the decolonisation of education in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe in the light of the *status quo* of domination by an alien knowledge paradigm. It is necessary to consider what transformation, in relation to education in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe, means.

4.2 Transformation Defined

The definitions of the term "transformation" are subject to contestation. In the light of Zimbabwe's colonial experience, transformation of education would entail changing the colonial education curriculum so that it also identifies with the cultural experiences of the indigenous people. However, there are varying perspectives on the extent of these changes. For Makgoba (1998: 58):

> transformation is an act or process whereby the form, shape or nature of something is completely changed or altered i.e. a blueprint change. It should be distinguished from reformation; a process of modification without fundamental change i.e. a cosmetic change.

Makgoba's (1998: 58) understanding of transformation has been critiqued by Ramose (2003: 140a). In analysing Makgoba's definition of transformation, Ramose (2003: 140a) argues that "...transformation involves the complete change of 'form, shape or nature' of something." For Ramose (2003: 140a), lack of clarity of terms used in Makgoba's (1998: 58) definition of transformation makes its meaning unclear. Ramose (2003: 140a) makes reference to the terms "blue print", "form", "shape" and "nature" that Makgoba (1998:

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58) uses in defining transformation and he argues that their meanings are unclear. This will make it difficult to establish the meaning of the term "transformation". In particular, the change that transformation aspires for cannot be easily established in the light of problems with respect to the meanings of the defining words of the term "transformation". Ramose (2003: 140a) argues that it is not clear whether the change that transformation seeks is change of "form" or "shape" without change of content or substance. However, Makgoba (1998: 58) seems to be referring to a change of substance when he argues that transformation must involve a complete change of something. In reference to the colonial curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe, it is problematic if the change that transformation seeks is in respect to "form" or "shape" and not content. This is because change of "form" or "shape" does not focus on the content of the colonial curriculum that the colonisers imposed in order to maintain their dominance over the indigenous people.

It must be noted that the content of the curriculum embodies the ideology of those who control it. It is thus imperative to focus on the curriculum as one seeks the transformation of the colonial education curriculum. Ramose (2003a: 137) argues that transformation of education must be conceived as a "paradigm change" and not a "paradigm shift". This is important if the colonised are to overcome the continued and unjust dominance of the educational paradigm of the colonisers (Ramose, 2003a: 137). Transformation conceived as a "paradigm change" is a genuine move to reverse the epistemicide that was caused by the imposition of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers at the expense of that of the colonised people (Ramose, 2003a: 138).

Ramose (2003: 140a) argues that Makgoba's (1998: 58) understanding of transformation as "blueprint change" is misleading and "…it is also somewhat deterministic and thus undermines human freedom even if philosophy might consider it to be a necessary illusion." Understanding transformation as a "blueprint" is problematic because the "change" that transformation seeks has to be carried out in line with predetermined pattern (Ramose, 2003a: 140). Thus understood, such "change" becomes an illusion because it is determined by an already established pattern. It is not a product of dialogue among human beings. Having noted the problems inherent in Makgoba's (1998: 58) definition of transformation, Ramose suggests an alternative definition. For Ramose (2003a: 140), "...transformation in the sphere of human relations means the deliberate entry into dialogue with another in order to construct mutually agreed forms or shapes out of already existing material." While Makgoba's (1998: 58) definition of transformation is silent on the necessity of dialogue in the transformation agenda, Ramose (2003a: 140) regards dialogue as important in constructing a mutually agreed outcome. If this dialogue is understood as dialogue between the colonised and the colonisers, then such dialogue may prove difficult to carry out because the colonisers do not consider themselves as occupying a position of parity with the colonised people.

Though Makgoba (1998: 58) and Ramose (2003a: 137) are in agreement that transformation must bring about change, they differ in their understanding of the term "change" and how such change has to be achieved. Lack of unanimity among scholars with regard to the definition of the term "transformation" has been taken as a

shortcoming of the quest for transformation. One can, however, argue that no term or concept can be ascribed a definition which is uncontentious. Though lack of a clear definition of transformation may make it difficult for one to know what one must do in transforming something, one must not be discouraged. In light of the fact that the definitions of transformation have one thing in common, that is, the need for change, this must be the guiding principle as one seeks the transformation of education in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe so that it becomes Africanised.

It is also important to ensure that the languages of instruction are indigenous. This is necessary given that "the colonial education system denies that the colonized have real human languages" (wa Thiong'o, 1981: 9). In respect to the necessity of use of indigenous languages as languages of instruction, Nkoane (2006: 64) states that:

> the language issue in education is very central, because it is through language that people understand culture, produce knowledge and interact with the world. The mastery of language in which any discipline is taught is the prerequisite to the mastery of subject matter.

So, in order to deal with the problem of alienation that the colonial curriculum has caused on the indigenous people, fundamental changes must be made beyond simply ensuring the co-existence of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people and other epistemologies. In our view, "changing" the curriculum without changing the fundamental system which sustains it, is a futile exercise. It is our submission that the Africanisation of the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe will decisively solve the problems that colonial epistemicide has created. We now focus on the case for the Africanisation of education in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe.

4.3 In Defense of the Africanisation of Education in "Postcolonial" Zimbabwe

"Postcolonial" Zimbabwe faces a serious challenge with regard to ensuring that its education is relevant to, and in accord with, its cultural experiences (Shizha, 2006: 20). The reason for this present situation is that the colonial education system is grounded in the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers. It is thus necessary to transform the colonial curriculum so that its content becomes significant to the new social and political order.

Africanisation becomes an act of liberation from colonial epistemicide. The indigenous people's sites of knowledge must co-exist with others in the Africanised curriculum. For Ramose (1998: v):

> intellectual liberation from dependence and mimesis means a radical and critical questioning of dominant Western epistemological paradigm from an African standpoint. The latter means taking the African experience in its totality as an inescapable point of departure for the construction and critique of knowledge.

Africanisation in education must lead to the end of the exclusive construction of knowledge solely from the standpoint of colonisers' epistemological paradigm (Nkoane, 2006: 49). The colonisers' epistemological paradigm must no longer be regarded as the sole basis for the understanding of reality. The exclusive dependence and use of this paradigm in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe is not advisable if genuine Africanisation of the curriculum is to be successfully carried out. Other epistemologies must co-exist with the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people in the transformed curriculum. So, in order to Africanise education in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe, there is need to infuse the new curriculum with content from the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people which

was previously denigrated by the colonisers. This is necessary because education has remained the means by which the colonised people have continued to be subservient to the colonisers' epistemological paradigm (Nyamnjoh, 2012: 136). We now turn our focus to Africanisation as a response to neo-colonialism.

4.3.1 Africanisation as a Response to Neo-colonialism

Neo-colonialism refers to the continued dominance of the colonisers over the colonised people after their supposed "independence" from the colonisers' grip. Ghanaian scholar Kwame Nkrumah (1965: x) argues that "a State in the grip of neo-colonialism is not master of its own destiny." It is simply independent in name but practically still under the grip of the colonisers through indirect rule. Its independence is insignificant (Nkrumah, 1965: xiv; Mazrui, 2004: 5). Nkrumah (1965: ix; Mazrui, 1977: 53) understands neo-colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism that has taken the place of colonisation. For wa Thiong'o (1981: 11), "neo-colonialism is that process in which a country is nominally independent but its economy is still in the hands of the Imperialist bourgeoisie. Nothing has, in substance, changed." It is a new form of colonialism. For Nkrumah (1979: 134), "the new colonialism creates client states, independent in name, but in point of fact pawns of the colonial power that is supposed to have given them independence." This continued dominance of the colonisers' knowledge paradigm justifies our call for the Africanisation of the curriculum so that the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people co-exists with other knowledge paradigms.

