

# **ANCESTRAL VOICES: SPIRIT IS ETERNAL**

Copyright © Dalian K Y Adofu 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the author.

Nor can it be circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and with a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

Permission for reproduction is granted for personal and educational use only. Commercial copying, hiring, lending is prohibited. Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication will be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

## **ANCESTRAL VOICES PRODUCTS**

### ***Upcoming releases:***

Ancestral Voices: Spirit Is Eternal (Book)

~ October 2016 ~

[www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/book](http://www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/book)

Ancestral Voices: Spirit Is Eternal (Film)

~ Summer 2017 ~

[www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/av2](http://www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/av2)

### ***Available to Order:***

Ancestral Voices: Rituals For Living

~ October 2015 ~

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/ritualsforliving>

Ancestral Voices: Esoteric African Knowledge

~ May 2011 ~

[www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/av1](http://www.ancestralvoices.co.uk/av1)

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/34118>

# CHAPTER 1

## *African spiritual universe and cosmology*

Our exploration of African Spiritual Systems must start with an outline of particular concepts that holds true in all African communities to aid the reader attain a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the Cosmology.

It is a necessary starting point as these systems extend beyond what we commonly understand by the word 'religion' and its association solely with matters concerning 'God', worship, dogma, prescribed days for veneration and the like.

African spiritual Philosophies and Cosmologies include much more and have "shaped their cultures, their social life, their political organisations and economic activities."<sup>1</sup> (Mbiti, 1991: 10).

This introductory volume of work will focus primarily on those concepts that will aid the reader in attaining a body of knowledge that will be useful in cultivating a spiritually informed and enriched life experience. Some of the fundamental concepts that inform the philosophies and practices include:

### *1. Nature of Existence*

In the African worldview the nature of existence does not comprise solely of what we can perceive with our visual sense, that is, our eyes. There are two aspects to the created universe; the physical and spiritual.

The spiritual realm is also stratified into various spaces or abodes- those of departed ancestors, spirits (deities) and that of the penultimate source of Creation of all things in existence. These two realms are in constant interchange with each other and what happens in one realm can have an impact on the other, in doing so keeps order and harmony in the cosmos and on earth.

Continental communities such as the Dagara, Akan and Diasporic Vodun adherents in the Caribbean, contend that our spirits journey into this invisible realm during sleep to enact causes whose effects are subsequently manifested in the physical realm. This is the same phenomena most in the New Age movement describe as Astral Travelling and is why dreams are highly regarded across these communities, because they are viewed as containers of useful information to explain events in the physical reality we call life.

### *2. Order and Balance*

Opposing but complimentary forces maintain order and balance as a necessity for harmony between realms of existence. There can be no 'good' without 'bad' and the focus is not to do away with matters considered 'bad' per say, but rather to use as useful contexts for learning, growing and informing future actions.

All 'bad' things come with lessons, as does the 'good', and in overlooking their reasons for being in our lives, the consequent results are disharmony and disorder.

This dichotomy of being is applicable to all things in the African worldview and Divination and Ritual are the tools used to address imbalances and to maintain ideal states of being.

### *3. The interconnectedness of things*

All things in existence have an impact on each other and this interconnectedness and interplay is universal. There is a cause and effect relationship to be found in all experiences as well as acts and thoughts, such what can be willed in the mind can also be borne in the flesh; what is referred to in the mainstream as 'the law of attraction'. This law also happens to be one of 7 of the most ancient of universal laws, identified by the Africans who inhabited the Nile Valley, that is now Modern day Egypt.

By the same token, it is understood that it is the Kinetic and Thought Energy expended in carrying out ritual practices and visualisations that is transformed into the physical realisation of the ends being sought. The energy given out backed by intention is what is returned to the sender.

