

The Charge and the Challenge of Illuminating the Spirit (*Skh Djr*): The Question of Paradigm, Episteme, and Terminology for Therapy and Treatment

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Abstract

This article engages in a discourse that further interrogates the idea of a Kmt-Nubia/ BaNtu-Kongo grand narrative and from that positioning advances the Science of the Spirit. It explores an African paradigm, episteme and associate critical terminology as useful tools for the structuring of the Science of the Spirit that is inclusive of total reality (the visible and invisible) and conclude with a call for a *Skh Djr* (Pan African Psychology) Textbook for counseling, treatment and therapeutic interventions that are untethered to the general categories and areas found in Euro-American psychology.

Keywords: Spirit (*Skh Djr*), Moya, paradigm, episteme, therapy, treatment, Pan African Psychology

**Icala nenselele yokucacisa umoya (*Skh Djr*):
Umbuzo wendlelakubuka, ukuqinisekisa
ulwazi kanye namatemu ohlelo lokwelashwa
kanye nokwelapha**

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Iqoqa

Leli phepha lidingida uhlaziyongxoxo oluphinde lungenelele olwazini jikelele olulanda nge-Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo bese kuthi ngaleyo ndlela luqhubele phambili isayensi yomoya. Luhlwaya indlelakubuka yobu-Afrika, ukuqinisa ulwazi kanye namatemu ahlaziyayo ahambisanayo njengamathuluzi abalulekile okuhlela isayensi yomoya ehlanganisa iqiniso eliphelele (elibonakalayo nelingabonakali) futhi luphetha ngokuhlaba ikhwelo ngeSkh Djr (ubumbano ngesifundongqondo ngobu-Afrika) incwadi yokweluleka, ukwelashwa kanye nezinhlelo zokwelapha ezingenzelwe kuphela izigaba eziwayelekile kanye nezihloko ezitholakala kusifundonqondo ngeYurophu neMelika.

Amagama asemqoka: Umoya (*Skh Djr*), Indlelakubuka, Ukuqinisa ulwazi, Uhlelo lokwelapha, Ukwelashwa, ubumbano ngesifundongqondo ngobu-Afrika

Introduction

When a small group of Black Psychology professionals and students dramatically broke away from the American Psychological Association (APA), and by association, from the field of Euro-American psychology, that act ushered in a revolutionary search for an appropriate field of study and practice that was designed specifically for people of Black African ancestry. This break was nothing short of a scientific revolution (Clark 1972) that has evolved over time to challenge and uproot the western grand narrative that universalised Euro-American psychology. This disruption of Euro-American psychology's hegemonic hold on psychological thought and practice has challenged Black African Psychologists to seek our own indigenous philosophical grounding, paradigmatic frameworks, theoretical orientations, and therapeutic practices. It should be noted here that, as conventionally used, the idea of indigeneity gives uncritical privilege to a superior European status, which renders the 'indigenous', by comparison, as a less than equal kind. Indigenous, in this sense, however, pertains to 'originating or occurring naturally in a particular place'. Hence, ideas, thoughts, and theories originating or occurring in the West, i.e. Euro-American, are indigenous to the West. Every identifiable grouping of people has its own indigenous ideas, beliefs, and thoughts. None are implicitly superior or inferior to any others. Raising up and holding in high regard and deep respect African indigenous thought and practice is the requisite task for engaging in the ongoing development of an African-centred science of human functioning unfiltered by a Western thought and episteme.

Black Psychology, the Evolution of Terminology and the Importance of Nomenclature, ergo *Skh Djr, Moya*

The evolving perspectives found in Black Psychology, African Psychology, and Pan-African Psychology are coterminous with the different naming of the field, which should be seen or understood as the evolution of an emancipatory process, wherein psychologists of African ancestry are attempting to reclaim the authority to name and define a discipline devoted to the understanding and cultivation of human psychological development, functioning, and healing.

Dr. Jacob Carruthers noted that 'African scholar practitioners must break the chain that links African ideas to European ones and listen to the voice of the Ancestors without European Interpreters Ultimately 'knowing' is the

result of a divine, universal and intergenerational conversation among God, the creator, the cosmos, nature and the creatures of the earth, especially human beings' (Carruthers 1995: 31). During this same time, Asa Hilliard (2008: 24) pointed out that, 'It is time to take charge of our tools, our problem definitions, our priorities, and to change directions. It is time to reach for excellence. We must have a mission to assume greater responsibility and control over our children's socialisation and to push for education for critical consciousness'. This guidance is critical to our charge and challenge of exploring the question of African human functioning.

The task additionally requires revisiting what, in practice, constitutes the idea or notion of a field of study, or scientific discipline. A scientific discipline, by definition, identifies not only its subject matter, but also its intellectual territory (boundaries); a priori assumptions; specific bodies of knowing and knowledge (episteme); internal/external regulatory practice; methods; conventions and standards; instructional technology; and institutional and social groupings.

The unspoken paradox here is that in identifying our field or discipline as Black Psychology or even Pan-African Psychology does nothing to change or correct Euro-American psychology's a priori assumptions about being human, prevailing episteme, regulatory practice(s) or healing technology. At best, it defines our field as an 'ethnic'¹ or 'coloured' adjunct to Euro-American psychology. While Black African peoples' geo-political and social-historical experiences with Blackness functions as a powerfully unifying theme, by qualifying as such, our current intellectual practice does little to rescue African being and thought. 'Blackenisation' or 'Africanisation' of Euro-American psychology (Grills & Rowe 1998) not only does little to reconceptualise and correct Euro-American psychology, it ought not to be our goal.

The adjective, Black or African denotes a qualifier—a determinative or modifier of the phenomenon called psychology. Hence, the classification as Black psychology, African psychology and/ or Pan-African psychology

¹ It is important to note that the origin of the term, 'ethnic' can be traced to ecclesiastical Latin from Greek *ethnikos*, meaning 'heathen', and *ethnos*, meaning 'nation'. In late Middle English, it came to denote a person not of the Christian or Jewish faith. Hence, as an ethnic adjunct to Euro-American psychology, Black psychology would be understood to constitute the psychology of the heathen nations, or those not of the Jewish or Christian faith.

constitutes the discipline as a modified version of Western psychology. Except for the mutations, aberrancies, adoptions, and adjustments resulting from enslavement and colonisation, the human functioning of African people should, in fact, not be thought of as simply modified Western (Euro-American) human functioning. A common response to this dilemma has been the attempt to blend aspects of Western psychological theories and practices that are the least toxic with the emerging developments in African psychology. While this 'hybridisation', in some instances, has proven to be helpful or useful, it could also be seen as a form of 'mulefication' of African psychology. As the breeding of a horse and a donkey results in a mule, so too without critical assessment, do the blending of features found in Western psychology with features of African thought potentially result in ideas, theories and practices that constitute a system of thought that is incapable of reproducing itself. A 'muleified' version of African human functioning which is intellectually impotent, or merely a continuation of Western psychology by default, is unacceptable. In effect, to attach Black or, for that matter, Pan-African to the field of Euro-American psychology, especially when it comes to matters of psychological treatment, only addresses or changes the 'subject' to Black or African people, and possibly their accepted social grouping, but ultimately does little to alter the field or the practice itself.

