Siinyoqaba: We Are a Fortress, Inculwa Ceremony

BY JOY NDWANDWE (Guest Writer)

Hence his Majesty King Mswati III’s speech during the ceremony that the regiment was in line with the Indigenous Cosmology: the king thanked God and ancestors for the blessings of rain and success of Inculwa Ceremony.

His Majesty recognised the perseverence of his late father King Sobhuza II in persevering Inculwa and acknowledged his father’s cosmological presence during this ceremony. The King emphasised mutual respect as the grounding base for regiments, highlighted the shield as protection as the spear is tied to the shield, symbolizing cosmic and social order. Most significantly he emphasised that Inculwa 2012 was an international and international and participatory with participants from Africa and Qatar.

Indigenous Cosmology
Prophet LaNdawonde in Alokozi Kwami Kwekaeni underlining King Sobhuza II’s philosophy states that: ‘Authentic Identity based on Traditional African Cosmology and Ontology edifies on how we are members of society, living and dead as cosmic beings. How upon birth the cosmic being must learn cosmic and social order in order to enjoy harmonious human existence and coexistence... as cosmic beings or ‘ntfu’ or ‘soul’ emerged from the Supreme Being or Ultimate Source, God, from the society of the unborn into the world.”

The King’s expression marks the beginning of Inculwa as this period enables him to connect with members of the society, living and dead; as a cosmic being, leader and header of the nation, as the old adage teaches us that when the head of the fish is rotten so will the rest of the body. This affirms that leaders who have the cosmic responsibility to ensure rain, harvest and prosperity of the nation, thus sustaining the body. The seclusion enables the leader to meditate, contemplate and pray for the success and prosperity of the nation, cosmic responsibilities of the head of the nation.

This seclusion enables the King to connect with the Supreme Being of the Ultimate Source of all that is in order to ensure that all the negative elements of the year are cleansed of his psyche; in preparation for Divine Guidance for the new season that awaits him and his people. He also connects with members of the society of the unborn and dead, as a source of inspiration for the future of those to come; and most significantly that who have been on earth, blessed with the wisdom of hindsight on how to deal with the society of the living.

Cosmic and Social Order
When the Little Inculwa begins, the nation joins His Majesty in the dance to forgive them, through affirmations and meditative dances that shed the negativity of the year. The songs address negative utterances that the King is expected to have experience during the year; and this also fortifies the people who participate from their own negativity. As healing the head of the nation is also healing the nation, and those who participate are representatives of the nation.

The Inculwa dance is circular, symbolising the circle of life with the men and women facing each other. This is symbolic of how the circle of life, balances the masculine and feminine energy; which is critical for preserving the essence of life, in the society of the unborn, living and dead. Although Inculwa is predominately about the men and boys regiment, Divine energy is critical as women are the moral shields of society; hence the women bring this energy to fortify the King and celebrate the right of passage of inculwa.

The muscular energy for protecting the children, unborn, living and the departed ancestors; expressing how life in the African paradigm is a continuum, hence a person does not have an expiry date. This understanding grounds cosmic and social order which is also expressed through the Tingatja when going on their pilgrimage of innocence which collecting the Lon'kwan. This is symbolic of connecting with the society of the unborn, which has been preserved by Tingatja throughout the year and now being cultured as pure or innocent energy during this ceremony.

The catching of the bull is also a significant component of the cosmic and social order, which we celebrate in Inculwa; as the boys are inherently catching the bull inside themselves, to enable them to enjoy harmonious human existence and co-existence without bullying others. The involvement of both young and old members of the living society is an important part of how Inculwa is a living condition; this understanding is important in the living, and the living are preserving it for the society of the unborn.

Harmonious Human Existence
Prophet LaNdawonde stated thus: ‘The Traditional African Cosmology edifies on how the soul in the middle of a triangular matrix of cosmic and social relationships, with human beings the right as part of society of the living’ (hence we greet with the right hand).

Kuthuknek is a source of emotional intelligence, which grooms us to enjoy harmonious human existence in the society of the living; therefore, an integral part of our indigenous cosmology.