Nkrumah's understanding of neo-colonialism is instructive in interrogating the unjust and continued dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm after the supposed departure of the colonisers from their position of control over the indigenous people. In this light, we submit that the continued dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers is an indicator that neo-colonialism has indeed become the new form of colonialism. The indigenous people ought not to celebrate the physical departure of the colonisers from the positions of power because colonialism has mutated into neo-colonialism. For wa Thiong'o (1981: 12), "during the neo-colonial stage of imperialism education and culture play an even more important role as instruments of domination and oppression."

The colonisers' culture and education are still predominant even after the departure of the colonisers from positions of direct control of the colonised people. Despite the Report's (1999: 24) proposal to change the curriculum so that it allows the co-existence of the paradigms of knowledge of the indigenous people and others, the curriculum in present day Zimbabwe still remains largely dominated by the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers. Nkrumah (1965: 35) argues that "though the aim of the neo-colonialists is economic domination, they do not confine their operations to the economic sphere. They use the old colonialist methods of religious, educational and cultural infiltration." The imposition of such an epistemological paradigm on the indigenous people is an alienating experience (Nkrumah, 1965: 35).

The attainment of "independence" from colonial rule becomes "decolonisation" in the nominal sense. For Nkrumah (1965: 31), "decolonisation is a word much and unctuously used by imperialist spokesmen to describe the transfer of political control from colonialist to African sovereignty. The motive spring of colonialism, however, still controls the sovereignty." Decolonisation makes a false impression of total and genuine liberation of the colonised people from the colonisers' grip. Given the deceptive nature of the term "decolonisation", it must be used with caution. Africanisation of the curriculum becomes a necessary corrective to the exclusive dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers over that of the indigenous people.

Nkrumah's (1965) critique of neo-colonisation can be regarded as a precursor to the insights of some African diaspora philosophers who share a similar position in regard to the need to challenge the enduring dominance of the colonisers in areas such as knowledge production even after the departure of the colonisers from direct control of the indigenous people. While Nkrumah (1965) regards neo-colonialism as the successor of colonialism, the diaspora philosophers identify coloniality as a successor of colonialism. For example Mignolo's (2005: 112) contention that "independence changed the *actors* but not the *script*" reflects Nkrumah's (1979: 134) position that "independence" of the "African" states is nominal in so far as the colonisers still maintain control over the indigenous people. We now turn to the position of some diaspora philosophers in regard to colonial epistemicide.

According to Mignolo (2011: 2), the term "coloniality" can be credited to Anibal Quijano. Quijano (2007: 170) understands coloniality as the most general form of domination in the world today that has remained after the end of colonialism as an explicit political order. For Mignolo (2005: 111), coloniality refers to the continued domination and oppression of the colonised peoples under the guise of modernity. The *status quo* of continued dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers under the guise of modernity must be reversed through the Africanisation of the curriculum. Africanisation becomes a bold step to reverse the exclusive domination of the curriculum by the knowledge paradigm of the colonisers at the expense of that of the indigenous people. The knowledge paradigm of the colonisers is considered as "modern" and of a superior kind to the "traditional" knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people. However, for Mignolo (2011: 41):

> 'modernity' is a European narrative that hides its darker side, 'coloniality'. Coloniality, in other words, is constitutive of modernity —there is no modernity without coloniality. Hence, today the common expression 'global modernities' imply 'global colonialities' in the precise sense that the colonial matrix of power (coloniality, for short) is being disputed by many contenders: if there cannot be modernity without coloniality, there cannot be either global modernities without global colonialities.

In the light of Mignolo's (2007: 450) understanding of "modernity" as encompassing coloniality (Escobar, 2007: 185), it becomes apparent why he regards coloniality as the darker side of "modernity". The imposition of the colonisers' "modernity" leads to the domination of the colonised people (Mignolo, 2007: 450; Mignolo, 2011: 2). The epistemology of the colonised people is discarded and that of the colonisers is imposed. "Modernity" which the colonisers impose on the colonised people is conceived as a way of liberating them from their dark past. However, coloniality is hidden behind the rhetoric

of "modernity". The epistemicide of the knowledge paradigm of the colonised people becomes one of the enduring effects of colonialism (Santos, 2006: 14; Richardson, 2012: 539; Grosfoguel, 2013: 84).

Maldonado-Torres (2007: 243) argues that coloniality survives colonisation. It remains thriving in books, cultural values and knowledge paradigms imposed on the colonized people. Maldonado-Torres (2007: 243) makes a distinction between coloniality and colonialism. For Maldonado-Torres (2007: 243):

> 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, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations.

This means that colonial domination remains in place after the physical departure of the colonisers from their positions of power over the colonised people. For Quijano (2007: 170), "coloniality, then, is still the most general form of domination in the world today, once colonialism as an explicit political order was destroyed."

The denial of the existence of other "modernities" or subaltern "modernities" is a consistent character of colonialism (Santos, Nunes and Meneses, 2007: xxxiii). The colonisers' modernity is destructive to and excludes the knowledge paradigms of the colonised people (Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 244; Dussel, 1995: 12; Dussel, 2000: 472; Dussel, 2009b: 508). In our view, Africanisation seeks to reject this dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers in the curriculum by also recognising and

including the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people into the curriculum at all levels. This involves a rejection of the colonisers' "modernity" and its darker side.

In commenting on the state of higher education in "Africa", Mazrui (1978: 264) states that:

> African universities still remain instruments for the transmission of western culture, whether they were specifically intended to be so or not. The graduate produced from Makerere or Ibadan or Dakar is a human being who has moved substantially towards becoming a specimen of European tradition…Clearly academic freedom in the sense of substantial intellectual independence is seriously compromised in a situation where Africans are almost always intellectual followers and almost never intellectual leaders.

The independence of the indigenous people from the dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers becomes a historical necessity. In place of the *status quo* of the exclusive dominance of the colonisers' knowledge paradigm, the co-existence of the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people and those from other geopolitical centres must be fostered in the transformed curriculum. The creative potential of the indigenous people can be recognised if they are allowed to think outside the confines of the Eurocentric paradigm (Mazrui, 1978: 264). The belief that the colonisers have exclusive entitlement to the production of knowledge for all people must be questioned and rejected. Such a belief unjustly elevates the colonisers' paradigm to transcultural status. Mazrui (1978: 267) yearns for a future that challenges the tyranny of Eurocentrism and in turn allows the indigenous people to be recognised as creators of knowledge. This is the objective of Africanising education. We now turn to the responses to the call for the Africanisation of education.

4.4 Responses to the call for the Africanisation of Education

In this section, we consider comments that have been made in regard to the Africanisation of education. In considering these comments, our objective is not to undermine Africanisation but to consider how these comments can be used to strengthen it.

One criticism labelled against Africanisation is that it is a nebulous concept (Horsthemke, 2004: 571). It is argued that Africanisation does not have a clear definition. Horsthemke (2004a: 571) argues that "there is lack of clarity not only about what the idea means, but also about what it involves or implies." Horsthemke (2005: 184; Horsthemke, 2009: 3; Kistner, 2008: 94) thus proposes what he calls "…a rights-based approach that establishes rights as the backbone of redress and reconciliation as its heart" that can be employed in order to deal with the past educational injustices which were caused by colonisation.

