

Culture, Tourism and the Economy

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

The organisers of this come together, have asked me to come and demonstrate to all of you how, Culture can impact the state of our country in terms of its productions and circulation of those products as commodities to result in resources and capacity for our country. I do not know how you can do that. We must not be a nation which bestows Izangoma, with powers they do not have and will never ever have, nor should Izangoma belittle their knowledge through lies, stating that they can bestow people with izikhundla, or make them rich. The simple relationship, between iZangoma and the people and the people and the Izangoma, is for both to know, as the Creator wishes, who they are. Face to face with an Isangoma, you have given yourself an opportunity to know who you are, and you have also given that Sangoma the opportunity to know who they are. My approach, and I must try to be as simple as possible, because it is in simplicity that that which awes us, is articulated, and therefore also, it is when our belief is engaged, or our curiosity inspired, or when we feel informed, or further made to realise that there exist in life, more than what meets the eye, that we will then continuously look over our shoulder-wishing that we must never forget what we have experienced.

Culture: what is culture?

Culture is simultaneously the fruit and the determinant of a people's history by the positive or negative influences it exerts on the evolution of the relationship between (human beings) and their environment and among (human beings) within their society as well as among different societies.

Amilcar Cabral

The Economy:

What is the Economy?

The standing state of a country based on the production of the quality of its commodities and the contribution of those commodities to the viability and capacity of that country to manage itself and its finances, and to give quality of life to its citizens, who also deserve to live in an environment which sustains them, and other forms of life.

Tourism:

What is tourism?

Tourism is the business of ensuring demand of the "fruits" and "history" of a people. The fruits can be natural or social, they can be tangible or intangible. The objective of this is to experience, learn, enjoy, entertain, know and use what was experienced, so as to know more about oneself and others, and, to use that experience.

Do note that, as I go along, I will be most creative and I will abandon the conventional and instead seek to incubate so that we can discover the "fruit" and be creative with the "History" made by the

people of this country. If we reach that stage, then together we must commit that we will innovate, guided by our understanding of culture, tourism and the economy, and that only after that will we then ask, what do other countries do in this regard? Let us imagine at this stage that there is no other country on earth but ours, with its history, which may be “negative” or “positive” and its “fruits”, which may be tasty or bitter. I must make a claim upfront, that I did not come here to lecture. I came here so that together, when we leave this place we have arrived at a place where we have discovered who we are, and therefore also have come to know what our country is. In order for us to do that, one of the other factors which we need to use as our point of reference is that our country is diverse in many respects: history, culture, race, languages, beliefs, religion, spirituality, healing systems etc. The other, reference point must be our constitution which, in its preamble, creates a whole out of the diversity, while also, shoring up the parts of the whole: it states, in the preamble that:

“We, the people of South Africa,

Recognise the injustices of our past;

Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;

Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and

Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity...”

Once when I asked Credo Mutwa, the Sanusi of our country, what was South Africa called before the settlers came to this land? His answer was that this part of the continent, was called Lefatse la Barwa le Bakone. (The country of the people of the South and of the North). During the construction of the premier heritage site of our country, The Freedom Park, this subject came up very sharply, when the issue of the beginning of our country was discussed under the title: Precolonial Conflicts, when it was outlined that the South African Nation has been tempered by precolonial, genocide, slavery, resistance, liberation, South African, the first and second world wars-eight conflicts in all. It is still an outstanding record of history that the archives of both the Oral History Association of South Africa (OHASA) and the South African Democratic Education Trust (Sadet) must be perused and studied with the objective to complete the jigsaw puzzle of this country, as determined by and a “determinant” of history of the indigenous people, here. Having referred to the indigenous people of this country, let me refer also to Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) which is the “fruit” cultivated by the indigenous people of the then country called, our ancestors, “Lefatse la Barwa le Bakone”, until at their interaction with the then new comers, the European settlers. What is IKS?

