

Weave Seven: Surfacing of the Paut Neteru (The Tree of Life), Embrace of Path to a Divine Self Included With and Including the Divinity of Nature and Bringing my Cloth to Field in a Vital Bicultural Complementation

Connecting to the Source, Embracing a System of Purposeful Graduation, Appreciating Unity in Diversity and Natural Inclusion

... [Western society] seems to be very concerned with perfecting their technological know-how while losing out on their spiritual dimension. We believe that in the long run the special contribution to the world by Africa will be in this field of human relationship. The great powers of the world may have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look, but the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face.
(Biko 1978:46)

Introduction

Experiences in Mandiani advanced my learning, living and working in profound ways. Important was the prototyping of my valuing social living pedagogy, included with an engaging dialogical praxis, a unique purposeful recognition and an enhanced relational mutuality, and now undergirded with commitment to heal, protect and create. Important also was the founding of the ‘appreciative value of the African Voice’ in the Mandiani’s Great Story. This is Mandiani’s legacy.

However, in my own learning, living and working there is a stirring in my imagination, as I embrace the flow encouraging my own development. The stirring is as a pull towards new experiences, in new environments. Yet, it belies a concern as I wrestle iterations of the kind as follows:

“We are doing ‘good work’, but where the decisions are being made about our work, the African Voice remains negligible. I aver about working in those environments.

I feel the frustration of the marginalised. There is a great deal more to do. Yet, if I remain in the margins of the marginalised the influence I seek to be is compromised. I am resigned to the status

quo. I am now challenged to experience in the margins of the mainstream influence”.

“If I do not model change is possible, then I am as much an obstacle to change, as the system that I condemn for its lack of transforming. I need to do something different for something different to happen - a journey to the private sector?”

These are some of the iterations in and out of my thoughts. My departure from Mandiani was not an easy decision. However, I would continue to engage with staff, parents and young people participating in Mandiani and contribute to work with black boys in co-initiating the novel leadership programme, under the auspices of ISIS’ Ubuntu: Social Living Networks project.

My move to Berkshire Consultancy Limited (BCL), in commencing the position of principal consultant is embraced as a compelling journey. It is a build on a rich seam in my experience and a new challenge in occasioning my functioning in the private sector (the margins of mainstream influence). The inspiration is the ‘appreciating value’ of the African Voice. The flow is for reaching out to my fullest co-creative future possibilities, whilst continuing inquiry into Self and Work (a subtle shift) vision – a substantive imagination of confidence.

Berkshire Consultancy Limited is on the Loom

On the Berkshire Consultancy Limited (BCL) website and what we say about ourselves include the following words:

“BCL provides an integrated range of services to meet the challenges of effecting complex organisational change. Consultants from diverse backgrounds work with the tangible or ‘hard’ aspects of change and improvement, such as business processes, structures, systems and ways of working. We are also skilled in recognising and working with the less tangible or ‘soft’ aspects represented by organisational cultures and people’s values, attitudes and emotional responses, as well as building their individual capability. We believe that most change situations require this dynamic approach in order to achieve the best results.

Founded in 1994, BCL links its success directly to the provision of high quality services in ways that are constructive, genuinely collaborative and passionate about adding value and achieving the results that clients need” (BCL website).

I really do feel this is an apt description of BCL’s offer and approach, and shares what I embrace as the organisation’s thrust. It is this thrust, together with my emergent commitment to communicate the appreciative African Voice to the widest community, which was important in configuring how I orient myself, learn, live and work in this new environment.

This is my conscious venture/journey into the private sector, augmented from some strength, both in relation to Mandiani’s legacy in me and my prior positive involvement in BCL through my associate consultant membership. This positive involvement as an associate consultant in had seen me work collaboratively with Eden Charles (BCL Account Director) and Barbara Agyeman (BCL Associate Consultant) on National Health Service (NHS) Breaking Through programme (BTP) for BME staff¹⁸ seeking senior leadership positions in the NHS. In this employment I had wide-ranging involvement across the programme on assessment centres, development workshops, action learning sets and coaching. Of particular import here, was that the programme was for BME staff, it was a leadership programme and my own diverse consultant participation on the initiative. These are important factors that course through this weave, as I inquire into experiences as a consultant in BCL.

A significant development in my co-facilitation on the NHS BTP of import to my living theory thesis is “Stories of A Glorious Past” component, which I introduced

¹⁸ NHS BTP

and subsequently developed with Barbara Agyeman (BCL). This “component” grew from the challenge of engaging with the idea of the existence of “African, Asian and European ways of being” and exploration of how to present this idea in purposeful, meaningful and practical ways.

Figure 33: African and Asian Ways of Being

African and Asian Ways of Being in the World Compared to European Way of Being	
European	African and Asian
Either / or	Both / and
Reductionist	Holistic
Separation of the spiritual from the everyday	Integration of spiritual to everyday and everyday into the spiritual
Separation of God from people	God and humans are one
Striving for constant growth	Striving for balance
Control over	Accepting, live with
Life goals achieved through the acquisition of external material things	Life’s purpose as about acquiring wisdom being and inner peace
Greater value put on left brain operations	Greater valuing of right brain operations
Mind- body spirit dualism	The human organism is a totality
Individualism, “Me” oriented	Individuality within group context
Learn facts, computational	Learn to be wise, the ability to operate effectively in the world
A need for certainty. All things are knowable and planned	Accepting of uncertainty
Function before style	Style is inseparable from function
Linear	Circular, rhythmic
Detachment, Objectivity	Involvement, engagement
Emphasis on the young and new	Valuing of the past, age and experience as well as the new
Speed, valuing of doing things quickly	Valuing doing things well
The ends justifies the means	The path, is as important as the end

“Stories of A Glorious Past” is drawn from diverse sources. However, most directly, it drew from a framework depicting African and Asian Ways of Being compared to

European ways of being (see Figure 30 above), which I had used on development programmes in the past. I liked this framework, though controversial, because of its thought-provoking construct and content. However, Kambon in cautionary tone though suggesting that we should not be deterred from exploring the sphere of worldviews between African and European, advised that we should be mindful of this complex and continually evolving field of the so-called human sciences.

Kambon in his own presentation stated that there were four components in the construction of a worldview and listed cosmology, ontology, axiology and epistemology. He noted that cosmology is the structure of reality either from African and European perspectives. Ontology refers to the essential nature of reality drawn from the experiences of African and European experience. Epistemology is the way of knowing-understanding reality through group experiences. Axiology is the value placed on social relationships.

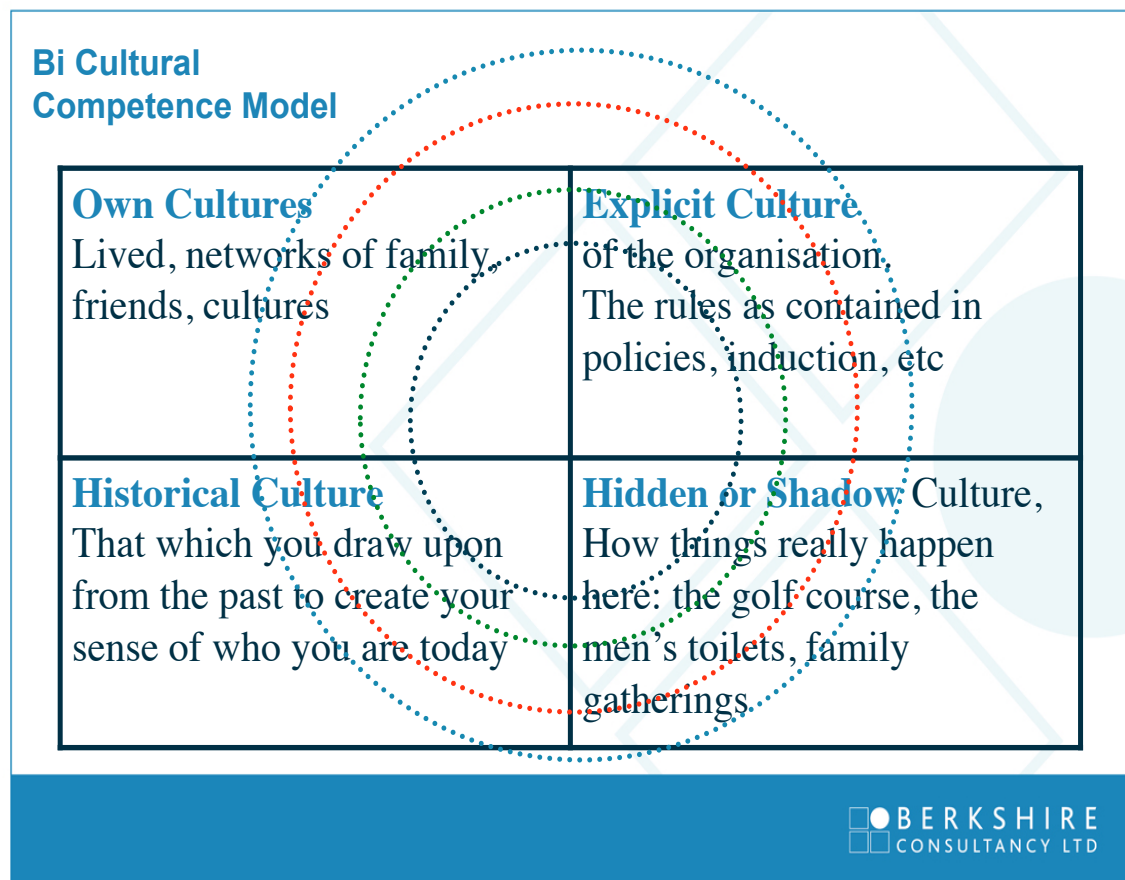
Figure 34: Four Components of the Worldview Construct

Cosmology	
African – Independence, Collectivism, Human Nature Oneness/Unity	Separateness/ Alienation, Independence, Human-Nature Conflict / Control over Nature
Ontology	
A Spiritual basis of nature/ Existence/ the Universe	A material basis of nature/ Existence/ the Universe
Axiological	
Emphasis on Person-to- person/ Human-to-Human relations	Emphasis on Person-to-Object/ Human-to Object relations
Epistemological	
Emphasis on Affective-Cognitive synthesis as the way of knowing reality	Emphasis on Cognitive over Affective processes as the way of knowing reality

This worldview construct presented by Kambon represented different cultural realities which reflected distinct ways that Africans and Europeans, whilst conceptualising, organising and experiencing reality. These were rich areas for exploring leadership, social relationships and standards of judgement.