This notion of interconnectedness is best summed up in the Akan proverb "Obiakofa na okum sono, nam amanson nhina di -It takes a man to kill an elephant, but the universe consumes it."<sup>2</sup> (Danquah, 1968: 189)

Likewise, it is also evident in the Bantu concept of Ubuntu; that each member in a community has a bearing on others within it, and the wellbeing or otherwise of the whole is not separate from that of the individual or their immediate environment.

In Chaos Theory, 'The Butterfly Effect' would only be coined as a term describing the same concept in Western Science in 1961 by Edward Lorenz and espouses the same idea of interconnectivity of events. Such correlations between Empirical Science and African sacred concepts remind us of the need to re-investigate African Spirituality from an unbiased and objective perspective for useful knowledge that can inform contemporary Social Organisation and Education.

### *4. Social & Spiritual Hierarchy*

The structure of social organisation is a reflection of the hierarchical organisation in the spiritual realm. So the king is the symbolic representation of the Creator/'God', the palace officials are the various spirits/deities (of nature, cosmic, universal) that act as the 'intermediaries' who hold various roles of office and officiate matters between the masses and the king.

So in the same way that there is an official responsible for overseeing crop growth, another in charge of the standing army and so on, so are there different deities with various abilities or powers; for healing, agricultural work, fishing and the like.

Such differentiations further explain why it is these deities that commonly have shrines and temples dedicated to them and are usually the subject of prayers and rituals of veneration, rather than a direct appeal to the Creator/'God'.

Such a direct appeal to a senior figure would be considered disrespectful in social circles, thus the same is required in spiritual circles. One must first approach the intermediary to pass the message on, as is the norm in African Social Organisation. It is partly due to this lack of understanding regarding African Etiquette that led to early European missionaries mistakenly claiming that Africans lack a Supreme Being/'God' in their cosmology and rather worship spirits; a misinterpretation that still plagues traditional African Spiritual Systems today.

### 5. *Cyclical Existence*

Nothing in creation is ever lost even when it decays, withers away and is no longer discernible by our visible senses. Instead, it is transmuted into another form or function such that existence continuously replenishes itself.

This is why reincarnation is an accepted fact in African and Diasporic traditions, because a person that has left the physical realm can be reborn as their spirit is ever present in the wider cosmos.

"Africans believe in reincarnation, but the African idea is not based on a written text; it is based on the belief that human beings live in a cycle, that things go around and come around. African reincarnation is based on the religion of ancient Egypt, where the priests said that we shall come back millions and millions of times."<sup>3</sup>

(Asante & Mazama, Vol 1: 2009)

That one is provided with as many opportunities necessary till they attain their divine life purpose for the benefit of self and others also attributes to the African Creator, the ideas of justice, unconditional love and consideration.

A non-judgemental Source solely concerned with the evolution of its manifestations to reach the highest state of being. This is why the notions of sin and hell are absent from the spiritual framework.

### 6. *Spirit of being*

In the African worldview, all things in creation have the quintessential essence (spirit) of the Creator contained within it, whether animate or inanimate, an extension of the aforementioned notion of the 'interconnectedness of things'. This is why we find some rocks or other natural formations deemed worthy of veneration in African communities; because it is a sign of respect for the essence/spirit of the Supreme Being within it. And so communication with the Creator can be virtually through all things.

The human body is thus just a holding vessel for the spirit and consciousness of the Creator. The ultimate aim for our individualised consciousness is to reunite with source and this is achieved by living an exemplary life that affords one the status of an 'ancestor' upon death. This animating essence within the human vessel is known by various names across Africa such as 'Chi' amongst the Igbos of West Africa and 'Mana' amongst the Bantu of East and Central Africa and further identified as the

'Breath of life' given to humans by the Supreme, as found amongst the Nuer of Sudan and the Konso of Ethiopia.

### *African conceptions of the Creator/'God'*

The anthropomorphic conceptions of the Creator/'God' amongst Africans have never been solely confined to the human form. It is not uncommon to have more than one title of reference with varying meanings within the same community of people that each encapsulates an aspect or function of this Divine Source. The many titles of reference given and their meanings reflect the broad approaches utilised by Africans in conceptualising the penultimate source of all things.