Horsthemke's (2006: 454) point is that Africanisation can be rejected on the premise that it is a vague concept. However, it is the nature of terms that they cannot be easily ascribed definitions that everyone can agree upon. The fact that a term does not admit of a clear definition, cannot at all mean that it cannot be used in discourses. For example, the term "democracy" is one term whose definitions are contestable. However, despite the problems in defining it, democracy still remains very much relevant in human discourse and practical life. Those who have undertaken to define it at least have an idea of what it means. In a similar way, despite the problems in ascribing a definition to Africanisation that has transcultural appeal, one key aspect that is observable in some of

its definitions is the need to bring into recognition and incorporate indigenous sites of knowledge as one among other sites of knowledge. This means that the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people must be placed at the level of parity with other epistemological paradigms (Lebakeng, Phalane and Dalindjebo, 2006: 76). The need for the curriculum content to also incorporate the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people appears quite clear and discernible. In addition, the recognition of the indigenous people as creators of knowledge that is comparable to knowledge created in other geopolitical centres cannot be nebulous. One can hardly profess ignorance of what the term "Africanisation" means when it, for example, states that the continued dominance of the epistemology of the colonisers is unjust and must be ended through the elevation of the knowledge paradigm of the indigenous people to the level of parity with the knowledge paradigms from other geopolitical centres.

Makgoba (1998: 51) argues that the term "Africanisation" has been politicised. Because of the fundamental changes that it seeks to cause to the *status quo* of dominance of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm over that of the indigenous people, it has caused a lot of discomfort to those who think it may lead to the end of their unjustly acquired privileges. It has been regarded as a move to reverse the "good things" that the colonisers have brought to the indigenous people through colonisation (Makgoba, 1998: 53; Nyamnjoh, 2012: 141).

Mindful of its potential impact on their privileged position in the production and creation of knowledge, "they have decided on its meaning and interpretation from their

perspective. In other words they provided a Eurocentric meaning and promoted this throughout the world" (Makgoba, 1998: 51). What is implied in the view of those who regard Africanisation as a return to the so-called "dark past" is that they do not want the colonised people to assert their independence from the Eurocentric understanding of reality. The colonisers' myth that the indigenous people are not capable of creating knowledge from their own indigenous foundations serves colonial interests.

Critics have argued that it is problematic to argue for the Africanisation of knowledge (Horsthemke, 2004a: 583; Kistner, 2008: 97). For these critics, one needs to be clear on the kinds of knowledge that can be Africanised. In the view of critics of Africanisation, this is necessary because not all kinds of knowledge can be Africanised. Horsthemke (2004a: 583-4) and Kistner (2008: 97) are in agreement that what can be Africanised is knowledge by acquaintance and practical knowledge. For them, propositional knowledge cannot be Africanised. According to Horsthemke (2004a: 584), "...the notion of the Africanisation of knowledge in the factual or propositional sense is problematic, not least because of the relativism it invokes." We take propositional knowledge as what is the case and what is the case first of all emerges from a particular geographic space and context (Okere, Njoku, Devisch, 2005: 1; Okere, 2005: 20). Even though it might turn out to be transcultural with regard to its appeal and relevance, we cannot deny its particularity in terms of its origin. In light of this, it becomes untenable to argue that propositional knowledge cannot be ascribed to the indigenous colonised people and thus be Africanised. For Kistner (2008: 97):

> insofar as the possibility of creating and transmitting an "African" or "indigenous" knowledge is contemplated, this could pertain only to practical,

skills-based know-how but not to propositional knowledge. In so far as the possibility of propositional knowledge is entertained, it cannot be "indigenous" or "African" knowledge, as propositional knowledge is *epistemologically* context-dependent – that is, context-dependent in its formal requirements only.

In the light of the above, what can be legitimately Africanised are "skills" and "knowledge products" because they are relative. However, the same cannot be done to propositional knowledge without committing a contradiction (Kistner, 2008: 97). This is so because propositional knowledge is regarded as "universal" in scope. For Horsthemke (2004a: 584; 2009: 11), the claim by defenders of Africanisation that there are in existence different sites of knowledge is faulty because it would imply that there are different truths and different realities. Accepting that there are different truths and realities leads to what Horsthemke (2004a: 584; Horsthemke, 2004b: 38) calls "comprehensive relativism" whereby truth differs from society to society and from culture to culture. This relativism is regarded as "problematic". In the thinking of Horsthemke (2004a: 584), truth cannot be relative. Horsthemke (2004a: 584) states the problem of relativism which is associated with the Africanisation of knowledge when he argues that:

> Beliefs may, and certainly do, differ from individual to individual, from society to society, from culture to culture. The appraisal of the suitability of justification may vary with different contexts. Yet, the implication that truth differs in similar ways is highly problematic. Truth is neither a matter of personal belief nor of social or cultural consensus. There are well-known problems with this kind of relativism. First, the relativist cannot logically claim universal validity for his thesis that knowledge differs radically across societies and cultures or that truth is local or context-dependent. Furthermore- if accepted, albeit bearing in mind the inconsistency involved-relativism has certain undesirable implications or consequences that, for example, few Africanists would presumably wish to accept, such as the impossibility of judging or evaluating competing knowledge claims.

The implication of Horsthemke's (2004a: 584) position is that truth is "universal". In so doing, he may not be aware of the problems that the term "universal" invokes. In reference to the creation and production of knowledge, it has the implication of legitimising the views of people from one geopolitical centre as having transcultural application (Harding, 1997: 65). Knowledge, as it is understood by colonisers must be, following his reasoning, understood thus by the colonised people. So, the term "universal" implies taking a particular understanding of reality as having transcultural appeal. This thinking rejects alterity in the understanding of knowledge. It takes the pluriverse as a homogenous entity with, for example, a homogenous conception of truth. Standardisation and "universalisation" of knowledge and, in particular, truth is taken as important in "...judging or evaluating competing knowledge claims" (Horsthemke, 2004a: 584).

With regard to propositional knowledge which Horsthemke (2004a: 584) and Kistner (2008: 97) consider as "universal", one can be interested in knowing the origin of this propositional knowledge. In analysing this claim, it is important to state that we subscribe to Makgoba's (1998: 47) view that "knowledge is a human construct, and that by definition has a human purpose. Knowledge cannot be sterile or neutral in its conception, formulation and development." In view of the above, it becomes untenable that a certain type of knowledge can be regarded as "universal". In calling for the "universalisation" of knowledge, the colonisers want to retain the prerogative to create and disseminate knowledge in pursuance of their own interests. So, Africanisation of education and knowledge is seen as a threat to the colonisers' stranglehold in respect to the creation and

dissemination of knowledge. By, claiming that propositional knowledge cannot be Africanised because it is "universal", critics of Africanisation are arguing that propositional knowledge is not identifiable with any geopolitical centre in terms of its origin and content. In our view, this position cannot be easily defended if we are to take Makgoba's (1998: 47) understanding of knowledge.

If it is accepted that propositional knowledge is "universal", it would imply that this is the knowledge that has to be taught if one is to "fit in well in the global village". In the light of our stated view on knowledge, that which is conceived as "universal" is in fact knowledge which is particular to one geopolitical centre but which has been forcibly imposed on the colonised as *the* knowledge.