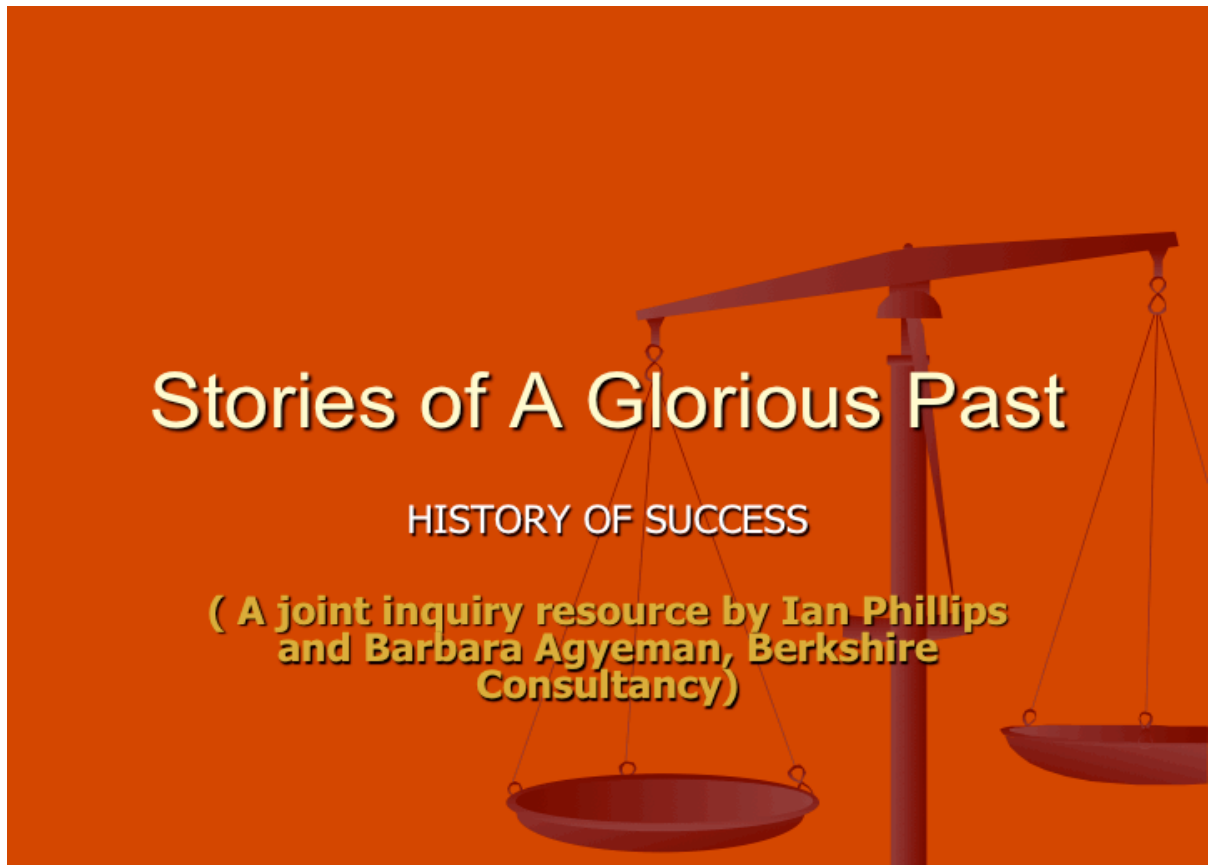
The “Stories of A Glorious Past Model” also drew from the Bicultural Competence Model developed by Charles, (see Figure 35), which was inspired by the work of Gloria Bravette that encouraged exploration of one’s own culture and historical culture, and the organisation culture and its hidden or shadow culture. This model inspired all who worked on NHS BTP that included Shelly Hossain (BCL Associate Consultant), Sharon Jennings (BCL Associate Consultant) and Cyril Husbands (BCL Principal Consultant) to deep and purposeful storytelling.

Figure 35: Bicultural Competence Model



Further, the model drew from “Histories of a Glorious Past” that was utilised on Mandiani’s “Learn to Love to Learn” programme and my own engagement with living theory methodology. This was the background to the “Stories of a Glorious Past” component of the NHS BTP, which focused on African and Asian ways of being and utilised an appreciative inquiry approach (Cooperider 1989) to surface and explore relevant issues pertinent to the living theory methodology (Whitehead 1989). It was with this intent that I/We would begin the session with the following PowerPoint slide already being displayed on the screen. It would be a session that encouraged part of a wider workshop focused on empowerment and exploring (in my mind) the source of our leadership and social relationship in what transpired to be an inspiring and transformational resource.

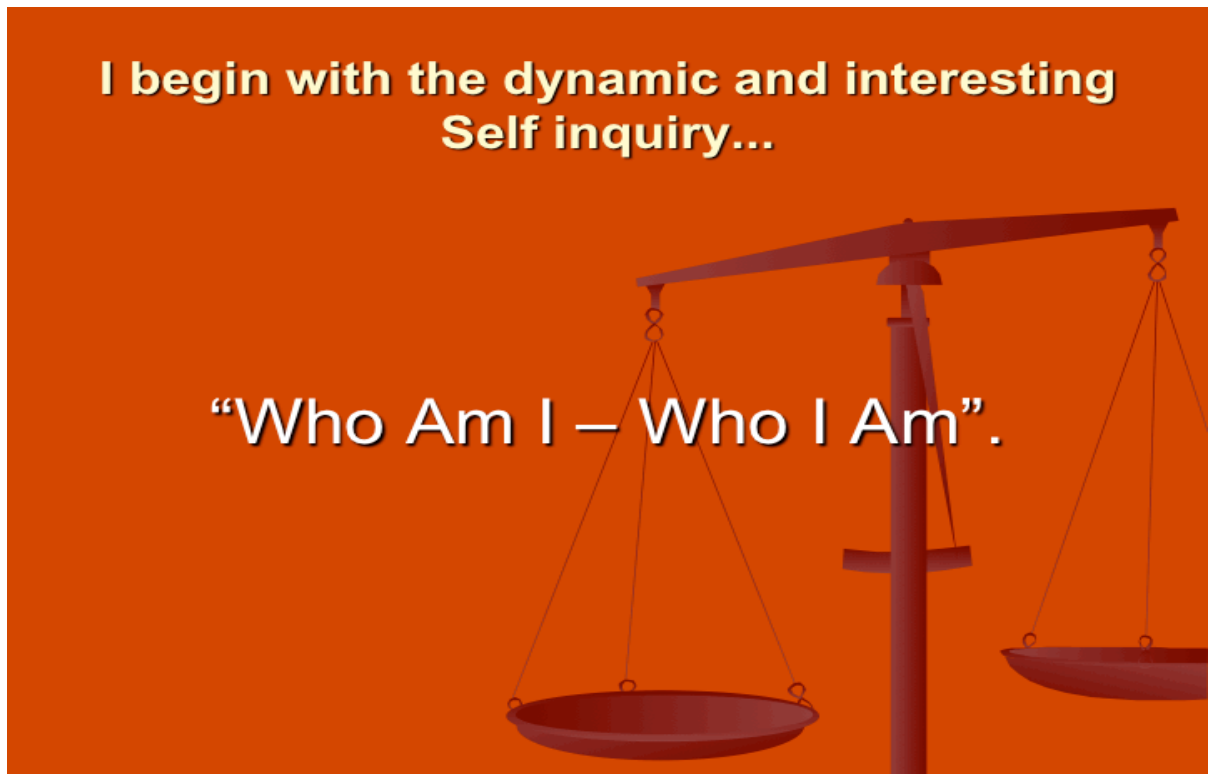
Figure 36: Stories of a Glorious Past - Slide 1



I have often wondered about how this first slide is appreciated, but the only answer I have obtained is that it really does not give a clue of what is the come. I have also felt that this is the case.

The second slide (below) when presented a connection is made with the “historical culture” component of the bicultural competence model (above), the noting of a “history of success” included on the first slide of Histories of a Glorious Past and an encouragement to focus on what this may mean for self-identity, an alertness arrives into the room that is comprehensive.

Figure 37: Histories of a Glorious Past - Slide 2



On a number of occasions it has appeared, as if even before I have said a word, participants are already asking themselves the questions posed. It seems as if their thoughts are racing ahead, searching to find answers, as their bodies tightening, and they grit their teeth as they inquire in their own memories in hope of gaining some special insight.

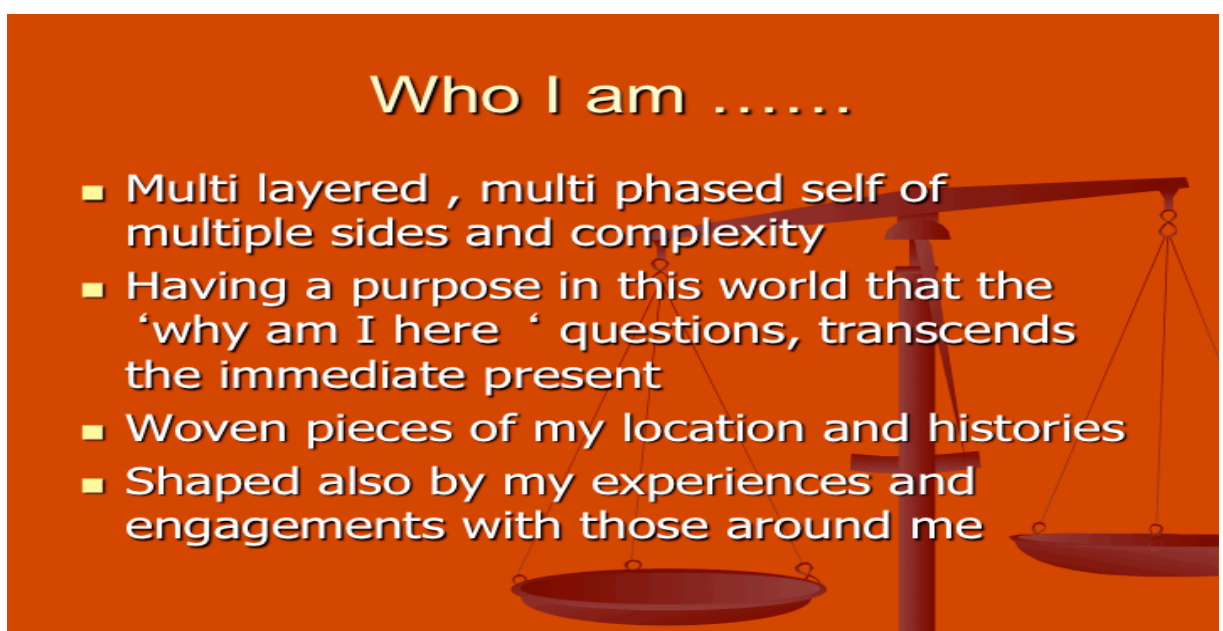
This (what I call) question and assertion is a build from my own living thesis inquiry. I have found this “question and assertion” frame useful in the context of acting to know (who am I) , knowing (who I am) and appreciative inquiry (to start from strengths).

Figure 38: I am - Slide 3



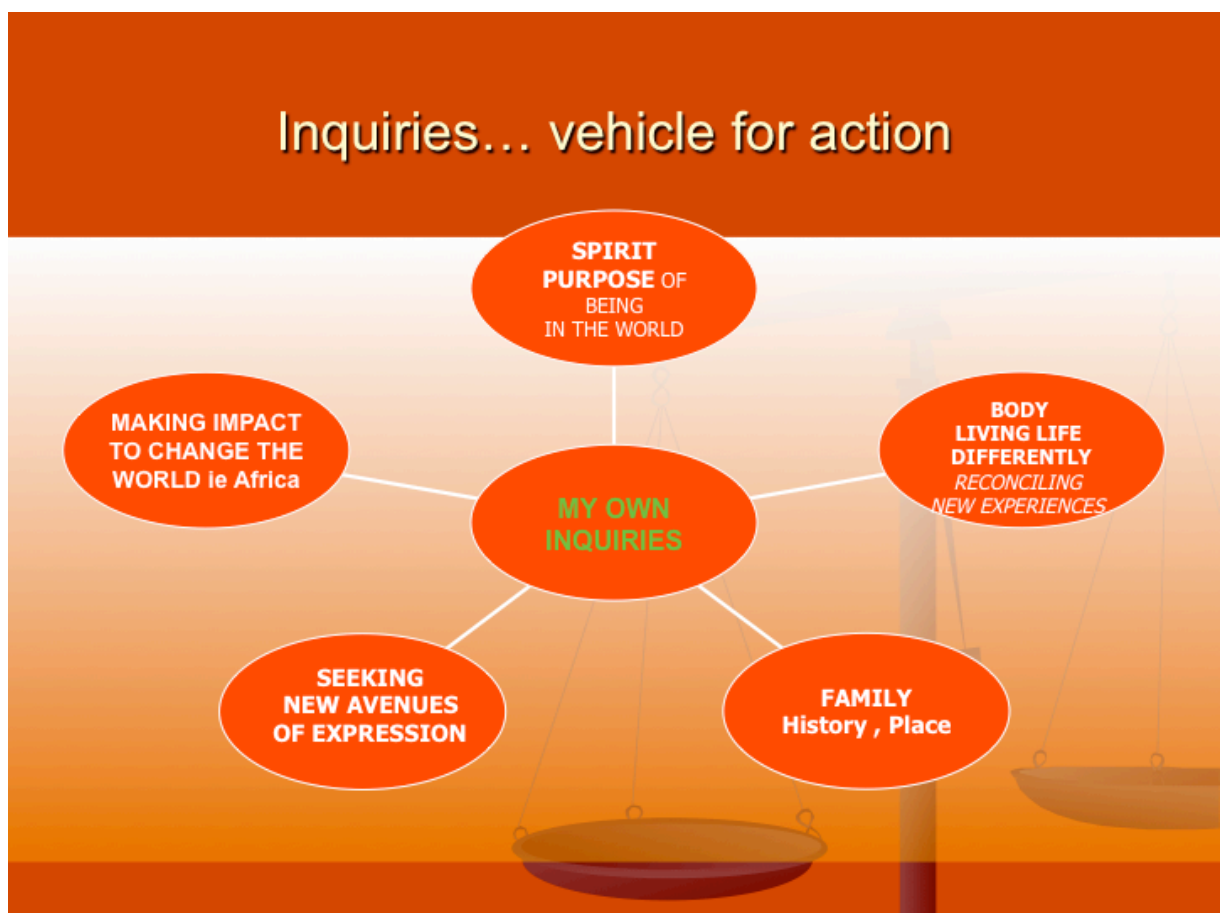
The third and fourth slides show how in “Stories of a Glorious Past” the surfacings of my own self-inquiry is shared and made public. I proffer meaning and offer explanation, as I depict “I am” and offer explanation of “Who I am.”