This termination requires more than just an adjectival shift or switch. The goal of claiming an accurate and appropriate terminology and nomenclature for identifying the science of African human functioning is, in fact, made more difficult due to the legacies of colonialism, enslavement, and Westernisation. For example, the concepts and language of Western psychology prevents us from freely exploring the full (visible and invisible) reality of be(ing) African (whether continental or diasporan). Too often our exploration of African thought and behavior is conceptually incarcerated (Nobles 1976) by the languages, concepts, and ideas we have inherited from our Euro-American psychological education. In a very real way, our education is a continuation of 'philanthropic colonialism', wherein the general posture and attitude of the academy relative to African people views the latter as dependent and needy, where the Euro-American 'mission' and/or burden is to 'save' or 'uplift' the African through their understanding and knowing, without serious consideration of African thought. Our work unknowingly falls victim to a condition defined as cultural antimony, wherein the cultural substance or deep structure (especially its precepts) between two or more cultures stand in

contradistinction to one another. This condition can result in contradiction, conflict, opposition, and incompatibility in their respective meanings of reality. The belief in White Supremacy creates a state of ‘cultural antimony’ in the mindset of white people that creates a pathological need to accept without evidence any and all examples of Black negation and nullification. This condition, in many ways, is evidenced by the ‘incommensurability’ between features, aspects, and manifestations found in African and Euro-American cultures. Due to an unfettered Western education, Black people are taught to accept Black inferiority. Consequently, any idea of Black original thought, especially about human functioning, is seen as incompatible with real thought, psychological knowing and, therefore, unnecessary and unscientific.

Accordingly, our task should be to deeply explore an African paradigm, episteme and associate critical terminology as useful tools for the structuring of the Science of the Spirit for understanding African human functioning and therapeutic practice unfiltered by western thought and episteme.

From Episteme to Paradigm to Narrative

African deep thought and wisdom traditions suggest that the Universe is ‘matter’ in appearance, and ‘spirit’ in reality. The material universe is only the perception of reality, that is, in fact, non-localised, immutable, and eternal spirit. African epistemology, consequently, imprints the natural centrality of the role of the Divine and of the ‘Spirit’ in the acquisition of knowledge (Advice & Pascah Mungwini 2010).

Using indigenous epistemic reflections, cultural appreciations, and apperceptions about reality to inform their knowing framework and intellectual mindset, an African Grand Narrative as the mindset for guiding counselling and treatment would be a constructive process, reflecting deep intrinsic African beliefs as both descriptive and explanatory discourse by which Africans interpret and reinterpret their experiences in order to recognise, record, and make sense of events and experiences, especially wellness and *dis-at-ease*. The power of the grand narrative is that it shapes and influences what we see and accept as normal. The African grand narrative shapes and influences, without European or Western interference, what is understood to be and accepted as normal.

All humans use their own epistemic reflections, cultural appreciations, and apperceptions about reality to inform how they ‘know’ and ‘think’ which, in turn, allows one to further recognise and record events and experiences as well as ‘make sense’ out of reality. Through an African lens, episteme (knowing/ understanding) would concern itself with:

- (1) how reality is defined;
- (2) the nature of reality;
- (3) how truth is determined;
- (4) that which is knowable and can be known; and
- (5) what the relationship is between knowing (process); the known (subject) and the knower (being) – what should/could be done in response to the known.

There are several features or assumptions which distinguish an ‘African paradigm: ’

- (1) the universe is a vital cosmos;
- (2) the ultimate nature of reality is Spirit;
- (3) human beings are organically related to everything in the universe;
- (4) knowledge comes from participation with and experience in the universe (reality); and
- (5) human relatedness is the praxis of our humanity.

The African epistemological method would allow indigenous African treatment and therapy to be guided by participation (equilibrium- balance between knowing, knower and known), relatedness (harmony) and unicity (balance between rationality and intuition; analyses and syntheses; known and unknown, and the visible and invisible).

Dr. Joseph White (1980) charged Black researchers with ‘develop[ing] our own’ African-centered psychology and with advocating for the indigenisation of the discipline, and the development of new models and methodological approaches that build upon the history and culture of African people. Curtis Banks (1992: xx) has suggested in this regard that, ‘Insofar as that reality is the collective experience of African peoples, the ultimate description of the new science of the Spirit will never spring from the mind of any intelligent scientist. Rather, it will spring from the collective wisdom and

sensitivities of the community intelligence of all its members'. Ultimately, the appropriateness of any suggested nomenclatures' i.e. *Sakhu Sheti*², appropriateness, and accuracy will be evidenced by the extent to which it is adopted by the 'community intelligence' of the collective wisdom of those who currently call themselves Black, African, or Pan African psychologists. To stimulate such a wellspring and as an act of self-determination, we wish now to turn to the notions of *Skh* and *Moya*.

Skh: The concept of *Sakhu (Skh)* was introduced as a refinement of the concept of African essence presented in the science of African human functioning (Nobles 2013a). As a system of thought and action, *Skh Djr* examines and utilises the processes that allow for the illumination and liberation of the Spirit. Technically, *Skh Djr* is a term representing the further Africanisation of Black Psychology, or the science of human functioning. It is a filtered (free of western contamination) process of understanding, examining, and explicating the meaning, nature and functioning of being human for African people by conducting a deep, profound, and penetrating search, study, and mastery of the process of 'illuminating' the human Spirit or essence and totality of all human experiences and phenomena. *Skh Djr* requires one to think deeply and profoundly about African meanings and understandings of the nature of being human. Parenthetically, this process can only be accomplished by interrogating the language and logic of traditional African peoples, which, in turn, will allow greater insight into the functioning of contemporary African

² The concepts of *Shushukulu*, *Nkindi*, *Nganga* and *Nkondi* are all congruent with *Sakhu Sheti*. The term *Shushukulu* means 'a being who has eyes in the physical world as well as in the spiritual world, or a knower that sees both sides'. Neither the inside or outside has a secret. *Shushukulu*, in the singular is *Nkindi*. To the question: what is *Nkindi*? The Luba answer '*udi Nkindi shushukulu ngelelu wa mu ngenyi*' meaning an '*Nkindi* is a specialist or a scholar in the art/way of thinking'. The *Nkindi* is a *Shushukulu* in the art or manner of 'making, building, developing, weaving, stretching, extending, expanding, creating and inventing' thoughts or ideas'. The *ciLuba* concept of *Endela* is equally informative. *Endela* is 'one who seeks, researches, probes, inquires deeply about a subject' A *shushukulu*, *nkindi*, and *nganga* are not only qualified to deal with physical issues, but are able to communicate and address issues of the Spirit: they have 'eyes' in both worlds. They are not only wise men/women, they are therapists and healers.

peoples. *Skh Djr* operates from the basic premise that there is an African way of being that reflects an African ‘quality of thought and practice’ (Nobles 2015a), rooted in the cultural image and interest of people of African ancestry (Karenga & Carruthers 1986).