For instance, the names for the Creator might mean 'the provider'- indicating the community's understanding that it's the source of all sustenance or 'the all powerful rock', a reference to being a source of strength/support for adherents and so on. The Kikuyu name for the Supreme 'Ngai' means Creator, a reference to function, whereas 'Akongo' means 'the beginner and the unending Almighty and inexplicable' for the Ndembu of Zambia, a reference to the Omnipresence of this Source.

The various titles show quite clearly that Africans sought not to personalise the concept of 'God' into a human being.

"It does not make God in its image but tries to see itself in God's image. So if God is every and all things at once and we the human being, the bumblebee, the butterfly, the grass, the tree, the calaloo, the corn, we are all different expressions of that singular essence having our peculiar experiences which all interdependent on one another for survival."<sup>4</sup>  
(J. Small, 2013)

Mainstream religious attributions to God, such as being Omnipotent (all powerful), Omnipresent (everywhere at every time) and Omniscient (all knowing) are also explicit in the African conceptions.

### *The Creator/'God' as Nature*

'In Africa, nature is everything'. Credo Mutwa encapsulates the importance of nature across all sectors of African societies in this simple statement.

The reference to nature is not just limited to the vegetation and soil, but also animals and the earth itself, including the four elemental sources- air, water, fire and minerals/rocks. This by no means excludes the planetary and universal bodies, many of which also inform particular ritual ceremonies as evident in full moon rituals or the appearance of interstellar objects such as comets or meteorites visible in the earth's atmosphere.

The Omnipresence (ever present) of nature is evident the world over. It is all encompassing and enduring. Even where vegetation is absent or gradually erodes,

it assumes the form of sand (deserts), and even in such environments we find whole ecosystems of life forms still striving.

The Omnipotence (all powerful) of nature is explicit in the destruction wrought from tsunamis, tornadoes, whirlwinds, earthquakes and fires. In these 'natural disasters', we witness an awesome power that even all the technological advancements has yet to surpass or even curtail.

Its incredible power is further gleaned in its ability to also sustain life in some way. Its power to destroy is complimentary to that of its power to rebuild, as is evident with new growth and fertile soil after a bush fire for example- again we see reflected in this the notion of dichotomy/duality as earlier explained.

The Omniscience (all knowing) of nature is witnessed in the cyclical changing of seasons at prescribed times, just as the day becomes night, planets revolving in alignment and their phenomenal effects on earth evident for all to see- whether it's the female menstrual cycle or the tidal effects at sea and other water bodies. There is an innate creative intelligence that spurs on a harmonious dynamic interchange well beyond human comprehension.

Nature also meets many existential needs for humans. It is a source of plentiful and varied food types; plants and animals with different vitamins and nutritional qualities as well as a source of housing materials to meet sheltering needs, medications to help cure various ailments and so on. It is thus not surprising it is conceived of as Divine and worthy of veneration across the continent and its legacy in Diasporic communities that have carried on the traditions.

It also explains why we find different formations within nature being respected as sacred. The Masai refer to Mountain Kilimanjaro as Ngaje Ngai (the house of God) and Matabele mountain in Kuruman, South Africa, is sacred amongst the Zulus and Xhosa. Trees such as the Sycamore of ancient Kemet, Baobab, Iroko and Nyame Dua in West Africa and water bodies such as Lake Bosumtwi in Ghana or Lake Bamblin in Cameroun and so forth.

The earth itself is also a prominent deity/spirit in the African mind and imaged as female, corresponding with the functions of creating life (children) and providing for their needs (feeding and caring etc).