The strength of the thesis for the Africanisation of education lies in its call for the *status quo* of the domination of the indigenous people by sites of knowledge that are alien to them to end. It is a genuine quest for what Castro-Gómez (2007: 428) calls "epistemological plurality". By calling for the recognition of indigenous sites of knowledge, Africanisation has faced resistance from those who benefit from the *status quo*. This is quite expected. For Freire (2000: 55), "it would be a contradiction in terms if the oppressors not only defended but actually implemented a liberating education." So, the oppressed must initiate their liberation and that of oppressors (Freire, 2000: 56; Shor and Freire, 1987: 14). By opposing the colonisers' false claim that their understanding of knowledge is the only one there is, Africanisation educates them that there are in fact different sites of knowledge and that no site of knowledge can be regarded as superior by

definition to the other (Ramose, 1998: vi). In this regard, instead of being seen in the negative sense, the Africanisation of education must actually be seen as a positive move which is meant to reject the myth of domination of the colonisers' understanding of knowledge and asserting that there are other sites of knowledge beside those of the colonisers.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have argued a case for the Africanisation of education in Zimbabwe. We defended the thesis that the Africanisation of education is necessary in order to reverse the conditions of alienation that were caused by colonial epistemicide through the imposition of an alien epistemological paradigm. We argued that Africanisation must entail fundamental changes to the colonial curriculum so that its content accommodates both the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people and other epistemologies. This must be done at all levels. This is an exigency of a fundamental natural and historical justice (Ramose, 2010: 5) that represents a quest for genuine liberation of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. The rejection of the imaginary inferiority of the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people and the call for parity of epistemologies is important in asserting their humanity (Ramose, 1999: 8). In Chapter 5, we argue that reason which colonisers claim as their exclusive entitlement was in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to their contact with the colonisers. Some proverbs of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are used in order to defend this position.

CHAPTER 5: UNCOVERING REASON THROUGH SHONA PROVERBS

5.0 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to reject the colonisers' claim that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are arational. The presence of reason among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as reflected in their proverbs counters the colonisers' claim that they are without reason. Some selected "Shona"[40] proverbs are considered in order to show that proverbs have philosophical content and consequently reason. This is necessary in order to show that the colonisers' claim to exclusive entitlement to philosophy is indefensible (Bourdillon, 1998: xvii; Ramose, 1999: iii; Dussel, 2009a: 62-64; Dussel, 2009b: 504). The reason for focusing on some "Shona" proverbs only and not others from other linguistic groups in Zimbabwe is simply on the grounds of familiarity with the "Shona" language in comparison to other languages and not because of prejudice.

The first section focuses on the origins and meaning of the term "Shona". We argue that the origin and meaning of this term is in dispute. Second, the term "proverb" is defined. In the third section, we argue that the "Shona" proverb is a source of philosophy. In the light of the presence of philosophy among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, we reject the colonisers' claim that the indigenous people were without reason. In the fourth section, some proverbs are analysed with the objective of establishing their philosophical content. We now turn to the definition of the term "Shona".

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[40] The possible origins and meanings of the term "Shona" are discussed in the first section of this chapter.

5.1 Understanding the term "Shona"

The origin of the term "Shona" is in dispute. It has not been established with certainty how it originated and what it means. Jeater (2001: 449) takes it as a colonial creation meant to refer to a cluster of dialects with a similar orthography. According to this position, the term "Shona" was not in use before the arrival of the colonisers. For Jeater (2001: 449):

> chiShona is itself a colonial invention, a text-based synthesis of various closely related regional vernaculars. These regional variations had been fixed as distinct written dialects, each with its own orthography and systems of word-division, by white missionaries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

It is argued that the dialects that later became grouped under the collective term "Shona" preferred to be called by their dialect names and not by the term "Shona". This was because the term "Shona" was not proposed by any of the dialects that became collectively known by this name (Chimhundu, 1992: 89-90; Jeater, 2001: 449). These dialects are Karanga, Manyika, Ndau, Kalanga, Zezuru and Korekore (Samkange and Samkange, 1980: 17; Kahari, 1990: 5; Chimhundu, 1992: 89).

Considerable resistance to the use of the term "Shona" in reference to the dialects that shared, according to colonisers, similar orthography was faced. This was partly because of its foreign and obscure origin. Commenting on the usage of the term "Shona", Burbridge (1924: 17) notes that "we describe them thus not because this use of the word "Shona" is acceptable to them-"In so speaking of us we are reviled (*vanotinyomba*)," say the natives-but because, having been adopted by the Government Board of Examiners, the term has now an unequivocal meaning." While Burbridge (1924: 17) makes reference to the resistance that this term faced, he does not state how it originated.

It must be noted that scholars are not agreed on when this term started to be used to collectively refer to the dialects that shared the similar orthography. Doke (1931: 78; Chimhundu, 2005: 29) is regarded as the one who formally recommended the official use of the term "Shona" to refer to clusters and sub-dialects which he considered to have a similar orthography (Chimhundu, 2005: 30). In 1931, Doke (1931: 78) recommended that the term "Shona" must be used in reference to the unified language of those dialects that shared a similar orthography. The reason why Doke (1931) chose the term "Shona" as the name to refer to the unified language remains unclear.

With regard to how the term "Shona" came to be used, Fortune (1969: 56) argues that:

> as for the term Shona, which was chosen, after considerable discussion, to indicate the group of clusters as a whole, this was imposed from outside and there is no certainty how the name arose, though it was probably from an Ndebele source.

It is thought that the term "Shona" was a nickname given by their enemies, the Ndebele people or the Portuguese (Fortune, 1969: 56). In reference to the term "Shona", Bourdillon (1998: 16-17) argues that "it appears to have been used first by the Ndebele as a derogatory name for the people they had defeated, and particularly the Rozvi." Fortune (1969: 78) submits that this term was given in contempt of the linguistic dialects that later became known as "Shona". This could explain why all dialects that were later referred to as "Shona" resisted to be called thus (Burbridge, 1924: 17; Doke, 1931: 78; Fortune, 1969: 56). The artificial nature and obscure foreign origin of the term "Shona" makes its continued usage in reference to the dialects that were named thus suspect. In this study,

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we thus use the term "Shona" with caution. We now focus on the definition of the term "proverb".

5.2 Understanding Proverb

An attempt at ascribing a precise definition of the term "proverb" is met with difficulties (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: xiv; Russo, 1983: 121; Finnegan, 2012: 382). This is partly because proverbs are often found in, and closely related to, other literary expressions such as songs, poems and folktales. For Finnegan (2012: 382):

> the close connection of proverbs with other literary forms raises a difficulty. How, particularly in an oral culture, can we distinguish proverbs from other forms of oral art? or indeed, from ordinary clichés and idioms, and from such related but different forms as maxims and apophthegms?

This has made it difficult to establish what a proverb is and how it can be differentiated from other literary expressions. Despite the challenges one faces in defining a proverb, some definitions have been given which can be of help in understanding it. Russo (1983: 121) defines the proverb as:

> …a brief, well-shaped complete sentence, understood by its users as anonymous in authorship, existing in the language for a long time in almost invariant form, stating a general truth that everyone would accept as important and useful to recall, and, because of this antiquity and accuracy of insight, sanctity of insight, sanctioned or almost "sanctified" by the culture as wisdom of the elders that must be taken seriously, must be accorded "weight," when spoken.

Proverbs are terse statements (Owomoyela, 2005: 2; Miruka, 1994: 47) that summarise ideas, thoughts and truths accepted and upheld in a given society. Finnegan (2012: 383) defines a proverb as "…a saying in more or less fixed form marked by 'shortness, sense, and salt' and distinguished by the popular acceptance of the truth tersely expressed in it." In the light of Russo (1983: 121) and Finnegan's (2012: 382) definitions of the term

"proverb", terseness, hidden meaning and anonymity of authorship become some of its defining characters. "Antiquity" as a defining character of proverbs (Russo, 1983: 121) makes them endure the test of time.

