



Pedagogical Anxiety in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Implication to social work teaching and learning

Dionisio Nyaga, Ph.D.^{1,2*}

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¹School of Social Work, Algoma University, Canada

²ORCID: 0000-0003-2884-4240

*Corresponding author: Dionisio Nyaga, dionisio.nyaga@algomau.ca

Abstract. There has been minimal discussion on the effects of artificial intelligence (AI) in social work teaching and learning in Canada (Hodgson et al, 2022). This paper therefore attempts to look at artificial intelligence in social work teaching and learning in ways that center voices from the margin (Holmes & Porayska-Pomsta, 2023; Menifield, 2022), mostly those of African and Black students in the western social work classroom (Moore, et al, 2022; Zuckerman et al, 2022). Equally, there is limited scholarship on experiences of Black students within the social work curriculum and classroom. This coupled with historical injustices meted on Black students and the role of social work in this form of racial erasure pushed me to bring on board prevailing issues of anti-Black racism in social work teaching and learning in Canada. Artificial Intelligence may exacerbate an already historically fragile relationship between the Black students and a white social work curriculum. I look at this discussion as one of the many social work ethical teaching and learning issues that continue to be overlooked in discussions entailing technological anxieties in modern social work classrooms and for which many social work schools continue to pay less attention. It is these forms of everyday forgetting and ignorance within a white centric classroom that I seek to interrogate and bring on board issues of anti-Black racism in a technologically accelerated classroom. This paper is an invitation to actively discuss and foreground historical anti-Black racism that continues to manifest in contemporary technological escalation and expansion and for which to me seems to be relegated into the epistemic margins. The paper calls for a robust discussion of how issues facing Black and African social work students must be considered in ways that are ethical when engaging with technological concerns brought about by Artificial Intelligence. The paper invites communities of social work scholars, governments, and all stakeholders both within and outside the educational sector to include issues of historical anti-Black and anti-African racisms into discussion on Artificial Intelligence and acknowledge the complex and intersectional ways in which Black social work students are expunged and deported within the Canadian social work classroom environment. Such an ethical engagement compels us to find ways of centering and employing intersectional and complex epistemological axes into the current anxieties on technological acceleration of the Canadian social work classroom brought about by Artificial Intelligence. This is an important and

fundamental aspect of social work teaching and learning, because a failure to do so may equally mean accelerated harm to Black and African social work students in Western classrooms.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Black Students, African Students, Teaching, Learning, Open Access.

Introduction

It seems to me that much of the discussion being held in public forums about the employment of Artificial Intelligence in social work teaching and learning have failed to open anti-Black racism envelope that could help us reimagine the social work classroom in new and complex ways that are curious to Black and African histories, values, and realities (Duhaney et al, 2022; Lilly et al, 2023; Smith et al, 2023). The message is clear; that Black social work students continue to face existential racial eviction and deportation in the social work classroom and yet such historical truth continues to be sidelined and marked as purely instinctual and unfounded. Those who attempt to open the envelope seem to collapse African ways of living into a single story, with the intention of being culturally competent or sensitive (Pon, 2009) to Black issues in social work teaching and learning. The danger in such forms of western epistemic charity to Black based teaching and learning and for which social work remains implicated is the forgetting of African spirituality as a fundamental element of African ontology and epistemology; and the eventual epistemic violence on Black students in Canadian social work classrooms (Mayor, 2023). Such forgetfulness helps commodify and market Africa in the world market to impress how artificial intelligence cares for the childlike Africa. Such forms of care have overtime been marked as violent and meant to hide and conceal whiteness and white supremacy in social work teaching and learning. The social work classroom becomes an industrial complex of manufacturing such white centric narrative about Africa while simultaneously upstaging a white educator as the quintessential savior of the Black and African student in the social work classroom.