The concept or notion of *Skh Sdi*, in turn, represents the practice (method/ methodology) of ‘*Sakhu*’ (illumination). Consistent with the African adage ‘if it exists, it most assuredly is spirit’, the *Skh Sdi* (*Sakhu* practitioners/ methodologists) would be ‘spirits (humans) who are ‘led’ by Spirit, who ‘read’ spirit(s); who seek help and protection from Spirit and engages in the ‘salvation’ and ‘nurturing’ (healing) of Spirit by performing the *Sakhu* as it should be done’.

Moya: The idea that all reality, visible and invisible, is Spirit, is captured by the Nguni³ concept of *Moya* and the Sotho-Tswana conception of *thuto ya sa moya*, the ever-present, vibrating energy (*amandla*) emanating from the Ultimate (Initial) Source or Being, *UMvelinqangqi*, and which permeates all phenomena. The *Moya* or energy has been in existence since *UMvelinqangqi* ushered be-ing into motion; in fact, the entire universe is comprised of the ceaseless extension of the First Being, hence the Afrocentric idea that be-ing is becoming (Karenga 2006) or *uku-ba* in the language of the Nguni people of Southern Africa. While the word *UMvelinqangqi* is roughly translated as the Divine/God in the standard English language, an etymological analysis of the term points towards a very complex and philosophical understanding of reality in which God is not only the first and final source of being, but is also continuous with the rest of creation. In the word, *UM-veli-ng(q)a-ng(q)i*⁴ the prefix, *um-* points to a process of be-ing or becoming (motion); *-veli* is derived from the verb *-vela*, to emerge; *-ngqa* qualifies the emerging entity (*-Veli*) as being the first one (*-ngqa*, *very first*) to do so; while *-ngqi* indicates that the emerging entity is at the same time the final destination of be-ing (*-ngqi*, final, end). From this as well as other sources is derived the understanding that the telos of be-ing in indigenous African thought is to reach the state of perfection, at which point one is unified with the Source of Being,

³ For the purposes of this article, we refer to Nguni dialects, isiNdebele, isiSwati, isiXhosa and isiZulu in the collective, as they are all variations of a common Bantu grammar.

⁴ Note: to ease pronunciation, the ‘q’ in both ‘ngqa’ and ‘ngqi’ is often omitted, leading to the word being written and pronounced *uUmvelinqangi*.

uMvelingqangqi. A complete exposition of *uMvelingqangqi* is beyond the scope of this article, save to mention that the life journey may have to be repeated many times and involve forms of re-incarnation, before the Godhead is achieved (Bynum 1999). Similarly, the commonly used alternative word for God in isiZulu, *u-Nkulunkulu*, needs to be understood beyond the conception that it points to one's grandparents (-*khulu*) and the grandparents (-*khulu*) before them, *ad infinitum*; which is a partial, though limited explanation. Indeed, the adjective '-*khulu*' means 'great' in the Nguni languages, and the noun is '*iinkulu*' (that which is great or vast). Bantu languages usually denote vastness (greatness) beyond imagination by doubling (multiplying) the word of the entity in question, hence, *i-nkulu-nkulu* when the word refers to objects and *u-Nkulu-nkulu* when the word is personified (i.e., it takes characteristics of Noun Class 1 which is generally reserved for humans). With this logic, one would argue that the word *u-Nkulu-nkulu* (God) denotes, the Ever-expansive One; the Multiplicative One whose vastness is not only continuous with the rest of creation but is beyond imagination.

If one takes the above analysis into account, it is evident that not only does all of creation comprise an extension or multiplication from the single source in whose Spirit or *Moya* we all partake; the final destination of creation is unification with the Divine self. In support of this thesis, Credo Mutwa (2003: 18) writes as follows: 'The Christians have told us that God created the soul, but our understanding in Africa is a little different from this. We believe that the soul is in fact an integral part of God and that our souls came into being when God created Himself [Herself]⁵. We exist because God exists, and our souls are fragments of this Universal Self'. Echoing the twin ideas of consubstantiation and the non-dual nature of reality (di-unital logic) (Dixon 1970) as understood in indigenous African epistemology, Mutwa (1998: 18) goes on to write that the soul or 'The *moya* can be trapped in too small a body, or too weak, or sick. We believe that the *moya* also breaks into smaller globules in a body, so that there is a *moya* of the blood, a *moya* of the liver, of the

⁵ The English language, which distinguishes between the male and the female pronouns, has put a constraint on Mutwa's writing, leading to the use of the male pronoun for the Universal Self he is writing about, when there are no gendered pronouns in Bantu/African languages and the Universal Self (God) is understood to be and depicted as hermaphrodite. This underscores the importance of linguistic analysis in an African episteme.

stomach, and so on. And if the *moya* of that part is sick, then the organ itself is also sick, and is not functioning properly. That is why the soul [*moya*] affects the body in such intimate ways'. It is on this understanding, therefore, that Afrocentric psychology understands life in general as a series of endless transformations from one state of being to another, leading ultimately to the unification with the Godhead, *UMvelingqangqi* the Source of all Life. Put differently, be-ing (in a singular case) is *Moya* (Spirit) and the totality of being is *Moya*.

Skh, along with the ideas of *Moya* can be offered, herein, as the recommended terminology for the 'African Science of the Spirit'.

The Challenge: Illuminating the Spirit

Wellness can only make sense in context of what it means to be (Spirit). The challenge of illuminating the African Spirit and creating treatment interventions, therefore, must begin with an understanding of the meaning of 'being' for African people. Ngubane (1979: 62) argues that the African understanding of the person is a 'protein' evaluation of the human being, which flowed into Nile Valley high culture of the Ancient Kemites, and subsequently created clusters of similar conceptions all over Africa. What is recognised as African culture and civilisation is, in fact, the combined social conventions and inventions emerging from a common African meaning of the person.

Before exploring indigenous African knowledge systems, it may be helpful to revisit Bantu-Kongo genesis beliefs and the underlying logic of *UbuNtu* through African languages and logic as exemplary of African deep thought and philosophy.