The "Shona" term for "proverb" is "tsumo". Chimhundu (1980: 37) argues that the "Shona" terms "tsumo" and "shumo" can both be used to refer to a proverb. He (1980: 37) states that "the words *shumo* and *tsumo* are commonly regarded as dialectical variants of the same lexical item for 'proverb', *shumo* being Karanga and *tsumo* being Zezuru, etc." It must be noted that the term "tsumo" is also used by the Korekore and Manyika. Unless the "etc" in Chimhundu's above quoted proposition is referring to these dialects which also use the term "tsumo" to refer to proverbs, it is not correct to limit the usage of the term "tsumo" to the Zezuru only.

We submit that the term "tsumo" and "shumo" do not mean the same thing. In fact, the two terms refer to different things and have different meanings. The term "tsumo" refers to a proverb while "shumo" refers to the worthiness or sense of something said or done. As Chimhundu (1980: 38) later argues:

> as long as reference is limited to 'proverbs' as particular-type statements or axioms, with specified structural patterns, the practical thing to do is to discard *shumo* and to use *tsumo* in the interests of unification of the Shona language. The problem, however, is that *shumo* has a wider meaning than *tsumo*.

It must also be noted that the term "shumo" is in use in other "Shona" dialects but not as a lexical variant of "tsumo". It is used in reference to the worthiness of certain utterances or deeds. In our view, it is not an act of compromise to regard the terms "tsumo" and

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"shumo" as different in respect to their meanings as Chimhundu (1980: 38) suggests. For the purposes of this study, the term "tsumo" is going to be used in reference to proverbs.

"Shona" proverbs are short but laden with deeper meanings. The meaning of "Shona" proverbs is not an easy matter. Establishing the meaning of these proverbs requires careful and deep thought (Gelfand, 1979: 120). Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xvii) argue that the terseness of proverbs ensures that "no words are wasted and all propositions are stated as succinctly as possible with common grammatical forms frequently curtailed or changed." This terseness of "Shona" proverbs enables their users to easily recite them in discourses and debates. In terms of the structure, "Shona" proverbs are regarded as poetic, figurative and allusive (Finnegan, 2012: 380). They are also considered as "generally…different from ordinary speech and reveal a special technique or grammar of verbal composition" (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: xvi).

Although the authorship of proverbs is subject to contestation, they enjoy a certain level of acceptance within the society that gives rise to them. Their content is a reflection of the context in which they are formed. It is thus necessary to understand proverbs in their social context. In our view, proverbs are a source of philosophy. Since proverbs were in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers, it is untenable to deny that philosophy among the indigenous people predates the arrival of colonisers (Dussel, 2009b: 504). We now focus on proverbs as sources of philosophy for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

5.3 Proverbs as sources of Philosophy

In this section, we defend the position that proverbs are a source of philosophy for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe (Furusa, 1996: 83) and other indigenous colonised people of Africa. It must be noted that the colonisers denied the presence of philosophy among the indigenous people (Gyekye, 1987: 4). They imposed their own philosophy and knowledge paradigm on the indigenous people as part of what they regarded as a "civilising" mission. The colonisers' rejection of the existence of philosophy among the indigenous people was based on the supposed absence of writing among the indigenous people.

Philosophy was taken as present in writing traditions and absent in non-writing traditions. Since writing was considered absent among the indigenous people, they were thus regarded as incapable of philosophy. However, this position cannot be rationally defended. For Olúwolé (1997: 5), "to force oral texts into pre-conceived, Western defined literary genres is to indirectly pre-empt the possibility of their being philosophy. It is also to deny the empirical fact that intellectual traditions do occur in different genres in different cultures of the world." The supposed transcultural dominance of the colonisers' paradigm of thought over that of the indigenous people is both indefensible and unjust. It is not tenable to argue that philosophy cannot be found in the proverbs. Contrary to the position that we advance in this chapter, Wimmer (2002: 20) argues that "proverbs may have taught us to be cautious, they do not teach us the way to obtain knowledge." Wimmer's position is untenable. In fact, it has been argued that proverbs are a legitimate source of knowledge (Gyekye, 1987: 15; Olúwolé, 1997: 77; Akinmade, 2009: 109; Avoseh, 2012: 238). Olúwolé (1997: 54) argues that "thought can undoubtedly be woven

in the oral form." This position is also defended by Gyekye (1987) when he argues that "African philosophical thought is expressed both in the oral literature and in the thoughts and actions of the people." Olúwolé (1997: 54) rejects the view that when ideas occur in the form of proverbs they cannot qualify as "strict" philosophy. In the light of the disqualification of proverbs as a source of "strict" philosophy, Olúwolé (1997: 54) poses a question: "from what aspects of African thought, for example, does one then choose texts to be tested as specimens of 'strict' philosophy once we rule against the possibility of oral texts being philosophical literature?" Proverbs cannot be disqualified as a genuine source of "strict" philosophy simply on the basis of what the colonisers conceive of as philosophy in the supposedly "strict" sense. Whether proverbs do or do not express philosophical thought in the Western world is no reason to authenticate or disqualify proverbs as a legitimate source of philosophy among the indigenous people. We subscribe to Olúwolé's (1997: 77) position that proverbs contain and express the philosophical thought of the indigenous people.

Kimmerle (1997: 62) takes language as an important source of philosophy. Proverbs are considered as part of language. For Kimmerle (1997: 62), "language is the medium in which philosophy works. Philosophy draws its questions and the possible answers from language." This makes language quite important in the creation of a philosophical system and the production of knowledge. In the light of the position that language is the medium of philosophy, one can argue that philosophy is generated in all languages. This makes the indigenous people of Zimbabwe capable of philosophy and knowledge production. Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xxi) argue that proverbs "…are said to represent a

people's philosophy. In doing so, they serve to impose some sort of regularity on the unfolding variety of life and to stress the proper form of behaviour or the type of character or action to be expected." Kahari (1990: 1) concurs with Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xxi) when he argues that "some of the Shona people's profoundest philosophical concerns are enshrined in their proverbial lore." This shows that some proverbs are a source of the philosophical thoughts of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. For Kimmerle (1997: 63), "the sages (wise teachers, both male and female) formulate their advice about difficult practical questions of life and about the riddles of the universe and human life in a conversation which frequently results in a saying or a proverb." The proverbs can be used to give advice.

5.3.1 The value of Proverbs

"Shona" proverbs are educational (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: xx). They are educational in matters of ethics, knowledge of reality and legal issues. In regard to ethics, proverbs are used in order to discourage people from engaging in certain kinds of behaviour. For Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xx):

> …there remains a rich repository of practical as well as ethical advice in…Shona proverbs. Important to remember is the fact that they allow people to refer to delicate or forbidden matters in discrete and indirect ways. Outside the family circle, rebuke is never administered directly, but a proverb that names no names will always make the point. Wit, too, can be useful educationally and good laughter is not far away from many proverbs.

So, some "Shona" proverbs give advice on the kinds of actions to pursue and those that ought to be avoided. Through use of appropriate proverbs, ethical values are inculcated in the recipients of such proverbs. This helps in shaping the conduct of the recipients of these proverbs in a desirable way. In regard to their juridical function, they are

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strategically introduced in court discourses with the purpose of giving advice and giving counsel in indigenous courts of law. For this reason, Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xix) argue that "a fair number of proverbs must be called juridical axioms or maxims and as such they reflect customary law in replacement of codified law in a literate society."

In view of the position that proverbs are a source of philosophy for the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, one can thus reject the colonisers' claim that philosophy and indeed reason were not in existence among the indigenous people before their arrival. However, those who have undertaken to argue that proverbs are a source of philosophy for the "Shona" people (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: xxi; Kahari, 1990: 1) left the term "philosophy" undefined. What they claim is simply that "Shona" proverbs are a source of their philosophy. Suffice to state that the definition of the term "philosophy" is in dispute (Oguejiofor and Onah, 2005: ix). It becomes more intriguing in the light of the attempts by the colonisers to impose their own understanding of philosophy on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. The way philosophy is understood from the Eurocentric standpoint puts in doubt the indigenous people's understanding of this term.