When we are able to integrate beyond our immediately into the broader levels of society we are considered emotionally intelligent; our tradition of kuthuknek enables us to learn the skill and art of living in the society of the living. Kuthuknek requires one to become a member of a regiment and this is an integral part of Inculwa as the dance and the pilgrimage is organized according to Luthuli or regimentary programmes.

The older regiments in the society of the living become role models for the younger members of the regiments; and this is not by age, but experience in the art of enjoying harmonious human existence within the society of the living. They are also experienced in the meditative dance and most significantly in the songs that are affirmations of fortification for the King as head of the nation. These songs enable the regiments to connect with their own authentic identity whilst they dance on behalf of the society of the unborn whilst honoring the society of the departed ancestors.

Kukhlela, paying homage to the King by working in the fields, is an important part of our emotional intelligence; as the regiments pit into practice the art of synchronicity in the land of the living. They work side by side as a united team, and this year they were able to complete their task at dashing speed, indicative of how through kuthuknek they expressed unity of purpose. Unfortunately, this unity of purpose does not filter through into communities and most significantly in the present day ‘infoenhlan’; one of the fields are government offices where the same regiments need to apply this invaluable experience of emotional intelligence.

Co-existence
Co-existence requires spiritual intelligence or Kuzima Kusumdala as it expresses our relationship with Unvelwiniheli or the Supreme Being and ancestors, part of the triangular matrix of our relationships. The Inculwa is a fortification process as its entirety is based Divine Guidance, with the cosmological elements of the sky, sun, moon, stars and herbs coming from the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source of all that is. The water pilgrimagecannot be manipulated by members of the living society; it is guided by divine guidance: with the sky, sun, moon, stars and the ocean as the ‘high priest.’

This requires a high level of spiritual intelligence of letting go of the human weaknesses of wanting to manipulate systems and processes for personal gain and enrichment. As the Inculwa fortification also requires the collection of natural herbs in mourning from the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source of all that is. These herbs connect Inculwa with the environment, which is a critical component of our indigenous cosmology, as we coexist with the environment, hence we do not manipulate it for personal consumption and enrichment.

In our act of co-existence, there are the ancestors who are part of our society of the dead or departed, which we continue to honour as they are an integral part of our authentic identity. Ancestors honour through knowing our genealogy, totems and most significantly family history; enables us an authentic identity amongst their own authentic identity, whilst we co-exist with others without insecurity. To co-exist we require being firm at the authentic identity level, love, compassion for such that we are not unkind to others. We, as a society, are where we are, where we are coming from and where we are going.

Honouring ancestors is about the yesterday, today and tomorrow, which is an integral part of the indigenous cosmology of being part of society, living and dead or departed. When we participate in Inculwa, we honour those who preserved it for us whilst we were in the society of the unborn. We also affirm our role as preservers of Inculwa for the society of the unborn, whilst ensuring that when we become ancestors ourselves we expect the society of the living to participate in our honour.

Inculwa is our fortification process where we express our indigenous cosmology with its four edicts of supreme being or divine guidance, harmonious human existence and coexistence. Hence we celebrate our co-existence through the cosmological expression ‘Siinyoqaba, We Are a Fortress’ as we do not only fortify the King during Inculwa; but our own authentic identities. Inculwa enables us to experience the circle of life guided by the Supreme Being and Ultimate Source of all that is; through cosmic and social order, harmonious human existence and coexistence, from the Kings seclusion until the regiments are dispersed.

Conclusion
My journey into unearthing the indigenous cosmologies has been synonymous to a wilderness that will be published in my next book. By His Grace I Know Earth, reflecting on the Supreme Being and Divine Guidance, whilst honouring the teachings of King Sobhuza II on how the world will end ‘umezimila’ when the nation gapes you will know earth.” The reality of the wilderness, marks the advancement in the honouring the late King Sobhuza II’s legacy on how Swaziland will be a guiding star of Africa as part of the African Renaissance Agenda. This wilderness has enriched me with invaluable life learning experience of how being perceived as a dronek, loser and failure comes with lessons in humility, which have restored my dignity and authentic identity as an indigenous prophet and the late Queen Regent LaZidze or LaZidwe incarnate.
This perspective indicates how the Ndawndwe have been ‘chief priests’ with the ability to magically imprison opponents depicts the existence of ‘indigenous scientific’ knowledge in the 1800 epoch.

