

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at:  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281295376>

# From Black Psychology to Sakhu Djaer: Implications for the Further Development of a Pan African Black Psychology....

Article *in* Journal of Black Psychology · August 2015

DOI: 10.1177/0095798415598038

---

CITATIONS

6

READS

253

**1 author:**



[Wade W. Nobles](#)

**21 PUBLICATIONS** **423 CITATIONS**

[SEE PROFILE](#)

# From Black Psychology to *Sakhu Djaer*: Implications for the Further Development of a Pan African Black Psychology

Journal of Black Psychology

1–16

© The Author(s) 2015

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/0095798415598038

jbp.sagepub.com



Wade W. Nobles<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This article traces the historical evolution of African (Black) psychology in the United States and outlines the main components of an African-centered psychology. The article concludes with a call for the formation of Pan African psychology founded on the notion of Spirit or *Sakhu* and an invitation for African (Black) psychologists to seize the global opportunity to informally and/or where advantageous formally establish a Pan African (Black) Psychology African World Federation Network.

## Keywords

African-centered psychology, African psychology, African self-consciousness, Afrocentricity, spiritual/spirituality

## The Advent of Black Psychology

The Association of Black Psychology was born in the social, cultural, and political vortex of the civil rights and Black power movements occurring in the United States. The unending struggle of Black people from captivity, kidnapping from Africa to captivity and enslavement in early America to segregation,

---

<sup>1</sup>Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture, Oakland, CA, USA

### Corresponding Author:

Wade W. Nobles, Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture, 1012 Linden Street, Oakland, CA 94607, USA.

Email: [drwade.nobles@iasbflc.org](mailto:drwade.nobles@iasbflc.org)

exploitation, and discrimination in contemporary times came to a head in the 1960s with the assassination of our civil rights leaders like Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, and Fred Hampton. Even though there were two or three early Black psychologists; that is, Francis Cecil Sumner in 1917 and Inez Beverly Prosser in 1933, Robert Williams (2008) notes that with the exception of Kenneth Clark and Martin Jenkins, Black psychologists were virtually unknown prior to 1968. At that time African American students and professional psychologists found the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) in San Francisco in 1968. The ABPsi was formed as a national organization free and independent of the American Psychological Association. In forming themselves, these Black psychologists who held positions in various academic, public, industrial, and governmental programs pledged themselves to the realization that they were Black people first and psychologists second. These men and women charged the American Psychological Association with condoning the White racist character of American society and failing to provide models and programs conducive to the solving of African American problems stemming from the oppressive effects of American racism. It is extremely important to point out and highlight that we declared the primacy and importance of our Blackness over our status as psychologists.

The ABPsi was thus formed to utilize the skills of Black Psychologists to benefit the Black community. Specifically, the *raison d'être* of the Association was to address the significant social problems affecting the Black community and to positively impact on the mental health of the national Black community through planning, programs, services, training, and advocacy. In its origination, the objectives of ABPsi were to (a) organize our skills and abilities to influence necessary change and (b) address the significant social problems affecting the Black community and other segments of the population whose needs society has not fulfilled (B. H. Williams, 1997).

For the accuracy of the historical record, it is important to acknowledge that at the birthing of the ABPsi, we formed an ABPsi, but had yet to create the discipline and practice of a Black psychology. During the next two decades, several Black psychologists, for example, King, Dixon, and Nobles (1976); Akbar (1984, 1990); Azibo, (1989); Hilliard (1986); Nobles (1972, 1986a, 1986b, 1997); Myers (1988); Kambon (1992); Wilson (1993); Grills and Rowe (1996), joined in the excavation of African ideas as ground-  
ing for the reemergence and advent of the discipline of Black psychology.

Due to the assault on African people's humanity and the depopulation of the continent resulting from the savage system of both Arab and European slave trade, African intellectual developmental trajectory was derailed and African people and our indigenous ideas were disconnected and shattered.

This has resulted in our not being able to be informed by and benefit from an ongoing intellectual and cultural exchange. Nevertheless, similar diggings were being conducted by continental psychologists (Kruger, 1988; Mphahlele, 1987; Owuso-Bempah & Howitt, 1995), including the importance of indigenous psychologies (Nsamenang, 2006).