This ontology of forgetting has been discussed at length by Pon (2009), who argues that such an imperial cultural direction helps to reify racism in new ways. Even though past research has touched on the everyday erasure of African and Black students in the class (Curran et al, 2022), it remains to be seen how such racial eviction will find its way in the discussions on Artificial Intelligence more so in the social work classroom. What seems to be current and manifest in public forums on Artificial Intelligence remains white and pure (Holmes & Porayska-Pomsta, 2023) and fails to recognize and acknowledge anti-Black racism in the social work classroom and how technologies of Black erasure continue to be employed in social work teaching and learning to deport, simplify, quantify, and ultimately expunge Black and African social work students from the classroom (Altaha et al, 2023 Deas & Mina, 2023).

The paper therefore attempts to remember Africa in social work teaching and learning in the age of Artificial Intelligence in ways that are complex, critically reflexive and intersectional, while bringing on board histories, values, and realities of Black and African social work students as a necessary ethical requirement in these discussions (King et al, 2014). The paper argues that the questions of African anxieties and Artificial Intelligence must be valued, mattered and accounted for as we imagine and mitigate epistemic imperialism and colonialism in Canadian social work classroom settings. This paper inserts discussions of colonial anti-Black racism technologies that have previously been employed in western social work teaching and learning and how they might be accelerated and entangled with artificial intelligence in ways that conceal and hide anti-African and anti-Black racism in the social work classroom while simultaneously creating an impression of a white curriculum as the quintessential savior of the deplorable and broken Black student.

First, I give my story as a student in a colonial classroom and relate the colonial modalities that were employed to simplify my Indigeneity as an African student. After that, I delve into the discussion of biopolitics of reason and white logic in determining what gets to be imagined as intelligible and the simultaneous acts of racial erasure of African indigeneity and Afrocentric values and realities (Asante, 1988; Dei, 2017; Nyaga, 2017). Through this white centered epistemic discussion, Africa is forgotten and ignored as not belonging to the space of reason; and therefore relegated into instinctual existence. This form of racial erasure was employed in my education journey to eliminate my African consciousness and expunge my values and realities. Logic and science are considered white and consequently the African body is supposed to be decanted into the software of whiteness in what has come to be referred to as the African development or civilization ((Mbembe, 2017;2016). Such a Western and white centric model of development and saving of the ‘African child’ must be seen in the context of violent colonization of the African psyche and subsequent erasure of African values and ways of being (Shipley, Comaroff & Mbembe, 2010). In a nutshell, whiteness as a software of colonization helps discount African Indigenous teaching and learning, instead asserting the white classroom as a quintessential savior of the broken and deplorable African child. From there I look at serialization and downloading of reason into Artificial Intelligence (Mbembe, 2021) and how that may as well be employed in accelerated ways to hide and conceal anti-Black and anti-African racisms in Canadian social work teaching and learning. We are entering an age of accelerated and entangled life and in it, we run the risk of further decelerating the gains made in anti-racism social justice —more so in social work teaching and learning.

As I write in this paper, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has pushed out any engagement of critical race theory in the curriculum (“Ron DeSantis Mounts Effort,” 2023). We continue to witness a calculated racist onslaught in school systems in Toronto and Canada-wide. These are just some of the

mundane epistemological infrastructures that continue to be laid down to finally see the world as having overcome the Black and African problem. I see this as a violent onslaught on the Black and African social work student meant to silence any anti-Black racism criticisms and conversation and stop any further discussion on critical equity, diversity, and inclusion in social work teaching and learning. I then look at the challenges of Artificial Intelligence in the social work classroom setting, as well as unveil Indigenous Black and African opportunities in a social work classroom that employs Artificial Intelligence and then offer some concluding remarks.