Figure 39: Who I am - Slide 4



Slide 3 and 4 above evidence focus areas of my own living theory thesis and engagement with Whitehead's unit of appraisal and I as a living contradiction (Whitehead 1989). The focus areas of my living theory here are self-identity, values, beliefs, experiences, attitudes, actions and claims to know. In this way participants are encouraged to self-inquire and reflect into their knowing of their influence on self, others and social formations.

Figure 40: Inquires as vehicles for action – Slide 5



In slide 5 evidence of how my inquiries are used as a vehicle for action is explored. However, also in evidence through the five slides is the collaboration of Barbara and me. Our names are on the opening slide and there are changes in the content of slides 3, 4 and 5, which shows Barbara's inclusion. For example, in slide 3 (I Am), there is a distinction between values and beliefs. Beliefs, although appreciated in original

model was not a separate heading. These were all developments for dialogue and development. In slide 4 (“Who I Am”), there is the phrase, “Woven pieces of my location and histories”, which was introduced by Barbara to reflect her living experiences.

In slide 5 there is evidence of how my initial focus on purpose in my own studies are transformed in collaboration and given new form. It is as a result of our collaboration that included in the slide is how inquiries for action connects with our spiritual being, have implication for how we communicate with our bodies with a sense of place/location.

Figure 41: Out of the black experience



Slide 6 begins to encourage inquiry into that that location in a dynamic way, and there are opportunities for individuals to go in and out of frames to explore in precise ways the nature of one's own influence in relation to place/location. It is in this context, being borne in the Caribbean that I would consider the impact of slavery, and also the wider experience of African people in unsatisfying circumstances which impact mental models (with focus on notions like the Africa made no contribution to civilisation; it is the dark continent – see slide below).

Figure 42: Reframing – Slide 6

The slide features a dark orange background. On the right side, there is a graphic of a scale of justice. The right pan is higher than the left pan, and a large, colorful question mark is superimposed on the right pan. The question mark is filled with a rainbow gradient. The scale is dark brown.

Reframing History

- Slavery
- Poverty , Famine, Genocide , Disease
- No Black /African contribution to civilisation , dependent , requiring others to show the way/ the light
- Unenlightened – the 'Dark continent ' lost barbaric before ' white civilisation'
- Asia & Africa – continents of 3rd worlds / developing countries, banana republics in disarray

Slide 6 would offer a premise for reframing and I would give some examples of how I had accomplished some change in my way of being. It is here that “discovering old hidden truths” and “blowing away the myths that dis-empower” really garners participants’ attention.

I think what is dramatised here is an opportunity to think about your condition outside of the box, both individually, and in collaboration. It is in this way that Barbara and I demonstrate (modelling our own influence) and in showing our collaboration enable others to value theirs to gain new insights, which are communicated openly and often point to actions and commitments for change.

Figure 43: Discovering Old Hidden Truths – Blowing Myths that Dis-Empower



It is here that the question: Has anyone ever heard of Timbuktu is posed. This invites puzzled faces and encourages the movement of heads most time sideways and behind as quick glances. The impression being conveyed is that everyone is asking the same question – “Who knows?”

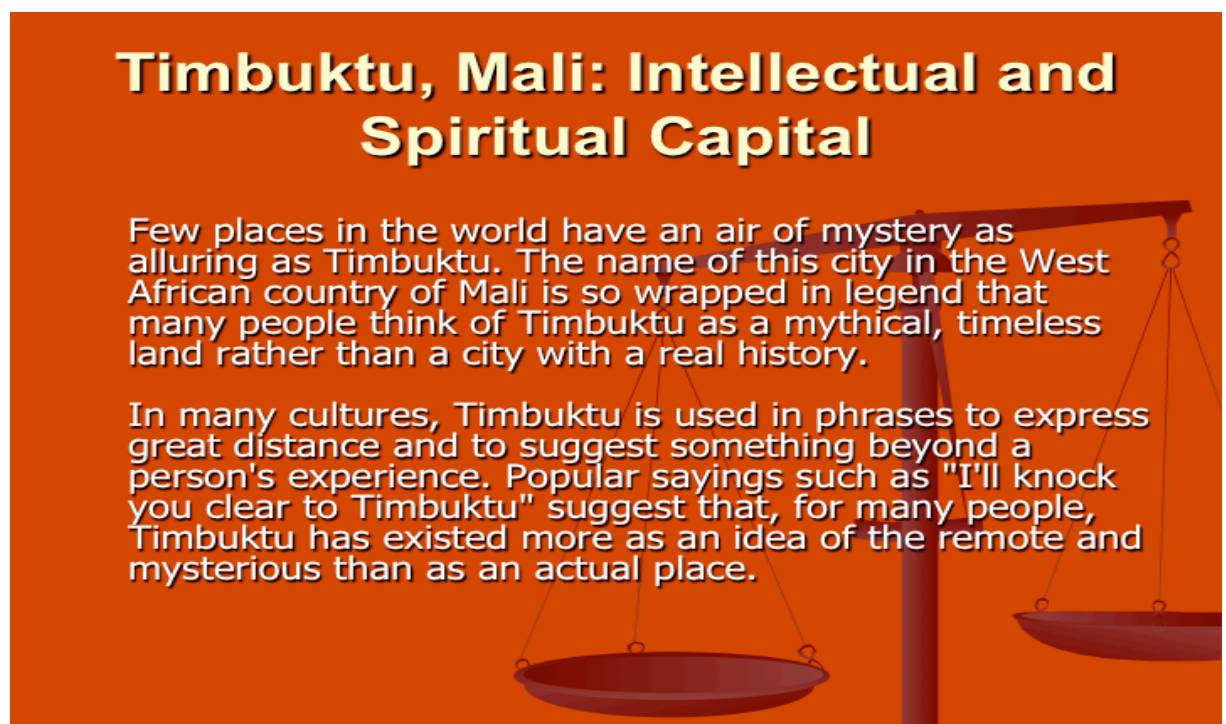
I repeat: Has anyone ever heard of Timbuktu in a somewhat incredulous tone. In my own thoughts I hear Miss Buckton from my own story, “Create Your Own Dance”, I

am mindful that my incredulity is not as Miss Buckton's ridicule. I am playful in creating an exciting to learning. Encouraging a willingness to search – to take a chance on knowing. There has never been an occasion when no one in a group has never heard of Timbuktu.

Invariably, replies would be slow with people searching their memory banks for data. Eventually, at least one participant would say that they have heard of Timbuktu and share about it in the context of it being the "farthest" place on earth or some other fabled connection like "I will kick you clear to Timbuktu."

This sometimes triggered other recollections and so would begin our "Stories of a Glorious Past" to discover "hidden truths" and "blow myths that disempower". The next slide, particularly, early on in the NHS BTP programme sent surprise through participants' imagination. I would introduce it, without showing it, and ask.

Figure 44: Timbuktu



Timbuktu

- Scholars from all over the Islamic world came to the University of Sankore (as well as the city's over 180 *madersas*) where courses as varied as theology, Islamic law, rhetoric, and literature were taught. The university was housed in the Sankore Mosque built with a remarkably large pyramidal **mihrab** in the years of the Mali Empire. The university, one of the first in Africa, became so famous that scholars came to it from all over the Muslim world. At this period in African history, the University of Sankore was the educational capital of the western Sudan, where 25,000 students studied a rigorous academic program.

We would cover the following:

- African and Asian Civilization
- African-American and Caribbean Peoples Contribution to a History of Success
- Important Connections Gandhi and Martin Luther King
- Freedom, Independence and Democracy
- Why is this important?
 - For exploring African and Asian approaches to being in the world compared to the European
 - For inquiries that say we are beautiful people, we have unlimited potential and giving recognition to our power to transform our condition and situation (limiting beliefs)

- To evidence that we have location (sense of place) personal, familial, communal, national and universal
- To know who we are and our purpose for being in the world

It is in this way that we sought to communicate the African and Asian Voices on the NHS BTP, and in my own Emergent African Great Story the “ Stories Of a Glorious Past Model” is a significant development in my own thinking of ‘what works for the success of diverse groups’. In this way empowerment for diverse groups, successful work stories, and improving communication of the African Voice, connecting with Asian ways of being, and other ‘minority’ voices (disabled people) in the “Stories of a Glorious Past” component would be afforded. In my own mind this is how I began communicating the African Voice (as the Black Experience) to a wider community (African And Asian) in authentic ways.

The African Voice was also brought into the room on the other programmes that I facilitated as associate consultant for BCL across a range of public sector organisations for managers and staff in general. For example, in my work with BCL I facilitated on equality, diversity awareness and community engagement workshops. There were also workshops focused on understanding the legislation and bringing equality and diversity into everyday conversations. Further, there were diversity programmes for managers aimed at moving beyond compliance with the legislation, to influencing the hearts and minds of the staff and the implementation of “Race” Equality Schemes and Community Engagement Strategies. This was the nature of the work that I would continue in my early involvement as core consultant in BCL.

However, I would deepen experiences in this sphere with involvement in the NOMS Accelerate Programme and a range of programmes for the Department of Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education). I was one of the lead facilitators on the ground breaking and award-winning National Offender Management Services (NOMS) 'Accelerate to' Programme. This successful positive action leadership programmes is directed to empowering staff from BME and Disabled backgrounds to reach senior executive positions in NOMS. This was very much in the same mould as the NHS BTP. A rigorous application and assessment centre underscored the selection process for the 18 months programme. The programme comprised residential leadership development workshops, action learning sets, coaching/mentoring, working with participants' managers and participants engaging in 'stretching' work placements. (I say more on the Accelerate programme later).

I was also worked with the DCSF as one of the lead facilitators on the innovative cultural awareness workshops, as a researcher on DCSF's 'talent management' programmes and coach on the co-mentoring programme supporting senior staff in the DCSF and staff from BME background in their professional development and relationship.

I worked ostensibly with participants from diverse BAME background on the NHS Breaking Through programme and the CDC. There was a recognisable mix of participants from BAME and European ethnic backgrounds on NOMS Accelerate Programme and the DCSF co-mentoring programme for senior staff and staff from BME background. In workshops for public sector organisations like OfCom, UKPS, and CPS participants were predominantly from white-European ethnic backgrounds.

The approach with all participants was to start from the strengths of who is in the room, applying appreciative inquiry methods to engage, build relationship and focus on individual and group learning needs relating to the focus of the workshops. In my facilitation I was mindful of my own 'valuing social living pedagogy' (my influence), as I sought to communicate authenticity and congruence with my embodied values and commitment to heal, protect and create in new environments.

However, as a core consultant in BCL, I appreciated that there was a great deal of learning to do, particularly with regard bid writing and presentations for winning work, as I sought to find my feet, perform well and open self to feedback from diverse others, in diverse form, in what seemed like a new world.

In finding my feet, there was scope to increase my grounding quickly through informal conversations (on and off programme), involvement in learn and share sessions and participation in BCL social events. I certainly felt confident in areas where I had already been successful in my work as associate consultant, and was able to build on that confidence through new involvements in BCL.