Bantu-Kongo: The Bantu-Kongo believe that the heated force of *Kalunga* blew up and down as a huge storm of projectiles, *Limbwandende*, fusing together a huge mass. In the process of cooling, solidification of the fused mass occurs, giving birth to the Earth (Fu-Kiau 2001). In effect, the Bantu believe that all of reality (*Kalunga*) is fundamentally a process of perpetual and mutual sending and receiving of Spirit (energy) in the form of waves and radiations. *Kalunga* or reality is the totality, the completeness of all life. It is an ocean of energy, a force in motion. *Kalunga* is everything, sharing life and becoming life continually after life itself. As the totality or the complete living, *Kalunga* is comprised of both a visible realm (*Ku Nseke*) and

an invisible realm (*Ku Mpemba*). The visible physical world has Spirit (energy) as its most important element or nature. Referred to as *Nkisi* (medicine), the Spirit element of the physical (visible) world has the power to care, cure, heal and guide. The invisible (spiritual) world (*Ku Mpemba*) is comprised of human experience, ancestor experience and the soul-mind experience. The *Ku Mpemba* has Spirit (energy) as its most important element or nature. In effect, if reality (visible and invisible) is, it is Spirit. All that exists are, therefore, different concrete expressions of Spirit. In effect, 'Being' is being Spirit in a reality of Spirit. Fu-Kiau (2001) further clarifies that the human being or *MuNtu* is a 'threefold unfolding' experience in the realms of yet-to live, living, and after living. He further notes that a human being is a living sun (energy), possessing 'knowing and knowable' Spirit (energy) through which Spirit in human form has an enduring relationship with the total perceptible and ponderable universe. The Bantu-Kongo believe that diverse forces and waves of energy that govern life surround humans. This fire-force called *Kalunga* is complete in and of itself and emerges within the emptiness or nothingness and becomes the source of life on earth.

Based in the interrogation of the knowing implications of classical civilizations of Kmt (Egypt) and Nubia, and the ancient beliefs of the Bantu and Kongo people, Nobles (2015b) proposed that an African Grand Narrative be called *Kmt-Nubian – Bantu/ Kongo*. The African Grand Narrative, *Kmt-Nubian – BaNtu/ Kongo*, in turn, understands that all in reality is 'Spirit' or 'Energy' and that a particular process of knowing emerges from African genesis or creation myths, the meaning of being human, and concept of life and death.

UbuNtu: In terms of *UbunNtu*, the construct *Ntu* is thought to be the universal expression of Spirit or force. *Ntu* inseparable from *Umu* is 'Being' itself (Kagame 1989). Conceptually, *Ntu* as a modal point at which Spirit as being assumes concrete form, is reflected in four categories of expression in *BaNtu* philosophy. In effect, there is one essence with four categories of expression. Human beings (*Mu Ntu* or *Muntu*) are an expression of Spirit or force (*Ntu*). Place and Time (*Ha Ntu* or *Hantu*) are equally expressions of Spirit or force (*Ntu*). All the material objects (*Ki Ntu*, *Kintu* or *i-zi Nto*) like mountains, other animals, rivers, and so on, are Spirit expressions (*Ntu*). Joy, beauty, laughter, love, emotions, and so on (*Ku Ntu* or *Kuntu*) are equally Spirit expressions (*Ntu*). 'UbuNtu' is, therefore, Spirit in which Being and beings coalesce. It is the cosmic universal force.

Being human is to be Spirit, energy or power. Being Spirit is to be one who lives and moves within and is inseparable from the ocean of waves/radiations of Spirit (energy or power). A human being is ‘spirit’ who affirms one’s humanity by recognising the humanity of others and on that basis establishes humane relations with them. A human being is ‘spirit’ whose unfolding is a constant and continual inquiry into its own being, experience, knowledge, and truth (Ramose 1991). To be human is to be a Spirit in motion (unfolding). Being human is being a phenomenon of perpetual, constant, and continual unfolding (vibration – sharing and exchanging) of life Spirit. Humans are containers and instruments of Divine Spirit and relationships. A human being is akin to a living sun (unlimited power), possessing a ‘knowing and knowable’ Spirit (energy or power) through which one has an enduring relationship with the total perceptible and ponderable universe. The human being is a three-fold unfolding experience of yet-to-live, living, and after-living Spirit.

‘Spiritness:’ To capture this understanding, the term ‘Spiritness’ is offered. ‘Spiritness’ was introduced (Nobles 1997) as a construct representing the belief that the complexity of being a person (as immaterial and material) gives one an intrinsic human value, and that the person is, in fact, a process of being, becoming and belonging. ‘Spiritness’ recognises that, as Spirit, beings simultaneously have a metaphysical connection and ethereal extension into and between the supra world of the Deities, the inter-world of other beings, and the inner world of oneself. It is believed that African people experience their ‘Spiritness’ simultaneously as a metaphysical state and an ethereal extension or connection into and between the different realms of reality⁶.

Further Structuring African (*Skh, Moya*) Science Spirit

When the human spirit is well, whole, and healthy, being human is experienced and characterised by confidence, competence and a sense of full possibility and unlimited potentiality (Nobles 2009, unpublished manuscript).

⁶ It is important to note here, parenthetically, that the misunderstanding of African beingness, i.e., as ‘human being’ and not ‘spirit being’ has resulted in the misidentification of African ‘spiritness’ as simply spirituality.

The task of the next millennium for continental and diaspora Black African people is to be authentically African and, in so doing, create time, place, and space on the stage of humanity's future. Ours is to be African by understanding the African Spirit, in order to heal the wounds through African Spirit Science. In fact, our fundamental task, as we enter the next millennium, is to address the dual challenge of our existential problematic by resisting our de-Africanisation (de-culturalisation) while we retain and advance our sense of Africanity (African Spirit) in a non-African or, more correctly, an anti-African environment.

Wellness and Illness: Having presented the indigenous African understanding of the human being and all of creation as Spirit, it is necessary also to discuss the main tenets of wellness and illness from an indigenous African epistemological stance. It is not the absence of disease *per se* that defines wellness or health in the Afrocentric paradigm. Health and wellness are indicated by the connection or equilibrium within the person. In terms of the intrapsychic community of selves comprising the human person (Ogbonnaya 1994); disconnection from other people, the community, the land, the environment (ecology), the ancestors, and ultimately Spirit is what constitutes illness or dis-ease. This compressive understanding of health and illness is commensurate with the view of creation as espoused by the inhabitants of the Nile Valley civilisations and their descendants. According to this view, God created the world by means of a process of re-ordering chaos (imbalance or disorder) into a process of order, balance, harmony, or wholeness, thus ushering order (*uzinzo*) from disorder (*inhlakanhlaka, inxushunxushu*), a process that continues to date in various forms.