In 1972, Dr. Reginald Jones published *Black Psychology* as the first collection of the thoughts and theories of Black psychologists in the United States. In that publication, Nobles (1972) introduced the notion of African philosophy and African psychology as fundamental to the burgeoning field of Black psychology. The beginning of a Black psychology represents, in my opinion, a scientific revolution in the intellectual universe of humanity's understanding of human functioning.

## Psychology in Africa

The importance of Black Psychologists from around the world meeting at the 30th International Congress of Psychologists in Capetown, South Africa in 2012, reconvening at the ABPsi meeting in New Orleans in 2013, and then again at the 1st International Congress of the Forum of African Psychology in 2014, is that we, as members of the worldwide African family, had an opportunity to reconnect the scattering of Africa's children and to consider the question of psychology in Africa. This has become an ongoing discussion relative to healing the mind of the African world. In so doing, we can help heal all humanity. The charge of the Forum of African Psychology, rightly so, was to bring together leading African-centered scholars, prominent academics, professional psychologists, and traditional "spirit practitioners"<sup>1</sup> (healers) from throughout the African world and to continue the task of creating a Pan African Black Psychology that will not only heal the damage of historical colonialism, enslavement, political exploitation, and westernization but will also serve to guide African people into the next millennium. There is a need for African-centered psychology that responds to the needs of African communities.

We, who call ourselves psychologists, must refigure psychology to reflect the realities of Africa and her children worldwide. There should be agreement among Black African psychologists to use African epistemological reflections<sup>2</sup> and subsequent skill sets to meet the challenges of our time in every context and to engage in policy and program development wherever African people exist.

We, therefore, should not be just talking about psychology in Africa. To simply bring Western psychology to Africa is to be complicit in the mental brainwashing and psychic terrorism (Nobles, 2015) of Africa and the adoption of the very tool and theories that have been used to demean, defame,

debilitate, and damage us. In effect to merely advance Western psychology into Africa would be akin to uncritically drinking poison as if it were medicine to heal and revive ourselves. The discipline and practice designed to assist in the healing and management of the human affairs of African people must be uncompromisingly African centered and grounded in the philosophy and wisdom traditions of African people.

The paradox of our time is that to simply apply Western psychology to Africa (both continental and diasporan) and her children is to turn a blind eye to the role Western psychology has played in the dehumanization of African people and adopt that which is logically and spiritually unacceptable. Not only is the continued blind importation and application of Western thought unacceptable to those of us responsible for understanding African human functioning, it is also counterindicative and self-contradictory to being a self-defining, self-sustaining, self-affirming healthy, and whole people.

All human communities, especially African prior to invasion and colonization, used their own intrinsic essence (spiritness), epistemic reflections, cultural appreciations, and apperceptions about reality to inform their *knowing framework* and *intellectual mindset* from which, in turn, they recognized and recorded events and experiences as well as “made sense” of the world. To be clear, what is needed, in my opinion, is the continued creation of a Pan African Black Psychology that is the cocreation of Black Psychologists throughout the African world.

## The Western Grand Narrative

Narratives are understood as being part of a constructive process in which humans interpret and reinterpret their experiences according to “narrative structures” (Sarbin, 1986). A so-called “grand narrative” reflects deep intrinsic beliefs as both descriptive and explanative discourse. Accordingly, humans use their epistemic reflections, cultural appreciations, and apperceptions about reality to inform their *knowing framework* and *intellectual mindset* to further recognize and record the making of sense of events and experiences as a grand narrative. Historically, the Western Grand Narrative has been grounded in logical positivism, biological determination, social Darwinism, reductionism, and more recently, postmodernism. In these intellectual and philosophical frameworks, the Western Grand Narrative has supported a mindset that is grounded in ideations that privilege difference, aristocracy, elitism, classism, racism, sexism, genetic inferiority, caste attribution and value, empiricism, and rationalism as the only way to know and understand. The Western Grand Narrative has shaped and influenced what we see and accept as normal. Unfortunately, in a very real sense, a direct consequence of the Western Grand

Narrative for African people is that it infects the African mind with a disease that can best be symptomized as “Afrophobia,” a persistent, abnormal, and irrational fear for things African; “Europhilia,” a positive unwarranted feeling of love, liking, and affection for things European; and “Grecomania,” a violent derangement of the mind due to Greek thought and ideas. Hence, when we fail to see the need for an African Grand Narrative, the Western Grand Narrative becomes the only way of describing, understanding, and explaining reality by default. While the western world asserts and privileges its grand narrative based on Judeo-Christian Greco-Roman thought as universal, it is not. It is simply unchallenged and unduly accepted by default.