From the Eurocentric perspective, philosophy is understood as a discipline that involves the highest exercise of reason (Eze, 1997: 11). Since the colonisers denied reason to the colonised, it follows that they also denied them philosophy because reason is very much part of philosophy. The colonisers' imposition of their own particular understanding of philosophy on the colonised people is problematic because it disregards the fact that philosophy originates and is understood from the standpoint of a given social setting. To

pretend that the colonisers' understanding of the term "philosophy" has transcultural appeal is to disregard the fact that philosophy first of all originates from a particular social setting. For Ramose (2003: 115b), "…particularity must be accorded precedence over universality with regard to talk about 'African philosophy'. This is necessitated by the fact that experience is the basis for philosophy. But experience is always bound to time and space in the first place." In our view, philosophy asks fundamental questions about reality and the condition of human beings within a given geographic space. It is in line with this understanding of philosophy that we submit that proverbs are one of the sources of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's philosophy.

In doing so, one must be reminded of the stereotypes that have been created with respect to oral cultures as genuine sources of philosophy. In particular, the views of Appiah in respect of what qualifies as philosophy in the "strict" sense are important to consider here. Appiah (2003: 339) accepts that:

> in one sense, the philosophy of a person or a group is just the sum of the beliefs they hold about the central questions of human life-about mind and matter, knowledge and truth, good and bad, right and wrong, human nature, and the universe we inhabit. At their most general, as I say, these beliefs are naturally called "philosophy," and there is nothing wrong in using the word this way.

Appiah (2003: 339) proceeds to state that such a kind of "philosophy' is found in all cultures and can be called "folk" philosophy. In the view of Appiah (2003: 340), this "folk philosophy" can be contrasted with what he calls "Western philosophy" which he regards as "formal" philosophy. In regard to "Western philosophy", Appiah (2003: 340) argues that "philosophy, as it is practiced and taught in modern Western universities, is a distinctive institution that has evolved along with Western societies."

This understanding of philosophy raises three important issues. First, by understanding "Western" philosophy as "formal" philosophy as opposed to "informal" philosophy, one becomes unsure of the standard that is used to classify these "philosophies" as such. There is a sense in which one can be driven by stereotypes which lead one to regard the philosophy of his/her culture as of a superior kind compared to that of other cultures. Such stereotypes disturb an honest evaluation of the philosophies of other cultures (Brown, 2004: 4). Second, by regarding "Western" philosophy as "formal" and philosophies from other cultures as "informal", one is being judgmental of other philosophies one is less qualified to make comments on. Third, if we are to consider Appiah's (2003: 340) definition of "Western" philosophy, we can establish that it originates and develops within a particular social context. Its relevance is primarily limited to the social context that gives rise to it. To elevate this "particular" philosophy to a transcultural philosophy on the pretext that it is the only "formal" philosophy there is, is simply to disregard the fact that all cultures have their own philosophies.

Elevating the colonisers' particular understanding of philosophy to a transcultural one is not acceptable (Mignolo, 2007: 450; Walsh, 2007: 225; Dussel, 2009a: 62). In the absence of a transcultural standard upon which philosophies can be evaluated as either "formal" or "informal", it is futile to be judgmental. In our view, the philosophy that is derived from the proverbs of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe must be considered as a philosophy that is at par with philosophies from other geopolitical centres.

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It must be noted that proverbs are found in all societies (Russo, 1983: 121; Orwenjo, 2009: 123; Easton, 2012: 519). However, their use and meaning are relative to a given society. They are context-bound (Odebunmi, 2008: 75). They are used in a given context to convey a certain meaning. It is possible for the contents of a proverb to have influence and relevance beyond the society that gives rise to it, but it must be noted that a proverb originates from a particular society. This means that proverbs must be understood in their cultural context (Viriri, 2004: 356). In emphasising the need to interpret proverbs in relation to their social context, Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: xix) state that "this includes the particular occasion or observation at which they originated as well as the social function they now help to illustrate or understand." In this light, the function of the "Shona" proverbs can fully be understood by one who has knowledge of the social context from which they originate and are used. The lessons that proverbs offer to various aspects of life make them one of the sources of the indigenous people's philosophy. In the following section, we intend to show that some "Shona" proverbs are a source of philosophy.

5.4 The philosophical content of some "Shona" Proverbs

In this section, three "Shona" proverbs are analysed with the objective of showing their philosophical content. In showing that proverbs have a philosophical content, we also show that reason, which the colonisers claimed to be their exclusive entitlement and therefore absent among the colonised people (Bourdillon, 1998: xvii), was in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before their arrival. Indeed reason is reflected in the indigenous colonised people's proverbial lore (Wanjohi, 1997: 14). The colonisers'

denial of the existence of reason among the indigenous people has the implication that they do not have a philosophy. This is a position that we reject in this study. Besides showing that reason was in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, we also argue that "Shona" proverbs are educational.

The first "Shona" proverb that we are going to analyse is *chitsva chiri murutsoka* (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: 164, no. 702) which can be translated to mean "a new thing can be attained through travelling." As is the case with all proverbs, this proverb is susceptible to various interpretations. With regard to its surface meaning, it simply tells that travelling enables one to be exposed to new things. In our view, these "new things" can be understood as new knowledge. This new knowledge is obtained as one interacts with unfamiliar environments as a result of travelling. In line with this understanding of the proverb, one can argue that the act of travelling exposes one to new knowledge. Travelling can be understood literally to mean a change in one's physical location. As one gets to a new and unfamiliar place, one gathers new knowledge. This knowledge can be referred to as empirical knowledge. The knowledge gained by the traveller enables him/her to increase his/her stock of knowledge. The implication is that one's knowledge becomes proportional to the effort one puts in generating new knowledge. The one who does not "travel" much becomes limited in terms of his/her stock of knowledge.

In its deeper meaning, c*hitsva chiri murutsoka* can be understood to mean incessant mental quest to attain new knowledge. This requires one to be able to think deeply in order to find explanations and solution to problems that face the human society. One has

to work hard in order to attain knowledge that can be of use to the human society. This proverb can thus be understood as encouraging people to work hard in order to find explanations and solutions to the life situations and problems they face. One cannot achieve this if one were to think that all there is to know has already been settled. The quest for new knowledge must be unending. It is thus naïve for one to revel in the little knowledge that one has. Having too little knowledge about various aspects of reality can become a source of embarrassment as one becomes limited in discussions with others. In matters that require epistemic expertise, the one who has more knowledge is considered a worthy consultant.

The implication of this proverb is that no one can claim exclusive entitlement to knowledge. The one who wants to gain knowledge of reality has to work hard in order to realise his/her goal. This involves use of one's faculty of reason and sense experience in order to explore and understand reality. However, when colonisers conquered the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, they came with preconceived ideas that the indigenous people had no reason and that they were fixated in the past without any signs of progress (Bourdillon, 1976: 9). Such a stereotype is misleading. It is misleading because it portrays the indigenous people as inferior to the colonisers in terms of rational exercise and material progress. However, one can argue that advances in material possessions are determined by the natural and social conditions in existence in a given geographic space.