Assessment also played an important part in my grounding and confidence as I opened myself to programme and workshop evaluation, 1 – 1's with line manager, appraisal interviews and exposure to 360-degree feedback which affirmed my positive experiences.

In the communicating the African Voice I felt that that particularly on the NHS BTP and NOMS accelerate programme this was being accomplished with authenticity

and in ways that were being understood. There was also advancement in Self and my Work, both in engagement with staff from BME background, and with diverse staff across national organisations. Yet, I still considered my Self and Work to be in the margins of mainstream influence .. This was so, even though there were opportunities to have good engagement, build new relationships and encourage the embedding/mainstreaming of equality of opportunities and diversity in organisational policies and strategies, managers and staff members everyday conversations and practice.

However, the scope for change existed in my own willingness to expand my expertise and in opportunities arising out of my work. For example, I built on learning and practice experiences in coaching/mentoring related to diversity to focus on appraisal interviews, 360 degree feedback and professional development plans related to career development needs across diverse education and health sector organisations. I afford unique purposeful recognition, enhanced relational mutuality and an engaging dialogical praxis to work appreciatively, build relationship and support coachees in their acting for purposeful change.

I also worked on development centres with the Gloucestershire Police Services, where I was able to use confidently my valuing social living pedagogy to make good impact in a challenging environment.

In this way I begin to see my influence in a wider context without losing who I am. In the opportunities that became available I was able to see the values influencing my learning, living and working (my valuing social living pedagogy), as I engaged with staff at all levels of organisations.

However, involvement on two programmes at the British Council, one for the Community Xchange Initiative involving British Council staff from the UK, Kenya and Indonesia focused on intercultural dialogue and active citizenship and the other the evaluation of the Prime Minister's Global Fellowship involving 100 young people drawn from across the UK on a programme focused on business and entrepreneurship I am able to utilise the principles of UBUNTU to underpin the programme (See below, I am because we are) to a diverse community. Using the African Voice in an open way.

This was a new point of departure relating to the African Voice in the room.

There is also a new development with inquiry into Self as I illuminate my preferences with the MBTI. My recorded type is INFP, and of interest is my typing as a person with an 'intraverted feeling' function. It was with this understanding that I prepared a PowerPoint presentation for my MBTI group, which evidenced the following:

Intraverted Feeling

- i Feeling people make decisions based on feelings, so the 'intraverted feeling' function allows a person to know what they value.
- Words are not enough – more associated with images, feeling tones and insights. Collective process - a filter for information that matches what is valued, wanted, or worth believing in.

- Patient balancing of the core issues of peace and conflict in life's situations. But when a value is compromised – we think. “Sometimes, some things just have to be said”. Mostly though this process goes on “in private” and is expressed through actions.
- Importantly, we know when people are being false or insincere or if they are basically good. It is like we have an internal radar (in-reaching abilities) that enables us to connect and look to the soul of things and people (like I have been doing with this living theory thesis).

The notion of knowing what I value and the use of a collective process (images, feeling tones and insights) as my filter for data that matches what I value, want, or is worth believing is an interrupt. I am challenged to review my thinking across My Cloth. I reflect how did I arrive at the choosing of the Sankofa bird, the depicting of the action of the co-creators of the Sankofa Learning Centre as Maroons, and my new personal and universe objectives in embodying the African Voice, and my commitment to the Great Passion.

Indeed, how did I arrive at the seeing of the values extant in my valuing social living pedagogy and the appreciating value of the African Voice. I am concerned as I reflect on the rigour of my scaffoldings. Have my constructions been arrived at too easily, too simplistically? I had arrived at this place when the completion of my living theory thesis was in sight, and would go to the place of quiet to search my memory bank, my intention and my actions to see how my filters were at work in valuing what I value. I would with open eyes,

open heart and open will explore the development of my ideas, retrace my steps and inquire into the models that I had created.

Now, I can say I am sure there is evidence of my valuing what I value.

However, in this living theory thesis there is also much about valuing what others value and putting my learning into practice. I can acknowledge that as a result of my self-study that I am not a person that is easily convinced and I have heard through other voices in my studies of my stubbornness and my well-defended self and have consciously sought the views of others (in tapping the collective) in bringing about change in that Self.

I have noticed myself listening to the views of peers, and professional colleagues and taking notice of their counsel. It is in this way that I have brought about change in my learning, living and working, which has made me more permeable, more humble, open to other ways of thinking and acting, less judgmental, and motivated to inquire deeply into self and change course. This is just what I have done in entering the private sector away from valuing what I wholly value (working in the African community) responsive to a wider calling, an inner stirring to explore new environments, reaching out in search of my fullest co-creative possibilities.

I was also mindful of the viewing a self who patiently balances the core issues of peace and conflict in life situations. Yet, comes to the moment when things just have to be said. I see this vividly in Self and know that that weighting is constantly going on privately. I have sought to practice airing my concerns more openly, and I am always surprised at how easily resolutions come when

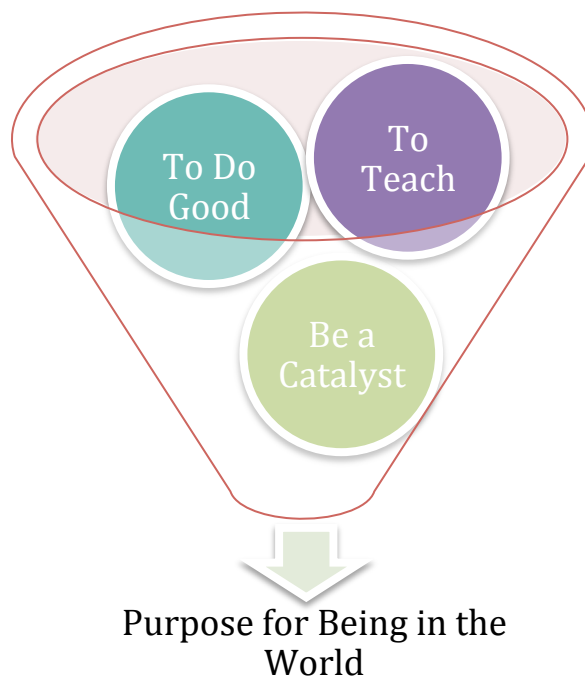
I do just that. Yet, I know that I have difficulties in this area. Whenever I am pulled into conversation I have something to offer, something to say. In my private balancing however, it sometimes appears as if I have not. I have noticed this and I have tried to put my self in places and take actions where my inner workings are revealed in the open. There is still work to be done here.

Of course, I enthused about my inner radar and wanting to get to the soul of things. I suspect this is "I" valuing what I value. However, I now know its content and have an awareness of how it can work in my own disinterest if I take it lightly. I now have vigilance as well as an appreciation of the values that I value. I know if those values are held so tightly that they have no room to grow, to breathe, as I embraced the Sankofa bird and Maroon. Then, the prospect for change is diminished, as was evidenced when I found no change in the relationship with my father, in how I compromised my notion of community and as a consequence with that compromised vision in how I limited the impact I could have in the world, in the universe, in the space that cannot be cut.

It is into that space that cannot be cut that I searched for inspiration and in inquiry into my "intraverted feeling", I was able advanced my living inquiries with attention to my 'being African, being an educator and being a storyteller'. These were important moments in my study and encouraged a deepening of inquiry as I made connection with notions of community (I am because we are, Ubuntu as social living) and also make connection with my actions as a catalyst and motivator. Further, I

would inform on my way of being and nature of my leadership and it is with greater insight that I am able to relate to Self and my purpose for being the world as follows:

- Self as a contradictory being
- Multi-layered complex self
- Living unity of opposites



In exploring my purpose for being in the world, I affirmed 'to do good, to teach and to be a catalyst for change, as my embrace.

I had reached an important juncture in my development in my studies and in BCL.

Extending my influence

In my work in BCL through coaching I was able to extend my involvement across the DCSF family of organisations on the Advance Leadership Development Programme. This was a programme for high potential senior staff with the capability of becoming

system leaders. I was also able to extend my involvement in NOMS working with prison governors and senior officers in Her Majesty Prison Services and the Probation Service on their innovative Continuing Development Programme focused on leading without losing yourself (authenticity, self-management and work-life balance) and emotional intelligence.

At the Department of Health I was involved in the comprehensive leadership programme and strategic leadership workshops. I designed and developed the Department of Health's 'Challenging Inappropriate Behaviour Workshops' (utilising the valuing social living model). Further, I designed and co-facilitated the Department of Health's Career Development Programme for Diverse staff at Grade 6 & 7 that included a Stories of a Glorious Past component.

Additionally, I have also been working on the Health Foundation's 'Closing the Gap' programme as a learning and development consultant. This programme is directed to working with teams seeking quality improvement in the health and I have been able to pilot the "Six Stories to Tell" model as a result of engagement with Judith Thurman (1995) and emergent in my living theory thesis (White, 1989). The Six Stories to Tell are as follows;

1. Who Am I stories
2. Why I am here stories
3. Vision Stories
4. Education Stories
5. Values in action stories
6. Knowledge creation stories

I designed and delivered the highly successful one-day Workshops for the University of Kent that is now mainstreamed in the leadership development programme.

These developments have shown my own movement from the margins into mainstream influence. This is so, both in the focus of my work, and what I now do as my work. However, I am challenged to consider the criticality of the “Accelerate To” programme in my own development, as a place to be my self and do my Work, co-inspire, crystallise my vision, co-create, prototype and experiment, co-evolve and perform that has been foundational in experiences in BCL.

Accelerate (now Accelerate to) Programme

The Accelerate to programme is a unique experience for me, in its spanning over five years, utilising appreciative inquiry, affording the applying of my valuing social living pedagogy and embracing of the challenge to access the source dimension of my leadership and social relationship in a live and emergent way.

I have been involved in six cohorts of action learning sets, six cohorts of development on residential (veritable co-inspiring, co-creative and co-evolving communities of learning and practice) impacting my learning, living and working.

This is where my Stories of a Glorious Past, my Storytelling (now six stories to tell), my work with Career Anchors, my introduction to Emotional Intelligence workshops and my sharing of engagement with Theory U as a sound technology for change inputs have been prototyped and evolved as integral parts of the programme.

“Accelerate To”, for me, represents as a place for the purposeful presentation and

challenge of our novel ideas, for building bridges as we journey our influence and for meditation. It is also a place filled with the great loving spirituality of its participants, and which encouraged me to inquire deeper into the African Voice at a practice level, and to explore my learning, living and working in a thorough way (participants questioning Scharmer; questioning new found theories).

Further, “Accelerate To” is a place, an emergent field, within which my own inquiries for a sound technology for change and communicating the African Voice have been greatly facilitated. It is here that my African humanism, included with the notion of caring for the Africa in us, my living Ubuntu (included with respect of the unconditional kind) and my Great Passion, grounded and integrated as my valuing social living pedagogy is evolved. It is not that my valuing social living pedagogy does not already do this (Ubuntu is a sound technology for change). However, what begins as a groping, flourishes as rediscovery as my research leads to The Paut Neteru (The Tree of Life). Dr. Malauna Karenga, notes as follows:

“At the heart of the concept and practice of Ubuntu is the value of reciprocity in relationship and practice. Indeed, reciprocity or mutual responsiveness inform and undergird each principle and practice of Ubuntu.

Mutual respect is an African ethical value that reaches back to ancient Egypt and which defines humans as possessors of dignity and divinity, sacred and deserving of the highest respect. This respect is also a rightful recognition and appreciation of our similarity and diversity, and our embeddedness in and responsibility to the natural world. Mutual caring for each other speaks to loving-kindness, compassion, rightful attentiveness and responsiveness to each other and our constant concern for the well-being and flourishing of each other. Mutual sharing cultivates in us a profound commitment to share the good and goods in and of the world.”(Karenga 2010)

In my own learning, living and working, I follow this path to Egypt (Kemet) and find the Tree of Life. In the surfacings of the Tree of Life, meaning and explanation critical to the understanding my own spirituality, communication of the nature of my commitment to purposeful learning, living and working (not in a religious way) and

profound change in my valuing social living pedagogy is the challenge. The challenge is to choose the path to a Divine Self included with and including the Divinity of Nature.

