

NEW TELAGOGIC LEARNING IN POST-COVID-19 UNIVERSITIES: LEARNING BEYOND NEO-COLONIALITY AND NEO-CYBER- COLONIALITY

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“During times of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act”. George Orwell

ABSTRACT

In Kongo around 1706, Christian Catholic missionaries incinerated Kimpa Vita and her boy child for resisting to buy into their myths and manufactured realities packaged as Christianity, a mind-altering indoctrination of western belief. This was the onset of coloniality using mendacity and mendaciloquence projects intended to capture the African mindsets in order to create conditions for colonialism and its looting of African resources. Through Desktop research, a historical perspective and netnography, the study sought to achieve two objectives. 1. To demystify ancient history and make transparent how African mindsets remain captured to this day as colonial looting continues unabated. I also show how neo-coloniality has been repackaged as neo-cyber-coloniality, this idea that advanced technologies in the 21st century thrive on racialised patterning of the internet thus perpetuate racism, prejudice and domination-prone society. 2. To introduce an empowering model and telagogy, a web-based, technology-driven learning. Results show the negative impact of coloniality on the ruptured psyche of Africans and how these 15th century Christianity and 19th century western scientific plinth have captured African mindsets and how the captured African psyche obfuscates the uncovering of unfettered looting of African resources. They also show how the new world order is necessary for telagogy to thrive and sustain a domination-free and just society.

Key Words: Pedagogy, Telagogy, Coloniality, Neo-cyber-coloniality, African psyche

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

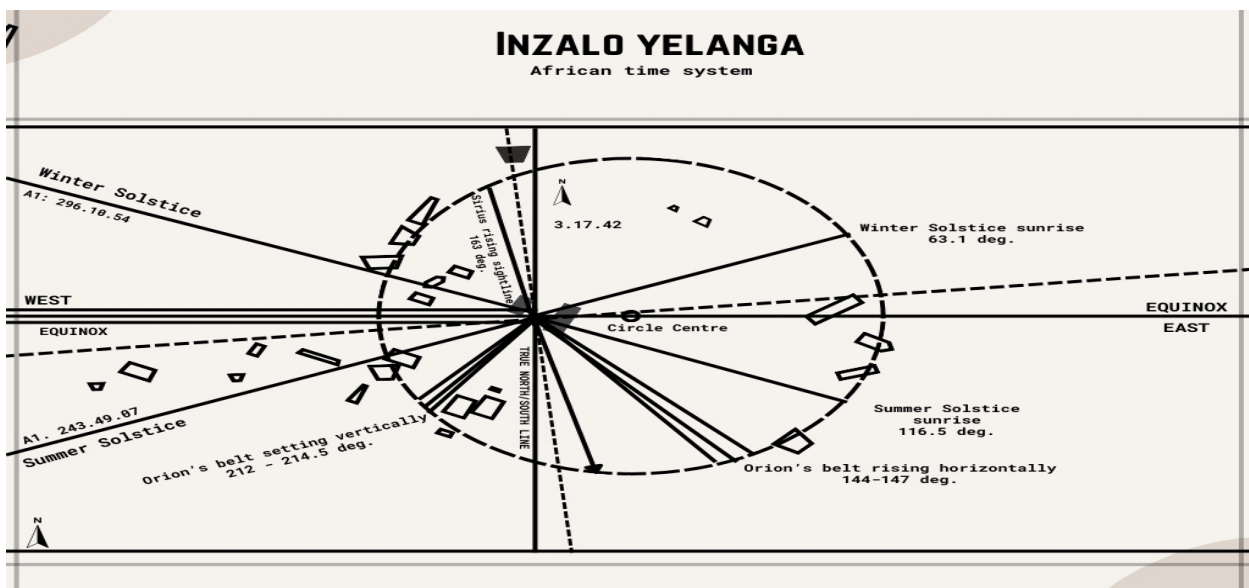
The 15th century Kongo was marked by the arrival of Portuguese Christian Catholic missionaries armed with a Christian message intended to superficially proselytise barbaric indigenous people of Africa. Those that rejected the message such as Kimpa Vita were publicly immolated. In a useful book published in 2019 called *The passion of Kimpa Vita*, Jemedari Kilele (2019) reclaims and restores the real narrative of Kimpa Vita as one who rejected Christianity as alienating, seeking domination over all deserving beliefs, make people believe

in the power of one human being who looks just like them and its spiritual reformatting. All of these were actually anti-African and trembled on African Spirituality, African values, African culture of collectivism (*letsema*) and active citizenry (*vukusenzele* work ethic). The concept of barbarians was first used in Greek to describe all that is foreign to Greek and etymologically derives from bar-bar which is an onomatopoeic take on languages of foreigners that mimic the sound of all that is foreign. What the west did not understand, they labelled barbaric to escape the rigour of probing it which was also undesirable to the west seeking domination and entrenching of white supremacy. This was the origin of weaponising difference in lieu of using it as a source of strength marking how white supremacist and racialised ideas emerged and how domination over others was fathomed. The real intention was to sell those who looked different myths and manufactured realities packaged as mendacity and mendaciloquence projects meaning this was a mind-altering indoctrination of western monoculture and western religion. This was particularly important to those indigenous people whose land was of interest to the west for purposes of looting and theft of their resources. Little research was done to investigate how Africans or indigenous people led their lives, what knowledge guided their lives and what education was there and how the intertwined strength of multiple beliefs, epistemes, cultures and identities would have created a completely different world, one that is free from domination and that aspires to be just “in the family of views” (Hausman and Waldren, 2011, 2). The 21st century learning would have to be based on these diverse ideas collated from across multiple contexts, regional ontologies, worldviews and epistemes. It has to pursue ideals of equity, domination-free society that aspires to be just. Pitso (2023a, Pitso 2023b) calls this new 21st century learning telagogy, a web-based, technology-driven learning that encourages self-determined, peer-based adult learning that is most likely to stream similar to Netflix beyond 2030. In the next sub-section, I explore the philosophical concept of egalitarianism as moral, political, social, economic and religious concept all of which take a stance on equality and inequality. I then advance the notion of equity and argue that our current society has so divided us and put us in different societal pedestals that different anchoring mechanisms would be necessary beyond equality to eventually position all of us on similar societal pedestals. There is also an admission that achieving fundamental equity is an impossible possibility, this idea that perfection is inaccessible (Pitso, 2009) so that I advocate for relative equity. Relative equity refers to the type of anchoring that is in variant for all individuals so that our historical disadvantage determines the type of anchoring for individuals so that we all are placed at a societal pedestal that we all debated and agreed on as long as all of us have universal access to

equal health, fair distribution of wealth and, diverse as well as non-racialised spatial sharing such that rapacious greed and abject poverty are permanently abolished.