As counterpoint to the false universality of the Western Grand Narrative, I would like to share some ongoing thoughts and preliminary suggestions relative to a proposed African “Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo” Grand Narrative; an African philosophical grounding; and, the Skh Djr (Sah koo Jair) for the further development of a Pan African Black Psychology.

## **Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo Thought**

An African Grand Narrative<sup>3</sup> is reflected in the “voice” of people of African ancestry, which is seldom and often ignored or not heard. Growing out of African people’s cultural grounding, meanings of being human, and historical relations, an African voice reflects the subjective and collective ability to express the essential and authentic experience of life and living for African people. An African Grand Narrative would and should reflect and represent the voice of African people on the continent and throughout the diaspora. Accordingly, I propose that we formulate an African Grand Narrative based in “Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo” thought that interrogates the knowing implications of the classical civilizations of Kmt (Egypt) and Nubia, and the ancient beliefs of the BaNtu and Kongo people. Such an African Grand Narrative would posit that reality is “Spirit” and that a particular process of knowing emerges from African genesis or creation myths, meaning of being human, and concept of life and death. Parenthetically, it is important to provide a clarification of this idea of “Spiritness” as distinct from spirituality. I have suggested that “Spiritness” pertains to the condition of *being spirit* as distinct from “spirituality” which pertains to having the quality of “being spiritual.” It is believed that African people experience their “spiritness” (Grills, 2002; Nobles, 1997) simultaneously as a metaphysical state and an ethereal extension or connection into and between the *supra* world of the Deities, the *inter* world of other beings, and the *inner* world of oneself. “Spiritness” is often misconceived as spirituality and deemed a religious quality. It is more akin to physics than religion.

An African Grand Narrative would privilege the sense of personhood, synergy, interconnectedness, circularity, wholism, and collectivism. Grounded in African epistemological reflections, the African Grand Narrative would privilege a particular intellectual mind-set that would posit that real(ity) is based on "Spiritness," as defined above. The idea of "Spiritness," in turn, would allow for the framing of the process of knowing with constructs like commonality, centeredness, transformation, transcendence, improvisation, inspiration, agency, will, revelation, invocation, intention, and the "power of the word."

The thinking, theories, and ideas associated with the development of a Pan African Black Psychology must openly, unashamedly, and unapologetically give recognition and respect to and grounding in a "Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo" shaped African Grand Narrative which privileges the idea of an expansion of Mphahlele's (1987) notion of African Humanism to that of a Pan African Humanism."

The concept of "Pan African Humanism" requires an adequate psychological understanding of African humanity worldwide and its intellectual and cultural developments, as well as relationships to the Western world and other world cultures. Pan African Humanism would require engagement with all forms of African intellectual, literary, and artistic production across time and space. Pan African Humanism serves as an orientation for the study of the psychocultural, geopolitical, intellectual, and artistic history of African people in both its historical unfoldings and contemporary expressions worldwide. The evolving Pan African Black Psychology should be an African-centered interdisciplinary and multidimensional investigation of African philosophy, literature, languages, history, politics, aesthetics, spirituality, and science. As a global discipline, Pan African Black Psychology would allow us to approach questions of human essence, experience, and expressions (i.e., values, customs, beliefs, conduct, etc.) important to all cultures—the nature of the beautiful, the meaning of human existence, the search for the divine, the nature of historical epochs—through an African-centered interdisciplinary and multidimensional studies.

Pan African Humanism supports the use of an African-centered paradigm that privileges the life experiences, history, and traditions of people of African ancestry as the center of analyses, ergo, African-centered psychology. Such a paradigm would give license to scientifically understanding an African-centered way that represents the core and fundamental qualities of the "Being," "Belonging," and "Becoming" of people of African ancestry. The African-centered way, in turn, would assert as an organizing precept the importance of "being" as central. Accordingly, the experiences of being, belonging, and becoming and the principles of location and agency for reviewing and understanding African phenomena are epistemologically paramount.