This is my commitment for the African Voice and Great Work to be in the room in complementation. However, for me it is foundationally much more than this, as already intimated in my noting that it brings about profound change in my valuing social living pedagogy.

Discovery of The Paut Neteru

I had initially become aware of The Paut Neteru through engagement with members of the Ausar Auset Society whilst working in Sankofa. Kofi was one of the co-creators of the Sankofa Learning Centre, who often storied with the children about the “Tree of Life”. His son, Emmanuel, received the whole of his secondary schooling in Sankofa. I was always fascinated with Kofi’s positively peaceful demure, his deep conversations with the young people and his great artistry - one his drawings is below.

I have also known Imani for years as a member of the Ausar Auset Society and she has always been happy to dialogue, pass on books and tapes, particularly the insights of Ra Un Nefer Amen over the years relating to diverse subjects, which I embraced as the presentation of an African worldview. My own research evidences the Ausar Auset Society as a Pan-African religious organisation founded in Brooklyn, New York in 1973. It has an international chapter in London.

The organisation provides members a societal framework in which the ‘Tree of Life’

(The Paut Neteru) is appreciated as contributing to the cosmogony and philosophical underpinning, of a spiritually empowering (African/Kemetic) way of life that aims at the awakening of the Ausar principle (the Divine Self) within each individual. This is what I call my embrace of a Divine self included with and including the Divinity of Nature, and which acknowledges, as the Sons of Ra Ministries suggests, "that our true Being is best described as a Mind-Body- Spirit Complex" (Sons of Ra Ministries 2006, p. 37).

How I arrived at this place stems from the challenge of Ra Un Nefer Amen, in Metu Neter (1990), as follows:

"Due to the lack of knowledge of Self, and the purpose of Life, most people in the world are going about the daily business of living with wrong ideas of what is life, what should be their true goals, how to correctly achieve their goals." (Amen 1990, p. 46)

This is a challenge at the heart of my living theory thesis, and an area where I have a decided interest, particularly relating to influences in my learning, living and working and that of others and social formations. Ra UN Nefer Amen considers the guidelines for the true fulfilment of our mission on Earth are in cosmogony. The study of cosmogony, Ra UN Nefer Amen purports has two fundamental goals. One, the provision of "an ordered and unified view of who and what is God, man and the forces that administrate and sustain the world" (Amen 1990, p. 46). Two, the provision of a framework that guides thinking and action through diverse "life situations to the successful identification and attainment of the goal of living" (Amen 1990, p. 46).

Ra Un Nefer Amen suggests that the study of cosmogony “*achieves this by showing how all events in a person’s life are integrally related to his/her destiny. Through it is revealed the spiritual value of each and every event in a person’s life*” (Amen 1990, pp. 46-7).

The Tree of Life is drawn from the cosmogony of Ancient Egypt or Kemet, which is its ancient and indigenous name and is presented within the “grand theme of the cosmological mythoscientific” surfacings extant in African spiritual traditions. This cosmological mythoscience is communicated comprehensively by Ra Un Nefer Amen across his diverse work. However, in this study focus is given to the Paut Neteru (the Tree of Life), and its import as an initiation system in my search for sound technologies of change. This is why it is foundational in my valuing social living pedagogy.

The Sons of Ra Ministries informs that Tree of Life comprises 11 principles, appreciated as theological “Knowledge” and “a doorway”, an offering to begin to have a greater experience of ourselves, as we are instructed by the Ancient African Elders: “Man/Woman Know Thyself” (Sons of Ra Ministries 2006, p. 1). In that instant, I recall my rites of passage event at the Elmina slave fort and communication with my Ancient Elders, at the “Door of No Return”, as I mouthed the refrain of the poem, “I Made the Journey”:

*Remember
We are one with you
You are one with us
But more than that spiritually
We are one
One are we*

I also recall the counsel of the Ancient Elders in that dungeon, and I search and find

the lines in the poem that is stirring in my thoughts. I find it and the words are as follows:

Heeding the call of my ancestors to come home
 Feeling ill-prepared as they walked with me at Elmina
 They counseled ... use lived experience to understand
 Why your life's journeys have brought you here
 Know who you are ... who you are not
 Know where you are from ... where you are from not
 Search out your footprints
 Respecting those of others
 Tell the story... inform
 Disassociate fiction from fact
 The values to behold though blurred are still in tact

Then, later in the poem I see my commitment to my reawakening self as evidenced in the words that follow:

I bear witness
 And awaken the spirituality within me to make claim and reclaim
 That which has been bequeth to me
 My ancestral inheritance
 I call on the ancestral spirits that flourished
 In those great civilisations of Nubia, Egypt, Ethiopa
 Of Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Zimbabwe and others
 To say Elmina
 Here was not the beginning

I repeat "here was not the beginning" a number of times, as the meaning shifts from the notion that African history did not begin with slavery and that Elmina, Ghana, though very important in the history of Africans is also not the beginning. My thoughts run to Egypt and its surroundings, as the beginning, (as it has done many times since my African birthing) and the foundation for my being African. It is doing so again now as I enter that doorway, beckoned once again by the Ancient Elders: "Man Know Thyself."

This is important, because what is critical here, is that it is believed within African spiritual traditions that through the active, focused and determined connection with the divine forces that exist both inside and outside of the self that the attainment of divinity and true selfhood (my embrace of the Divine Self included with and including the Divinity of Nature) is possible. I am breathing heavily and I take a deep breath. In this schema, significant is an understanding of the importance of the integration of the divine, the cosmos and our relationships with each other.

The Spiritual Society of Amen-Ra claim knowledge of the true meaning of Africa and African, as 'We are the People of the Spirit' and through their African Love Wisdom Teachings are seeking to bring forth a "new day" on this earth. However, they do not in any way separate the human family. The perspective that they embrace is that all originate out of Africa (I have also suggested earlier that this is my position though it is not fast). However, I like how the Spiritual Society of Amen-Ra offers the choice that "*all who reconcile with Mother Africa can call themselves African*" (Sons of Ra Ministries 2006). This has been my choice.

It is with this sentiment that I continue with the story of my embrace of a path to a Divine Self included with and including the Divinity of Nature that was motivated by what I found in the surfacings of the Paut Neteru.

Norman Harris (2011) posits that the Paut Neteru is a symbol for both how to live this life, and how to live eternally. He says of the Tree of Life, "it is the perfect symbol for the African conception of God as having complimentary dualities: an unmanifested dimension (eternal life); and a manifested dimension (how to live in this life)" (p. 3). Harris also says it is in understanding this relationship that the Paut

Neteru can be viewed as a "... graduated means through which the Prime Cause effects the world" (p. 3). The prime cause is Amen, the "Zero", which is positioned above the Paut Neteru. The way the prime cause effects the world is extant in the remainder of the Paut Neteru (p. 3).

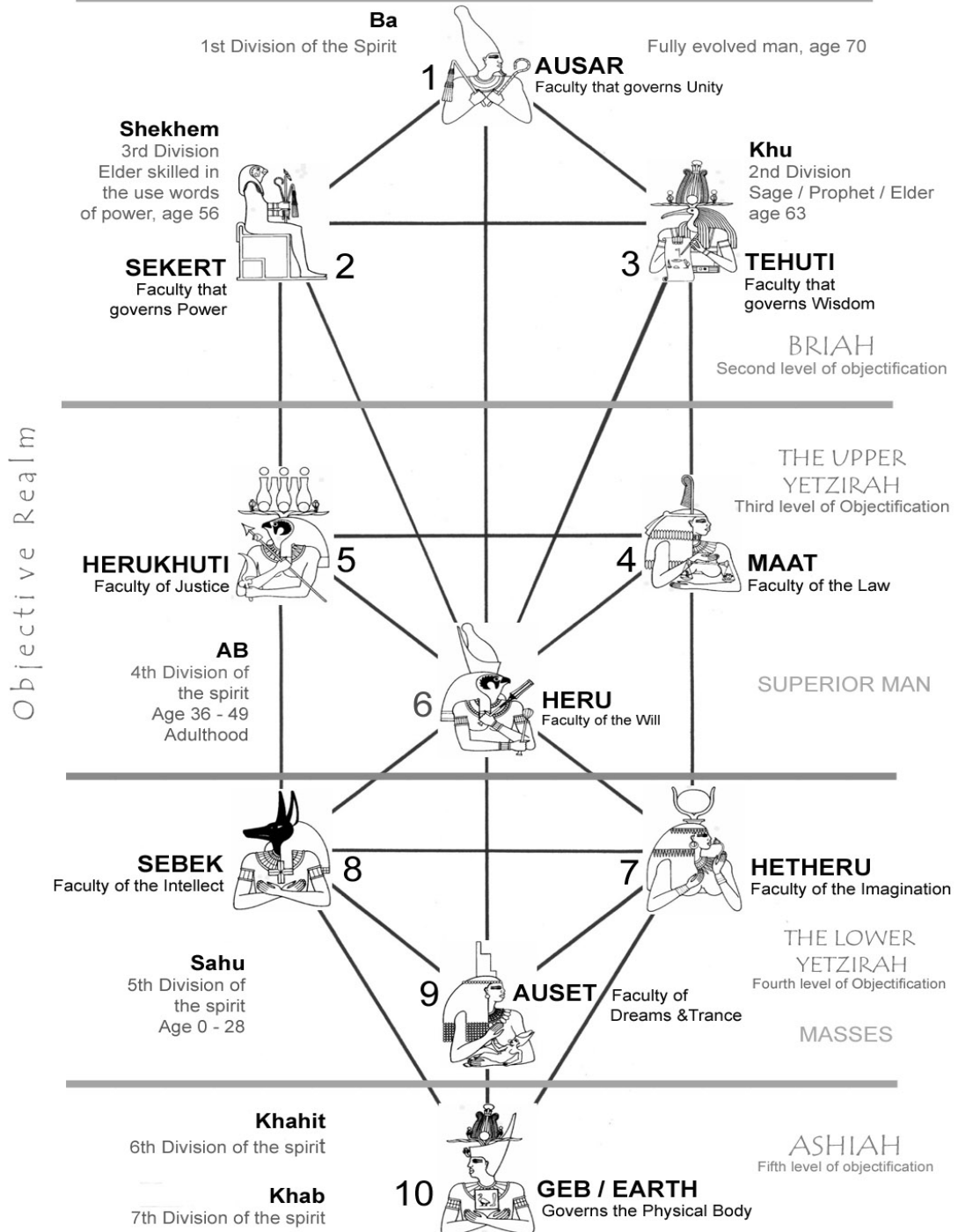
Therefore, the Paut Neteru is a system of initiation. We all start at branch ten, the physical body symbolised by Geb, and through life, with appropriate cultivation we move up The Paut Neteru. The purpose of each step is to move ever closer to the understanding of the "unity within diversity." I aver a knowing possible only through the cultivation of the shared seed-like God characteristics of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence" (Harris 2011, p. 3).

The Tree of Life

Harris (2011) citing (Amen 1990) presents Amen or the zero (0) sphere as the source of creation. The prime cause effects nine surfacings of the spirit grouped in three sets of three, each represented as a triangle. These spiritual surfacings complement to create and administrate the tenth (10th) sphere, (Geb), which is physical reality, the effect (Harris 2011, p. 3).

Each of the three triangles in the Paut Neteru signifies both a step in the creative process, and its purpose. The first triangle comprises Ausar, Tehuti, and Seker (branches one, two and three respectively). It is here that the divine characteristics of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence that God shares with humanity are in harmony. This triangle points up towards to "Amen", the "hidden one", the source of everything, like a 'reservoir that supplies forever without diminishing' and to absolute peace, un-manifested reality (Harris 2011, p. 3).

Subjective Realm **Amen**  ATZILUTH undifferentiated energy/matter



TREE of LIFE

Harris (2011) on the second triangle notes that it comprises Maat, Herukhuti, and Heru (branches four, five and six). It is here that divine law, justice and free will

comprising the decision-making functions are to be found. They are critical for order and balance between the un-manifested aspect of God (spheres one, two and three) and the activities necessary for manifestation (in the final triangle), experience in the world. This triangle points downward towards manifestation (p. 3).