There are many forms of disorder or disconnection⁷, all of which potentially lead to illness or dis-ease; some of which have the potential to bring an end to life as we know it. Below is an attempt to capture a few indices of disconnection, albeit in summary form.

⁷ The idea of disconnection differs from the Euro-American psychological idea of 'alienation'. It is more akin to disconnected Spirit, wherein disconnection results in a complex of debilitating, corrosive and malignant beliefs, values and attitudes (confusion, contradictions, conflict, fear, anxiety, insecurity, anger, hostility, anomaly and ignorance). The experience of the forms of disconnection are thought to be represented by the idea of shattered consciousness and fractured identity (see Nobles 2013b).

- **Disconnection from the Self:** The idea that an individual could be in disharmony with the self emanates from the complexity and multiplicity of the person in Ancient Kemetic/ Bantu thought. According to the peoples of the Nile Valley Civilisation, the human person is comprised of multiple components, such as the physical body (*khat*, *umzimba*) that is liable to decay; the heart (*inhliziy*), which is the source of good and evil thoughts; an abstract personality or individuality, known as the Ka, which can separate from the body at will and partake in funeral and other offerings. Mutwa refers to this as the person's *-ena* and hence the saying '*Mina*' (*mi +ena*) or *-nna*, meaning, 'me, of this essence'). Based on Mutwa's descriptions of the *-ena*, as well as Budge's (1960) elaborations on the meaning of the *Ba*, it is evident that the two refer to the same aspect of being; namely a Spirit self that can detach itself from the body, and is dependent on the funeral offerings and libations for its continuity or survival. Finally, the *Ba* or *Moya*, is that eternal aspect of the self that is continuous with the Divine Self, and hence, is permanent. Individual disharmony and illness could thus result from the imbalance between the various components (e.g. *Ba*, *Atmu*, *Seb*) of the self. For example, a calling to become a healer could result in an imbalance or illness, if the chosen individual is not ready to heed the call, at the cognitive or physical level, resulting in illness (Mutwa). Self-hatred, such as the desire to be and/or act as white, is something that one is not, is another aspect of this internal disequilibrium.
- **Interpersonal Disconnection:** This occurs when one fails to live in harmony with other people and their neighbours (*omakhelwane*). Violation of other human beings, through acts such as violence or rape, results from the failure to see the other human being as an integral aspect of the self (see Nobles 1975), and hence that violence or harm to the other is equivalent to self-harm. This is because all people exist as one in Spirit. Philosophical maxims such as *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (it is in recognising others as human and acting on those bases, that one becomes fully human) and *motho ubebelwa munwe* (a person is born for the other) *all* point towards human interdependence as an indispensable aspect of be-ing. Racial hatred, gender-based violence, violence against infants and elderly people, all stem from the ignorance of our mutual Spirit-ness, which can only be described as an ignorance most profound.

- **Disconnection from the Family and the Ancestral Lineage:** this may come about as a result of a range of factors, including the failure to honour one's ancestors, while religiously honouring the ancestors of one's oppressors. In indigenous African epistemology, it is understood that the ancestors withdraw their protection from the family if the elders fail to perform appropriate libations. The withdrawal of protection manifests in the form of misfortune or illness (symptoms), which are compounded, until there is an appropriate diagnosis and the problem is addressed.
- **Historical and Linguistic Disconnection:** this refers to the loss of historical memory, which is essential in defining the community as a people with artistic and scientific achievements. It also includes the loss of the right to name oneself and the landscape, and the tendency to belittle African languages in favour of European languages, leading ultimately to linguistic genocide (see Nobles & Federico this issue).
- **Material Disconnection:** this refers to the loss of personal and collective dignity due to poverty, loss, and ultimately, dehumanisation.
- **Epistemological Disconnection:** this refers to disconnection from indigenous knowledge bases, philosophies, and value systems and practices. Just as there is an after-effect (post-harm or trauma) when persons are victimised by crime or assault, there is an unaddressed harm or illness associated with epistemicide and menticide. This is particularly due to the schooling systems' unwillingness to connect with the multiple ecologies of knowledge, instead openly championing Western knowledge systems as being superior to other knowledge systems, albeit in the absence of compelling evidence to this effect.
- **Disconnection from the Land:** this refers to indigenous people's loss of land and displacement, leading to the loss of a livelihood and inability to perform critical self-defining rituals such as the right to bury and continue to honour the deceased⁸. According to the laws of African indigenous

⁸ As recently as 2018, for example, the Ethekwini (Durban) municipality in South Africa was practicing what is called the recycling of graves. In terms of this practice, the Municipality had the right to re-use graves after a 10-year

peoples, no individual or family can interfere with the burial grounds of another family. Mutwa (1998) puts this strongly where he states that a community or people that lose their ancestral burial site/land do not deserve to live. The fact that a practice of recycling graves in Durban was even entertained and put into practice bears testimony to the profundity of the disconnection amongst the African people.

- **Ecological Disconnection:** African knowledge systems propose a holonic (fractalised) universe in which human beings are part and parcel and reflective of their surrounding ecological environment. Mutwa (n.d.) has written as follows in this regard:

When I was initiated for the first time in 1937 into the mysteries and knowledge of Mother Africa, I was ordered by my teacher who was my aunt. She said I should go outside and fill a small clay pot with water. And then she said to me, 'Look into the water – what do you see?' I was caught in a trap because an initiate is not supposed to have an ego. An initiate is not supposed to refer to himself. I said, 'Aunt, I see a person in this water'. She said, 'Who is that person?' I did not dare say it was me. I said, 'It is the person I know who is the son of my mother, the only son'. And she said, 'Yes, you are in this water, and the water is in you. Until you know that, that you and the water are one, you must not even drink the water, you must not even think about it, because you have cut yourself off from it.

The understanding that human beings are one with the rest of creation gives rise to many practices in indigenous African (diasporan and continental) communities. One example is the cleansing of the land where blood was spilled during the war to prevent the re-occurrence of wars and to enable the Spirits of those who fell on that particular spot to be cleansed. This makes it possible for the fallen warriors to continue the journey towards being full Spirit (*Moya*) and to refrain from troubling those who live in the vicinity; it is called *Ukugeza*

period post-burial, unless additional rent had been paid. Many African families were traumatised when, upon visiting the graves of their loved ones, they were greeted by newly erected tombs of those unknown to them. The CRL Rights Commission investigations lead to the suspension of this practice.

umkhondo, or the cleansing of the path. Spilling blood on the earth, it is understood, is one of the most profound of violations. Another example is the custom of African-American youths who spontaneously erect makeshift altars on the site (place) where friends or family members were killed or the tradition of ‘jumping over the broom’, as the confirmation of marriage during African enslavement in America. Symbolically, the jumping over the broom together signified that the two individual Spirits were now one Spirit (a single or combined energy vibration), in the social space called marriage. Failure to understand that Spirit (human) beings are connected to the rest of creation, all of which is Spirit, results in environmental pollution and other forms of degradation, irregularities, and dis-eases. Hence, in African thought, disconnection in its various forms comprises an illness or imbalance that calls for specific interventions to take place.

