Indigenous Knowledge’s Systems in the African Century

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It is remarkable that the founders of African nations lamented the destruction of African civilisations by slavery and colonisations and yearned for the rebirth of Africa. From the outset these African leaders though subscribing to foreign ideologies and religions recognised and acknowledged the distinctive features of the African personality and world-view and aspired to build a new Africa based on these features.

In 1892 John Langalibalele Dube, founder president of the ANC delivered a speech entitled “Upon my Native Land”, in this speech he envisaged a free and independent Africa which would be spiritual and humane. Dube was a self-proclaimed Ethiopianist who was profoundly influenced by Brooker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Institute which produced the early African-American intellectuals who became leaders of the civil rights movement and also contributed to rekindling the spirit of Ethiopianism in Africa itself. Brooker Washington and his contemporaries such as W.E.B Du Bois and Henry Sylvester Williams were profoundly influenced by Prince Hall, the founder of the first African Masonic Lodge and schools for free slaves.

In his studies of Free masonry Prince Hall discovered that the founders of western nations were not only influenced by the solar (Kara) philosophy and science of ancient Ethiopia and Egypt but modern sciences such as geometry, chemistry, astronomy, architecture and medicines originated in Ancient Ethiopia and Egypt. These sciences were called because Hermeticsm they were invented by the African sage by the Hermes.

Thus Prince Hall was convinced that Africans could revive their ancient glory and build a New Africa. This inspiration made him to build lodges and schools for the enlightenment and education of freed slaves. Thus Ethiopianism became the foundational philosophy of the Pan African Association which was established by Henry Sylvester Williams in 1900.

Leading members of the Pan African Association, notably Henry Sylvester Williams, came to Cape Town after the first Pan African Congress of 1900 in London. Williams
and his colleagues spread the Pan African spirit among traditional leaders and civil society and thus contributed to the establishment of the provincial native congresses which culminated in the establishment of the ANC.

Meanwhile Ethiopianism sparked the secession of the African clergy led by Nehemiah Tile and Mangena Mokone, founder of the Ethiopian church of Africa. The Ethiopian church movement in South Africa gave birth to the ANC and its members participated in wars of resistance such as the Bambatha Rebellion.

The African clergy seceded from western churches because they suppressed the African past, identity, culture and traditions and practised racial discrimination. The Ethiopian church taught Africans self-esteem and the culture of self-help and self-reliance. In 1905 a young South African student, at Columbia University delivered a speech entitled “The Regeneration of Africa”. In his speech Seme like Dube envisaged a free and prosperous Africa which would be spiritual and humane. Seme was also inspired by the past glory of Ancient Ethiopia and Egypt. Hence, Seme defined the regeneration of Africa as the creation of a unique civilisation for Africa and Africans. Two African leaders, notably, Marcus Garvey and Anton Lembede began to translate the vision of the New Africa into reality. Marcus Garvey and his Unia movement that established branches in South Africa taught the humanist principle of I and I (i.e. I am because you are) based on the Hermetic or Gnostic theory that every person is a divine spark that derived from the universal spirit that is called God. Garvey called on the people of African descent the world over, to worship god through Ethiopian (i.e. black African) eyes and established the African Orthodox church to preach this Ethiopian or black African theology and religion.

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A disciple of Marcus Garvey, Anton Lembede, distinguished the African and European world-view. He embraced the African philosophy of holism (i.e. unified theory of being) and humanism. According to Lembede the European was characterised by individualism and greed while the African conceived herself/himself as an integral part of the whole community that was gravitating to greater unity. Besides, the African regarded herself/himself as responsible for contributing to the welfare of the whole society.

This historical account show that Africans are an autonomous member of the human family has made a great which contributed to human civilisation in its own right. Africans also have distinctive features like the Chinese and Indians which could be exploited to build the new Africa envisaged by the founders of our nations.

The Indigenous African knowledge systems (IKS) movement provides a common platform for indigenous Africans to rediscover their past, identity, culture and knowledge systems or sciences and make new contributions to human civilisations. Thus IKS movement require a philosophical framework that the transcends tribal, ethnic, racial and religious divides which historically caused conflicts on the African continent and retarded the cultural, social and economic emancipation of the African continent. The founders of Maphungubwe civilisation developed a unifying spiritual
world view a knowledge systems and inscribed them on a zodiac which is substantially the same as the zodiasts found at great Zimbabwe, Meroe in the Sudan (heartland of ancient Ethiopia) and Dendera in Southern Egypt.