The natural and social conditions in the colonisers' countries of origin were not the same as those of the colonised people. To expect their level of material progress to be the same

to that of the indigenous people is unreasonable. For example, one may not expect a landlocked country to invent a ship when it is quite apparent that it is of no use to it. The colonisers committed this error of judgement when they considered themselves superior to the indigenous people on the shaky basis of their supposed better material progress. After assessing the colonisers' supposed superior position in regard to material progress, Gelfand (1968: ix) argues that "it is not difficult to see how the European, proud of these palpable advantages, might so easily conclude that he was endowed with greater powers of reasoning and consider himself as a superior being to the African."

The proverb *chitsva chiri murutsoka* can as well be used to question the colonial stereotype that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe did not think beyond what the previous generations bequeathed to them (Bourdillon, 1998: xvii). In trying to explain the lack of what he calls "...reasoned and systematised philosophy of religion" among the indigenous people, Louw (1926: 58) argues that:

> it may also be due to the fact that the Bantu to-day are imprisoned in a tradition which they themselves do not understand. Unquestionably they accept what has been handed down to them from their forefathers, and however illogical and inconsistent those traditions may be, they unwaveringly tread the path that their fathers have trodden. And when pressed for an explanation why they do certain things, they will invariably reply: "Our fathers did so," or "Our fathers said so." "The whole Bantu race is so little philosophical that it would admit conflicting ideas to an extent which would be impossible in more rational and more intellectually developed minds."

There are two important issues raised by Louw (1926: 58) that require to be commented on. The first issue is with regard to the importance that the indigenous people are said to give to the "tradition" of their "forefathers". Louw (1926: 58) considers the indigenous

people as forever conditioned by what their "forefathers" have believed in and said. Such a position is contestable.

This view portrays the indigenous people of Zimbabwe not only as unthinking and arational, but also as a people who are always fixated in past "traditions". We submit that this is not a true representation of what the indigenous people of Zimbabwe are. The authenticity of the supposed "confession" and what is "confessed" is in doubt for the following reason. The "confession" has internal contradictions in that the one who "confesses" accepts that knowledge has "roots" that the indigenous people do not bother to discover. In our view, the indigenous people's awareness that knowledge has "roots" is indeed confirmation that the indigenous people are concerned about the "roots" of their knowledge claims. The proverb *chitsva chiri murutsoka* shows that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe take the quest for new knowledge as important if one is to find explanations and solutions to problems and challenges of life. One cannot, therefore, legitimately claim that the indigenous people always take what their "traditions" say when it is apparent that they take the quest for knowledge as a human necessity. Questioning of the established body of knowledge and the quest for discovery of new knowledge is reflected in this proverb. It is thus untenable to argue that the indigenous people do not reflect upon that which their "traditions" tell them as Louw (1926: 58) claims.

The second issue that requires commenting is that the so-called "Bantu" are less philosophical to the extent that they do not notice contradictions in ideas that they hold (Louw, 1926: 58). Louw (1926: 58) accounts for the affirmation of contradictory ideas in

the indigenous people's supposed rational and mental deficiencies. Suffice to submit that it is not correct to regard the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as less philosophical and incapable of noting that the ideas they hold are contradictory. The contention that the indigenous people are less philosophical cannot be taken as a fact unless there is a transcultural standard to judge the level of philosophical thinking of different groups of people. It is curious that the colonisers have tended to appoint themselves judges on matters pertaining to the colonised people. In respect to contradictions, one can argue that in any philosophical tradition, there are bound to be divergent views. These cannot be taken as instances of contradictions.

The second proverb that we are going to consider is *zano pangwa uine rakowo* (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: 7, no. 21). It can be translated to mean that "one does not have to wholly depend on the advice of others but one must also have his/her own idea in respect to a given issue". The term "zano" can be translated to mean an "idea" or "advice". This proverb exhorts people not to exclusively regard the advice of others as the answer to their life situations and challenges without thinking for themselves what they consider to be the answer to these life situations and challenges. One must ensure that he/she carries out his/her own analysis and reflection on issues under consideration. One's failure to have a personal position in respect of a certain issue under consideration would mean that one becomes easily swayed by the positions that others hold. It is problematic for one to simply accept what others say about certain issues because one may end up accepting what others say including some falsehoods. These are some of the lessons that we derive from this proverb.

It must be noted that this proverb does not tell its recipients to totally disregard opinions or ideas of others on certain matters. It requires one to consider the merits of other people's advice when it is considered in the light of what one holds. This proverb is often used when one wants to pursue a certain course of action that may have personal consequences. In this situation, one must not simply proceed to do something on the sole advice of others without giving sufficient consideration to what one thinks with regard to that particular course of action. In our view, the most important contribution that this proverb makes to the philosophy of the indigenous of Zimbabwe is that it requires one to think and reflect on issues before one commits oneself to pursuing a certain idea or course of action.

This proverb shows that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe regard the exercise of one's rational faculty as important if one is to deal with one's life situations and challenges. It undermines the colonisers' claim that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe were unthinking beings before their arrival. This view of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is untenable as our argument has already shown.

The proverb *zano pangwa uine rakowo* calls for the agency of individuals in establishing the epistemic basis of their actions. The place of the individual in decision-making and knowledge production is encouraged and respected. This position negates the colonisers' contention that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe do not promote independent thinking in preference of what the "community" says. For Naudé (2011: 1):

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the reason Africa lost its dominance in higher education (remember the brilliant School of Alexandria and Augustine from Hippo?) and why it lost its leading position in science-so clearly evident from Egyptian engineering and Zimbabwean building projects-is quite simple: cultures that underplay (even undermine?) individual excellence and maintain strict social order through respect for tradition and authority struggle with innovation.

Naudé (2011: 1) locates the reason for the so-called decline in "Africa's" intellectual "tradition" on its aversion for individual innovation in preference to what "tradition" and "authority" prescribes. It is unclear how "Africa" at some point in history was a dominant force in matters of knowledge production and building projects when it had so much respect for "tradition" and "authority" which downplayed intellectual creativity and individual excellence. We agree with Naudé (2011: 1) that "Africa" contributed significantly to world civilisation. However, we disagree with Naudé (2011: 1) when he argues that "Africa" has "lost" its position in science and knowledge production because individual excellence is suppressed. It is necessary to point out that colonialism and its successor, neo-colonialism, led to the suppression of the indigenous people's enterprise and contribution to world civilisation.

We submit that "Africa's" contribution to world civilisation was downplayed and distorted by colonisers in order to justify their conquest of the indigenous people. For example, despite evidence that points to the indigenous origin of the Great Zimbabwe monuments and civilisation (Garlake, 1982: 1-2), Gayre (1972:101-102; Mullan, 1969: 48) argues that it had a foreign origin given its resemblances to similar structures elsewhere inside and outside Africa. Colonial epistemicide meant that knowledge production among the indigenous people was suppressed because the epistemological

paradigm of the colonisers was considered as the dominant and the only legitimate one (Castro-Gómez, 2007: 428). The progress in science and knowledge of the indigenous people was therefore rendered difficult under such conditions. The supposed decline in "Africa's" dominance in higher education and science can also be attributed to conquest in the unjust wars of colonisation and the theft of "Africa's" intellectual traditions (James, 2009: 12). One cannot, therefore, claim that the reason for the decline of "Africa's" dominance in higher education and science is premised on the indigenous people's aversion to individual excellence and innovation. The proverb *zano pangwa uine rakowo* shows that this view of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe is not correct.