Amongst the Akans, she is revered as Asaase Yaa (Mother Earth), Ani for Igbos and Maa-ndoo which means 'the wife of God', amongst the Mende peoples (Opoku, 1978). She is not just inanimate rocks and soil, but a living, functioning entity that can be communicated with via offerings and specific rituals to sustain a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship.

The erudite Professor Charles Finch posits that is through these observations and attributions gleaned from nature that are then extended unto 'zootypes', that is, animals, giving rise to the archetype of the 'Mother Goddesses'. (Walker, 2011)

*The creator/God as female*

The earliest depictions still on record in Africa to date are of the Creator as a female, and one with child, again pointing to the function of giving birth, that is, coming into being or form. For the ancient Africans of the Nile Valley Ta-Urt, a pregnant hippopotamus becomes a representation of the Great Mother Earth and its ability to sustain life. (Walker, 2011)

The feminine generative power provided the initial seed of thought to identify how Creation came forth. A process of birthing or becoming and therefore was afforded to the female of the species.

In this conception is the utilitarian nature of African Spirituality, such that the creator is less an anthropomorphic rendition of human beings but rather a functional conception, relating to how all things are created.

Professor James Small (2013) provides further evidence of this with reference to the oldest written African document from the Nile Valley- 'The book of the Coming Forth by Day', also known as 'The Egyptian Book of the Dead'. When the visible aspect of the Supreme Being, Ra, comes into being from his hidden and unknowable aspect, Amen, he states that his Creation is of his mother Nun; the primordial waters. Here we have another clear indication again of the Feminine as the Genesis of Creation with yet another reference to the birthing process as the progenitor of all life in existence.

We find the process of birthing in the cosmology of the Dogon as well, and even though their Supreme Creator is referenced as a 'he', Amma. He creates the world through 4 clavicles whose form are in the shape of a millet seed and very much resemble the female reproductive organs.

That they are also four in number is indicative of the 4 primordial elements of nature. So within the Dogon cosmology we find both the notions of the Supreme Being as nature and with feminine attributes intricately interwoven together. Notably, the Supreme Being of the Ijaw of Nigeria, 'Woyengi', is still a Mother Goddess; responsible for the creation of the universe and everything in it.

*As Male and Female pair*

There is more surviving recorded evidence of the Creator as a male and female pair in existence as opposed to singular male God-heads. As previously covered in the genesis story of the ancient Kemetians, the male aspect, Ra, is borne out of the female, Nun. (Small, 2013).

Amongst the Akans it is Nyankopon Kwame (Male) and Asaase Yaa (Female), for the Fon and Ewe peoples Mawu-Lisa embodies the dual nature of the Supreme Being, still retained in its legacy in Haitian Vodun in the Caribbean as the two serpents; Danbala-Wedo and his wife Aida-Wedo.



The conceptualisation of a dual nature to the Creator is recognition of the involvement of both a masculine and feminine principle for creation to come about. Even the designations of the father being in the sky (above) and the mother being the earth (below) alludes to one of the 7 universal principles of Ancient Kemet (Egypt)- 'As above, so below' - the principle of balance.

An allegory for this can be imaged in the rain falling from the sky (sperm) that then fertilises the earth (womb), leading to the consequent sprouting and development of life. It is thus easy to understand how and why the masculine principle (male) is held in African societies to represent the 'unseen' or 'beyond comprehension' aspect to Creation whereas the female is the visible and 'discerned' aspect. It is often held that the 'spirit' of the child is assigned to the father whilst the blood/body to the mother.

It is important to note that these conceptions do not carry with it the semiotic associations of power as found in western ideological frameworks such as, because the male is 'up'; it is more powerful than the female who is 'down'. Instead it is a reference to a complementary and harmonising state of affairs necessary for creation to occur.