What all this suggests is that there is an African way of being which should reflect an African “quality of thought and practice” rooted in the cultural image and interest of people of African ancestry (Karenga & Carruthers, 1986). This African-centered way would represent the intellectual and philosophical foundations on which people of African ancestry create their own scientific and moral criteria for authenticating the reality of African human processes (Asante, 1991). Parenthetically, it should be noted that it is only when one has a sense of his or her own “human integrity,” that is, way of being, that one has the “instinct” to resist dehumanization or oppression as well as the capability to even contemplate, let alone achieve, human liberation/freedom.

The historical difficulty or problem with developing a Pan African Black Psychology has been the inability to free ourselves from Western thought and ideas and to comprehend and conceive of the African experience before enslavement and colonization. The question of “being” as seen and defined by African people is seldom, if ever, part of the intellectual discourse. This is the direct result of being disconnected from our own way of being. The African meaning of being human is rarely the starting point for any African, continental or diasporic, intellectual, artistic, or political dialog. African-centered interrogations concerning “identity” and “consciousness,” that is, how do African people recognize and become aware of our humanity, must be asked anew.

We, as Pan African Black Psychologists, must give ourselves the opportunity to engage in deep epistemological reflections regarding how Africans make sense of reality and how Africans recognize, record, and reveal their sense of reality as descriptive and explanative discourse, ergo, an African Grand Narrative. The development of a Pan African Black Psychology should reveal and restore how African people worldwide express the experience of living as an experiential expression of our “essentiality-of-being,” and response to preenslavement and postenslavement and colonization.

## **The Philosophical Grounding for a Pan African Black Psychology**

Before discussing the philosophical grounding for a Pan African Black psychology, I want to highlight the importance of language as defined by Diop’s directive to find the cultural unity of Africa by examining the domains of history, language, and psyche and the significance of the BaNtu heritage. Diop (1974, xiii) makes a convincing argument that the cultural unity of Africa is located in its language, history, and psyche. He, however, leaves the



exploration to the psychic unity undone. Tucker (2003) has pointed out that Africa has over 3,000 indigenous languages and innumerable creoles, pidgins, and lingua francas. Implying that Africa is a land of Babel. This observation was used to support the idea that those Africans kidnapped into slavery all spoke many different languages and were not able to understand each other. However, what is more accurate is that most languages spoken in Africa belong to one of three large language families, that is, Afroasiatic, Nilo-Saharan, and Niger-Congo (Epstein & Kole, 1998). The Niger-Congo language family, in my opinion, should be termed the BaNtu-Kongo language family. It is the migratory expansion of the BaNtu with their language, beliefs, and so on, and not the river Niger that more accurately denotes the language family. Parenthetically, the so-called Niger-Congo or more correctly BaNtu-Kongo represents about three fourths of all of sub-Saharan Africa. With regard to language families, what should be obvious but seemingly less appreciated is that people create language to communicate about what is most important to them, that is, environment, experience, belief, thought, and so on. The BaNtu-Kongo language family represents the need of the BaNtu people to communicate their thoughts, beliefs, and experiences. Hence, if there is a common language family, then there must be common experiences, environment, and beliefs, and thoughts that bind that language family. It should also be noted here that BaNtu essentially means people or the people of spirit (Ntu). However, it has been denigrated, especially in South Africa and refers now to be a qualifier designating inferior status and/or the area, that is, BaNtustan, set aside for Black people in support of apartheid.

The so-called BaNtu expansion, it is believed first originated around the Benue-Cross rivers area in Southeastern Nigeria and spread over Africa to the Zambia area. Sometime in the second millennium BC, the BaNtu were forced to expand into the rainforest of Central Africa. Later, the BaNtu began a more rapid second phase of expansion beyond the forests into Southern and Eastern Africa reaching modern day Zimbabwe and South Africa. Another theory held that the BaNtu originated from the Congo and spread out to the north, east, and the south. Whether going from north to south or south to north it should be clear that the BaNtu spread out over most of Africa and with the experience of the slave trade spread equally throughout the new world. The primary evidence for this great expansion (Ehret, 2001), one of the largest in human history, has been linguistic, namely that the languages spoken in sub-Equatorial Africa are remarkably similar to each other, to the degree that it is unlikely that they began diverging from each other more than 3,000 years ago. The BaNtu people with their culture, language, family, spiritual beliefs, and philosophical ideas are the very people stolen and kidnapped in the Transatlantic slave trade. In effect, BaNtu beliefs and ideas were embedded in the various peoples who were stolen and kidnapped.