IKS is the processes of gathering knowledge, through interacting with nature and the environment, and among each other, by the indigenous people of Lefatse la Barwa le Bakone, and accumulating and organising that knowledge with the objective to create quality of human and other forms of life within a liveable environment.(iARi)

IKS has 5 categories namely:

Social issues: culture, history, arts, heritage, spirituality, religion, languages, proverbs, idioms ,philosophy etc

Institutions: Leloko(extendd family),bogosi,(“Chieftainship”) bogwera,(initiation) bongaka,(indigenous healing) kereke,(church) etc

Technology: mekgwa ya temo methods of farming),ya dintwa methods of warfare), dikago,(methods of architecture

Biodiversity: kitso le botsalano ka: batho,(methods and relations through humanness, plants and animals and plants) diphologolo,(methods of knowing and relations about and with animals, plants and people) dijalo(methods and knowledge about plants, animals and people) le tlogo (knowledge about and with plants, animals and people) etc. etc.

Liberatory processes: mekgwa, diketso, kitso ka golwela kgololetsego le lefatse la Barwa le Bakone.(body of thought regarding resistance against invasion by settlers and the liberation of the country of a people of the North and the South and South Africa)

Let me tell a story, and I hope, it is just a story or just a joke about us. A government delegation went to a foreign country, on a state visit. All went well until when it was time to exchange gifts. The people from the foreign country we visited brought their gifts and handed them over, we also reciprocated, we gave our hosts presents. When they unwrapped their gifts from us, they found that the gifts were made in their country, when we unwrapped our gifts we found that the gifts were made in their country. A total humiliation for our delegation and for our country!

The key lesson of this, which I hope has nothing to do with reality but is a joke and an admonishment, is that, it is extremely important for us to answer the question: what is unique about South Africa, our country? How can we turn that uniqueness, to become shining quality products? Of what value is that uniqueness and that quality of those products? How can we share that which is unique and is of quality, with other peoples of the world? Why must we share it; which part of those products and with whom in the world must we share it? Is that which is unique, natural or social?

The indigenous Africans of South Africa, bestow a most important characteristic within the diversity of our Country. Their presence has entrenched the Afroness of the African continent, in the diversity of South Africa. They have bestowed an African discourse to the diversity of South Africa, making the South African diversity unique, to be anchored on a South African African discourse. That discourse resides in the languages, idioms, proverbs, history, in short, in the social categories of IKS: as also it resides in the IKS institutions, technology, biodiversity and liberatory processes and in the total human experience of "lefatse la Barwa le Bakone". There can be no South African discourse without the emancipation of the African voice. There can be no South African diversity, without the emancipated African discourse. The biggest challenge therefore, after 1994, after the implementation of the South African constitution, is, where is this emancipated indigenous voice of South Africa which must emancipate all other South African voices,? Where is the reconstruction and development of the south of this country? It is only when that has happened that South Africa will express its diversity, and therefore offer human kind a unique diversity. What are the "fruits" which were borne by the history of the indigenous people "positive" or "negative"? How did those fruits contribute to the determination of the history of South Africa? What is it which they reflect currently, in the heritage landscape of our country? How has that landscape, been organised, made accessible, how is it maintained, conserved, preserved-in other words, how has the nation through the Government, through itself and through the private sector invested in that landscape which must consist of tangible and intangible heritage? Also, how has what is the South African tangible and intangible heritage been exposed to human consciousness, to enrich the human experience?

Let us tackle one of the difficult heritage institutions of this country: Bongaka. This is an IKS institution. It was founded on the basis of the hunters and gatherers' socio economic foundation, by the indigenous people living in Lefatse la Barwa le Bakone. While it emerged out of experiments which were either "positive or negative influences in their "exert(ion)... on the relationship between the "(indigenous people)..." and their environment and among their" (communities and other communities of indigenous people) it has carried into and it exists in the 21st century, and is

functional to 86% of the South African nation. In current times, it is most stigmatised. It is, from some circles of our population dubbed most backward, pagan and primitive, yet, it plays a role in the health sector of the population, together with the allopathic medicine, as also, it overlaps, together with other institutions like the church into either religion or spirituality. Besides its belief system, it has handed over a scientific legacy of knowledge about the flora and fauna of our country, and its relation to both "human and other forms of life." The institution, based on belief, has formulated and created a consciousness among Africans about the Creator and Ancestors; as with any other culture, it has rituals and ceremonies, symbols and artefacts, systems and methods and sub-institutions within it.