This is to build a theoretical framework that undergirds telagogy in addition to the Non-Affirmative Theory of Education and cosmopolitanism. I also share a model that seeks to recapture Africans from their deep-seated slumber of comfort so they can reclaim themselves, their identities, episteme, culture and heritage including our many calendars based on Southern Hemisphere ethno-astronomical knowledge. Southern Africans had their own 75000-years calendar called *Inzalo Yelanga* which is still available in Mpumalanga Province in South Africa (Figure 1). Dogon people, Egyptians and Ethiopians had their own calendar, all of which were based on deep astronomical knowledge of Southern Hemisphere. Mkhize (2011) shows how the Zulu nation in ancient times used the African calendar to manage *Umsamo* and how Africans related to their ancestors. *Umsamo* was intended to host ancestors in our homes and strengthen the relationship between the living and those who are incorporeal and have joined the Community of Saints and are closer to *Tlatlamatjholo/mungu/uNkulunkulu/Umveliqangi* (Supreme Being). The Dogon people, using their enormous ethno-astronomical knowledge, amassed over time developed four calendars as Venus, Sirius, lunar and solar. The lunar calendar was used to link patterns of its movements with activities of farmers (Stratos, 2005). The ancient Egyptian calendar consisted of 360 days, three seasons of four months each. It could have influenced the making of the Julian calendar which, in turn, had an impact on the Gregorian calendar which added a leap year as a distinctive feature.

Figure 1: Southern African Calendar based on Southern Hemisphere ethno-astronomical knowledge



The erroneous use of the 400-years Gregorian calendar based on Northern Hemisphere Astronomy in the Southern Hemisphere cannot be allowed to persist into our domination-free

and just society. It was intended as part of universal deceit. There is a specific relationship between determining activities of a nation and the Astronomy-based Southern Hemisphere calendars. The Gregorian calendar disconnects this vital relationship that brought Africans together to resolve community issues via *letsema/ilima/mmea* (collectivism) based on the climate conditions of the time and encourage Africans to be actively involved in these activities intended to promote the economic conditions of the entire community in what they termed *vukusenzele* (active citizenry). In order to overcome these entrenched western epistemes and practices, Africans have to reclaim and restore their own African cognitive content and practices. For instance, in 845 ACE, Emperor Wuzong of China banned Christianity and decreed that all built church buildings be forfeited to the state. Emperor Wuzong was fully aware of the manufactured realities and myths of Christianity and its insidious promotion of coloniality and its negative impact on Chinese people. This is the problematic that is tackled in this article, the deliberate and insidious impact of coloniality and Abrahamic religions on ruptured psyche of Africans resulting in the violation of their consciousness, mindsets and lacking in pursuit of equity. In order to develop a deeper understanding of these ruptured African psyches, I use netnography as a method of finding out how these psyches of Africans are reinforced or restored to their former African mindsets via social media. I also seek to determine whether there is voluntary efforts from formal structures of coloniality such as institutions of formal education, churches and political formations that attempt to eliminate inequality.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad problematic that is addressed in this study is the system of coloniality and how it seeks to perpetuate itself in a world that seeks to function in a just and fair way in the society that is domination-free. In this study, I tap into ancient history to determine how the western-centred society used difference to create disparity, sustained it this long and seek for it to perpetuate into posterity. In the book called *New Confessions of a Hitman: How America took over the World*, John Perkins describes in considerable detail how the west seeks to maintain the *status quo* of domination and gross injustice. Through Desktop research and assuming a historical posture, I demonstrate how Africans got to be so captured into western religions of Abrahamic origin and why this was necessary to maintain western power and looting. In the 2015 book called *The looting Machine: Warlords, Tycoons, Smugglers, and the Systematic Theft of Africa's Wealth*, Tom Burgis describes in considerable detail how the west continues to this day to steal and loot our resources in collaboration with carefully selected Africans called

in township lingo, *mdlwembe*, (shameless collaborators with the oppressive systems of the west and working against the legitimate struggles of the oppressed). Professor Ruha Benjamin of Princeton University argues that our blackness and womanhood are not in themselves trustworthy given that they tend to be conscripted to advance western agendas and thus become complicit in perpetuating white supremacy. This means being alert all the time, problematise, critique and lay bare how the system of coloniality and its 21st century variant called neo-cyber-coloniality perpetuate itself using our own Africans. The 21st century neo-cyber-coloniality uses sophisticated and advanced technologies such as variants of chat-GPT, meta-verse, immersive technologies, Sora-AI and many more to perpetuate itself into posterity. Professor Ruha Benjamin 2019 book, *Race after Technology* lays bare how social hierarchies such as racism are embedded in the logics of internet-based technologies hence neo-cyber-coloniality in the 21st century. Neo-cyber-coloniality seeks to perpetuate racism, white supremacy, prejudice and discrimination on grounds of these advanced technologies and artificial intelligence. In the 2020 *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography*, a journal article review of the book by Ruha, Benjamin and Tyler McCreary admits that the book is addressing racialisation of advanced technologies so that they are not socially neutral rather entrenches white supremacy given that its racialised patterning stems from Eurocentric episteme which McCreary (2020, 2) considers as a good thing. In his own words, he argues that advanced technologies cannot be based on “fragile assemblages of fragmentary knowledge”. However, these assemblages of fragmentary and precarious knowledges were never given a chance to prove their saliences since the 15th century and were further marginalised when the western scientific plinth of 19th century was imposed as a universal source of clean, unproblematised Eurocentric knowledge which also served as the blueprint of the entire world. I wonder how these advanced technologies were going to look like when all these knowledges from different regional ontologies were allowed to claim their stakes and prove their scientific worth. Advanced technologies features and patterns would have benefitted from these “*assemblages of knowledge*” considered correctly as fragile because they were stunted since 15th century. If given a chance to blossom, a completely different posture would have appeared. Anyway, even western knowledge is based on informed conjecture (Creswell, 2014) bringing doubts on its own stability and inerrancy. Western knowledge beyond its own puffery is equally fragile otherwise what is the point of research and scholarship in this century. McCreary represents a cohort of scientists and scholars who are conscripted in very influential positions in society as scientists to drive a western narrative of white supremacy. Sadly, our own Africans have equally been conscripted to advance this very white supremacy narrative as scientists, scholars,

technocrats and politicians. As Ruha Benjamin in the YouTube clip where she addresses graduates argues that our blackness and our womanness are not going to save us from neo-coloniality and neo-cyber-coloniality because they are essentially untrustworthy as earlier stated. We are yet to determine whether our scientists and scholars in hallowed spaces of higher education can be trusted or treated as equally conscripted to drive and perpetuate white supremacy and manufactured western realities as well as the myths that sustain them. In light of these facts, the following objectives drive this study:

- To demystify ancient history and make transparent how African mindsets remain captured to this day as colonial looting continues unabated. I also show how neo-coloniality has been repackaged as neo-cyber-coloniality, this idea that advanced technologies in the 21st century thrive on racialised patterning of the internet thus perpetuate racism, prejudice and domination-prone society.
- To introduce empowering models of Critical Self-reflection and telagogy, a web-based, technology-driven learning that attempt to re-educate Africans in ways that eliminate constant impugning of their basic dignity and allowing inferioritisation as they actively participate in their own ignominy, an *infra dignitatem*.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

A critical question to pose is whether inequality or inequity should be challenged and eventually eliminated especially in attempts to establish a new world order. Hausman and Waldren (2011) deal effectively with inequality by posing the question of what is wrong with inequality when it simply refers to differences among people. Indeed, they essentially are repeating the Miller Challenge dictum of “what is bad about inequality?”. In response to this question, Hausman and Waldren (2011) argue that there is nothing wrong from a philosophical and moral point of view. The issue is when politics come into play because inequality means unequal access to benefits of health, economy, space, land and education. Colonial politics breed and sustain domination, inequality and poverty. Inequality refers to unequal and unjust distribution of resources collectively accumulated in a particular society.

These matters come under scrutiny in the next sub-sections as part of theorising about a new world order that is domination-free, just and committed to equity.

Table 1: Differences between Equality and Equity

	Equality	Equity
Meaning	Everyone is assumed to be on the same social pedestal	A recognition that each individual has different circumstances and begins from a certain position of disadvantage
Resource Distribution	Equal distribution of resources and opportunities irrespective of social pedestal	Considers social pedestal status to distribute resources and opportunities
Recognition	Treats all members of society as equal irrespective of their social standing	Treat individuals in society in terms of their socio-economic standing
Benefit	Offers all members of society same resources and opportunities	Each individual is given what that individual needs
Consequences	Perpetuate disparities in society	Equalises
Nature of Society	Domination-prone	Domination-free

Egalitarianism and the Case for Relative Equity

Driving the idea that all people are equal and deserving of equal rights, equal resources and equal opportunities, egalitarianism is based on equality. Given impact of slavery and colonialism on continents like Africa, the difference between the life expectancy of Japan and Angola is 43 years but that is not the whole story. Hausman and Waldren (2011) show that the shocking part is that Angola life expectancy is only 38 years marking the devastations of colonialism in Africa. Christianity is the dominant religion in Angola and has failed to arrest this trend. Wariboko (2018) laments the devastation of African personhood that was relational by coloniality and Christianity. Wariboko (2018) calls it a dialectic oscillating on two irreconcilable strivings leading to a crisis of self-identity and split self brought about by the negative impact of Christianity. Split self, in his view, was to be a clash of two main subjectivities of African cognitive content and Christian doctrine. This was an elaboration on what Du Bois (1903) calls “double consciousness”, the presence of two opposing social identities. This has made it near-impossible for Africans to self-form, that is, have a distinct African identity and prosecute own life on the basis of African cognitive content. Self also risks in the face of formidable hegemonies of interest succumbing to exigencies intended to sabotage, capture and control self for narrow ends that benefit not the self but hegemonies of the times such as Christianity. How self forms therefore is of huge interest to hegemonies of the times. The suggestion by Foucault is therefore critical in the creation of self as a work of art – “the self-conscious pursuit of the higher self that is ingenious and intelligent as well as aesthetic”. A good starting point is critical self-reflection as outlined in the empowering model I describe in subsequent sections of this article. Self formation occurs amidst these hegemonic interests, seeking to implant their own exigencies on Africans for their interests not those of Africans. Once one becomes incapable of self-creation, hegemonies would create their own

and once one tries self-creation as a work of art then powerful forces of propaganda and indoctrination would be unleashed on an African. Self-power does not serve the interests of hegemonies hence the ideas of Klikauer (2022) describe in greater detail how hegemonies engage in mass deception to create selves they can control and manipulate. The effort to reach higher self begins with identifying these patterns of mass deception, instruments used to resist self-formation and engaging in self-creation of the higher, aesthetic African.

Economic inequality, access to unequal health and unequal education occur in the presence of this religion because it enables the primitive capitalist system and thus is complicit in the exercise of inequality brought about by the western economic setup that breeds income inequality, denies people the right to equal health. The west firmly believes that “faith, soul, a belief in higher power” (Perkins, 2016, 50) is necessary for the optimal functionality of colonialism hence religions such as Christianity are promoted under the economic system that breeds inequality and a Gini Coefficient of 60% in Africa. Africa is one of the most unequal continents in the world given that its own population has been denied equal access to resources and land which the west continues to loot and steal (ÍBurgis 2015). Africans have been duped to believe that there is a place called heaven, an estate prepared solely for their eternal bliss, *in the sweet by and by*” by Christians who have never been there. The anagogical remains in our own imagination and that imagination has been weaponised to serve interests of hegemonies of colonialism and Christianity. In the book called *The African Experience*, Khapoya (1994) describes lucidly how ancient Christian missionaries worked in cahoots with colonisers to achieve a common goal of what Brian Schmidt (2015) calls “Christianity as a double-edged sword in colonial Africa”. Schmidt (2015) describes how Christian missionaries played a major role in enabling colonialism and how today it continues on the same path in creating conducive conditions for neo-coloniality and neo-cyber-coloniality to persist even in a materially different global ambience. Iskarna (2018) uses NgugiO’Thiongo 1965 novel to demonstrate how the relationship between Christianity and colonialism enabled the looting and theft of African resources by the west.

Another response to Miller’s challenge on why inequality is bad is called fundamentalist egalitarianism which posits that greater weight ought to be assigned to those bearing the greater brunt of inequality produced by political-economic setup such as that of colonialism and its variants, apartheid. Two additional responses come from traditions of telic egalitarianism which argue that it is in itself worse bad that others are in a worse off condition than others (Moss, 2009). Another emerged from deontic egalitarianism which suggests that it would be unfair if two people with identical claim to a resource would then get unequal share (Moss,

2009). Given that deontic egalitarianism seeks fairness, it is in the territory of justice it becomes relevant to this study particularly restorative justice defined as atonement to what harm was caused to a victim. It involves restoration and taking specific actions to right the harm committed to another individual. The focus is then on victim-offender mediation, conflict resolution, victim impact panels, family group conferences and circle sentencing. The objectives of restorative justice are similar to those of seeking equalisation and fairness thus closer to what I term relative equity on a number of fronts. Firstly, an injustice ought to be visible for both to apply. In terms of inequity, an unfairness ought to have happened and in restorative justice, a harm ought to have been inflicted both of which disadvantage the victim. Secondly, it involves an individual who has been disadvantaged, one way or the other. Thirdly, some course of action for accountability is required in both instances to even or equalise the playing fields. Relative equity refers to the type of anchoring that is in variant for all individuals so that our historical disadvantage determines it. Restorative justice also seeks some anchoring to function.

Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is a philosophical stance that posits that people in the entire globe belong to a larger global community irrespective of differences in ethnicity, religion, language and political affiliation. This means that all humans belong to one community as one race despite differences. This is a celebration of difference as a strength and recognition that in our diversity we are stronger. The concept emanates from ancient times when humanity and its nature were intrinsically intertwined leading to Diogenes declaring in 412 BCE that he was the citizen of the world (Nowicka, 2024). This Diogenes perspective inspired the Stoic cosmopolitanism which was opposed to Greek divisions between the Greeks themselves and those foreigners they labelled as barbarians giving recognition to our universal citizenry. If, as early as the fourth century, humanity embraced this concept of world citizenship then colonialism, racism and gender imbalances would not have occurred and things like inequality would have not happened. Cosmopolitanism is inclusive at all levels of society and posits an interconnected world at a political, economic, social and recognises diversity of culture, race, ethnicity and values as sources of strength not weakness. Our differences cannot be used to privilege others such as the avaricious oligarchy while others live in abject penury. Cosmopolitanism reject the notion unequal distribution of privilege and opportunities. It is therefore consistent with any type of egalitarianism particularly deontic egalitarianism with its focus on fairness and justice.

Non-Affirmative Theory of Education

This new theory of education is suitable for those committed to creating a new world order that is domination-free and just. It considers all knowledges as legitimate irrespective of the context of origin. It suggests that students should summon first knowledge from within their contexts and regional ontologies and then supplement by knowledges from other contexts but should affirm non of it. This is to avoid signification of one knowledge form because where there is signification, displacement of other equally deserving is not far away. In this theory, no absolute truth exists only perspectives and no facts only accounts reflecting key principles of Nietzsche perspectivism theory. Under this theory, the 19th century scientific plinth is treated as a regional ontology with its own assumptions about the nature of reality which, in its case, is mechanical and objective. We know that western science is based on informed conjecture (Creswell, 1994), reduces humanity to people that respond mechanically on the exigencies and vagaries of nature and is deeply influenced by assumptions of Behavioural Psychology that studies behaviours of animals and try to extrapolate such behaviors to humans using ratomorphistic experiments. Humans are more complex and cannot be reduced to animal behaviour as that is *infra dignitatem*.

Integrated Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in this study integrates cosmopolitanism, Non-Affirmative Theory of Education (NATE) and the philosophical take on equity. The physical and psychological wounds caused by colonialism at a physical level and coloniality at a psychological level compel for individual anchoring hence the need for relative equity. This would then level the playing field so that we all can start from a common social pedestal. Post-1994, the democratic dispensation started off on the wrong foot. Moeletsi Mbeki in his 2009 book entitled *The Architect of Poverty* describes how the democratic dispensation created conditions for generation of poverty through a brilliant plan of co-opting former political activists who became instant millionaires through the Black Economic Empowerment and later called Broad-Based Economic Empowerment. This was to prepare white privilege for the new dispensation and to hide the fact that white privilege amassed through colonialism and its variant, apartheid in the form of avaricious oligarchy was having a face-lift. The new dispensation thus lost out on formulating policies that would serve greater good rather serve narrow interests of the oligarchic elite. Sampie Terreblanche in his 2012 book called *Lost in Transformation: South Africa's Search for a New Future since 1986* calls all of these political maneuvering the behind-the-scene British and American manipulation that sought to protect the narrow interests of their

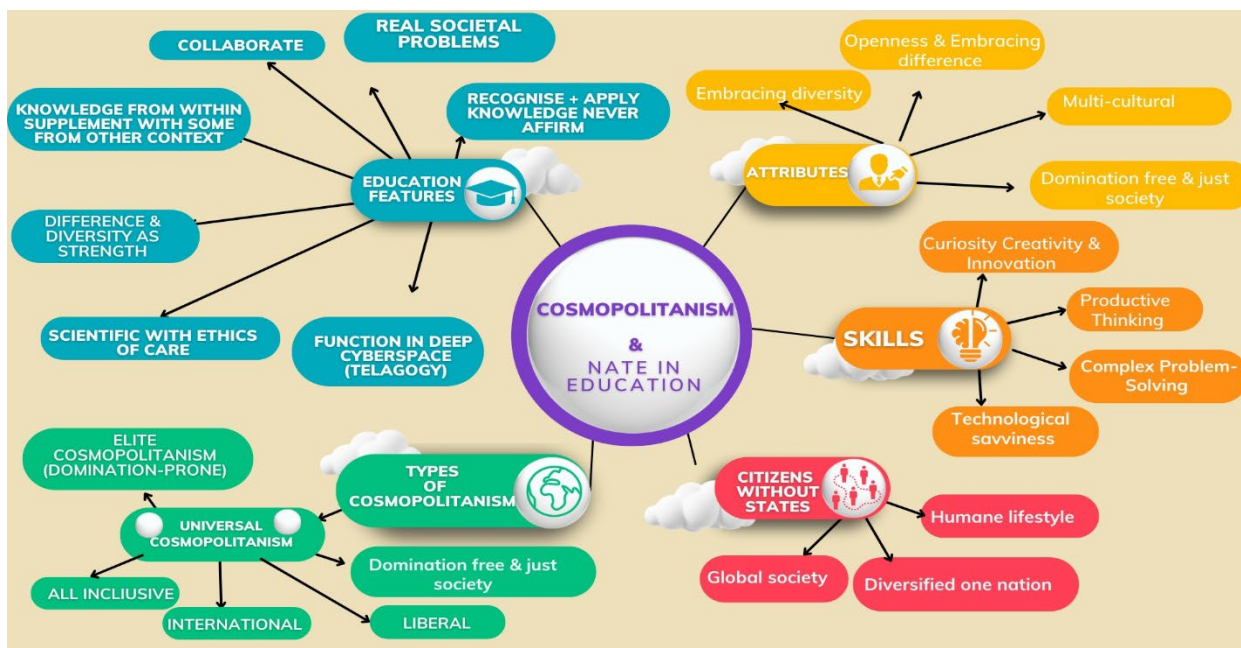
transnational corporations. The real bargaining chip was whether the then views of the ANC seeking equity would triumph in light of the interests of the avaricious oligarchy. BBB-EE has to be seen as the triumph and sustaining of the interests of the oligarchic elite. What got lost in transformation is actually equity and the interest of oppressed Africans who continue to carry the yoke of neo-coloniality under democratic dispensation. Higher education, as leaders of society have to make transparent the need for equity hence the introduction of telagogy which is not only about learning driven by advances in technology but one that probes the fundamental essence of our current democratic society and its failure to embrace equity. There is also a historical twist which traced the micro-genesis of disadvantaged and how it is sustained via neo-coloniality and neo-cyber-coloniality given that these technologies are not socially neutral. The key features of telagogy seeking relative equity are:

- It rejects the entrenched 19th century western scientific plinth as the blueprint of the entire world and advances that it is no more than a regional ontological perspective. It posits a broad-based scientific plinth with a strong work ethic meaning the science with the ethic of care so that science becomes implicated in reversing the damages caused by coloniality and pursuit of epistemic, social and economic equity.
- Telagogy honours and celebrates difference and diversity as sources of strength not grounds for racism, prejudice and discrimination. Colonialism in all its manifestations whether seeking epistemic injustice, spatial and economic differentiation used to this day, difference and diversity as a partitioning mechanism.
- Telagogy is based on the new theory of education called Non-Affirmative Theory of Education (NATE). It advances two main ideas. Firstly, the recognition of all epistemes from across all contexts and the view that all epistemes have a regional ontological origin including western episteme. Secondly, NATE calls for any education to help students to summon knowledge from their own regional realities first then supplement it with knowledge from other contexts but more importantly, never affirm it. Affirmation of a specific knowledge brings into play the condensation and displacement dynamics via the process of signification and marginalisation. We know what happened when humanity or section of it chose to affirm knowledge from the western regional ontology.
- Telagogy is based on the notion of collaboration amongst students themselves, students and lecturers and, between students as well as advanced technologies in co-creation of value and productive problem-solving. In the 18th century, the students-lecturer collaboration helped shape the Physics episteme when Friedrich Kohlrausch

employed a student-centred pedagogy to collaborate with his own students to discover new knowledge about Physics. He even went further to make them present their findings in conferences.

- Another feature of telagogy is its tackling of real, social problems drawn from regional realities and help solve community issues. In Scandinavia where I spent four months in 2018 as the quest researcher in the Engineering Faculty of Lund University, I stumbled upon an idea they use for the classroom-community projects. It involves building a database of real problems from the community and local government which the community and local government submit to the university. Students then build collaborative teams of five and chose which problem to tackle and solve. The solutions are shared with the concerned parties. Students, in turn, receive marks for such projects.
- Telagogy embraces, applies and optimises advances technologies such as variants of chat-GPT, meta-verse, holo-connect, Sora-AI and many other such technologies. It argues that beyond 2030, *mutatis mutandis*, higher education would stream similar to Netflix.
- There are skillsets that would be vital to develop under telagogy such as shifting undergraduates learning from reproductive learning which is based on epistemology of mimesis to developing productive thinking, complex problem-solving similar to collaborative projects of Scandinavian Universities and build in students curiosity, creativity and innovation. In the longitudinal study of 16 00 cohort of children, NASA researchers sought to measure the creativity of these participants over time. The purpose of the study was to measure their creativity and innovation using the test NASA initially applied to its recruits. The findings show that at five-years old, participants creative genius was 98%. At 15 years it dropped to 12% and as young university adults, it dropped to 2%. Professor Huha Benjamin in a YouTube clip where she is addressing an audience on *Imagination: A Manifesto* provides a lucid explanation for this phenomenon:
- “the inherent genius that we all possess is schooled out of us. The very place we should go to...to incite our minds is the very place where it is routinely squashed, ground down and standardised not inevitably but predictably and it is not individual students that suffer but society as a whole”.

She then recommends that we should take Imagination as the site of struggle. Telagogy is doing exactly that. It is almost criminal that our education system from primary to university is squashing creativity, Imagination and innovation out of ourselves. In my own investigation on creativity in undergraduate studies, I used the standardised Torrance's Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT) in a cross-sectional study to determine the creativity of 54 advanced Engineering undergraduates (N=54) (Pitso, 2011). TTCT measures fluency, the number of ideas a student can generate at a given time. It also measures Flexibility, the number of a variety of ideas that a student can produce at a given time as well as Originality referring to the Novelty of generated ideas per given time. The results showed a slightly higher percentage in fluency, moderate percentage on flexibility and very low percentage in Originality thus confirming the NASA study and Professor Benjamin's comments that our inherently endowed creative genius is being systematically being eroded out of us to a point where, once we reach higher learning then it drops from 98% to 2%. This is an indictment to university learning focused narrowly on standardisation, reproduction and indoctrination of disciplinary knowledge especially at undergraduate studies. Given its marginalisation, curiosity and imagination have to be sites of struggle especially at a university level to reverse the 2% score. Telagogy seeks exactly to reverse this trend at higher education captured by a corporatised business model that pursue quantity in lieu of creativity, Imagination and innovation in what Hayes (2017) calls Macdonaldisation of Higher education. The essential problem that schools-out our inherent creative genius is the application of pedagogy meant for children of the ancient elite at a University.

Figure 2: The Integrated Theoretical Framework

DIGITAL DIVIDE AND CASE STUDIES

In our comprehensive effort to better understand and clarify the practical aspects of telagogy and its potential challenges, we organised Academic Writing Retreats offside to focus on:

- The practical applications of telagogy across diverse students composition.
- Its potential obstacles and challenges.

This effort resulted in the book I edited called “Telagogy: New Learning in Society 5.0: Beyond Neo-Coloniality and Neo-Cyber-Coloniality” which is currently under review at African Sun Media Publishers. Some of the chapters focus on experiments conducted on chat-GPT with advanced undergraduates, meta-verse in rural areas with potential to bridge the digital divide. Another case study involves testing the practical application of immersive technologies including meta-verse in providing alternatives to actually gaining workplace experience by physically attending.

Potential challenges include consideration of universal accreditation system which in the same book, is suggested in making telagogy to enable marginalised regional realities. This is also necessary because students of the future would curate their own curriculum drawn from various educational institutions across the globe. This would also compel governments to fund students in lieu of universities.