Africans on the continent and throughout the diaspora are fundamentally BaNtu people. In fact, it is only in understanding the BaNtu-Kongo ideas and meanings of being human that one will be able to better or more fully determine the impact of the Trans-Saharan and Transatlantic slave trade.

In terms of beliefs and African deep thought, Ngubane (1979) argued 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, in fact, is recognized as African culture and civilization is the combined social conventions and inventions emerging from a common African root meaning of the person.

While there is not enough room in this exposition to exhaust the topic, the further exploration of the proposed “Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo” African Grand Narrative and African philosophical thought does require some detailing here.

The ancient Kemite/Nubians believed that the Neb-er-tcher evolved from the primordial substance and facilitated the evolution of forms into phenomena (Budge, 1997). The “creative principle” emerged out of the primordial substance; that is, “Nu” and all phenomena were, in fact, extensions of “Nu.” The Kemite/Nubians believed in the consubstantiality of all phenomena. One key to understanding Kemite/Nubian philosophy, can be found in the belief about the meaning of the person. Because the person was a manifestation or expression of “Nu,” the primordial substance, the ancients regarded the “form” of the human being as destined to live forever. Hence, institutions were developed to enable the person to evolve in response to the challenges of nature. The human person, like other forms, has an “unchanging value” and evolves in response to the demands of that value. The ancients regarded the primordial substance, “Nu,” as infinite. The infinity operated, in terms, of its law, which was its will. As a manifestation of “Nu,” the person represents a manifestation of “the Law.”

In discussing BaNtu philosophy, Kagame (1989) notes that all that exists can be subsumed under one of four categories of Ntu or spirit. Ntu, in this regard, is thought to be the universal expression of force or spirit. Ntu inseparable from Umu is “Being” itself. It is the cosmic universal force. “UbuNtu” is spirit in which Being and beings coalesce.

This notion of spirit or force or power makes no distinction between spirit and matter. Matter is not in the BaNtu conceptualization a manifestation of spirit. Matter and spirit are not separate. They are not different or apart. Reality is not a duality of matter and spirit. “UbuNtu” is all that is or “be.” Conceptually, Ntu, as a modal point at which 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. The categories are *Mu Ntu*, *Ki Ntu*, *Ha Ntu*, and *Ku Ntu*. All beings, all expressions of spirit can

**Table 1.** UbuNtu: Spirit Beings (*Mu Ntu*) in a Reality of Spirit (*Ntu*).

<i>Mu Ntu or Muntu</i>	Human beings are spirit (energy)—Knowing and knowable spirit, including the dwellers of the afterlife (dead), those yet-to-be-born as well as the angels, orishas, loas, and ancestors.
<i>Ha Ntu or Hantu</i>	Place and time are spirit (energy)—Activated by <i>Mu Ntu</i>
<i>Ki Ntu or Kintu</i>	Material objects are spirit (energy)—Activated by <i>Mu Ntu</i>
<i>Ku Ntu or Kuntu</i>	Emotions/feelings are spirit (energy)—Activated by <i>Mu Ntu</i>

be found within one of these categories. All that exists will express itself as one of these expressions. Human beings (*Mu Ntu or Muntu*) are an expression of spirit or force. Place and Time (*Ha Ntu or Hantu*) are equally expressions of spirit or force. All the material objects (*Ki Ntu or Kintu*) like mountains, other animals, rivers, and so on, are spirit expressions. Joy, beauty, laughter, love, emotions, and so on (*Ku Ntu or Kuntu*) are equally spirit expressions. As such everything and all being is “UbuNtu” and as such are more than simply related to each other. All that exists are different concrete expressions of *Ntu*. In effect, “Being” is being spirit in a reality of spirit (see Table 1).

All being is therefore, spirit, energy, or “UbuNtu.” In being, humans exist in the aforementioned categories. The category *Mu Ntu* includes intelligent beings that are living, the dwellers of the afterlife (dead), those yet-to-be-born as well as the orishas, loas, and ancestors. That which exists as *Ki Ntu* are forces that are activated at the command of *Mu Ntu*. Plants, animals, minerals, created objects, and ideas, and so on are all spirit (*Ki Ntu*) awaiting the command or activation by *Mu Ntu*. Spirit also exists or expresses itself as space and time. This is *Ha Ntu*. Modalities of existing are equally spirit. *Ku Ntu* as “modal” spirit gives “beingness” to modalities like loyalty, devotion, discipline, and so on. The UbuNtu idea should be thought of as one of the root ideas in African philosophical thought and the further creation of a Pan African Black Psychology.

