A short reading list on African history, colonialism, post-colonialism, Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism

A few landmarks and great achievements in African history:
- Egyptian thousand year civilisation – [Engineering an Empire on Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=)
- Great Walls of Benin – dating back at least until 1180 AD but possibly started in 850 AD ([Fred Pearce, African Queen, New Scientist, 1999](https://www.newscientist.com/article/2035791-the-spectral-wall-of-benin/))
- Timbuktu – a [UNESCO World Heritage site](https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1245) – especially Sankore University of Timbuktu – established as a centre of Islamic learning at least as far back as 1100 AD and possibly as far back as 989 AD.¹

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1978 – seminal work arguing that the West defined itself over and against a mythical construction called the ‘East’ or the ‘Orient’ (the Arabic Middle East) – [Wikipedia overview](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orientalism).


Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, 1982 – looks at the world from 800 to 1400 including the African kingdoms and the interconnectedness of the world even then and asks why it was that Europe ended up dominating. The book is helpfully reviewed and contrasted with other perspectives by [Jason Antrosio on Living Anthropologically](https://www.livinganthropologically.com/2010/09/europe-and-the-people-without-history/).


Irwyn Ince, *Afrocentricity and the Church, part 2* on [Reformed African American Network](https://www.reformedafricanamericannetwork.org/) (a very helpful site) and *Mawusi, The Truth about Afrocentricity*, on Truth for Africa Lovers blog – both pointing beyond Eurocentrism and Afrocentrism to Christocentrism.

David Murray on [20 Cognitive Biases](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/blog/2018/oct/18/cognitive-biases) and *Michael Ramsden on Logic and Fallacies* – not specifically about colonialism but connects with ethnocentrism and useful in connection to debate and research on Africa (which often falls into one or other of these fallacies).


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¹ Cf. establishment of Universities of Bologna (1088), Oxford (1096), Salamanca (1134).
‘Master’ culture. The cultures of colonised states are complex amalgams of re-imagined imports, redefined survivals, hybrid and creolised elements.\(^2\)

Bill Bryson, *Mother Tongue: The Story of the English Language* & *History of English (Open University on Youtube)* – good fun and good reminders that the English language and the English people are an extremely mixed, ‘mongrel’, hybrid creation of multiple invasions, migrations and movements.

**Change the Rules** – Youtube video – on global inequality and how to change it. See also:
- Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why aid is not working and how there is another way for Africa* and Lawrence Solomon, *Fair-trade coffee producers often end up poorer, Financial Post, 2011*
- *International Justice Mission* and *End It Movement* – seeking an end to ongoing global slavery

“\[Verse 1: There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.\]

11 “All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”

12 “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.”

13 “The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

14 “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood; ruin and misery mark their ways,

16 and the way of peace they do not know.”

17 “There is no fear of God before their eyes.

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\(^2\) E.g. a hot tea leaf drink imported from India to the UK, adapted and indigenised with the addition of milk and sugar, exported to British colonies where it was again modified, contextualised and incorporated into different cultures in a wide variety of ways.