RESEARCH METHODS

Desktop Research

Taking a historical stance, the study sought to debunk myths of coloniality as also repackaged as neo-coloniality and neo-cyber-coloniality by using an Internet-based Desktop research method. This research approach deals with two insidious aspects of coloniality as a system and as a propaganda machine. As a system like any system, it has specific objective it seeks to achieve and combines some parts so they work orderly to achieve desired results. A system therefore consists of a goal, arranged key concepts that function smoothly to achieve desired results. The goal of colonialism was simple. Firstly, identify indigenous places of interest meaning find what take Europe forward economically such as raw resources. Secondly, impose a political system that suits European agenda of taking the resources of the defeated indigenous people by any means necessary including violence and mental capture. At a physical level use violence and at a psychological level brainwash them. The focus of the study was on the psychological level. The strategy that was employed was that of inferioritisation, make indigenous people despise their own capabilities, cultures and abandon their identities plus their knowledge so as to embrace the knowledge the system offers. The system is so designed that it privileges its own knowledge and marginalises indigenous knowledge which it deliberately devalues. In collecting data from the internet, I focus on the marginalised and devalued data and why it was ostracised. The table below was used to capture data:

Table 2: Data Collection Table from the Colonial System

Goal	
Parts	
Desired results	

The research then focuses on coloniality as a propaganda machine. A propaganda machine is a social construct used in universal deceit of a particularly targeted population. It has elements of a distorted truth, miseducation and deception. The main purpose of the propaganda machine is inferioritisation to a point of developing the capacity to live with the absurdity of abandoning one's identity, culture, values and knowledge as one embraces same from foreignness. It also includes the willingness to obey orders from foreignness. It also creates perfect conditions for perpetuation of slave-master mentality of 15th century when elite paradigm was fathomed. Until today, the apparatus of the propaganda machine are still visible but ingeniously hidden to the majority of Africans but also include moneyed *mdlwembe* in suits who have been bribed into oligarchic elite ambiances to betray the legitimate struggles of his/her own people for equity. Table 2 below was used to critically examine how the propaganda machine was enabled and worked for coloniality, neo-coloniality and, now neo-cyber-coloniality

Table 3: Data Collection Table for the Propaganda machine

	<i>Ancient coloniality</i>	Neo-coloniality		Neo-cyber-coloniality
The propagandist				
The audience				
The content				
The media				
The effects				

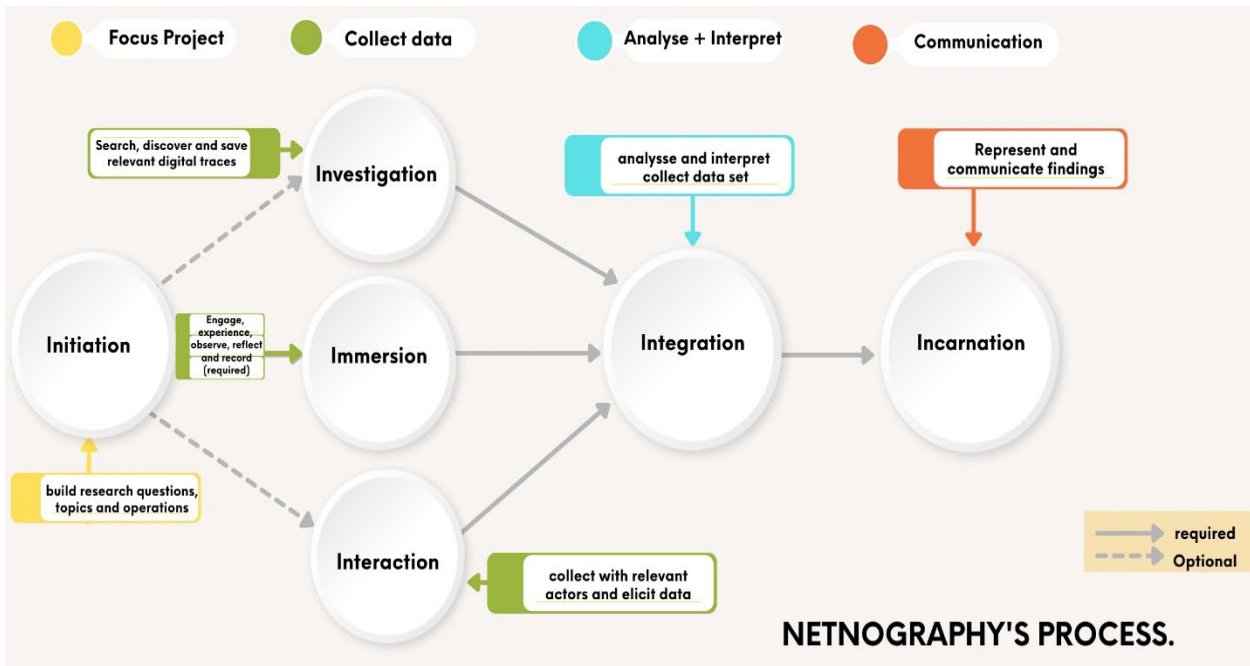
Netnography as an Emerging Research Method

Defined as a qualitative, participant-observational research that combines the strength of the internet and ethnography, Netnography involves better understanding online communities agendas via immersing one into these communities, understanding their motives, purpose and agendas. It essentially involves application of multimodal observations, elicitation and digital traces (Kozinets and Gretzel, 2024).

Netnographic Process A netnographic process is about capturing the authentic digital expressions without disrupting the online communities ecosystem (Gewinner, 2023). Overt posting and visible public conversations are therefore undesirable but risk exposing the lurker (one conducting an online research as a participant observer) to scratching the surface and failing to capture the culture of an online community. It is a complexity between etic, a detached outsider observing posting from without to achieve apparent objectivity and the emic hoping to capture deep cultural essences of online communities. Ethnography proceeds on the basis of capturing salient nuances of the culture of an online community and given its influence on shaping netnographic process, it is the emic perspective that is adopted in the study.

The first activity of netnography is immersion in datasets, that is, join identified online community or communities as is the case in this study. The issue is to access the rich sources of digital traces to uncover agendas being pursued by each online community. Immersion includes the initiation stage which gives focus to the research project by first deciding on which online communities to investigate and the rationale for the investigation of the chosen online community. In the case of this study, the purpose is to determine how social media perpetuates ancient propaganda of Christianity and coloniality either by way of reinforcing these myths and manufactured realities or by restoring cultures, identities, knowledges and heritages of the colonised territories which, in this case, involves South Africa as a microcosm of the many colonised African countries. Once registered as a lurker in a particular online community then active engagement with the content shared in that community follows checking for consistency of posting, consistency of messaging, agendas and cultures being build. Messaging refers to how the message is packaged and presented. I use the communication analytical tool called

Figure 3: A Netnographic Process



Rhetorics such as conquest, conversion, advice and invitation to decipher how the message is packaged and to what end. Rhetorics analyses communication/messaging in terms of determining the relationship between the persuader and the persuaded audience with varying degrees of severity of violence on the mind. Conquest persuasion seeks to win over the audience by any means necessary including indoctrination and propaganda. Conversion persuasion seeks same as conquest persuasion but is open to malleability to suit prevailing contextual issues such as modification to adjust to cultural nuances, languages as long as the audience is persuaded. Advice rhetorics still wish to persuade the audience but with little force. Invitational rhetorics jettison persuasion completely and seeks to engage the audience in a powerful conversation.