A Pan African Black Psychology must, therefore, embrace the African meaning of being human as being spirit, an energy or power. Refashioning African philosophical thought with its “Kmt-Nubia/BaNtu-Kongo” grounding, as an African Grand Narrative would assert that human beings as Spirit Beings are those who live and move within and are inseparable from the ocean of waves/radiations of spirit (energy). A human being is spirit that affirms its humanity by recognizing the humanity of other spirits 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. To be human is to be spirit in motion (unfolding). Being human is

being a phenomenon of perpetual, constant, and continual unfolding (vibration—sharing and exchanging) of spirit. In this regard, Fu-Kiau (2001) clarifies that the human being 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 Development of a Pan African Black Psychology: *Skh Djr***

The question of a Pan African Black Psychology must ultimately turn to the task of our being able to illuminate the spirit of *Mu Ntu* to the people worldwide. In furthering the challenge of Black psychology to rescue ancient African deep thought, I propose the adoption of *Skh Djr* (Nobles, 2013) as the 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, as well as all human experience and phenomena.

In order to fully understand the complexity of the *Skh Djr* (illumination of the spirit), one must include a discussion of the African antecedent comprehension of what it means to be human or to be a person. To understand this point, one has to think deeply and profoundly about African meanings and understandings about being human. Consistent with Diop’s (1974) directive to examine the domains of history, language, and psyche, *Skh Djr* would require that one interrogate the language and logic of traditional African people in order to gain insight into the functioning of contemporary African peoples. Our ancestors were spread throughout the diaspora absent of freedom, that is, in chains. However, they did not arrive absent of language, thought, and belief about who they were. Our ancestors on the continent had a sacred relation to the land. However, because of colonial domination that relationship was often disrupted. One direct consequence of colonialism was that many African children were forced into boarding schools and had to learn their captor’s language as well as their “way of being.” They too did not experience this atrocity absent of their mother tongue, thought, and belief about who they were. Our ancestors came with a language and a system of beliefs (logic) about what it meant to be human and whom and whose they were and why they existed. It is through a penetrating reinterpretation of the language and logic of our African ancestry, that both continental and diasporan Africans will be able to rescue and remember our humanity, wholeness, and wellness.

In directing us to locate Africa's cultural unity in its language, history, and psyche, Diop unfortunately left the exploration of the psychic unity undone. In an attempt to partially address Diop's psychic directive, I have offered the concept or notion of *Skh Sdi* (Sah koo Shedee) to represent the practice or method of *Sakhu* (Sah koo) first introduced by Akbar (1985). Consistent with the African idea of "if it exists it most assuredly is spirit," the *Skh Sdi* practitioners would be "Spirits (humans) who are 'lead' by spirit, who 'read' spirit(s); who seeks help and protection from spirit and engages in the 'salvation' and 'nurturing' (healing) of spirit by performing the Sakhu as it should be done" (Nobles, 2013, p. 294). There are traditional African concepts in every African language that represent the idea of illuminating the spirit and should be explored as a further expansion of a Pan African Black psychology.

Our charge is clear. Guided by the call to organize issued in the Capetown Declaration and the Nassau Declaration as well as in the charge to refashion psychology given in the New Orleans Accord, we must claim our own African Grand Narrative and use it, not only as our descriptive and explanative discourse about African reality worldwide but to shape the African way as a tool for healing ourselves and the world.

In open and direct collaboration, we, continental and diasporan, African/Black psychologists must aggressively interrogate and learn from our traditional sciences, for example, Ifa, Vodun, Candomblé, and collaborate around addressing the specifics of the New Orleans Accord, that is, forge continental and diasporan working relationships to critically examine the assumptions and paradigms concerning the understanding, development, and the emergence of African/Black peoples in context throughout their lives; commit to developing the culturally congruent discipline and practice of Pan African Black Psychology; as well as endorse and adopt the development and utilization of a Pan African Black Psychology for understanding, analyses, treatment, and restoration of African/Black spirit, mental health, wellness, wholeness, worldwide emancipation, participation, and unity of our people.