Story of Our Life: Developing the African Child

I was born and raised in Kenya before relocating to Canada for higher education. While I was born in Kenya's capital Nairobi, I grew up in the rural areas of Kenya with the care of my grandparents who took care of me while in the rural areas. They imparted on me the value of histories, culture, and well-being of our Embu Indigenous community in Kenya. I am from the Indigenous Embu community, and therefore my grandparent saw it fit to steep me in my cultural philosophy. Embu is an agricultural Indigenous community reside on the slopes of Mount Kenya, currently called Embu County. The model of cultural transmission is through word of mouth. The Embu Indigenous community believe in the power of the human as both a carrier and oracles (libraries) of knowledge. This epistemological and ontological belief runs contrary to the western ways of life as well as the Artificial Intelligence mode of documentation that believes in a one-stop-shop library. When I was growing up, much of my knowledge was through storytelling, proverbs, and riddles. Knowledge was and continues to be passed from one generation to the next, not necessarily to maintain it as original knowledge but rather to recreate new knowledges across generations. The expectation is that Indigenous knowledge and its production must evolve over time while maintaining African values and realities within it.

This kind of knowledge helped to unite Embu Indigenous communities while giving them a chance to produce knowledge in whatever circumstance they find themselves. Such ethical unity of purpose was never one that would singularize African knowledge but rather allowed various forms of opinions to critically question the place of knowledge based on time and space. This provided a critical space to engage with Indigenous knowledge in ways that would help resolve everyday community needs. This critical reimagination of knowledge allowed Embu peoples to be critical and ethical in their engagement with knowledge while employing it in their everyday care systems. The ethics of knowledge production allowed people to come together and share with each other in ways that allowed a form of community ownership of the resulting knowledge. In this perspective, knowledge was not an individual endeavor or commodity to be owned but rather something that allowed people to form respectful ethical relationships with one another.

Knowledge production was not just found and established in the classroom but rather could be carried out in the kitchen while families were cooking, during harvest time, or even when walking. Storytelling was a preferred methodology of passing and producing knowledge. This Afrocentric narrative methodology is one among the many common features in other Indigenous communities in Kenya. This has been expressed by other scholars such as wa Thiong'o who candidly captures the cinematographic essence of African storytelling (wa Thiong'o, 1986). Key to note in these stories was the respect for human ingenuity and capacity to store and re-evaluate stories in ways that enrich African lives.

With that said, I also happened to have gone to missionary school where most students were supposed to express themselves through English. English made the classroom, and Kenyan students embrace the Western ways of life in ways meant to downgrade and devalue African languages while simultaneously killing the African critical mind in what has come to be regarded as epistemological genocide (wa Thiong'o, 1986). This model of education left many African students with major epistemic trauma since they were supposed to download themselves into a foreign language for them to be understood to have entered civilization. English as a colonial language and technology of governance in Kenya helped to recruit and imprison the Indigenous Kenyan child in a singular ensemble of Western life with the promise of entering the white world, which was considered superior and exceptional. Many African students fell out with the colonial curriculum and one of the main issues was the ways in which such students were shamed and punished by the community for failing to enter Western civilization.

In this context, English as a software must be imagined as an artificial technology that prepared the ways for the current issues facing the many school systems across the world. In a nutshell, I argue that Artificial Intelligence is an accelerated linguistic grammar meant to dissolve human beings, and for that matter Africa and Africans, into an epistemological singularity in ways meant to be untraceable, unverifiable, continuous and unsubstantiated. The loss of the human intellectual faculties grounded in an overreliance on technology will usher in a new era of robotization meant to finally depoliticize through downloading and downsizing the human into an epistemological and ontological singularity. Just as the English language attempted to download the African critical mind into its linguistic software, so too will Artificial Intelligence reduce and simplify a generation of African social work students into a software if not critically checked. In this case, I call for inclusion of Black and African storytelling, histories, and values as part of a broader complex conversation on checking the spread of singular epistemic stories in social work curriculum that are now being prepared and sealed in the current conversations on Artificial Intelligence. Such forms of epistemological singularity are meant to kill African and Black reasoning in ways meant to space out Africa in potentially epistemically debilitating and genocidal from the world.