Cosmologies as it is directed and guided by the universe, the sky with its moon, stars and sun being the ‘High Priests’ of this Ceremony. The four edicts of these Indigenous Cosmologies being: Supreme Being or Divine Guidance; Cosmic and Social Order; Harmonious Human Existence; and Coexistence. Why would any conscious society let go of these invaluable edicts, which should be the constitutive rules for all knowledge systems to translate into sustainable peace in Africa?

This evokes my appreciation of the third reason of why the Ndawndwe’s spiritual and organic intellect is critical during Incwala, in my discussions with Professor Santos from the Centre of Social Science Studies in Portugal, Emperor Ngunyane said: “I am an Emperor, I do not know what I am...”

This earned him thorough, Logical and management including being paraded as a fool in Lisbon for calling himself Emperor or King. 

He maintained a high level of dignity as there is thin line between humiliation and dignity; hence this level of dignity is genetic with all the demonstration that my family has gone through.

The King’s fortification still continues every year, conducted by ‘chief priests’ who are spiritual and organic intellectuals.

Ndawndwe’s inherent spiritual and organic intellect has not allowed for living beings; rendering it impossible to initiate (zvawa) that have to kneel to their Goha, a critical process of initiation for traditional healers. He cannot be expected to humble themselves to their Goha; this would prove to be an impossible task for anMungu to subdue their power to a living being. This strength is a blessing for purposes of Incwala and it has been well preserved for generations to come. It is also a blessing to the Swazi Royalty, our children, grand children, great grand children and great-great grand children; as the Ndawndwe do not lose face nor succumb to the negativities of demonstration.

Conclusion

The Ndawndwe spiritual and organic intellect has had tremendous impact on my rising above being labelled demonic; as an indigenous prophet blessed with visions which enable me to see deeper than the rational eyes. If this is demonic then my ‘demons rock’ as I was guided by Queen Regent LaZidze or LaZidze (the Indigenous Cosmologies) and the late King Sobuhza II (Indigenous Leadership guide) into creating the book on King Sobuhza Cosmology as Epistemology for the Future. This King Sobuhza legacy book is competing within the Academy as material: African History; African Literature; African Philosophy; and African Leadership. Through this book I am now a Board Member of the African Renaissance Foundation, which will empower youth and young adults on authentic Identity and Dignity in Africa. “If you believe I am demonic, watch the space for the Ndawndwe’s fortification and combine it with the Makhubu academic genre.”

By Ikey Ndawndwe (Guest Writer)

The Ndwandwe and Incwala Ceremony

A ccording to Umqunu Bahi Bongani Ndwandwe descendant of Mwewwe the son of Soshangan the brother and authorized person to King Zuwde; the late King Mswati II was the first Swazi King to be ‘Indla Lisewa’ the ‘Gourd eater’ symbolic of being guided through Incwala protocols by the Mkhathwa our ‘chief priests’ brought to Swaziland by his mother the late Queen Regent LaZidze or LaZidze.

Historical Perspectives

Eileen J. King in The Social Systems of the Zulus: ‘Tradition has it that Zowe succeeded by magical means in taking Dingiswayo Mhangwana prisoner, whereupon he killed him and defeated theapatkan Mhangwana force. Zowe was now paramount, but Shaka was becoming too powerful for his liking, so he next turned to attack the Zulu. Shaka, a master of strategy, fled at first, but was careful to remove all food before him, so that the enemy should not go hungry. Then he thought it prudent to give battle, with the result that he defeated the Zowe.