We must not be afraid to accept the challenge and charge of critically assessing the limited utility and questionable fidelity of American and European psychologies for understanding and treating African/Black peoples. As continental and diasporan Pan African Black Psychologists, we should openly support the ongoing collaboration among and between continental and diasporan psychologists worldwide and to use the further development of Pan African Black Psychological theories in all areas of human endeavor by finding ways to assemble, critique, and make more accessible the existing oral, written, or electronic psychological works of African scholars concerning our understanding, analyses, interventions, and treatment (both traditional and contemporary) that promote the wellness of African/Blacks; and, in particular,

address the lingering and ongoing affects of both historical and contemporary colonization, enslavement, and dehumanization.

In spite of the success of the birth of a Black Psychology in the United States, which is not race defined, psychology on the continent, South America (Brazil), Europe, and the Caribbean may or may not be in the hands of Black Africans. The non-Black African control of psychology in the various places throughout the African world will need to be addressed as we unfold the furthering of a Pan African Black Psychology. We, in effect, need to identify and access whatever energy (spirit) and resources that will support our ongoing collaboration and intellectual exchanges, for example, joint education task force between the ABPsi and Pan African Psychology Union that should also include the Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Associations and the Regional Psychology Council of Bahia, as well as kindred associations in Europe and Asia.

Starting with a critical examination of the United States that developed Black Psychology and a systematic review and utilization of African-centered resources and materials, the task ahead should be to directly advance the worldwide examination and development of a Pan African Black Psychology and support the implementation of healing programs and services throughout the African world. Through this global initiative, we could provide opportunities for teaching, trainings, continuing education, workshops/seminars, professional consultations, in addition to ongoing discussions on the philosophies, theories, therapeutic intervention, research orientations, methodological approaches for the overall implementation, and dissemination of a Pan African Black Psychology.

In full collaboration, as an African family, we ultimately could become an "African World Federation of Pan African Black Psychology Organizations and/or Associations." Working together as a federation, we could and should provide certification and ultimately licensing for any psychological work occurring throughout the African world. To achieve this, I invite us, as African Black psychologists, to seize the global opportunity before us to informally and/or where advantageous formally establish a Pan African Black Psychology African World Federation Network that is committed to taking the authority to be "Spirit Beings" and practitioners of the *Sakhu*. To do so would, in my opinion, be the only way that we can guarantee that we produce and practice a real Pan African Black Psychology or what I propose we call *Skh Djr*. To do any less would be to fail to fulfill what our ancestors have prepared the way for us to be, Divine Spirit Beings, living in a reality of spirit, called to enlighten, restore, and heal.

### Author's Note

Keynote Presentation: 1st International Congress of African Psychology FAP2014, Polokwane, Limpopo Province, South Africa, March 27-29, 2014.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Notes

1. I choose to refer to our traditional sages, wise-ones, and healers as “spirit practitioners” rather than fetish priest or shaman because they use their immediate rapport with the Divine spirit to understand how to be, know, and heal.
2. My own epistemological reflections have been guided by ongoing direct conversations and study with the following living practitioners of traditional spirit science (religion): the Araba of Osogbo, Nigeria, Baba Ifayemi Elebuibon; the traditional priest, Nana Kwabena Adebresse Abass (Nana Alhaji Abass) of Ghana; the Ndepp of Senegal, Oulimata Diop; the High Sanusi of South Africa, Baba Credo Mutwa; and the Nganga of the Congo, Kimwandende Kia Bunseki Fu-Kiau.
3. Both Dr. Molefi Asante (2003) and Dr. Maulana Karenga (2010) have offered important definitions of Afrocentricity that support the unpacking of an African grand narrative.

## References

- Akbar, N. (1984). Africentric social science for human liberation. *Journal of Black Studies, 14*, 395-414.
- Akbar, N. (1985). Nile valley origins of the science of the mind. In I. Van Sertima (Ed.), *Nile Valley Civilizations* (pp. 120-132). New Brunswick, NJ: Journal of African Civilizations.
- Akbar, N. (1990). African American consciousness and Kemet: Spirituality, symbolism and duality in reconstructing Kemetic culture. In M. Karenga (Ed.), *Papers, perspectives, projects* (pp. 99-114). Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press.
- Asante, M. (1991). *Kemet, Afrocentricity, and knowledge*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Asante, M. (2003). *The Afrocentric idea*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Azibo, D. A. (1989). African-centered thesis on mental health of African Americans and a nosology of Black/African personality disorder. *Journal of Black Psychology, 15*, 173-214.
- Budge, E. (1997). *An introduction to ancient Egyptian literature*. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications.
- Diop, C. A. (1974). *The African origins of civilization: Myth or reality*. Brooklyn, NY: Lawrence Hill.xiii