Language was and continues to be a colonial technology of decanting or expunging African Indigenous forms of expression by marking them as unofficial, unintelligible, and emotional (notice mother tongue as an emotional and gendered language), ultimately discounting African reason which relied on emotions and nature to make sense. To make this linguistic erasure possible, a cow horn with a string attached to it was employed to monitor student engagement. Interestingly, we referred to the cow horn as *monita*, which was a lexicon of monitor (read this as surveillance). A teacher would walk around the school with the *monita* looking for a student speaking in *Kiembu* (Indigenous language of *Embu* people). If they heard one speaking in their Indigenous mother tongue language, they would hang the *monito* on their neck to signify them as non-compliant and undisciplined. This technology acted as a form of punishment, disciplining, and shaming the student by making them public in ways that acted as a deterrent to any other student expressing themselves in their mother tongue. Many students stopped expressing themselves and eventually left the school system in frustration.

The walkout of students from the western classroom in Kenya may be seen as a weakness in current Western social economies of teaching and learning, but I want to mark that as a force of resistance towards a system meant to denigrate African orality. Later, I will employ this aspect of African perspective on weakness and vulnerability as a necessary ethical demand for community engagement and eventual resistance against violent colonialism in social work classroom settings.

A student carrying the *monita* on their neck would spend time looking for another student who was speaking in their mother tongue and then pass it over to them. This enhanced total and omnipresent surveillance employed a panoptic technology of economy of power such that the students (who can be seen as prisoners) would work to surveil each other consistently and continuously. Students began to surveil and govern themselves in ways that made them either speak in English or remain silent. The employment of colonial surveillance and governmentality in the Kenya school system was meant to whiten, rationalize, quantify, and finally inaugurate the African child into whiteness (Nyaga, 2017). In short, the *monita* was used as a surveillance technique or software meant to empty African minds, values, and histories into a singular heteronormative white curriculum while proclaiming whiteness as the quintessential savior of African children from their deplorable African culture. These forms of colonial erasure continue to pervade teaching and learning in most African schools, social work included.

The implication of this violent colonial control technology is the turning of students against each other, internalized self-hate, loss of others, and impressing the white language as a savior of African children from their instincts. Many of those who went through this education system faced a lot of social challenges, one among them being disconnection from their cultural ways of being. This is because the *monita* worked to forcefully

decant through social diffusion their ways of being and embrace the Western ways of living.

The result to this form of colonial epistemological onslaught against African ways of living is the production (I employ this term politically since students in the Western classroom are not seen as anything other than a crudity of life that needs to be processed for the market) of the African child into a colonial worker. Every student was supposed to take an exam, and many of us would cram readings to pass the exam. Much of the Kenyan curriculum continues to encourage competitive learning and rote memorization while simultaneously discarding critical thinking skills (Ongesa, 2020). Much of African critical reading and engagement was replaced by reading to pass exams and become a worker. This loss of critical reading has been identified as the biggest problem that Kenya faces today, and that is currently affecting most African and world economies in the 21st century (Ongesa, 2020). According to Ongesa (2020),

Education systems in Kenya had undergone several reforms since 1963. For instance, the Ominde Report (1964) on educational goals, the Gachathi Report (1976) on educational objectives and policies, Mackay Report (1982) on change of curriculum from the 7-4-2-3 to 8-4-4 school system, and Koech Report (1999) on review of national philosophy, policies, and objectives. The national educational and training conference (2003), whose recommendations led to the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005, outlined long, medium, and short-term targets for the education sector, which included Education for All (EFA) and the Attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2015. (p. 180)

There are many changes in the education system meant to make students employ their critical and questioning mind in teaching and learning. While this is an impressive starting point, it is worthy to note that no engagement into how the *monita* story as a colonial technology helped decant the African mind, and how the same colonial technology could be employed to finally conceal coloniality within the school system.

This self-story helps to imagine the question of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning, in that if employed uncritically, it could decant social work students' critical mind in ways that rationalize knowledge making while depoliticizing the classroom. This may have immense material and symbolic effects and consequences on the African student in terms of critical engagement with the curriculum within the white classroom. In this regard, I insist on the need to look at artificial intelligence in ways that help remember African Indigenous ways of life and realities as expressed in their unique linguistic diversities and how that can help us rethink teaching and learning in western social work classrooms.