The above discussion points to a complex understanding of wellness and illness/disease that is not limited to physical or psychic phenomena. Rather, health, or wellness comprise a balance between and within the visible (person, family, clan, and physical ecological environment) and the invisible (the Spirit, the realm of the ancestors). Interventions are not geared towards individuals *per se*, but in both realms of the system as a whole.

The Charge: An Outline for a *Skh Djr* Clinical Textbook

There is no reason for you to try to become like white people and there is no basis whatever for their impertinent assumption that they must accept you. The really terrible thing, old buddy, is that you must accept them. And I mean that very seriously. You must accept them and accept them with love. For these innocent people have no other hope. They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. They have had to believe for many years, and for innumerable reasons, that black men are inferior to white men (James Baldwin, 1963. *My Dungeon Shook: A Letter to my Nephew*).

While recognising that Euro-American Psychology textbooks are indeed trapped in their history rather than ‘the universal’, the writing of an

Africancentred *Skh, Moya*, textbook for clinical practice must unashamedly and unapologetically give primacy to African language, logic, terminology, and concepts (see Appendix 1: Critical Terms and Terminology), while providing theoretical guidelines and therapeutic applications and frameworks for healing programmes and services. As a powerful example of the importance of language⁹, note that the false separation between therapist and client (see Nobles *et al.* 2016) is dissolved by using African language and refer to the person being treated as '*Bwana Mboti*', or 'the child of my ancestors' in Kikongo, and the therapist as an *Nganga*, which means one who is capable of activating the process by which the person, family, or community repairs, cures or restores itself to health and well-being. This small change in language dramatically changes the dynamic of the counselling session. The responsibility, dedication and duty of mutually healing family is far greater and more important than the uni-directional working with a client.

⁹ The importance of utilising African language and the ability to find correct meaning of terms and concepts is further hampered by our dependency on translations that were collected and crafted by mostly European missionaries. These translations were and should be suspect. In fact, we could apply the ancient adage, ascribe cultural etymology for methodological consistency '*traduttore, traditor*', meaning 'a translator is a traitor'. We should understand this to mean that, 'treachery is in the translation'. Note, for instance, in the *Dictionary and Grammar of the Kongo Language* (2015), the word *nganga* is translated as 'a contentious fellow, or one who is always raising objections'. An *nganga* cures both physical and spiritual disease and serves as a powerful mediator between the visible world and the realm of Spirit and ancestors. S/he is one capable of activating the process by which the body (persons or community) repairs, cures, or restores itself to health and well-being. The Kikongo word for shrine, *Vela*, is translated to mean heathen. The Yoruba word for a powerful woman is *Iyami*. Yet, it is translated as 'witch'. Parenthetically, it should also be noted that the word witch is derived from the Norwegian *vikja* and the Anglo-Saxon word *witega*, *wicca*, *wicce*, (roughly meaning 'to turn aside' and 'to conjure away') later through Christianity developed the meaning of a heathen devil worshipper. The total etymological history of this word is found in Europe, not Africa. Its application to the power of the feminine in Africa is indeed treasonous, and misleading. Treachery and danger is embedded in the translation.

The proposed *Skh, Moya*, clinical textbook needs to both address our intentional act of decolonisation and undertake the affirmation of an African reality through both memory and imagination.

Decolonisation: In terms of decolonisation, the task of freeing our minds can be thought of as scaffolds or layers of mental experiences. These layers separately, together, and in combination with other experience or activities help to remap the mental terrain of a decolonised mind. The experiences associated with or contributing to decolonisation are:

- (1) Critical consciousness, wherein experience(s) can stimulate the reawakening from the amnesia resulting from the hegemonic western grand narrative;
- (2) Re-imagining a world wherein one is given the opportunity to draw upon a different episteme and thereby unleash the knowing of African Spiritness. This experience directly enables alternative and counter-ideological visions and fuels the imagination with alternative possibilities; and
- (3) Reconciling the intersection at which one is tasked with the responsibility to create new understandings of the perceived ‘differences’ as social constructions which help deconstruct and/or eliminate western hegemony of thought and provide the recognition of intentional moments for the coming together of desperate ideas, events, and experiences;
- (4) Intentional disturbances, viz. actions and thoughts occurring when conventional or status quo narrative is challenged, countered and corrected and thereby create ideas, behaviours, experiences, and actions that, in turn, give legitimacy (recognition and respect) to indigenous African ideas, thoughts and beliefs that serve as counter hegemonic mental movement; and
- (5) Structural/foundational shifting, which intentionally shatters the underlying code of imperialism, subjugation, white supremacy and power relations (the material conditions that legitimate inequality, nullification and negation) supportive of them.

Memory and imagination are both fundamental criteria for decolonisation. The process of decolonisation is always blunted by ‘memetic ideations’ wherein the oppressed themselves undermine, deny, or reject the

very values of traditional life and espouse liberation in the language and meanings defined by their oppressors. Within imperial, colonial, and enslavement, beliefs and practices are deeply encoded ideations of African dehumanisation expressed as the null and/or negation. These ideations serve constantly to replicate themselves and reinforce behaviours that sustain the ideation and therein deny or inhibit African people from having ideas of our own that counter this and are capable of creating new ideas and/or rescuing an indigenous African episteme upon which to draw.

African Affirmation: Memory and imagination are also fundamental criteria for African affirmation. In terms of the affirmation of African reality, this proposed textbook should address the ideas of being Spirit and the notions of humanness and Pan African Humanism as defined by African deep thought and wisdom traditions. From African deep thought and wisdom traditions, and as defined in our ancestral memory, we are Spirit beings and not human beings. As Spirit Beings, we are tri-fold unfolding vibrating radiating energy/ Spirit (experience) of yet-to-live, living, and after-living Spirit likened to a living sun, possessing a ‘knowing and knowable’ Spirit (energy or power), through which one has an enduring relationship with the total perceptible and ponderable universe. In living, we are concentrations of essence manifested for a particular purpose. We are ‘Spirit beings’ housed in physical containers while having a human experience.

As after-living Spirits, ‘We are the Ancestors’¹⁰. In material form, we are molecular concentrations (expressions) of the essence (energy fields) of our ancestors.