- Ehret, C. (2001). Bantu expansions: Re-envisioning a central problem of early African history. *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 34, 5-41.
- Epstein, E. L., & Kole, R. (Eds.). (1998). *The language of African literature*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Fu-Kiau, K. K. B. (2001). *Tying the spiritual knot: African cosmology of the Bantu-Kongo* (2nd ed.). Brooklyn, NY: Athelia Henrietta Press.
- Grills, C. (2002). African-centered psychology: Basic principles. In T. A. Parham (Ed.), *Counseling persons of African descent: Raising the bar of practitioner competence* (pp. 10-24). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Grills, C., & Rowe, D. (1996). African traditional medicine: Implications for African centered approaches to healing. In R. Jones (Ed.), *Advances in African American psychology: Theory, paradigms and research* (pp. 71-100). Hampton, VA: Cobb & Henry.
- Hilliard, A. G., III. (1986). The wisdom of Kemetic governance. In M. Karenga & J. Carruthers (Eds.), *Kemet and the African worldview* (pp. 131-148). Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press.
- Kagame, A. (1989). The problem of "man" in Bantu philosophy. *Journal of African Religion and Philosophy*, 1, 35-40.
- Kambon, K. K. K. (1992). *The African personality in America: An African centered framework*. Tallahassee, FL: Nubian Nation.
- Karenga, M. (2010). *Introduction to Black studies* (4th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press.
- Karenga, M., & Carruthers, J. (Eds.). (1986). *Kemet and the African worldview*. Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press.
- King, L., Dixon, V. J., & Nobles, W. W. (Eds.). (1976). *African philosophy: Assumptions and paradigms for research on Black persons*. Los Angeles, CA: J. Alfred Cannon Research Conference Series.
- Kruger, D. (1988). In search of a human science of psychology. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 18, 1-9.
- Mphahlele, E. (1987, November). *Images of the African personality*. Paper presented at Conference on Black Culture and Business, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Myers, L. J. (1988). *Understanding an Afrocentric worldview*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.
- Ngubane, J.K (1979) *Conflict of minds: changing power isposition in South Africa*. Books in Focus, New York, 60.
- Nobles, W. W. (1972). African philosophy: Foundations for Black psychology. In R. Jones (Ed.), *Black Psychology* (pp.18-32). New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Nobles, W. W. (1986a). *African psychology: Toward its reclamation, reascension and revitalization*. Oakland, CA: Black Family Institute.
- Nobles, W. W. (1986b). Ancient Egyptian thought and the renaissance of African (Black) psychology. In M. Karenga & J. Carruthers (Eds.), *Kemet and the African worldview* (pp. 110-118). Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press.
- Nobles, W. W. (1997). To be African or not to be: The question of identity or authenticity—some preliminary thoughts. In R. L. Jones (Ed.), *African American identity development: Theory, research, and intervention* (pp. 203-213). Berkeley, CA: Cobb & Henry.



- Nobles, W. W. (2013). Fundamental task and challenge of Black psychology. *Journal of Black Psychology, 39*, 292-299.
- Nobles, W. W. (2015). Cultural resistance to psychic terrorism. In M. J. Shujaa & K. J. Shujaa (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of African cultural heritage in North America*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nsamenang, A. B. (2006). Origins and development of indigenous psychologies—Cameroon. *International Journal of Psychology, 41*, 258-259.
- Owuso-Bempah, J., & Howitt, D. (1995). How Eurocentric psychology damages Africa. *The Psychologist, 7*, 163-166.
- Sarbin, T. R. (1986). *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Tucker, C. G. (2003). *An introduction to African languages*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamin.
- Williams, B. H. (1997). *Coming together: The founding of the association of Black psychologists*. Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 9822882)
- Williams, R. (2008). *History of the Association of Black Psychologists: Profiles of outstanding Black psychologists*. Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse.
- Wilson, A. S. (1993). *The falsification of African consciousness: Eurocentric history, psychiatry and the politics of White supremacy*. Brooklyn, NY: Afrikan World Infosystems.