Table 4: Posting Datasets

	<i>Messaging</i>	<i>Agendas</i>	<i>Lingering Effects</i>	<i>Digital traces/cultural artefacts</i>
Community 1				
Community 2				
Community 3				
Community 4				
Community 5				
Community 6				

Criteria for Selecting Online Communities

The following criteria were used to select online communities:

- **Shared purpose:**
Online communities exist to serve a particular purpose and drive a certain narrative. It makes that agenda quite clear on its title.
- **Guiding principles:**
Guiding principles include users being accepted on condition that they share the agenda, interests, beliefs and objectives of the online community.
- **Need it Serves:**
A number of online communities have a need to serve and attracts people who share that need.

Analyse and Interpret Collected Data

In the analysis of datasets 1 focus goes to coloniality as a system, its formation, agendas, goals, parts that form a whole and desired goals (Table 1). Datasets 2 focus is on coloniality's propaganda machine used for mass deception and mass indoctrination. Key constructs are identifying propagandists including their interests and methods of persuasion, the gullible audience, the propaganda content, media and negative effects of a sustained propaganda and indoctrination. Datasets 3 pays attention to social media and the online communities formation, messaging, agendas they seek, and digital traces they lingering long after the message is delivered.

RESULTS

Datasets 1: Coloniality as a System

The goal of coloniality was to create a system based on manufactured realities, ancient myths and distortions in order to indoctrinate those whose territory was of interest to the west. It was essentially a system designed to alter mindsets and achieve inferioritisation of the indigenous people. This way, the indigenous people are eviscerated of their localised cognitive content, made to forget their identities and cultures as they are given colonial tags so they forget complete who they are. They are thus made to live with the absurdity of not knowing who they are, their histories and made to mouth others histories, embrace others cultures and epistemes. The system similar to ideology is at its most powerful when the victims become the ones defending it. Pitso (2023c) calls it a moment when one is othered. Othered self is when a person

has utterly embraced others identity, culture worldview, religion, calendar, lifestyle, education and has abandoned his/her own. In Africa, the west have achieved their desired goal of evisceration of African cognitive content, inferioritisation and complete capture although some African voices are beginning to rise again and arrest the descent to the ridiculous. Table 1 below summarises the findings from datasets 1:

Table 5: Epistemicide (total destruction of indigenous knowledge)

Goal	To totally eviscerate indigenous people of their cognitive content plus their inferioritisation
Parts	Use physical violence, proselytise, eviscerate, educate, indoctrinate, entrench your ways, reinforce constantly via building intimidating infrastructure
Desired results	Othered self, indoctrinated into a foreign belief and worldview

Datasets 2: Coloniality as a Propaganda Machine

The propaganda machine depends on someone who produces. and spreads distorted facts and ideas that further a colonial cause and damages identities, knowledges, culture and worldviews of others. Ancient propagandists were Christian missionaries, educators in formal institutions and later, the clergy. It has to be remembered that the clergy via their churches introduced formal education in African communities. Western formal education insidiously produced and spread propaganda through textbooks, the Bible and educators some of which were Africans including clergy. The propaganda machine functioned like a well-oiled machine. Monday to Friday, Africans were exposed to the propaganda of formal education which advanced western-centred knowledge at the exclusion of other equally deserving knowledges using mimetic epistemology whose underlying plinth was the slave-master mentality which was modified into expert-novice plinth. Weekend was reserved for the churches to continue with the propaganda agenda. As if that was not enough, Thursdays were introduced as women worship because women spent more time with children so served as potential propagandists. The neo-coloniality propaganda machine had to devise an insidious plan of using formal education up to university to drive the propaganda of western-centred epistemology and regional ontology as the only show in town. Of course, the church was very much part of the propaganda machinery. In the 21st century with people now exposed to accessing knowledge on their own, the propaganda machinery had to adjust accordingly and hide its cause through being embedded in advanced technologies. In all of these propaganda permutations, the audience remains largely African

and facts remain distorted. The media including social media is effectively used to achieve the same effects as the ancient propaganda machinery.

Table 6: Juxtaposition and Contrast of Ancient Coloniality and Neo-Coloniality

	<i>Ancient coloniality</i>	<i>Neo-coloniality</i>	<i>Neo-cyber-coloniality</i>
The propagandist	Christian missionaries, educators of formal education, clergy, parents	Educators, lecturers, Professors, media, clergy	Advanced technologies such as variants of chat-GPT, meta-verse, holo-connect, Sora-AI and many other such technologies
The audience	Indigenous people whose territories have been identified as of interest for the west to loot and steal	Indigenous people	Indigenous people
The content	Distorted facts, promotion of a single worldview, single knowledge, inappropriate use of Northern Hemisphere Astronomy in the affairs of Southern Hemisphere countries	Entrenched 19 th century western scientific plinth in the 21 st century, inappropriate use of 15 th century pedagogy, western-centred curriculum epistemology, underlying master-slave mentality packaged as novice-expert plinth	Terabytes of knowledge stored and programmed into advanced technologies including mobile phones, tablets and computers
The media	Books, radio, Morse code	Mass media such as newspapers, television and faxes, churches, clergy	Social media, television, podcasts, tick-tock, Apps such as WhatsApp
The effects	To other self	Overt Reinforcements	Covert Reinforcements

Datasets 3: Reinforcements or Reclamation

In trying to better understand qualitatively how social media is used as part of the propaganda machinery, I purposively selected seven online communities of which three is for sustaining Christianity and three which seeks to restore African cognitive content. Given that this is the cognitive age, I added one that ignite and inspire people to think critically. The idea was to determine how many people visit it. The results are captured in the Table below.