The notion of humanness asserts that the whole world is vitalistic (alive) and that this vitality is grounded in a sense of goodness. To the African, the entire universe is vitalistic, as opposed to mechanistic. The sense of vitality is infused in all areas of human activity. This precept suggests that African people have a psychological affinity for stimulus and change; often exhibit an increased behavioural vibrancy, and have a rich and sometimes spontaneous movement repertoire. It reflects the propensity for the energetic, the intense, the stimulating, and the lively. In terms of the educational process, humanness

¹⁰ Ancestors are the ‘Dwellers-of-heaven’ (Orisa, Lwas, living-dead, ancestors) i.e., they are those in the ‘invisible realm’ who are the expressions of Spirit/energy as ‘different’ un-seeable vibrations/ radiations that take expression as living material beings.

requires that educational processes be infused with high energy, vigour, interest, and creativity and be demonstrably linked to the students and the community's well-being and welfare.

Growing out of the cultural groundings of Black African people, the meanings they attach to being human, as well as historical relations, the notion of Pan African Humanness allows for an understanding of African humanity worldwide, along with its intellectual, literary, and artistic production and cultural developments across time and space, in both its historical unfolding and contemporary expression. Congruent with an African narrative and voice, African affirmation privileges the imagination that ought to fuel the investigation of African philosophy, literature, languages, history, politics, aesthetics, spirituality, and science, and encourages the interrogation of African human essence, experience, and expressions, the nature of the beautiful, and the meaning of human existence. It portends the search for the divine and the contextual nature of historical epochs. African affirmation supports and gives license to the use of an African-centered paradigm that privileges the life experiences, history, traditions and episteme of people of Black African ancestry.

***Skh, Moya, Counseling, Treatment and Therapeutic*¹¹ Interventions Textbook**

All African communities prior to invasion and colonisation, used their own intrinsic essence (spiritness), epistemic reflections, cultural appreciations, and apperceptions about reality to inform their knowing framework and intellectual mindset. Grounded in African wisdom traditions and deep thought, a proposed *Skh, Moya*, textbook should:

- (1) rescue 'our way' unrefracted by a Euro-American prism;
- (2) re-interrogating the 'regenerating-development stages' of Spirit beings;
and
- (3) address African critical consciousness through our ability to 're-imagine' the world, reconcile our false and created differences, support and encourage the necessity to challenge, counter and correct

¹¹ Treatment and therapeutic interventions should be thought of as techniques and/or tools for the 'restoration of the Spirit'.

dehumanising thoughts, and create ideas, behaviours, experiences and actions that foster the on-going refinement of an African episteme, paradigm, and grand narrative.

The proposed clinical textbook covering African-centred counseling, treatment and therapeutic interventions should at the minimum help the practitioner and patient co-engage in the exploration of what we have defined as critical consciousness; re-imagining the world; reconciling the intersect; intentional disturbance; and structural/foundational shifting. By critical consciousness, the text can stimulate the reawakening from the amnesia resulting from hegemonic western grand narrative. It will also address the paradox whereby indigenous forms of healing are sidelined in mental health and government hospitals on the African continent, this despite the findings that by far the majority of the population relies on traditional healers' services for their health needs.

By re-imagining the world, the text could draw upon a different episteme that directly enables alternative and counter-ideological visions. This process could unleash the knowing of African Spiritness and fuel the imagination with alternative possibilities.

Training with such a clinical text would also guide the practitioner and patient to co-create new understandings (reconciling the intersect) of the perceived 'differences' as social constructions that help deconstruct and/or eliminate western hegemony of thought and provide the recognition of intentional moments for the coming together of desperate ideas, events, and experience.

Finally, the proposed clinical text could present ideas, concepts and theories that intentionally shatter the underlying code of imperialism, subjugation, White Supremacy, and power relations (the material conditions that legitimate inequality, nullification and negation) supportive of them.

As part of crafting such clinical text, with the caution of hybridisation and 'muleification' discussed above, the works of the following treatment and counseling texts should be reviewed, explored, critiqued, and adapted: Fu-Kiau (2001); Rowe and Webb-Msemaji (2004); Kambon (2006); Nobles (2006; 2013a; 2013b; 2015b); Bulhan (1985); Mkhize (2004; 2018); Nwoye (2015); Boyd-Franklin (1989); Parham (2002); Harley and Stansbury (2011); Kutchins and Kirk (1997); Gallardo, Christine and Parham (2012); Phillips (1990); Myers (1998); and Myers and Speight (2013). This is but a sample of the rich number of texts from which this initiative could draw.

Conclusion

Given the critique and correctives suggested in this discussion, it is hoped that a team of continental and diasporan African Black *Skh Shetists*, formerly known as Black Psychologists, will:

(1) inspire the ‘community intelligence’ of the collective wisdom of those who currently call themselves Black, African, or Pan-African psychologists to consider the adoption of *Skh Djaer* as the proper nomenclature for the science of African human functioning;

(2) join together in exploring, defining, and understanding the need to rescue African language and logic associated with the illumination of the Spirit, ergo, *Skh* as a global necessity for the healing and restoration of wellness throughout the Pan-African World; and,

(3) co-invent and co-author clinical texts and/ or multiple text for healing that covers African centred counselling, treatment and therapeutic interventions between the realms (visible and invisible) of reality and over the lifespan areas of Spiritness (human) development and regional dispersion of African people.

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The Charge and the Challenge of Illuminating the Spirit (Skh Djr)

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Appendix 1

Critical Terms and Terminology in the Science of Human Functioning

A Preliminary Glossary

Abaphansi – In South African Nguni/ Ngoni (Ndebele, Swati, Xhosa, Zulu) The term refers to the community of the ancestors, those who lived exemplary lives, who have achieved the highest stage of being, namely the unification with the Divine essence, the source of all life. As the moral exemplars who detest wrongdoing, *Abaphansi* remain in regular contact with their families to give them guidance.

Abaphansi Basifulathele – Withdrawal of Ancestral Protection (South African) The term is used to refer to the situation when individuals or families suffer a range of misfortunes as a result of wrongdoing, resulting in the withdrawal of ancestral protection.

Aidogba nínu emí – Spiritual Imbalance, Imbalance in the Spirit (Yoruba)

Alasal Tarey – The process through which one comes to know and understand one's origin, essence and unfolding as a human being in order to serve humanity (Songhoy-senni).

Akom Ko – Without Spirit (KiKongo)

Bwana Mboti – The child of my Ancestors (Kikongo)

Dingo-dingo diandiakina – The healing process of a human being (KiKongo)

Elenini – Spirit defilement (KiKongo)

Enit Ori ẹ Kòpé – He who unable to put his mind together (Yoruba)

Funda dia Ngolo – Package of energy; the individual's self-healing power (KiKongo)

The Charge and the Challenge of Illuminating the Spirit (Skh Djr)

Ihlambo – A ritualistic recemony to cleanse those who were involved in war, or those communities or areas that witnessed the spilling blood during war.