On the third triangle comprising Het-Heru, Sebek, and Auset (branches seven, eight and nine), Harris (2011) describes them as the workers, doing the creative visioning, information gathering and memorising. They are influenced by the administrative triangle that is guided by the divine intention of the first triangle. Geb represents the physical body. Harris says The Paut Neteru can be thought of as “a metaphor for the concrete manifestation of an idea. It is the effect intended by the cause” (p. 4).

Additionally, Harris points out that the process of creation outlined in the Paut Neteru begins and ends with a single entity dividing itself for experience, whilst maintaining its unity. Each triangle, and each Neter within the triangles, complements in their diverse relational functions to provide the “graduated means through which the Prime Cause effects the world (Harris 2011, p. 4).”

The Sons of Ra Ministries (2006), communicate that Heru, is viewed as being at the crossroad (“on the cross”) and represents our “free will”, the place where we choose to enjoin with Ausar our True Self. They suggest when free will is used to enjoin with Ausar, this represents “my will and my Father’s will are one” (p. 33). This, for me, is my “We are one, One are we”, in my poem, “I Made the Journey”, and communicated is an expression of unity, a dynamic inclusion, rather than holarchy.

The Sons of Ra Ministries (2006) note if the choice is not made at Heru, then lower aspects of being are the guiding forces in our lives. We die at the cross. In this way, Ausar is viewed as the resurrection of our True Self. In this resurrection it is influences from the higher sphere of our being (Ausar, Tehuti, Maát and Herukhuti), impacting the lower aspects (Het-Heru, Sebek, Auset, & Geb) that manifest the higher / more effective use of one's imagination and intellectual faculties; the ability to bring our knowingness into our conscious awareness; to establish and sustain commitments; and to have vitality and health (p. 33).

It is in this way that I also prepare for life challenges, for in choosing the path to a Divine Self included and including the Divinity of Nature, I distance self from what the Sons of Ra Ministries term "regrets of the past" and "fear for the future" (Sons of Ra Ministries, 2006) with the help of affirmation and meditation. I, as the divine progeny committed to the Ancient Elders Will on Earth, sees in the embrace of the power, presence and activation of my own indwelling divinity, my being readied for initiation at higher levels, as integral to my inquiries and actions, as I continue on my journey, reaching out for the fullest co-creative future possibilities.

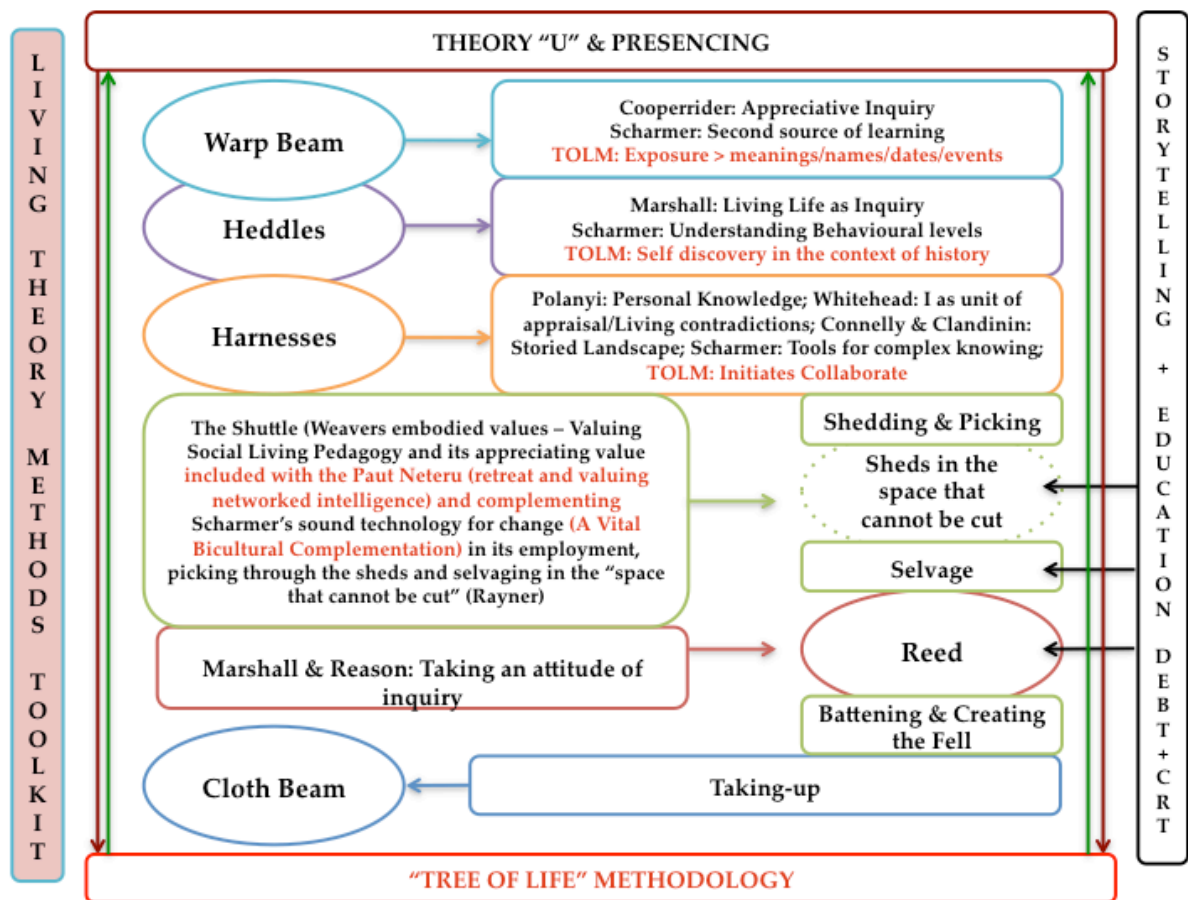
In understanding the 'Tree of Life', Ra represents the creative force of the universe, whereas Amen affirms a dimension of reality and consciousness prior to the creation of the physical and objective world. Thus Amen is known as the "unmoved mover". Ra is not the sun, but the creative power behind the sun that is best represented by the appearance and attributes of the sun; bringer of light, life, regeneration, removes the darkness and sparks the creation (Sons of Ra Ministries, 2006). The following from Sons of Ra Ministries provides a summary description of each of the aforementioned eleven (11) principles (Sons of Ra Ministries 2006, p. 34) as follows:

Table 5: Neters

Principle	Sphere	Description
Amen	0	Concealed, the Subjective Realm; infinite source of life-force and spiritual matter.
Ausar	1	The True Self or Higher Self. The ability to unify all aspects of our lives.
Tehuti	2	The Divine Will; the source of learning from within. The ability to bring forth solutions to all problems.
Seker	3	The source of Spiritual Power.
Maát	4	To understand and live in divine harmony with all things.
Herukhuti	5	The power to enforce spiritual laws; establish equilibrium and courage to act.
Heru	6	Relates to our will. Initiator of activities not compelled by: emotions, likes or dislikes (lower aspects of behavior); freedom of will relates here.
Het-Heru	7	The imaginative faculty.
Sebek	8	The intellectual faculty.
Auset	9	The personality.
Geb	10	The physical body.

The import of The Paut Neteru, for me in this living theory thesis is at a number of levels. It places in context my African birthing in its presentation of a system of initiation. It also contributes to my continuing rediscovery of the African Voice building and its appreciative quality extant in my valuing social living pedagogy. Further, it enables the freeing of the Sankofa bird and Maroon, which has been in suspended due to its weighted in the past. This freeing is on a number counts, for they have interiority to my process of initiation, proffer balance in my perspective between traditional and modern and value in their re-inclusion at a spiritual level in my sound technology for change, as I return to my true self in my embrace of the challenge of Maat, Tehuti and Ausar. That is to understand and live in harmony with all things; to use my Divine will, the source of learning within for knowledge creation and to follow the path of my true self, unifying all aspects of my life (learning, living and working).

Figure 45: Tree of Life Methodology and Vital Bicultural Complementation



The parallel for me with Scharmer's sound technology for change is uncanny, and recalled to memory is the challenge that I often face in introducing concepts, tools and technologies prefaced with the adjective new, on the Accelerate programme, only to be challenged honourably, with the query, has that same thing been said in a different way before. My only recourse, is to say possibly, from a place of knowing that the African Voice and other excluded voices have been passed, misperceived and not integral in the construction of modernity.

So, when we appreciate and interrogate what is new and novel in the content of modernity its arrival is tested with rigour. It is in this way that I bring my cloth to the field in engagement with Scharmer's innovation. It is in the understanding and communicating the actions necessary to move along the pathway towards Self (my

Divine self), and in answering the question what is my Work (my purpose for being in the world / the purpose of life), that it has applicability.

In this act there is significance in the challenge for profound change in my own influence, in my learning, living and working and that of others and social formations through advancing the African Voice foundationally. My focus on the *Paut Neteru* proffers an understanding of the creative process that is a necessary beginning to rescuing the manifested dimensions of the African Voice (as exemplified in the Sankofa bird and Maroon), and restoring / renewing of its spiritual power in my life.

Being and becoming

There are also new implications in how I appreciate being and becoming in my universe objectives. Earlier I noted, quoting Berry, that the universe story is the quintessence of reality. We perceive the story. We put it in our language, the birds put it in theirs, and the trees put it in theirs. We can read the story of the universe in the trees. Everything tells the story of the universe. The winds tell the story, literally, not just imaginatively. The story has its imprint everywhere, and that is why it is so important to know the story. If you do not know the story, in a sense you do not know yourself. In this way I can celebrate self and other as a “communion of subjects” (Berry 2000).

Now valuing, Rayner I make another connection, presencing the future. Rayner says:

Real life does not ... inhabit an even playing field of energy, space and time. Instead it continually both changes and responds to changes in the contextual circumstances of its natural neighbourhood in an improvisational process of autocatalytic flow, which gives rise to evolutionary and ecological complexity and succession (Rayner, 1997; 2004).

Rayner continues:

This process of 'natural inclusion' has been described as 'the co-creative, fluid dynamic transformation of all through all in receptive spatial context' (Rayner, 2006). Through it, an opening is made dynamically for an extraordinary diversity and complexity of interdependent forms and patterns of life to co-evolve over myriad nested temporal and spatial scales. The breathtaking variety that we can find in a crumb of soil, a patch of chalk, grassland, a coral reef and a tropical forest comes into being under the guidance of no more and no less than the responses and contributions of its membership to natural energy flow in a natural 'sustainability of the fitting' (Rayner 2008, 2010b).

Now, in the dynamic surfacing of the Tree of Life, an African initiation system leading to a conception of the Divine Self as both including and included by the Divinity of Nature, and its enjoining with Scharmer's field structure of attention - path to social emergence and I 'behold' a vital bicultural complementation. It is of 'cloth' – as tangible energetic surfacing, and 'field' – as limitless pool of intangible space.

It is in this way that the African Voice is freed, emerging from a 'living I' that comprises mutually inclusive complements and so sustains diversity within and as an inclusion of the 'space that cannot be cut'. In this way also I find inescapably that my self-identity naturally includes neighbourhood, dynamically distinct but not definitively discrete. I am able to presence a "neighbourhood" that is not only "I in communion with others". It is also as "I as the communed". I am in the neighbourhood, and the neighbourhood is in me, which has a more foundational meaning than how I have used bicultural competence in the past (I develop this idea later in the next Weave). Hence, my notion valuing Rayner, of my advance of a vital bicultural complementation, undergirding a natural inclusional living self, both individually unique and included in the common space of all emerges as I proffer an

audacious attitude beyond my inquiry, in my learning, living and working, in my relationship with others and in social formations, imagining the universe luminously, an energetic inclusion of darkness throughout light and light in darkness.

A Time of Disorder or Massive Institutional Failure

The Ancient Egyptians (now my Ancient Elders) told of a time of 'disorder, unrighteousness and ignorance', which would come and is to be appreciated in the context of the ebb and flow of the universe. It is written that it is at this time that the ancient teachings would be brought forth to reveal and to bring the light of truth to men and women of the Earth.

