**SOME PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN AFRICAN-CENTERED CULTURALLY- RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES**

This short essay essay addresses the second and third topics posed to our group. The value of presenting **holistic** teaching approaches to potentially **holistic** learners, in order to enhance human development that is transformational and perpetuating lies in our commitment to at least two things. I’ll present them in question form. What is the **efficacy** (effectiveness) of the content and delivery of what we offer? And what is the **potency** of said content and delivery? I propose here a few interrelated and recognizable concepts and principles for consideration. I’ll begin with a quote:

“The content of an African education and socialization process… includes at least the following parts: \*study of the whole heritage of the community \* study of the spiritual significance of everything \* study of the whole life of the community \* study of the whole environment & ecology \*study of how to maintain health \* building an understanding of MAAT (balance) and a commitment to it \* building strong community values \* building fundamental & advanced skills \* building strong social bonds \* building a strong ethnic family identity \* study of geo-political & economic forces \* building respect for elders \* building & maintaining effective nurturing systems for children.” (Hilliard, 2002)

Black people are at their essence – spiritual! Therefore, moral development is paramount in any valid educational process. There are four dimensions in human moral development and life. These are **God** – the Source and Ground of All Life; **Community** – the source of the Moral Life; **Family** – the Locus of Moral Development; and **Person (the Self**) – the Embodiment of Moral Virtue. Equilibrium maintains the relationship between these dimensions in life (Paris, 1995). As irrelevant as it may seem to some, epistemologies (learning systems) and cosmologies that avoid these dimensions will have no potency or efficacy in teaching and learning in these days and times.

Now let’s consider Hermetic principles, categories in nature, and environmental science, and they can help us contextualize **geoscience realities & understanding**.

The Eight **Forces of Creation**: movement and stillness; solidification and fluidity; extension and contraction; unity and division.

**Elements of Nature**:

Universe - \* space \* time \* energy \* matter \* change \* nature timeline.

Earth - \* earth science \* history (geological) \* structure \* geology \* plate tectonics \* oceans \* Gaia hypothesis \* future

Weather - \* meteorology \* atmosphere \* climate \* clouds \* sunlight \* tides \* wind

Natural Environment - \* ecology \* ecosystem \* field \* radiation \* wilderness \*fires (wildfires)

Life - \* origin (abiogenesis) \* evolutionary history \* biosphere \* hierarchy \* biology (astrobiology) \* life timeline \* human timeline \* organism \* flora (plants) \* fauna (animals) \* fungi \* bacteria \* viruses

**Environmental Science**

Applications - \* energy conservation \* environmental technology \* natural resource management \* pollution control \* recycling / re- purposing \* remediation \* renewable energy \* sewage treatment \* urban metabolism \* water purification \* waste management

**Heremetic Principles**: (universal laws are based on principles)

the Principle of Mentalism – the All is mind; the universe is mental.

the Principle of Correspondence – as above, so below, so above.

the Principle of Vibration – nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates.

the Principle of Polarity – everything is dual; everything has poles; everything has its pair of opposites, opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree.

the Principle of Rhythm – everything flows out and in; all things rise and fall.

the Principle of Cause & Effect – every cause has its effect; every effect its cause.

the Principle of Gender – gender is in everything; everything has its masculine and feminine principles. Gwynelle, (1995); Three Initiates (1940)

**References**

Hilliard, A. (2002), African Power, pp.14-15, 25, Makare Publishing Company, Gainesville FL

Gwynelle (1995), African Alkhemy, pp. xxi –xxii, One Horn Press, Nashille, TN

Three Initiates (1940), The Kybalion: Hermetic Philosophy, Yogi Publication Society, Chicago, IL