"Therefore, the sky and the Earth, respectively, the masculine and the feminine concepts of origin, as well as the metaphor of the two halves of a calabash, are also powerful symbols of creation in the traditional African systems of beliefs and are conceived exactly as any African compound."<sup>5</sup> (Asante & Mazama, vol 2, pg 619)

### *As Spirit Energy & Consciousness*

The Creator is also envisioned as a formless, self-conscious and intelligent entity. It supports the reference to the creative source being Omnipresent- ever present and everywhere, at all times, within all things. As a state of energy, it is beyond form and containment and can transmute into all forms, thus the various forms manifested across this earth. It is held that this Essence, or Spirit, of the Creator, is what is present within all things- both animate and inanimate- and gives form and life.

In African Spiritual philosophy, there are many different expressions of the Creator/God and an unlimited number of the forms it can take, hence why it is common to have Africans paying homage to a range of naturally occurring forms with no mental conflict as to its divine nature. It is also the basis of reverence for spirits/deities/forces of nature, because they are understood to reflect a particular aspect of the Supreme Being. These aspects are referred to as Orishas, Obosum, Nkisi etc across various communities are but microcosms of the all-encompassing macrocosm- the Supreme Being. More will be covered on that in the relevant chapter.

This is one of the reasons why we hardly find shrines dedicated to the Supreme Being in African communities or prescribed days, times and places for prayers and observances. It can happen at anytime and anywhere, as the presence of the divine source is constant. It is also the reason why proselytising is absent in African Spirituality as the understanding is if we are all of 'God', then how can one convert another back to 'God' simply by way of adhering to a set dogma?

The all-pervasive and imminent nature of 'God' from the African worldview is best summed up in the Akan proverb 'If you want to speak to God, tell it to the wind'. It does not mean to say the Supreme is the wind, but rather that it is Omnipresent and unfathomable in form or space. No prescriptions for times or dates for prayers and veneration; the channel for communication is always open.

Therefore, human beings are spirit beings first and foremost, not just the bodies or physical containers housing that animating spark. In the African conception, all in existence are but different manifestations of the Creator.

'The bee is in me, the bird is in me, the fish is in me, I am in the fish. In other words, life is one. It is wrong to separate the different faces of God because as we say in Zulu "God is one" even on the furthest ends of creation. God is one. He or she, she is many things just as the earth is many things, the earth is the tree, the earth is the rock, the earth is water, so is God, so is the human being."<sup>6</sup>  
(Mutwa, 2013)

It is explicitly expressed in the concept of the Chi (life force) in Igbo societies, this Chi is present in all things and is also the essence of the Supreme Deity, Chuwuku. Similarly, Ase, the manifestation principle or life force concept within the Yoruba traditions, expresses the same notion. It is contained within the life blood of humans, animals, plants and rocks alike and as a result, the Ase of Orishas can be invoked into inanimate objects such as stones for initiates of Shango as an example. Likewise the Dogon also of West Africa refer to it as 'Nyama' and is held to be transmittable from generation to generation and is contained within the blood stream. (Dieterlen, 1986)

In Central, East and Southern Africa, amongst the Bantu peoples, it is known as 'Mana'(life force) and is contained in everything. Higher cultivation of it is held to confer material benefits and blessings to one's life.

The Nuer of East Africa describe it as 'the life breath' and it returns to unite with their Creator Kwoth when one passes on.

That this Spirit/Essence of the Supreme is also self-aware (conscious) is evident in African Creation stories where the Source is willed into being through the transmutation of thought/mind energy into physical matter.

In the ancient Kemetian texts (Book of the Coming Forth by Day) briefly mentioned earlier, we find evidence of this in the dialogue concerning Ra where he says of himself after taking on form from his 'hidden self'.

"I create myself out of myself. I cause existence to begin to exist when I begin to exist. When I became conscious of myself, existence begun to exist. I came from my mother Nun."<sup>4</sup> (Small, 2013)

What we are presented with are 2 notions; self-replication and birthing or transmutation into another form, as indicated by the change in 'gender'. Professor Small contends that this discourse is in essence a metaphor describing the process by which 'Solid matter emanates out of liquid matter'; an idea not refuted within the scientific discipline of 'Quantum Physics'.