It would be a time for preparing the way and making the path straight; this is the time of renaissance. It is a time when we are to resurrect, rebuild and re-constitute ourselves (Norman Harris, 2011). Our present time could be appreciated as such, and in this way connection is made with what Scharmer says is needed at this time of large scale change, and of renewal. Therefore, in a spiritual way, the ancient ones say what Scharmer says, in my view, in his recognition of what is needed at this time. Scharmer says that this 'time calls for a new consciousness and a new collective leadership capacity' to meet the challenges of 'massive institutional failure, collectively creating results that nobody wants - climate change, AIDS, hunger, poverty, violence and terrorism'. The African Voice also has a view on these issues.

In my own transformation, rediscovery of the African Voice and embrace of the Great Passion (my valuing social living pedagogy) included with a unique purposeful recognition, an enhanced relational mutuality and an engaging dialogical

praxis, connection is made with the 'Tree of Life' and Theory U and their influence in my own learning, living and working, as I appreciate their sound counsel to operate in more conscious, intentional, and strategic ways in creating a future of greater possibility. It is time for my own renewal / re-invention, for the light to shine in the dark.

Significant also is the accessing of the source dimension of my leadership and social action from the twin sources of the path to social emergence (valuing Scharmer) and the path to my Divine self (valuing The Paut Neteru) both contributing to appreciating my embodiment of the African Voice as being and becoming from the vantage point of a vital bicultural complementation. It is in this way that I illuminate my blind spot valuing Scharmer's innovation and in focus on Who is Self and What is My Work valuing rediscovery of The Paut Neteru, proffer a contribution to explaining the process of creation and the purpose of life included with the African Voice.

This is an ontological discussion and the table below (Paut Neteru as An African World View Paradigm) shows how Harris *used The Paut Neteru* as a paradigm to afford the African Voice cultural expression in an inclusional way. It proffers a framework informing on surfacings (a number of features) extant in the African Voice, and is a valuable base for inquiry and offering meaning that is authentic in communicating the African Voice. In evidence is how the creative process works, and how inquiry might authentically proceed valuing the Paut Neteru (Tree of Life paradigm).

Harris provides initial definitions for four surfacings included in the African Voice

(the African World View) arising from the Paut Neteru in the table below. It should be noted that these four characteristics are also included in the framework, African and Asian Ways of Being Compared with European Ways of Being, which I shared earlier relating to the Histories of Success Model. Here, Harris elaborates on the four characteristics as follows:

Figure 46: African Worldview

	Ontology	Epistemology	Space	Time
African World View	Individuality defined in the context of community	Intuition and historical understanding validate what is said to be known.	Is structured by hierarchical value or function; awakens intuition to establish historical linkages (Amen, <i>Tree of Life Meditation System</i> , p. 121)	Means the order in which reality manifests itself (Amen, <i>Tree of Life Meditation System</i> , p. 121)

In this paradigm, the collectivist nature of African ontology, for me is demonstrated in the notion, “individuality defined in the context of community”. Other examples of this idea in the African Voice is seen in phrases, such as, “I am because we are” in Ubuntu. Further, evidence of this idea is in sources and activities ranging from creation myths to diverse spiritual ceremonies, and can now be seen in the concept of “unity in diversity” that is at the core of the Tree of Life. Indeed, in many African societies the advance a monotheistic concept in which a singular Creator divides itself in order to accomplish the various tasks of creation is in evidence.

It is in this way that an epistemology emanating from an ontology that does not make antagonistic, either /or divisions between the mind and the body, the sacred and the secular, and a variety of other dualities is presented. It is an epistemology structured by a both /and logic which conceptualises dualities as complementary

expressions of a single reality. This both / and logic extant in African epistemology is relational and simultaneously proffers a fixed and fluid set of dualistic and other relationships giving evidence of reality's infinite expressions of itself.

This is an African basis for understanding the world, and this understanding is exhibited in a variety of cultural expressions. It is there in the drumming welcoming the Asantehene chief. It is in the jazz session. It is in the steelpan jamming. It is the combination form and improvisation. The American heritage dictionary notes on jazz, it is a "style of music, characterised by a strong but flexible rhythmic understructure with solo and ensemble improvisations on basic tunes and chord patterns, and ... a highly sophisticated harmonic idiom." It is this creative tension between improvisation and predictability that helps give the drums, jazz and pan their dynamism and demonstrates complementarity in the African Voice.

It is with complementarity that the notions historical understanding and intuition included in the table above also have to be appreciated. Harris says the interest in historical understanding is not primarily about names, dates, times and places, because in one form or the other, we always been a part of this universe. What is of interest says Harris, is the use of historical understanding to learn about how the "spiritual reservoir manifests itself", as metaphysical science, and is the foundation for names, dates, times and places.

Therefore, at one level, this kind of historical understanding is advanced in terms of 'thematic or cyclical studies of history'. It is also made indirect reference to in folk-sayings (and on the Accelerate programme) in phrases like the "more things change, the more they remain the same."

Therefore, historical understanding is a premise for inquiry into the reservoir to discern specific manifestations of a given phenomenon, and it is in this way that thematic and cyclical approaches to history are examples of “tracing back to a common point of origin (Paut Neteru as an African Worldview Paradigm, 2011).”

What is the theme(s) that ties phenomena together over space and time? What is the nature of human development, which can account for the apparent repetitive ways in which human kind seeks to pose and answer fundamental questions about life? These kinds of questions are at the root of historical study, and assume a common cause, or, at least, a common set of laws, which facilitates human development.

Harris (2011) says, the purpose of humankind’s development and activity from the perspective of the African World View is to discover the unity in diversity, and historical study is advanced as an aspect of the initiation process in the search of understanding one’s life purpose.

Initiation, as historical study for Harris (2011) begins with the unstated assumption that there is unity within diversity, and from this assumption it proceeds through the following four stages: (1) systematic exposure to meanings associated with names, dates, places, and events (This is my histories of success); (2) engagement in activities meant to assist self-discovery within the context of history (Who Am I? Where am I from? What’s My purpose for being here? Lifelines / Storytelling) (3) collaboration among the initiates and various others for the purpose of problem solving (Forums, Symposia; (4) “networked intelligence” activities associated with meditation and technology (residential, retreats Accelerate programme). These stages of historical initiation help initiates discover the cyclical nature of history, and those points within

the cycle, which suggest spirals in human development beyond what said cycles suggest.

The first stage includes the systematic exposure to meanings associated with diverse phenomenon and is a stage of initiation, which socialises the spirit/intellect to know and 'behold' (Goethe) the best traditions in the surfacings of the African Voice (African World culture). The accumulating of information, and the successful completion of this stage of initiation into historical understanding "eliminates the need to ever doubt either the existential worth and legitimacy of the individual or the worth and legitimacy of her/his community". This is the value of the African Voice in itself - its appreciation as a "gift to the universe". It is this point that was integral to the 'Histories of Success' programmes prototyped in Mandiani, and now evolved in my emergent consultant work in BCL in the communication of the "appreciating value of the African Voice", and the emergence in its vital bicultural complementation. This is what helps silence what I called earlier as my reactive rigour.

The second stage of initiation is related to self-discovery within the context of cultural history and begins the process of individuals finding and refining their diverse talents in the terms of the best traditions in their history and culture. This for me relates to the finding of one's purpose in the world/universe. In effect, it is a lifelong dialogue with history that is commenced, and its best and most useful expression is embraced in the present. Self-discovery is intended to positively impact the present. This is the symbolic representation of the Sankofa bird and Maroon. It is also the nature of my own storytelling talent and purpose as I seek to do good, to educate and be a catalyst for justice, valuing Ma'at, Tehuti and Ausar.

The third stage is focused on collaboration among the initiates and is intended to demonstrate 'unity within diversity' through structured activities. This requires sharing and creating information and experiences, which helps initiates to see multiple ways in which responses to opportunities may be shaped. This kind of activity was evident in our parent – child challenges, quality events like the Elders Ball and our symposiums undergirded by our Heal, Protect and Create strategies in Mandiani. It was also extant in the work across diverse sites as emergent consultant in BCL as I embody my valuing social living pedagogy living unity in diversity and embracing and added-value and vital bicultural complementation.

The fourth stage of initiation into historical understanding is the utilisation of meditation and technology to assist in developing "networked intelligence". This extends the third stage by focusing on techniques to historical understanding. The Metu Neter offers a vast range of meditation techniques, which are timeless, and of value in the initiation process. The challenge is the freeing of the creative and unifying dimensions of the right hemisphere of the brain to conceptualise and understand reality. From this perspective, the left hemisphere of the brain, with its ability to implement, is put in the service of the unifying solutions posed by the right hemisphere. It is in this way that initiation is facilitated.

The idea of "networked intelligence" is derived from the digitalisation of information, but for me it is also the effective use of emergent fields. It is in this way that I have utilised video narratives and opportunities on the Accelerate to programme. The video narratives afforded opportunities for individual inquiry and development (like the noticing of my valuing social living pedagogy). They also

proffered occasions to tap the collective, co-create and innovate. The video narratives are at the heart of this living theory thesis.

The “Accelerate to” programme in its novel development also felt like engagement with new technology with the potential to co-create learning communities and learning opportunities consistent with life’s purpose, discovering the unity within diversity. Just as meditative techniques enabled the seeing within and beyond in a spiritual sense, so too did the Accelerate programme extend the consciousness of individuals (including my own) and the understanding of diverse cultures through our collective individual’s stories. In my own cultivation, the unique and comprehensive inter-relationships of the collective, the co-creation of environments embracing the highest relational mutuality and the accessing deep learning levels of learning through storied and dialogical engagement characterised the influences on my learning, living and working. The discovery of the Paut Neteru was emergent in this context, and in embracing change and facilitating my own development, study of the video narratives and experiences on the Accelerate to programme were foundational in providing a deeper way to understanding/communicating the African Voice as a sound technology for change).

Harris' (2011) intuition is derived from the ontological assumption that reality is a single, unified phenomenon and from this perspective, knowing has a relationship similar to the one that the involuntary systems of the human body have to the brain: we neither have to think or remember to tell our circulatory systems to extract oxygen from red-blood cells, nor do we have to tell our heart to beat at a rate consistent with the needs our physical activities require. This level of knowing requires no thought.

However, he poses, how does one reach this stage of knowing?