The zodiac of Maphungubwe is a wooden platter which is now in the cape museums. In the centre of this platter is a turtle or crocodile which symbolises the solar word called charaoh or Hamptah. This solar word is symbolised by the wings of the hawk or eagle on the zodiac of Dendera. Around the turtle or crocodile there are four triangular slabs. One in each pair of these slabs is facing in the opposite direction four interlocking chevrons.

The turtle or crocodile symbolises the word (Ham) of the master Architect of the universe (Ptah) which is made out of the mind, spirit, thought, soul, and word, reason. This triune word is surrounded by the triangular slabs which symbolise the four elements (water, fire, earth and air) and the four cardinal points and rudders of heaven. Thus the turtle or crocodile and the four triangular slabs symbolise seven spiritual elements which underlie the totality of being; -

- Mind or spirit
- Thought or soul
- Word or reason in the form of the body of light
- Water, fire, earth, and air.

These seven elements are encircled by seven outer planets which correspond to the seven Pleiades or circumpolar (Khelemela) stars which orbit the North Pole. The seven Pleiades or circumpolar stars (Khelemela) and seven outer planets (Kabiri) constitute the fourteen rungs of the ladder of Heaven or chain of Being which links the heaven and earth.

Outside the seven outer planets (Kabiri), also known as the sons of the master Architect of the universe (Ptah), there are three stars of the Orion (Urhana) belt and a triangle symbolising the spiritual father, mother and child. Below the Orion (Urhana) stars there are the stars Sirius (Saba) A and B which symbolise the mother (Isis) and child (Horus) whilst the Orion (Urhana) stars symbolise Osiris the husband of Isis and father of Horus. These gods made out the African spiritual trinity which dwells in the empyrean heaven called Luonde or Ulundi. The twelve fixed stars that we call the zodiac are inscribed on the rim of the zodiac of Maphungubwe, also called the zodiac of Matendere.

The twelve fixed stars are also group in four triads which correspond to the two equinoxes (Mwanamutapa) and Faro (or Amun) and two solstices (Mutapa and Mundu or FaHam). The two solstices and equinoxes also correspond to the four elements and Holy Beasts (Kheru) before the throne of the solar word (Charaoh or Hamptah) which is symbolised by the turtle or crocodile.

The universe mapped here by the founders of Maphungubwe and other Ancient African civilisations evolved from the Decade (70 principles) which came out of nothingness (Nahas/Nehes). In many parts of Africa this nothingness is symbolised by a python (Domba/Demba) biting its tail or ten concentric circles inscribed on stones. The two symbols represent the Divine Mind (Pamandara i.e. the knowledge of the operations of the operations of the sun). The solar (Kara) philosophy and knowledge systems embodied in the Maphungubwe and related zodiasts are expounded zodiasts are expounded in the Books of the African sage Khem or Thau Thau-Harama (Greek Thoth-Hermes) which includes:

- The Pamandara (Greek Pymander i.e. Divine Mind)
The Corpus Hermeticum
- The Kore Kosmu (i.e. virgin of the world)
- Imhotep (Greek Descepius)

These Books of Thoth-Hermes, popularly known as Hermetic Books, were rediscovered together with the Gnostic gospels in 1945 in southern Egypt. These Hermetic or Khemetic Literature reveals the African origins of theosophy or gnosis (i.e. spiritual knowledge systems) and modern sciences and religions. This African knowledge was used as a launching pad for the European Renaissance. There are two natural laws embedded in the Maphungubwe cosmology and Hermetic doctrines which Europe appropriated and used to build their modern civilisation. These are the law of square and the holistic world-view (i.e. unified theory of being) which formed the basis of Newton’s and Einstein’s metaphysics. Both of them were disciples of the African sage Khem or Thoth-Hermes.