Inhlambuluko – The process of coming clean (from -hlamba, to cleanse). The process may involve individuals, families or communities coming together to tell the truth, thus burying the past in order to move forward.

Jegna – Special people (*Jegnoch* - plural form) who have: 1) been tested in struggle or battle, demonstrated extraordinary and unusual fearlessness, 3) shown determination and courage in protecting our people, land and culture, 4) shown diligence and dedication to our people, 5) produced exceptionally high quality work, and 6) dedicated themselves to the protection, defense, nurturance and development of our young by advancing our people, place and culture. The easiest and foremost interpretation of the *Jegna* is one whose central focus is on the culture and character of one's people. The *Jegnoch* cherish and love their (our) people. (Ethiopian/Amharic)

Kalunga – The totality, everything, sharing life and becoming life continually after life itself. The completeness of all life. It is an ocean of energy, a force in motion. (KiKongo)

Kingongo – A state wherein the inner Divine presence is in harmony (blends) with the self-healing power (NGOLO) as expressed in all forms of being. (KiKongo)

Kizungu Zungu – The defiled or damaged Spirits (individual or collective) are seen as 'tornadoes of the mind' or 'mental chaos'. (KiKongo)

Kugusa Mtima – Deals with the capacity of the collective human will via the 'power' to transcend and transform human consciousness and thereby transcend ordinary existence and experience; unity with the Divine. The 'touching the heart'. (Kikingo)

Lendo Kia Tambukuso – Genetic Power (KiKongo)

Lendo Kiandiakina – Healing Power (KiKongo)

Lendo Kia Kukiniakisa – The self-healing power (KiKongo)

Luku – To poison or infect at a personal or community level (KiKongo)

Maafa – A great disaster and misfortune of death and destruction beyond human convention and comprehension. The African *Maafa* is not a single abhorrent event in history. It is an on-going, sophisticated, continuous ‘process’ in the support of world-wide White Supremacy; driven by fear and racial hatred and designed to dehumanize and/or destroy African people. The critical feature of the *Maafa* is ‘the denial of the validity of African people’s humanity’, accompanied by a collective and ever-present total disregard and disrespect for the African and the right of people of African ancestry to exist. The African *Maafa* gives license to the continual perpetuation of a total systematic and organized process of spiritual and physical destruction of African people both individually and collectively. (Kiswahili)

Mayembo ma nitu – Electricity throughout the human body. (Kikongo)

Moya – The ever-present, vibrating energy (*amandla*) emanating from the Ultimate (Initial) Source or Being

Ndoki – ‘Cause’ of a thing, including illness (Kikongo)

Ngolo – Energy of self-healing power (KiKongo)

Ngolo Zandiakina – Self-Healing Potential (Kikongo)

N’kisi – The container, as Spirit force, that holds the hidden power of the mysteries of life (Futu) to take care of itself. Futu (everything that life needs to survive) can have either safe or dangerous ‘medicine’. (Kikongo)

Ngang’a nkisi – The *Ngang’a nkisi* (Healer) is one capable of activating the process by which the body (persons or community) repairs, cures or restore itself to health and well-being. S/he is one who restores the physical, psychic, social and cosmic balance and harmony in and between persons, people (community), nature and the Divine. The *Ngang’a nkisi* (Healer) cures both physical and spiritual diseases. A Nganga serves as a powerful mediator between the visible world and the realm of Spirit and ancestors.

The Charge and the Challenge of Illuminating the Spirit (Skh Djr)

Nsaka Sunsum – Touching the Spirit (Akan)

N'singa dikanda – The biogenetic rope of the communities of the dead (Kikongo)

Nsumununu – When the Spirit of the community and the Spirit of its members become defiled or damaged. (KiKongo)

Ntu – Universal expression of Spirit, force. The modal point at which being (Umu) inseparable as concrete form of *UbuNtu* (Kikongo)

Okan tí O bale – Heart unsettled (Yoruba)

Se Alafia Ni – The state of perfect and total peace (Yoruba)

Sikere Folo – To act without spiritual connection (KiKongo)

Skh (Sakhu) – Illumination, into the soul of the being, that which inspires

Skh Djr – *Skh Djr* examines and utilizes the processes that allow for the illumination and liberation of the Spirit. It is an unfiltered (free of western contamination) process of understanding, examining, and explicating the meaning, nature and functioning of being human for African people by conducting a deep, profound, and penetrating search, study and mastery of the process of 'illuminating' the human Spirit or essence and totality of all human experience and phenomena.

Sumuna – violation of self-sacredness. *Sumuna* is caused directly by the breaking of taboos, cultural precepts and ancestral traditions. Community relations that violate the sacred inner self (*the violation of self-sacredness*) result in a state of *Sumuna*. Inter-, intra- and supra-relationships can violate the sacredness of self (KiKongo)

Tunda Milongi – violation of community laws and taboos (KiKongo)

UbuNtu – Spirit in which Being and beings coalesce (Kikongo); the process of becoming *Ntu* or Spirit, as it is manifest one's interactions with the totality of creation.

Ukugeza Umkhondo – the cleansing of the path (especially the path where there was a violent death due to war or murder). The cleansing is meant to appease the Spirit of the deceased and to prevent the re-occurrence of a similar event.

Ukufulathelwa abaphansi – When the ancestors turn away from their family (remove their protective powers) thus rendering the family vulnerable to illness/ harm and dangers.

Ukufa Kwabantu – Literally, Disease of (African) people (South Africa); an illness that is of socio-cultural or spiritual rather than biomedical origin; illnesses that result from the breakdown in communication between the living and those residing in the Spirit-realm.

Ukuzilungisa – To heal a whole people (KiKongo-Bantu/ Nguni). To remedy oneself; to heal the breakdown between oneself and the realm of the Spirits, to cause oneself to be complete or perfect.

Umsebenzi – A ritual or function that is performed to appease the ancestors; to repair the breakdown between the realms of the visible and invisible.

Umakhelwane – One's neighbours with whom one lives in harmony.

Yungulu – To burn up

Yurugu – Used by Marimba Ani in her African-centered critique of European thought and behavior (a self-created being born prematurely-- was doomed to perpetually search for the completeness that could never be his. Forever incomplete single-souled (rather than twinned in natural and divine complementarity with the female) impure and incomplete (Dogon). Based on Dogon cosmology. (Kiswahili)

Zola – Love. Love activates 'Ngolo', the energy of self-healing power (potential). It is the undeniable desire of one's Spirit to connect, merge, expand and extend into a greater oneness with another (Spirit). Zola requires that one value and treasure another with caring and affection in order to sustain, promote, nurture and inspire their 'perfectibility'. Zola (Love) is self and

The Charge and the Challenge of Illuminating the Spirit (Skh Djr)

collective cherishment. It is the essential act of personal and collective preservation and actualization. (Kikongo)

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