This perspective indicates how the Ndwandwe have been ‘chief priests’ with the ability to magically imprison opponents thanks to the existence of ‘indigenous scientific’ knowledge in the 1800 epoch. I admire Eileen’s choice of terminology ‘magical means’ as she did not fall into what Professor Bjorn Sandgren has coined the Elephant La Rouge (Red Elephant) Syndrome of viewing other people’s knowledge as unscientific and irrational; due to the western world’s inability to control and manipulate for production, consumption, material gratification and profit making.

This history lesson explicates the Ndwandwe’s love for food and then interest insights are they how did they not go into Shaka, but were hungry when attacked by this Military Strategist. In most of that hunger the Ndwandwe fled from Shaka to present day Mozambique, Swaziland, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia.

They ran away with the magic hence Shaka may have captured the land and cattle but not the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect; as prior to his death, Zowe presented his leader-

ship rod to the authorised person, Soshangan.

The Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect centered the Shangan clan or tribe, named after Shangan who had created the universe comprising the indigenous tribes and clans, who conceived to be called Shangan or People of Soshangan. This spiritual and organic intellect is well preserved in the legacy of Soshangan’s grandson, son of Mzwana; the last Emperor Ngunyane who was captured, humiliated and exiled by the Portuguese for refusing to concede he was not Emperor but a subject of the then Portuguese Kingdom.

Why Ndwandwe and Incwala?

Queen Regent LaZidze knew of her father’s spiritual and organic intellect, appealed to Swazi Royalty to allow her to bring the children of Mkhathwa; her brother’s children, assigned with fortification duties as the families ‘chief priests’. The songs sung during this fortification process are in the Ndwandwe dialect language snyakuyana or ukukhozana; the Children of Mkhathwa are neither traditional healers nor initiated Sangomans for fortifying the King. Thus they use the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect, which has mutated into diverse spiritual and organic intellectual capacity of the Ndwandwe within the Southern African region.

Secondly the Ndwandwe cannot survive without food, hence Shaka defeated them; taking into consideration that this fortification process is intertwined with the celebration of the first fruit; which Basi Davidson explicates as follows: “Kings were supposed to be killed if they broke any of the royal tabus on personal behaviour, fell seriously ill or lived too long as a famine or dam flood-ower: whenever they could no longer be regarded as fit guards of the right and natural.”

I suppose Zowe knew he had to die, when he failed to protect his people from hunger as he was no longer regarded a fit guardian; but the Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect had to be preserved in the celebration of the first fruit to prevent future hunger.

Ghanian scholar and authors Agytey in Africa Betrayed states thus: “to understand the role of kings, we should first consider the African concept of the universe, as Africans believe that the universe comprises three levels: the sky, the world, and the earth. This is the domain of spirits of both living and the yet to be born as well as of powerful forces such as lightning, thunder, rain and drought. The earth was the domain of dead ancestors, other dead tribesmen, and the activities of the living, such as agriculture, fishing and hunting. The world, occupied by the people and other tribesmen, was therefore the domain of war, peace, trade, and relations with other tribes.” This encapsulates the Incwala Ceremony from the King’s fortification until he dispenses the Regiment, where his speech through indigenous policy and politics focuses on the world.

Colonial and recent history has denounced the Incwala Ceremony and the Ndwandwe fortification process; thus motivating me to wish I was male. A very rare moment, which occurs only during Incwala; as throughout the year, I enjoy being Ndawndwe female who emancipates men with my constant and consistent equality status.

The reason I wish I was male during Incwala, to witness the fortification processes conducted by my fathers, brothers, nephews and all my relatives who have been demonised. I wish to be made to unearth what is perceived to be demonic with my Ndwandwe spiritual and organic intellect and Makhubu academic genre, to bring to the fore the embedded Indigenous Cosmologies.

It is tragic to deal with the Elephant Le Rouge Syndrome, from a westerner, but when this judgmental mentality emerges from your own African family it is demoralising; as it affirms the success of colonisation, and the transgression of all the western prejudice and shallow view of our Indigenous Cosmologies.