The law of squares, popularly and wrongly known as the theorem of Pythagoras is based on the triangle in the Maphungubwe cosmology which symbolise the spiritual father (Osiris), mother (Isis), and child (Horus). Here, the father principle represents the spirit, soul and body while the mother represents the four elements (water, fire, earth and air). The son represents the union of the father (1 or 3) and the mother (4). Thus the son is symbolised by the numbers 5 (1+4) and (3+4). Thus the law of squares says that in a right angled triangle the sum of the squares on the other sides are equal to the square on the hypotenuse.

The Law of Squares

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{c}^2 &= \text{a}^2 + \text{b}^2 \\
\text{Osiris} + \text{Isis} &= \text{Horus}
\end{align*}
\]

In this law:

- \(3^2 + 4^2 = 5^2\)
- \(9 + 16 = 25\)
- \(25 = 25\)
- \(5 = 5\)

The number 5 represents five elements (spirit, water, fire, earth, and air) which constitute the totality of being.

In the number 25 the number 3 = spiritual trinity
- 10 = ten planets
- 12 = twelve fixed stars
- 25

The number 25 represents the structure of the universe which is reflected in the human personality. Hence, Lord Khem or Thoth-Hermes taught that the human being was created in the image of the cosmos.

The human personality is made out of: -
• The mind, thought and word or spirit, soul and body which correspond to the spiritual trinity.
• Seven energy centres (Chakras) and three glands Pineal, Pituitary and which correspond to the ten planets
• Twelve organs of the body which correspond to the twelve fixed stars

Thus the human body is consubstantial (i.e. made of the same essence) with the cosmos and is subject to cosmic influences.

The origins of the cosmos and the human personality are described in the Law of Analogy or correspondence contained in the Tablet of Ham or the Emerald Tablet of Thoth-Hermes. This law was studied by Pythagoras, Plato, Apollonius of Tyana, Sir Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein and many Arab and European Renascent scholars. The Law of Analogy or correspondence says that everything emanated (i.e. came out) of the One (i.e. Divine Mind) and the mother thereof is the moon (ma/maia) and the father thereof is the sun (Ra) or the union (mara or Maria) of the two. It goes on to say that what is Above is the same as what is Below applies to the relationship of the cosmos and the human personality. Hence, Lord Khem or Thoth-Hermes taught that anyone who wants to know nature and god must know themselves. Thus the doctrine of self-knowledge became the foundational principle of all knowledge systems.

The Law of squares also provided as basis for African popular religions which elevated the moon (ma/maia) and the sun (Ra) or the union (Mara/Maria) objects of worship. Thus African popular religion came to be known as sabaism (i.e. worship of stars) or karaism (worship or the sun). The popular African goddess mara or Maria is also known as:

- Mari (karanga)
- Mwari (Karanga)
- Muari (Karanga)
- Mualii (Kalanga/Rozwi/Lobedu)
- Muhali (Rozwi/Lobedu)
- Muhale (Rozwi/Lobedu)
- Mogale (Sotho)
- Mwali (Kalanga/Rozwi)
- Mwalinkulunkulu (Nguni)
- Nwari (Tsonga)
- Nwali (Venda)
- Meru/Mereoe (Sudanese)
- Meri (Egyptian)

This goddess is also known as:

- Nomukhubulwane (Zulu)
- Nkosazana ye Zulu (Zulu)
- Kore mukuru (Rozwi/Lobedu)
- Gore or Kole (Rozwi/Lobedu/Venda)

The African goddess Mwari or Mogale is the rain goddess which was worshipped at great Maphungubwe, great Zimbabwe, and Mutokolwe at Lwandali, now Tshiendeulu (Venda) or Kheedeule (Lobedu).

The religion of the Black Madonna (i.e. goddess) and child symbolised by Mohale Mwali and Maluti/Malundi mountains respectively is still a living spiritual tradition in Africa. This goddess still appears in form of thunder and fire at Matopo hills and
Masase (Zimbabwe), Makonde (Bolobedu). The goddess is also symbolised by the Bird of Muhale (shire ya Mwari), i.e. the Raluvhimba/Ra libepe or Zimbabwe Bird. African people leave this spiritual tradition that has deep theosophical theological and spiritual roots for foreign anthropomorphic religions which boil down to the worship of the statues of white saints, angels and god and thus glorifying white persons as closer to and intermediaries between Africans and god. This is one of the main causes of white superiority and African inferiority complexes. Unless and until Africans are liberated from the racial ideology embedded in the imported religions cultural, social and economic liberation will continue to evade us.