Dr Kofi Bempah (2013) also states that in the creation story of the Akan, "God created a thing (Adie). Singular, a thing, not things, this is another way of saying that God willed and became. In the becoming mode, he assumed energy. So we have wisdom(God) and energy. Of course, matter is congealed energy so human being is matter and divine spirit. The body is the matter and all created things disintegrates but the divine aspect of man lives on forever, it is immortal."<sup>7</sup>

Likewise for the Dogon, Griaule & Dieterlen (1986) inform us that "Amma created his own twin, that is, the universe itself. Just as the universe is the replica of Amma and contains him, this universe was- and will remain – contained by Amma in the form of signs."<sup>8</sup> (pg86)

"Amma performed the work of creation in several stages. This work consisted of giving volume to that explosive force he had conferred on his own thought, projected outside of himself while he was materializing the world...Amma produced his own creation by "opening (himself) up."<sup>8</sup> (pg 184)

On the use of the mind to manifest creation; "When Amma began (tono) things, he had his thought in his mind. The thought he had written (tono) in his mind. His thought, it is the first figure (tonu) – Amma kize tonoy-go ku bonnu vomo-ne azubu vomo sebe. Azubu vomo ku bonnu vomo-ne tonu, azubu vomo tonu polo voy."<sup>8</sup> (pg 109)

What makes these notions particularly insightful is that we also find the Will and creative use of the Imagination to be crucial elements utilised in ritual practice for manifestation of desired outcomes in prayers or requests to the Ancestors.

The underlying principle is that it is the energy expended in bodily movements and in the mind as visualisations of what one desires, that then undergoes a process of transmutation to become the physical outcome prayed for or requested. An in-depth exploration of this is covered in the chapter on rituals for living.

In much of contemporary popular and literary culture, self-help books such as 'The Secret' and 'Think and Grow rich' amongst others, all espouse the principle of the

'law of visualisation' for achieving one's goals and aims. It is recommended by athletes, psychologists and even in branches of scientific endeavour such as Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

It is presented almost as a newly fangled concept within human activity, not an ancient African principle of Manifestation and Creation, thus removing an important contribution to World History and Civilisation and only furthers ignorance of what African Sacred Sciences really encapsulate.

### *As Ancestor*

The understanding that the Creator's essence is imminent within all things is a contributing factor to the conception that the Supreme Being/'God', is also the very first ancestor or progenitor of communities.

"African cosmological and religious interpretations of the world show commonalities that conceive the spirits and even the first creator as sharing the same life experiences, needs, and attributes as those of the average human being" (MK Asante, pg 619, 2009).

The Dogon of West Africa hold this to be true of Amma; "Having thought and then designed the world he wished to create, Amma tried as an experiment to superpose a bit of every kind of substance that formed a "flesh" originating from his own person, a "dross" to which he added his saliva." (Griaule & Dietressen, pg 100).

The Shona of Zimbabwe similarly conceive that the 'Mwari Triad- the Father, Mother and Son trinity in their cosmology, to be related to their legendary king Soro-Re-Zhou.' (MK Asante, 2009).

For the Bakongo of Central Africa, one of the names for the Creator- Nzambi- is also interchangeable with that referring to human beings, nzambi.

The Akan have the saying 'God is the first Ancestor' and Credo Mutwa confirms that the one of the names for the Creator amongst the Zulus, Nkulunkulu, means 'Great Ancestor'.

These notions shed further light on why Ancestor Veneration is so important in African societies, because it goes merely beyond just honouring the memory of a direct relative or seeking their assistance, it is ultimately an act of reverence to the Supreme Creator.

It is therefore not surprising that transitioned ancestors can be deified, particularly those who lived exemplary lives of benefit to the wider community and set worthy examples for emulation. Their subsequent deification is a reflection of how 'God-like' they had lived their life and positively impacted others.