Theoretical frame

Downloading Reason into Singularity

In the world of science, reason continues to be decreed and authorized as the highest domain in human existence. In fact, the exultation of reason has come to a point where scholarship on freedom and liberty or what we call moral philosophy tells us that to be reasonable is an advancement or development from instinctual tendencies towards a world of speech and knowledge. In this sense, when one is devoid of reason, they are subsequently marked as an inert being who cannot represent themselves due to their lack of speech therefore requiring an external element or savior to represent them. We are told that such developmental movement towards speech, made possible through reason, helps emancipate one from animism into a world of civilization (Mbembe, 2017). The assumption made through such moral philosophical arguments is that reason is the ground under which freedom can exist and without which life would be what Hobbes calls cruel and brutish (Bunce, 2013). In a nutshell, failure to have reason and speech downloads one into a state of nature and war. Such argument opens the discussion of reason as a quintessential element of saving the speechless from their self-cannibalization, therefore substantiating reason through speech as a moral requirement for saving one from a perpetual state of war into a world of peace. Foucault et al (2003) in his work on society must be defended has marked peace as war in other ways. This ontological argument helps to reimagine the ways in which production of a substance from its non-speech into acting as a speaking subject becomes the very point of violence that is authorized by reasoning law and required as a necessary evil of reductionism towards a peaceful state. For such a peaceful biopolitical world to exist, other lives must be brutalized, quantified, and reduced by reason into speaking subjects who must reflect their master's speech. It is through such forms of reductionism of substances into humanity that nature disappears while simultaneously preparing a world of peace and tranquility.

In fact, major philosophical claims argue that reason inaugurates the human into a speaking being who then can exercise rights through speech acts. Right giving therefore must be a process guided by reason through speech and that those who are unreasonable can be terminated (read this as social death) into speaking subjects who have rights and freedom to be called human. Humans are therefore the epitome of reason, since they can act through speech in ways that bestow them the right to exist as thinking beings. Such an existence must allow their speech to be acted upon by other similar speeches for them to be considered representable beings. This form of standardization helps destroy nature in ways that are perpetual, continuous, and unverifiable while simultaneously justifying singular speech as the quintessential human requirement. When I speak of such social destruction of nature into a reasoning world, I want you to think of the forms of imperial reasoning within the context of the classroom and the ways in which the African student is marked as that nature that needs to be processed into speaking subject and the ways in which such processing

helps destroy their African values, realities, and histories in ways that are genocidal.

In retrospect, those who fail to reason are without a speech, and as such cannot be regarded as right receivers. Over time, we know Black and African people have been marked as unreasonable and a wrong/error/mistake to be corrected or righted. Such correction is a colonial methodology meant to incarcerate the wrong into a box of rights, and the death that follows in such epistemological confinement. Black communities have over time been labeled as a deviant collective entity that must be corrected and formed and formatted into speaking subjects. Such a form of Black modeling assumes that Black is formless and consequently must be punished in ways that help standardize it into a speaking singular liberal subject. Colonization and its aftermath have made this a reality based on mass incarceration of Black children within the welfare systems in the West (Cantey et al., 2022; Rambert, 2021; Roberts, 2022). It is argued that if we can attempt to civilize, correct and give these Black children a speech to reason, then we can extend rights to them and therefore save them from their deplorable conditions and behaviors. This imperializing narrative argues that Black as a pathology can only be saved from itself through a civilizational process of giving it a speech (herein seen as a form of charity and benevolence) that will singularize it into a speaking subject who can reason and eventually enjoy their rights to be human. To be human therefore is a process of removal from the common into a world of individualism and atomization.