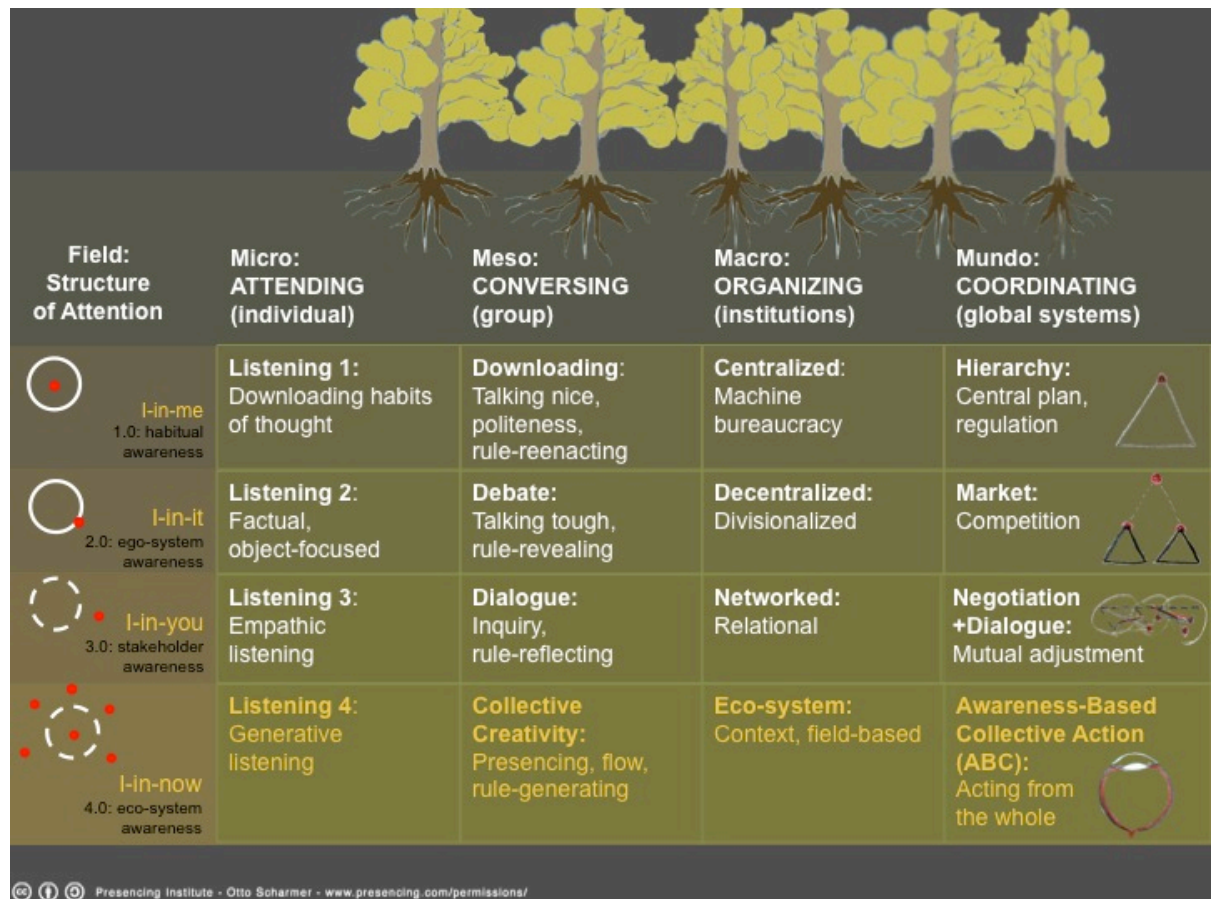
Harris suggests that whilst this level of knowing is evidenced by the absence of thought, it is facilitated and made possible by activities in the initiation process similar to those used in facilitating historical understanding. "Intuition is therefore a learned method, or, perhaps more accurately, it is the natural state of an awakened consciousness" (Harris 2011).

The learned dimensions are those techniques used to awaken the consciousness. The truth or validity of intuition is evidenced by the results it achieves in time; indeed, knowing how to tell time (the order in which reality manifests itself) is an aspect of intuition. It is in this way that African epistemology contrasts with the western scientific method in a number of significant ways. African intuition as epistemology incorporates both the divisive aspects of the left hemisphere of the brain and the unifying aspects of the right hemisphere of the brain. The ancient Egyptians symbolised the dual components of knowing in a variety of ways that were intended to create the equilibrium necessary to see the entirety of a situation.

Indeed, it is in this way that I bring my cloth, my large fabric to the field, as I evidence engagement with Scharmer's idea of a field structure of attention and connection with my large fabric (my African Great story) influenced by the 'Tree of Life'. It is in this way also that I engage with Scharmer's social grammar of the field structure of attention that illuminates the blind spot and the Tree Of Life Model (TOLM) application in resurrecting my Divine Self. Further, it is in this way that I engage Scharmer's 'thinking, conversing, structuring and globally connecting' as four

fundamental metaprocesses that underlie the collective process of social reality formation, and the TOLM's four stages of initiation.

Figure 47: Scharmer's Field Structure of Attention



Additionally, it is in this way that I engage with Scharmer's social technology of freedom articulating the set of principles and practices undergirding presencing and Theory U, and the TOLM's principles and practices undergirding of the African Voice

Therefore, the Tree of Life and /like 'presencing' and Theory U are multi-placed on the loom to afford new enquiry and proffer greater quality to my large fabric (My African Great Story). The loom has been transformed once more; the weaver's readiness to act to know has been sustained.

It is with this awareness/gaze that I was inspired to return to Scharmer's path to social emergence with new motivation. In my own transformation I would embody the African Voice as ways of being and becoming and search for my fullest future co-creative possibilities and a Divine self included with and including the Divinity of Nature.

It is with this foundation that I would also improve the Weaver's leadership capacity/capability in my learning, family, work in BCL and involvement in the wider community. It is from the perspective of learning, cognition and change, highlighting both the individual and the collective aspects of this emerging new capacity in my own cultivation that I would continue to journey.

On my becoming in BCL I would write:

A Life in the Week of Ian P

In this weblog
 Blog
 The intention is to share with you
 The inside looking out view
 Of an OD consultant
 Reflecting on live experiences extant
 In a very special week filled with sparkling moments
 That began in celebration
 Giving recognition
 To a unique anniversary
 With a mystery journey
 That heralded BCL's 15 years of sound service excellence

Commencing in London St Pancras
 With a champagne breakfast
 Through the Channel Tunnel to Belgium
 Full of good cheer and in company that was wholesome
 We sat for a sumptuous celebratory evening fare
 Royal, but without any undue fanfare
 And amongst the proud gathering

Upbeat and certainly glowing
 Embraced were thoughts of contentment
 Of a real sense of achievement
 As resolutions for continued prosperity – hear - hear
 Gently punctuated the air

Raised glasses were in evidence of course
 So too strings of “jolly good show”
 And next day on an open-top bus we would spy
 With spirits still high
 The historic city of Brussels - full of interesting sights
 Touristic prattle and the sampling of Belgian delights
 However, journeying back to London, undoubtedly
 That legendary ‘mannekenpis’ was the lasting memory
 Yet in our imaginings a golden ambition would linger
 For more days like these days
 Visions of a better tomorrow
 And for BCL an even brighter future

Unsurprisingly the weekend passed
 Unflinchingly fast
 And it took - truly - that early **Monday** morning journey
 Cross country to really ready me
 Supply the time to corral thoughts
 Dispel any sense of being out of sorts
 And with decidedly positive intent
 I challenged I to start from strength
 Embracing fully the ‘bespoke’ workshop
 I helped public sector managers to step up – step up
 In practical ways their everyday action
 Towards mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion

Working appreciatively
 With strategies that impact successfully
 Created was a valuing environment
 Supportive, challenging and stirring engagement
 Catalysing managers to work on issues live
 Inspiring amongst them the urgency to act for diversity to thrive
 On expectation – we name the elephant in the room
 Actions are motivated by an emergent vavavoom
 Addressing discrimination and zero-tolerated inappropriate behaviour
 We proffer a light touch – yet with a certain verve and vigour
 Employed are innovative tools -micro-messages - fierce conversations
 Stimulating leadership alignment to legislation, policies and strategic actions of
 organisations

Tuesday in London
 Through the thronging crowd
 And hustle and hub-bub of the capital’s underground
 An adept pathway through the chaos was found

Yet in spite of this success still arrived at security
 Somewhat badgered, bruised and somewhat sweaty
 And wondering (the lifts were not working)
 Yes wondering (I am not joking)
 What really is the benefit of such a journey?
 That tires you so much
 Takes your breath away
 And imprisons you at the start of the day

However with sufficient time
 After the none-too-easy climb
 To get tidy and rearrange my dress
 I congratulate myself how quickly I no longer look a mess
 Composure regained – I am most relieved
 And with preparedness complete and readiness achieved
 I facilitate an action learning set
 For senior managers in the Civil Service for whom it's a new concept
 Networking, putting learning into practice and a personalised development solution
 Revans work has really been revolutionary in its contribution
 Underpinned by a celebration of action inquiry
 And underscored by diverse perspectives in collaboration and vibrant community

Wednesday still in London

A set of executive coaching sessions I had to take on
 However, with the journey of yesterday still fresh in my mind
 To be on the underground again felt certainly unkind
 Yet with the same rituals to perform
 Protocols with which to conform
 There was comfort
 That the expended effort
 In taking almost identical steps – station by station
 The journey pleasantly took me to a different destination
 And in preparation with no pretence or attempt to contrive
 I resolved to ensure the sessions were emergent and alive

Exploring with coachees needs, desires and motivations
 Using techniques to facilitate their own solutions
 Set goals - encouraging commitment to action
 For lasting personal growth & change as a perpetual motion
 The maintaining of unconditional positive regard
 Has to be authentic – no facade
 Ensuring that coachees develop personal competencies
 Not unhealthy coach dependencies
 And wherever possible to determine success
 Make use of objective measures to evaluate outcomes of the process
 And always, always encouraging clients to improve continually
 Achieving their personal goals and living successfully

Thursday it's up North

So an early evening train journey on Wednesday is bought
 Gets me in situ allowing time to meet and greet

Share camaraderie in good company in way that feels neat
 There is also ample time for rest
 And to get ready for the following day to be at your best
 It's a Development centre
 And the need to concentrate throughout could not be higher
 There is such busyness about the day
 That being alert and adroit is the only way
 To observe, record, classify and evaluate
 We hope huh - none of the participants will be late

When the centre begins there is always excitement
 Participants' wanting to do well is more than an enjoining sentiment
 They are expectant, yet unsure of what to expect
 They arrive uncertain into the unknown circumspect
 To be tested and assessed over a range competencies
 Focused on their behaviours, skills and abilities
 For some an in-tray exercise is the opening
 Measuring organisation and prioritising
 For others it is a presentation
 To demonstrate skills in structuring information and effective communication
 Both these activities are central in any development solution
 Together with problem-solving in teams, leadership and negotiation

Friday, even further North

The workshop challenge is of a different sort
 For though the focus is still on leadership development
 It goes a little wider to embrace life improvement
 'Leading others without losing yourself' is its title
 For Authenticity, Values and workload management it provides the mantle
 On programme are managers willing to explore with invention
 Reflecting on self and giving leadership activities insightful attention
 Wary of positive leadership impact
 And nature of their worldly contact
 They crave well-being and want to live the good life
 Looking for a challenging peace – beyond current stresses and strife

Encouraged to focus on their purpose for living
 Managers are supported in drawing from own experiences and striving
 To uphold and practise their solid values
 In ways that inspire, uplift, motivate and enthuse
 And to see themselves in the world
 Our world
 Not as something or someone apart
 But 'nearby' as transformatory leaders stimulated to engage from the Heart,
 With emotion
 Loving and living life with true passion
 Building positive relations, disciplined and true
 Being proactive - whilst blossoming too

As this special week ended
 I could only acknowledge much energy had been expended
 Not in dismay

On the contrary very happy and pleased I would say
 Yet this special week was like the week before
 And in the consultant's journey the coming week promised more
 There is something about our travel that's always interesting
 Working with people and processes encouraging
 The unique and that different something
 I needed rest that is true
 But on the weekend there are still things in the community to do

For this OD consultant there is a maths class I take
 Sometimes a meeting to make
 And working in African ways
 With others under a motto that says
 'Help Us to Help You'
 That is Ubuntu
 Promoting social living
 And valuing ways of being
 It's a life philosophy at the core of my committed way of being
 At the heart of my OD consulting
 With Heal, Protect and Create as its underpinning
 Life and living is presented as for everyone's winning

For this OD consultant there is a maths class I take
 Sometimes a meeting to make
 And working in African ways
 With others under a motto that says
 'Help Us to Help You'
 That is Ubuntu
 Promoting social living
 And valuing ways of being
 It's a life philosophy integrated into my OD consulting
 At the core of my transforming
 With Heal, Protect and Create as its underpinning
 And presenting life and living as for everyone's winning

Now, I am confident of my valuing social living pedagogy in a qualitative way. I am confident in my consultancy impact. I am confident in being able to communicate the African Voice in diverse communities of learning and environments. I can appreciate its vital bicultural complementation.

In the following Weave the intention is to demonstrate how insight into my vital bicultural complementation, the result of bringing my cloth (now included with the Paut Neteru) to the field (valuing Scharmer's innovation), and the foundational

influence of both in accessing the source dimension of my leadership and social relationship, continued to inspire profound change in my appreciation of 'Who is Self' and 'What is my Work'. I give evidence of novel engagement with living contradictions, natural inclusion and re-imagining the universe luminously continue to evidence what I am doing to communicate the African Voice in ways that are authentic, African and at the same time understandable to non Africans and the academy in reach of my fullest future co-creative possibilities and Divine self included with and including the Divinity of Nature.