The African goddess (Mwali or Mohale) is the mother of the word (Umbe) of the Divine Light (Kara) known as Mbekara or Mberaka. This word is also known as: -
- Mbe
- Chembe
- Shambe
- Zambe as in Zambesia
- Zambi as in Mozambique
- Nyambe
- Ndjambi etc.

The Divine Light (Kara) is embodied in the solar principle.

The solar principle manifested itself as a solar trinity symbolised by the sun (Ra), the planets Venus (mara) and Mercury (Kara. This trinity manifested itself as the solar emblem depicted below.

**The Solar Emblem**

![Solar Emblem Diagram]

In this Solar emblem

- represents the Father
- represents the Mother
- represents the Child principle

The Solar [ ] emblem was taken from ancient Egyptian temples by Constantine the Great and made a Western Christian symbol which was later replaced by the crucifix.

The symbol P (or Ra) in the Solar [ ] monogram manifested itself as the Ancient Pillar (Zindj-ka-Fura i.e. the root or trunk of the sacred fire) or the Cube (Kaba) which became the heart or engine of the universe.

**The Ancient Pillar**
The emblem o represents the Ancient Pillar:

- (mundu/kabachat)

Here, the Ancient Pillar symbolise the five elements (spirit, water, fire, earth, and air). This means that reality consists of the union of spirit and matter (water, fire, earth, and air). Both Pythagoras and Plato learned these theories of the elements from Egypt. Euclid then wrote a book on it at the University of Alexandria.

**The Cube**

The fifth (spirit or ether) element is a trinity comprising the spirit/mind (ka+m), thought/soul (ba/u), chat/ndu (word, reason or body of light). Thus in the Cube the five elements are symbolised by an equilateral triangle mounted on a square.

This Cube became the basis of the Pyramaat (Greek Pyramid) or the BanuBanu (Greek Benben) stone which symbolises the primal hill (Tanu) which emerged out of the Chaos (Nunu) or Cosmic Ocean.

**The Pyramaat**

- =3 (spiritual Trinity)
- = 4 (four elements)
The Pyramaat (Greek Pyramid) is the hut which became the prototype chapel or temple (i.e. the place of communication with ancestors and God)

The Nature of the Human Personality

The three sacred objects (cube, pillar, and pyramid) symbolise both the godhead and human personality. They represent, in particular, the consubstantiality for the God and human principles at spiritual and material levels.

The Spiritual Constitution of the Human Personality

The spirituality of a human being is embedded in the concepts Kabachat and Mundu which are made out of:

\[
\begin{align*}
ka + ba + chat &= \text{Kabachat} \\
m + u + ndu &= \text{Mudu}
\end{align*}
\]

The concept Mundu has the following variations:

\[
\begin{align*}
m + u + ntu &= \text{Muntu} \\
m + u + nthu &= \text{Munthu} \\
m + u + thu &= \text{Muthu} \\
m + o + tho &= \text{Motho} \\
m + u + tu &= \text{Mutu} \\
m + u + nhu &= \text{Munhu}
\end{align*}
\]

mind + thought + Word = Higher Self

spirit + soul + reason = Higher Self

The intrinsic quality of the human personality is called Ubuntu, Botho or Vunhu.

The concept of Ubuntu/Botho is the fountainhead of the principles of equality, freedom, and justice for all which are the building blocks of all human and peoples rights. It is, therefore, unnecessary for indigenous African people to import moral and social value systems as well as human rights culture.

The pillars of the indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) movement expounded in this paper could be used to combat the cultural imperialism from the West and East as well as the deepening moral social and economic degeneration of African communities. The colonial and apartheid systems laid the foundation for the degeneration of African communities by:

- falsifying African history and suppressing African values and institutions.
- forcibly replacing, progressively and officially, African languages, religions or spiritual traditions, natural medicines and cultural institutions by those of colonial countries encouraging the formation of African elite groups, which are often alienated from their culture and became susceptible to assimilation and thus creating a social distance between these elites and the African popular masses.

This assimilation policy depersonalised African people and deprived them of self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-worth and the culture of self-help and self-reliance. Thus African people have lost imaginative powers and creativity.