The common is never understood as reasonable but rather a mass of emotions that must be disintegrated and lined up into singularity. This philosophical orientation continues to be employed in the apprehension of Black children and the eventual placement into the child welfare, education, and prison pipeline (Kelly & Varghese, 2018; Moody, 2016). The pipeline is therefore seen as a form of industrializing the Black other into a world of speaking subjects. Such a form of processing helps destroy a generation of Black children and for which spaces of social work teaching and learning have continued to supervise such atrocities unabated. Social work teaching and learning continues to employ this methodology of erasure to confirm that what is happening within the child welfare system is rational and proper. Students coming from such a classroom fail to see the complexity of social eviction present in child welfare and the ways in which the same is replicated in the curriculum and classroom setting. In a nutshell, this politics of social erasure also seems to be replicated in the classroom such that one setting is made to feed on the other. This spatial orientation between the classroom and child welfare are faces of the same coin that work in an unverifiable and continuous way to confirm whiteness and white supremacy in neoliberal care technologies.

Serialization and Downloading of Reason

While this has been the trend, that reason consolidated with freedom helps substantiate the human, we are witnessing increased spatial disturbance of reason as the quintessential element of being human and subsequent questioning of who gets to enjoy rights. It is now reaching a fever pitch that other forms of subjugated freedoms and realities are calling for equal representation into the metrics of knowledge production and therefore opening broader discussions on the fundamentals of rights in the representation of humans. This kind of disturbance is a direct onslaught into the speaking subjects as a right-holding individual. This has been necessitated by diverse scholarship on who gets to enjoy rights, and which kind of speech inaugurates one to a speaking subject. The question of right giving and representation politics has been an ongoing subject in social work scholarship. Questions of Africa as a childlike continent and therefore unintelligible space have been discussed over time (Mbembe, 2016). These representational politics have called into question the place of reason in determining who arises to a human subject. While this is happening, technological escalation and acceleration has bombarded reason in ways meant to download it into singularity (Rottenburg et al, 2021). It is a kind of epistemological funneling meant to further sift reason into nanotechnology. This means an escalated reason that has the speed beyond human reason. Speed is now the valuation of determining the world trajectory.

Some may argue that reason or knowledge production faculty is on an edge and what we see happening is brutalization of what we know as reason and knowledge. I would argue that such forms of epistemological brutalization are coming from below and increasingly made possible by the everyday transnational movement of those considered as broken and an emotionally unstable population. We are witnessing a world where no one belongs anywhere but rather everywhere and as such global connections have helped disturb the place of reason as an elementary principle in human rights. Questions of who is human and whose rights are human continue to pervade discussions of moral philosophy.

While there is an escalation of movement brought about by technology, we are equally witnessing an elevated fortification of national borders to limit the increased social movement of emotions into spaces once considered reasonable and human. These forms of prominent enclosures, some of them physical while others cellular, are driven by epistemological and pedagogical anxieties of an onslaught of reason by external impurities. The fear is that reason may at once enter a state of Alzheimer-related neurodegeneration. Such anxieties are driven by traditional and more parochial beliefs that the inside is safer than the outside and as such more reasonable than the brutish outside. The fear is escalated by the fact that such fortifications are slowly becoming permeable based on new technologies that continue to bring down the rational space while accelerating epistemological migration from the East to the West. These kinds of hysteria have come to focus on how the classroom will be

organized as well as the place of instruction in an AI-directed social work classroom.

While these discussions of artificial intelligence are ongoing, it has been noted that not much about African and Black reason is being incorporated into these discussions to help bring a more complex, nuanced understanding into social work teaching and learning. The main worry is that artificial intelligence might become yet another form of accelerated forgetting of issues facing Black and African students in the class and therefore affirm a singular and standardized social work teaching and learning. While this is noted, it is equally helpful to note that artificial intelligence could equally be employed to help answer the question facing Black and African students in the contemporary class. This can only happen if artificial intelligence is made Black by culturally informing it on the histories, values, and realities of Black people and making sure that such aspects of lived realities are not funneled into singular African reality. Such funneling would be a form of forgetting that equally reinvigorates ongoing racial onslaught on Black and African social work students. In a nutshell, there must be an ongoing discussion on how to engage with artificial intelligence without necessarily downgrading African reason into an ontological monolith.