This then read on the Ghanian Indigenous Cosmologies Demolated in Africa Betrayed was encouraging to know that not all Africans sold out to the Elephant Le Rouge Syndrome of demonising our own Indigenous Cosmologies. Incwala has lessons on Indigenous Cosmologies.
Sibaya system our indigenous governance tool II

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ccording to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland. Sibaya (the Swazi National Council) Section 232: (1) the members of the Swazi National Council shall elect, according to the highest policy and advisory council (Lobamba) of the nation.

(2) The Sibaya is the Swazi National Council constitutes the Swazi National Council, the Tribes of the real and all adult citizens gathered at the official residence of the Kholauka under the chairmanship of Ngwenyama who may delegate his functions to any official.

(3) Sibaya functions as the annual general meeting of the nation but may be convened at anytime to present the views of the nation on pressing and controversial national issues.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES OF SIBAYA 2012

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is Majesty King Mswati II in his opening speech challenged the nation to contribute to the nation building process, by deliberating on the following issues: Financial Crisis Solutions, Employment Opportunities, Economic Recovery and Poverty Alleviation; Elections 2013 and the Ratification of International Treaties and Charters. A long overdue nation building process after the protracted judicial crisis; then the teacher’s protracted strike compromising the peace and stability brand of the nation. Approximately 250 citizens contributed during this nation building process over the six days, they were so cheered or boded for their contributions by the magnitude of attendees at Sibaya 2012.

FINANCIAL CRISIS SOLUTIONS

The country’s leadership was challenged to consider whether the nation’s silence means peace prevails; as the nation is not blind to the corruption and greed that prevails in Swaziland. Corruption is cited as the main cause of poverty and the lack of resources for economic development. The president’s statement on the Sibaya National Congress No. 1; the nation felt this circular further widened the income gap between the rich and poor and was a necessity in expenditure in a country experiencing a financial crisis. Numerous contributors insisted that the country is not poor but suffering from server financial mismanagement, such as the $30 million lost per month through corruption.

The call for the arrest of those who are depleting national resources, as this was unwise to the nation carrying a heavy tax burden after the introduction of the VAT, hence demanding government’s transparency and accountability. The leaders were reminded on how the role of law was pertinent in dealing with financial mismanagement in government; and how trust must prevail in ensuring sustainable financial management.

The contributors felt the country’s leadership was not following the footsteps of King Sobhuza II, who listened to all citizens; the fools, the drunk, the insane, the poor, the rich and those he disagreed with. King Sombotile’s vision of the land as a nation, for the current leadership was perceived to be choosing both the coin and the Bible; to the extent that the coin was the major preoccupation, hence creating peace and stability.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Drug or marijuana was considered a potential solution towards creating employment opportunities, if it is properly regulated and legally traded. The current focus on exporting primary goods from Swaziland was highlighted as of dis-service towards creating employment opportunities. Particularly as current employment opportunities industries subjected their employees to low wages, unfavourable working conditions and seasonal employment with minimal benefits.

There were appeals for the King to consider the mining sector as a potential employment opportunity generator and economic driver; whilst improving the strategies for curbing greed and corruption, which is a deterrent for investors. Youth unemployment was highlighted including the call for leader’s early retirement to create jobs for youth.

The charge of curriculum to empower youth with technical and business skills was a highlight; such that they can participate in agricultural development, infrastructure development and sports development.

There were appeals to His Majesty for employment opportunities projects from foreign investors whilst also capitalizing on all the country’s natural resources. Thus ensuring development projects are not linked to the Mhabe Marani corridor; thus narrowing the gap between the rural and urban areas, through decentralization such as expanding government service delivery programmes; whilst curbing rural-urban migration, which is a threat to rural development. This is in line with the Constitution and His Majesty’s vision of Swaziland’s first world status; through ensuring access to service delivery in rural communities. Contributors applauded the King’s employment creation initiatives but they have not translated into economic development with sustainable employment opportunities. Sibaya called for the leadership to advise the King with truth, and the King’s advisers to advise truthfully; to enable His Majesty to have an honest view on the state of the nation.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

There was a call for competition within the telecommunications industry as the monopoly of MTN and SPTC was not economically viable for the country. Agriculture was a high priority during this nation building process as an economic recovery and poverty alleviation, hence water harvesting is the national priority.