"However, an ordinary person could become a part of the god head if the society deified him or her if their deeds were great enough.

Shango is now regarded as a Yoruba deity but was originally a Yoruba king whose contribution to metallurgy ultimately led to his deification. In the Ancient Nile Valley the same thing happened to Asar or Ausar. The Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus, portrayed him as a ruler in Ancient Sudan. At a later date he was deified and became the deity of resurrection in the Nile Valley. Greek sources call him by the better known name of Osiris.”<sup>9</sup> (R Walker, pg 14)

In the same Nile Valley we also find this to be true for Imhotep, the world’s first recorded multi-genius; builder of the Sakara pyramid and renowned physician. (J Jackson). Moving further south of the Sahara and in recent memory, the same was done for Okomfo Anokye of the Akan confederation, who summoned down the gold stool that is held to contain the spirit of Power and Unity of the Asante nation.

### *Summary*

What becomes immediately apparent in exploring the numerous African conceptualisations of a Supreme Creator is that it’s primarily a philosophical pursuit for meaning, order and social cohesion as they are underpinned by a functional and utilitarian focus. At its core is the understanding that the Creator is all things at all times and is not separate from that created, thus its vastness cannot be contained in a single theory or idea.

“Using the African system of understanding, the nature of being one cannot conclude that there is only one divinity. Neither can one conclude that there are many creator deities. At best, one must accept that the nature of the divinity is one, but the attributes of the one are found in the numerous manifestations as the many.” (Asante & Mazama, 2009)

The conceptions afford an experiential discovery of self, others, community and the environment to create a harmonious ecology of balance, sustainability and continuity. They bestow upon the community, frameworks for living that inspires ideals and values of unity, inclusivity and communality, where all things are valued and respected as important and necessary constituents of the whole.

“Africans may use all the materials that their environment puts at their disposal in order to express their ideas about God. For them everything that surrounds them exhibits a sort of transparency that allows them to communicate directly with heaven. Things and beings are not obstacles to the knowledge of God; rather they constitute signifiers and indices which reveal the divine being”<sup>10</sup> (Zahan , pg5)

*Notes*

1. Mbiti, J. (1991), Introduction to African Religion; Second Edition. England: pg 10.
2. Danquah, J.B (1968), The Akan Doctrine of God; Second Edition. England: pg 189.
3. Asante, M.K & Mazama, A (2009), Encyclopedia of African Religion Vol 1. United States of America:
4. Small, J (2013), Video interview for Ancestral Voices 2 film, New York.
5. Asante, M.K & Mazama, A (2009), Encyclopedia of African Religion Vol 2. United States of America: pp 619.
6. Mutwa, C. (2013), Video Interview for Ancestral Voices 2 film, South Africa.
7. Bempah, K (2013), Video Interview for Ancestral Voices 2 film, London.
8. Griaule, M, & Dieterlen, G. (1986), The Pale Fox, Paris: pp 86, 100, 109, 184.
9. Walker, R. (2011), Blacks and Religion: Volume One. England: pg 14.
10. Zahan, D. in Olupona, J. (2011) African Spirituality: Forms, Meanings & Expressions. United States of America.

*References*

- Asare Opoku, K. (1978), West African Traditional Religion. Nigeria: FEP International Private Limited.
- Bempah, K. (2010), Akan Traditional Religion; The Truth and the Myths. England.
- Fu-Kiau, K. (1980), African Cosmology of the Bantu-Kongo. Canada.
- Jahn, J. (1958), Muntu: African Culture and the Western World. West Germany.
- MacGaffey, W. (1986), Religion and Society in Central Africa: The BaKongo of Lower Zaire. United States of America.
- Morodenibig, N. (2011), Philosophy Podium: A Dogon Perspective- Second Edition, Illinois.
- Temples, P. (1945), Bantu Philosophy. United States of America.