The Biopolitics of Black Reason and Intellectual Citizenship

In a society that is accelerating toward digitization and serialization of social work teaching and learning, one is left to ask the question of what will survive and what will be left to die as the society collapses in singular heteronormative reasoning. In his discussion of biopolitics, Foucault (2003) marks state racism as part of the operation of deciding which bodies are left to die to create space for others. Those who survive are understood as part of the state population and entered in the state registry as statistics. These bodies are assumed to have entered the state of rationalism and therefore quantifiable, and provable. The process of quantification through serialization is meant to expunge emotions from the state mechanism to allow for the eventual universal identification and determination of who becomes the citizen and social work expert. This registration and governing of bodies and subsequent denial of emotional survival is one issue that demands of us to start imagining modes of technological erasure of what will continue to define the social work class environment in the age of artificial intelligence.

While Foucault was engaging with the discussion of state racism and biopolitical technologies of make live and let die, he failed to pay attention to Black forms of racism and ways in which such bodies are not only imagined as unintelligible but also whether they can be accounted as a population to be left to die or made to live. Black bodies are outside of these forms of statistics, since for one to be considered as capable of being and left to die or made to live, one must be part of state registration. In short, the death of Black bodies could not and must not be given an account in the

letting die metrics. Such a metric is white centric and earmarked to continue expunging Black bodies from the community of humans. Many African and Black scholars have punched holes on to this biopolitical debate (Mbembe, 2003) and argue that state extermination of Black bodies must be seen from a place of colonial histories such as slavery and concentration camps where white supremacy is employed to squeeze life out of Black bodies. Black and African bodies have over time been imagined as emotional and must be discarded to allow for a rational state. In fact, Black bodies are never imagined as emotional being rather, they are understood as instinctual beings who have no control of their faculties nor their emotions. In fact, Black is a no-body, which means for it to be inaugurated into a body, it must be processed through serialization and digitization. Such instinctual beings (read here as Black and African peoples) are understood as a threat to the survival of rational and reasoning state; and therefore, must be forgotten through a violent process that is outside state law or what Giorgio Agamben (2005) calls state of exception, which is inextricably connected to the forms of social isolation in internment camps and plantation slavery. Mbembe (2023) complicates biopolitical technologies to start imagining other forms of death that cannot be given an account in state registration. This body is Black and lies in between life and death and therefore any accounting of artificial intelligence in social work teaching and learning must be situated in the in-betweenness of life and death of Black and African social work students within the classroom teaching and learning.

Implicating theory to social work teaching and learning

This process of social elimination looks at Black and African bodies that are not part of the population and cannot produce or be produced into any state/ment. They are a meaningless sentence that must be arrested to allow for the affirmation of state-centric determination of who becomes the citizen. These forms of sentencing or arresting of Black and African bodies is one among the many colonial technologies that continue to be employed to determine the place of Black and African communities in the social work classroom. For Black and African students to be imagined as statements and to speak intelligibly in the social work classroom, they must be rationalized, simplified, and quantified in ways that remove Africa from their psyche while allowing Western ways of social work teaching and learning to be inscribed into their everyday classroom teaching and learning. This form of forgetting Africa in social work teaching and learning is meant to destroy its histories, values, and realities in teaching and learning by serializing and digitizing Africa into Western state control and imagining Africa/ns as a singular statement. In a world that is collapsing in singularity, and the loss that follows, it is fundamentally and ethically necessary for us to start asking questions of how such forms of serialization will continue to render Africa unintelligible, more so in an artificially intelligible classroom. This question of the loss of Africa and the anxiety that follows must be central in the discussion of artificial intelligence to allow for the reimagination of the

classroom in ways that are ethical and that re/member Africa. Any form of artificial intelligence in social work teaching and learning must give an account of Africa's multiple histories, values, and realities. This requires bringing together without necessarily uniting those histories, values, and realities into singularity. This ethical question demands us to start engaging and imagining the social work classroom setting differently and variously in the age of AI.