Investment of irrigation was also highlighted as a national priority, particularly as the King has invested in dams in certain areas.

The under utilisation of government farms become a high priority at this nation building process as these farms would have a huge impact in economic recovery and poverty alleviation. Contributors felt the current funding channelled through Tinkhundla was not easily accessible; hence it has not contributed to the curbing of poverty.

Contributors were adamant on how its time for industrial sites, tourism and arts and culture activities to be initiated in rural areas.

Small businesses were considered an integral part of economic recovery and poverty alleviation; as foreign businesses enjoy tax holidays, bank outside the country. The current education system was criticised for encouraging white collar jobs, instead of developing small business acumen and blue collar jobs seekers. The use of local transport businesses in the transportation of farm ore as opposed to foreign businesses; which has been the current practice under the Salgoaco.

The issue of ex-miners pension, widows and children being left vulnerable due to lack of compensation and payout was critical during this nation building process. The establishment of ex-miners Cooperatives was also highlighted by ex-miners, as this was perceived as delaying tactics; for many ex-miners have passed on without payments’ leaving their widows and benefactors vulnerable over the years.

The participation of persons with disabilities was a major highlight during Sibaya 2012; as they attended and contributed freely to this nation building process.

They felt empowered as in most instances they were discriminated from meeting with the King, due to their disability. Contributors called for a disability grant, to curb politicians and persons with political ambitions from using their vulnerability through donations, as they require jobs.

ELECTIONS 2013

The Tinkhundla system was considered to have failed the nation as cabinet and Parliament were uncontrollable to the nation and their constituents. It was strongly suggested that elections in 2013 should result in the election of dignified citizens who do not disappear, from constituency concerns after elections. Contributors also felt the parliamentary term should be reduced or there should be the maximum four years of representation in each constituency.

Contributors raised concerns on how the King’s supporters and advisors are ill-advised hypocrisy; their understanding of matters and challenges. There were calls for the realising of this government as it was considered to have failed to protect the economy of the country in accordance to the constitution.

Tinkhundla Decentralisation process was perceived as too slow thus negatively impacting on service delivery at the local level. It was suggested that Tinkhundla become local authorities to fast track service delivery and development, as they are currently entangled in greed and corruption, and hence becoming less effective.

The ineffectiveness of the Anti-Corruption unit was also highlighted as unjust as corruption and governance.

Progressive were challenged by contributors to come forward and present their manifestos publicly and issues openly at the Sibaya. The response to this call resulted in the process on how it time to consider the party system, where the King will be a constitutional monarch similar to Longden in England.

This was opposed by some conservative proponents in the nation building process; this opposition resulted in more members of the process exercising their call for multi-party elections in 2013.

On the elections 2013 a call for an interim government to declare the elections, to enable multi-party forces to discuss the national interest. Parliament debate for fine-tuning the Tinkhundla system. Contributors were clear on how Parliament requires more input and the current debates are linear and focused on protecting the status quo. They reminded the nation that Tinkhundla was an experiment, and its time for multi-party to be our governance experiment.

CONCLUSION

The national teacher’s strike and the return to school of learners was evident as Sibaya even took the responsibility to “Kwe mbula Ingubo” to pressure interest behalf of the teachers to His Majesty, as teachers respect their culture. It was also suggested that an independent investigation into the teachers’ strikes be undertaken and a report to His Majesty, independent from government.

The issue of women empowerment and involvement in the nation’s development was also highlighted, including the establishment of a ministry of women affairs. On scholarship payments I was personally guilty; as I served on the King Sobhuza II Legacy, unsupported by any government institution.

The contributors felt due to the current greed and corruption prevalence rate; the King must not be overruled. The government needed to set an independent fund operated through a designated non-government bank for the public good.

The international charters were rectified at the Sibaya 2012; contributors were adamant of their support to the King, vehemently opposed to Circular No.1 and most significantly expressed their lack of confidence in the current executive and legislative arm of government. There were numerous contributors who requested a form of Christianity and Christian principles to prevail in our leadership and the entire nation.