Table 7: Christianity as Political Project and Part of Neo-Coloniality

	Messaging	Agendas	Persuasion method	Digital traces/cultural artefacts
Community 1: Christian Network	11000 members, 90% video clips posting, responses are rare.	Christian message	Conquest to conversion	Images of European Jesus despite the invention of photography in 1822. You wonder who are these actors?
Community 2: Bible Study: Free Speech	178000 members,. Video clips and textual posting		Conquest to conversion	Images of an European Jesus
Community 3: Christian community	45 000 members, combination of video clips, textual, quotes from the Bible	Mostly Christian message although there was one Muslim video clips	Conquest to advice because some posting includes questions and comments	Images of an European Jesus
Community 4: Lies in Religion	18 000 members, video clips and textual posting	Refutes all that is Christian,	Advice rhetorics	Drawing of an eye on African map
Community 5: Putting our Ancestors First	102 000 members, video clips and textual posting	Restoring African cognitive content	Invitational rhetorics, people are invited to ask questions and share their ideas in an open space of engagement	The Nguni shield, ignited candles
Community 6: The African History	83 000 members, vide clips, textual posts, aesthetical images	Restoration of real African history	Invitational rhetorics	A photo of san people, father, son and daughter
Community 7: The Thinker's Quotes	392 000 members, video clips, pictures with text, textual posting	Critical thinking but Christians have also posted	Invitational rhetorics and a mix of conquest and conversion from Christian posting	Photo of Martin Luther King

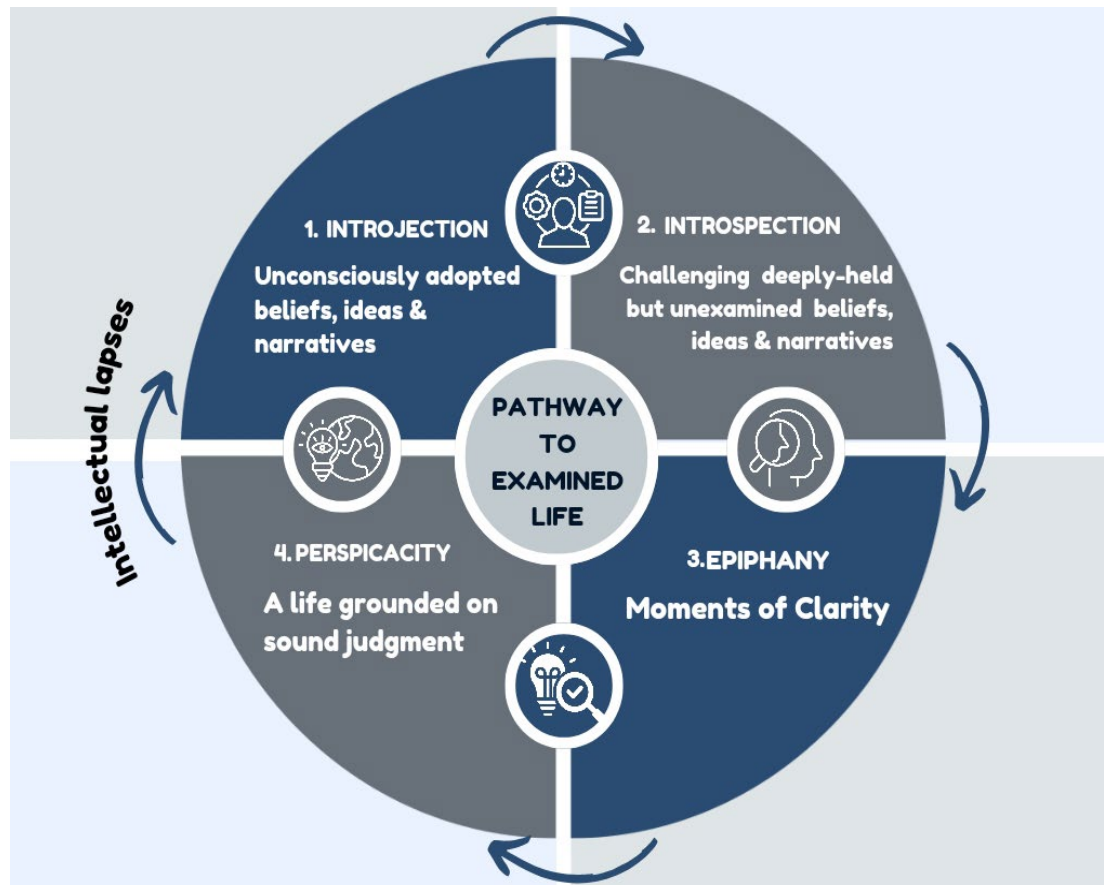
The Empowering Model

In this model, the first stage involves examining unconsciously adopted beliefs, ideas, ancient narratives, worldviews and knowledge. They need to be made transparent, recorded and examined critically. Each identified issue has to be examined and fixed. For instance, the inappropriateness of using a Northern Hemisphere calendar in Southern Hemisphere is adopted and used by most Africans unconsciously. This is an issue that needs addressing because there is a link between astronomical movements and African activities. This thing of people of the South being made to go on holiday and celebrating Christmas in December and new year in January 1 as adopted unconsciously has to be fixed. The African year begins in August 1 or September 01 and it is the time of all hands on deck agriculture-wise. Stage 2 entails Introspection, challenging these identified beliefs, ideas and worldviews until a moment of clarity becomes visible followed by built-in capacity to make sound judgements.

Telagogy as New Learning Beyond Domination and Injustices

New, streaming and technology-driven learning Pitso (2023a, 2023b) calls “telagogy” seeks a domination-free and just society. It calls for challenging variants of coloniality including neo-cyber-coloniality and driving social equity and justice.

Figure 4: Pathway to Examined Life



CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS

In *Race after Technology*, Professor Ruha Benjamin shows how ubiquitous apps and complex algorithms in this century are capable of reinforcing white supremacy and increase social inequity. She cites automation not simply as a product of racist programmers insidiously scheming on the dark web that advance inferioritisation but as deepening, discrimination under the guise of being neutral. She argues that this is a more sophisticated form of racism hidden and buried in deep programming and appears neutral and even benevolent. Through applying the concept of “New Jim Code”, Professor Ruha Benjamin shows how the biases and prejudices of programmers play out in dark spaces of programming artificial intelligence and machine learning. Choices on datasets and technical knowledge bias western-centred epistemology and

marginalises knowledges from the other contexts arguing superficially that embedded in these advanced technologies is machine learning which adds a layer of neutrality. However, this piecemeal addition of other knowledges does not begin to address the fundamental question of how coloniality marginalised and schooled out these other epistemes from other contexts so they became stunted and devalued to a point where they got ostracised and dumped in the cesspool of history. As long as western-centred epistemology is used to develop advanced technologies then past ills of inequity come to play. The assumed objectivity, scientific merit and unbiasedness of these advanced technologies obfuscate the truth about their true intentions as repackaged coloniality that perpetuate past ills of prejudices, discrimination and inequity. This is what I call neo-cyber-coloniality and needs to be eliminated in order to create conditions in which telagogy could thrive. The conditions appropriate for telagogy are domination-free, just and the society based on achieving social equity.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study makes use of mostly secondary data in the form of Desktop research although it adds Netnography to add primary data. It also fails to show how telagogy can be applied across the global context of diverse educational settings as that is part of future research. It also does not show how practically it can be implemented, meet accreditation demands and institutional standards. These are issues for further research.

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