Challenges and Opportunities for African Values, Histories, and Realities in social work Teaching and Learning

In many of the broader disciplinary discussions I have had with my colleagues, the question of suspicion of cheating by students is a major topic put on the table. Registration of social work students and their eventual entry into the classroom is flouted with elevated anxiety that they are not to be trusted and that they are prone to academic theft. In a nutshell, the social work classroom setting is already trained to mark students as suspects, and the curriculum helps a lot in orienting those forms of apprehension. Such forms of suspicion of students are impressed by a neoliberal mechanism that contributes to understanding the social work classroom environment as a space of profit making. Part of producing the market valuation or registration in the social work education sector is the official determination of surplus populations that needs to be serialized, digitized, and quantified by qualified social workers. To receive welfare, one has to be reduced in a number that can determine them as qualified welfare receivers. In this regard, the market and the question of citizenship must be normalized into class operations to help social work students understand and develop the welfare receiver into a right holding subject. This operation is a violent one that is highly militarized to make everything in that classroom a substance that can be sold for profit.

The state provides the required social work educational infrastructure, and the market implements the software for the running of the classroom. In the current discussion on software implementation in the classroom, one must recognize that artificial intelligence anxieties are not new but rather have been there ever since the social work classroom adopted a Western model of teaching and learning. The only difference is the acceleration of the software in ways that are assumed to be out of reach for humans. In this regard, the human who is exceedingly overtaken by artificial intelligence is the educator who must find new ways of governing the social work classroom and controlling the suspect student. I would argue that being a suspect is a question of social construction and that they who are African and Black are end up bearing the brunt of a surveilling classroom. In my doctoral dissertation, many of my participant's claimed racism was alive and well in major Canadian universities. Many are times when participants would be earmarked for elimination through a marking and evaluation system that made sure they fail. A participant in this study claims the following:

In education, the same issue is there. Let's begin from admission. When you get admitted to a particular program the issue of race comes into play. As a Black student, it is hard to get a good mark. I went to university here. One of the things I learnt from here is that it was hard for a Black student to get an A grade because there is something they call grade curving that makes Black students score lesser. Black students are casualties of the grade curve. They want to curve so that other students can fail so that they can redo the subject and by doing so the institution will make money out of it. (Nyaga, 2019, p. 166)

One of the participants was asked where they came from because of their accent. In other instances, African students could not be supported by predominantly white faculties. One of the participants in the study said:

You do not get the kind of opportunities and are not represented in the types of opportunities that are taken out at various levels. Things like scholarship, mentorship. Like we are not that many. So, when we have a few Black students, you would think that it would seriously affect those professors to take a very keen interest in them early enough to really mentor them closely. That is not what happens. You are left with the dogs and given less support. For me, it was that way for the last 8 years. Very little support and professional support in the sense like, hey, I think you should apply for this. I started getting more traction recently. (Nyaga, 2019, p. 167)

Such an accenting of African students are old market technologies meant to mark them as unintelligible or unregistrable in the classroom setting. In the process of asking such a question, "what is being asked without asking" is for the African student to explain their unfitting self so that they can be processed and inaugurated as intelligible citizens. In that regard, the question directed to the African student is a reminder that they do not belong in the classroom, and that they are deportable suspects. The question asked helps set the process of serialization and digitalization of the African student with an intent to change their accents and enter state citizenship. It is important to imagine how students and faculties are part of the neoliberal mechanism that helps register and quantify African students into the body politic.

Other participants in my study identify ways in which they would have failed in their course as part of the wider market scheme of minting profits from them (Nyaga, 2019). This goes to tell how issues of market technologies have been employed to erase and commodify African students into commodities that can be sold in the marketplace.

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