The third proverb that we consider is m*uzivisisi wenzira yeparuvare ndiye mufambi wayo* (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: 435, no. 1861). This proverb can be translated to mean "the one who knows the path across an expansive rock surface is the one who often walks on it" (Hamutyinei and Plangger, 1987: 435). Among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe, people's footpaths may cut across vast rock surfaces. People use these paths with a certain level of regularity. Stone surfaces are quite hard and it is very difficult for human footprints to easily cut out a discernible path that other travellers can use. With time, the path becomes visibly marked as people frequently use it. So, for one to use a foot path on a rock surface, one must have requisite knowledge of it since markings of the path may not be so apparent. Strangers are therefore expected to seek the advice and knowledge of the experts in using those footpaths. The one who has knowledge about the footpath is thus qualified to give expert guide to would-be travellers.

For Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: 435), "a person usually talks ably of things about which he has acquired some expert knowledge." One can only be an expert in a certain area and not all. Having expert knowledge of something is not an easy thing. It requires commitment so that one's knowledge claims qualify as distinctive and acceptable to their recipients. The term "muzivisisi" refers the one who has expert knowledge of something. It does not refer to those whose knowledge is general and unspecialised.

In further explaining this proverb, Hamutyinei and Plangger (1987: 435), state that "the proverb is always applied to the know-how of something devious and immoral, e.g. stealing." While this explanation is acceptable in relation to the aspect of expertise, it is not solely used to refer to "devious and immoral" expertise. Indeed a person who explains with exquisite detail how, for example, a certain case of theft could have happened may be or may not be a thief. Evidence of such expert knowledge may be used to identify the guilty person. However, there are some who may have such expert knowledge that is not necessarily an outcome of "devious and immoral" deeds. For example, the one who has expert knowledge on how a certain machine works has "know-how" which is not necessarily "devious and immoral". In this regard, this proverb can be understood as referring to both devious and desirable evidence of expert knowledge. For our purposes here, what is of interest is the fact that individuals are capable of attaining expert knowledge in a number of fields.

In our view, individual brilliance in matters of knowledge production is accepted and encouraged among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. By accepting that an individual

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can be reckoned as a knowledge expert in a certain area, this proverb negates the stereotype that individual initiative is not acceptable and acknowledged among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. In highlighting some of the supposed limitations of the Africanisation of knowledge, Naudé (2011: 1) argues that:

> we live in an age dominated by the successful marriage between science and technology. It can be shown that, for that to happen, a society must shift towards "enlightenment": a high regard for reason; emphasis on individual search for knowledge; an open challenge to tradition and authority; and practical application of theory under conditions of strict experimentation.

The call for a "shift" to "enlightenment" is justifiable if it is proven beyond reasonable doubt that the attributes of "enlightenment" are lacking among the conquered indigenous people. With regard to the supposed unique feature of the colonisers' epistemological paradigm, that is, its "...emphasis on individual search for knowledge" (Naudé, 2011: 1), this is proven wrong by the proverb m*uzivisisi wenzira yeparuvare ndiye mufambi wayo*. This proverb shows that expert knowledge of something is a product of an individual's enterprise and not a collective outcome. Though in its usage and application, such knowledge becomes shared among members of a given society, what is quite apparent in this proverb is that people have different specialised knowledge in various aspects of reality. "Muzivisisi" (expert knower) depicts an individual who strives for the highest form of knowledge on a given aspect of reality. So, knowledge originates from individuals. It becomes common to members of a given society through use and application. So, it is not correct to argue that the individual search for knowledge is absent among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

5.5 Conclusion

We have argued that proverbs are a source of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's philosophy. This is in response to the position that prior to the arrival of the colonisers, there was no philosophy among the indigenous people. The selected proverbs that we considered in this chapter show that philosophy has been part of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. It predates the arrival of the colonisers. In light of this, the colonisers' claim to exclusive entitlement to philosophy and consequently reason becomes indefensible. In our view, the philosophy of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe must, together with other knowledge paradigms, inform the transformed curriculum if the "postcolonial" education system is to be significant to the indigenous people of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to discuss the impact of colonial education on the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm. It was noted that colonial education considered indigenous education, philosophy and epistemology as inferior to those of the colonisers and at worst as non-existent. This is the colonial contention that this study sought to challenge. We argued that this colonial position is without basis because it has been established that education, philosophy and epistemology were in existence among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of colonisers. Suffice to state the myth of the supposed dominance of the colonisers' system of education, philosophy and epistemology has been portrayed as a fact. It is a fallacy to take this colonial myth as a fact of history. We argued that the epistemicide that the colonisers caused is an injustice that must be reversed through a genuine change of the curriculum so that it allows the co-existence of the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm and others. The recognition of the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm as one among other epistemological paradigms was taken as important given that the colonisers had considered it as inferior and at worst non-existent.

In chapter 1, the contested nature of education in pre-colonial Zimbabwe was discussed. We argued that the supposed inferiority or non-existence of culture, education, philosophy and epistemology among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of colonisers was based on the colonisers' biased analysis which was principally informed by their Eurocentric paradigm. The fact that the colonisers imposed their own models of culture, education, philosophy and epistemology on the indigenous people of Zimbabwe cannot be taken as evidence that the indigenous people did not have the same.

We argued that the indigenous people had their own culture. Since culture encompasses people's system of education, philosophy and epistemology, it is untenable to deny them these.

In chapter 2, we argued that the interplay of culture and education shows that education was present among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe before the arrival of the colonisers. In light of this, it was argued that the supposed inferiority or absence of a system of education, philosophy and epistemology among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe prior to the arrival of the colonisers gave them justification to impose their system of education, philosophy and epistemology on the indigenous people. This unjust act led to the dominance of the epistemological paradigm of the colonisers over that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. We noted that the content of the colonial curriculum was not derived from the cultural experiences of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe but exclusively from that of the colonisers. This curriculum was not meant to be of benefit to the colonised people but simply meant to benefit the colonisers and to regard colonisation as a historical necessity. Afrocentricity was considered as important in enabling the indigenous people to reassert their agency as legitimate contributors to the production of knowledge. It was noted that the denigration of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe's knowledge paradigm by the colonisers makes it difficult for them to consider their own knowledge paradigm as occupying a position of parity with that of the colonisers.

A discussion of the challenges encountered in bringing into recognition the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe after "independence" from colonial rule was the focus of chapter 3. This was discussed in the light of the

extent of the impact of colonial epistemicide that was fostered through colonial education. It must be noted that the imposition of colonial education on the colonised people of Zimbabwe resulted in the partial destruction of their knowledge paradigm. In the light of the impact of colonial epistemicide on the indigenous people's knowledge paradigm, we proposed that there is need to genuinely transform and Africanise the curriculum so that its content is derived both from the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other knowledge paradigms. This was considered necessary given that the attempts at changing the curriculum in "postcolonial" Zimbabwe as proposed in the Report (1999), though commendable, have not been implemented fully.

The focus of chapter 4 was to argue a case for the Africanisation of education in Zimbabwe. We considered Africanisation of education as necessary in order to genuinely reverse the colonial epistemicide that has denigrated and partially destroyed the indigenous people's epistemological paradigm. It was argued that the Africanisation of the curriculum must ensure that its content is derived from both the epistemological paradigm of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe and other knowledge paradigms. This was considered necessary in order to restore the place of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe as producers of knowledge that is comparable with other knowledge paradigms.

In chapter 5, we argued that philosophy and consequently reason which the colonisers considered as absent among the indigenous people of Zimbabwe predates the colonisers'

conquest of Zimbabwe. It becomes unjustified for the colonisers' philosophy paradigm to retain its dominance at the expense of that of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe. We have argued in this study that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe had their own philosophy which, as a matter of justice, must inform the transformed curriculum in present day Zimbabwe. This is necessary in order to ensure that the indigenous people of Zimbabwe recognise their own epistemological paradigm as one that is at the level of parity with other epistemological paradigms. The prerogative to judge what can be considered the philosophy of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe lies with them.

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