Let me dispose of this subject, by going back to how I began this presentation. I want to leave this matter for your consideration. I said at the beginning of the presentation. We must not be a nation which bestows Izangoma, with powers they do not have and will never ever have, nor should Izangoma belittle their knowledge through lies, stating that they can bestow people with izikhundla, or make them rich. The simple relationship, between iZangoma and the people and the people and the Izangoma, is for both to know, as the Creator wishes, who they are. Face to face with an Isangoma, you have given yourself an opportunity to know who you are, and you have also given that Sangoma the opportunity for him or her to know who they are. My approach, and I must try to be as simple as possible, because it is in simplicity that that which awes us, is articulated, and therefore also, it is when our belief is engaged, or our curiosity inspired, or when we feel informed, or further made to realise that there exist in life, more than what meets the eye, that we will then continuously look over our shoulder-wishing that we must never forget what we have experienced. Ubunyanga and Ubungoma are institutions founded by Africans, long before any settler settled in South Africa.

As an institution, like many other institutions of IKS, Bongaka has persisted and has survived some of the most violent, ruthless and brutal attacks against it. That is because this institution, has a large cliental as stated above, which has forever shored it up; it is also because it must, even as it has such a terrible stigma, be giving something to its cliental and therefore it shares that cliental with the clinics, both public and private hospitals and with the surgeries of private practising medical doctors. This puts the national health at risk if the healers on both sides, do not talk to each other about the health of their clients, but also about national health. What would happen if these institutions not only spoke to each other, but also, taught about each other at junior levels, but also created platforms for their dialogues and exchanges of data and experiences?

Besides spirituality, religion, culture, history residing in this institution, there is science and technology which are inherent to it. Science, Technology and Culture, as knowledge carriers, and their being able to develop people, have immense potential to create development. But also, Science and Technology, create Culture and culture is the context from within which science and technology thrive. What would happen, if the Health, Science and Technology, Tourism, Trade and Industry and Education, including Small and Medium Enterprises Departments, were to meet with the leaders of this institution to pose a question but also to brainstorm? The question must be: what is the role of this institution and can it be cleansed to become an institution of the 21st century? The brainstorm, whose objective must be: how can this institution "contribute to quality of life and to a liveable environment to all forms of life" must have precisely that as its objective: sustainability and quality of our country and its people.

The iARi definition of IKS, has evolved out of many years of discussions, research, debates and experiments about IKS in South Africa. IKS should have by now, become part and parcel of the basic education Department curriculum; it is already an issue at various universities in our country, where

the conveyor belt of these institutions deliver students to the nation with either, junior, Masters and or with doctorate degrees. However, the question which still stands and needs answers is: are the institutions of higher learning in our country structured and positioned such that they can contribute to an African discourse in our country? What is an African discourse?

A debate, among peers, a discussion among peers, a communication among peers, within the context of institutions of higher learning, about the past, the present and the future of our continent, from different perspectives of the globe and through different disciplines, within the context of the African Renaissance.

The issue of institutions of higher learning is very relevant to the issue at hand. With institutions of higher learning behind them, those who were scholars in them, become full citizens of our country and intellectuals who must challenge all boundaries and barriers, and blaze new paths towards quality of life and a liveable environment for all forms of life. On the other hand, in as much the state has to guarantee the freedom of institutions of higher learning, the institutions of higher learning must also have an obligation to the country: they must bestow quality intellectual acumen and ethical intellectuality of our citizens. These principles imply that there are a variety of tiers of institutions, which must participate in ensuring that the wheels of state do not only run, but that they also contribute to the quality, functionality, incubation, innovation, facilitation and distillation of a wealth of ideas, research and development, and a variety of experiments with bounds of possibilities for the transformation of the current discourse in our country. We are neither Americans nor Europeans, we are Africans. All South Africans, as the preamble of our constitution categorically implies, are Africans in diversity.

We must, as activists in the area of tourism, be aware that this issue of diversity raises bounds of opportunities, difficult as it is, if handled with principle and if it is nurtured with care to meet the objective not only of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic nation, but a uniqueness which can spin human history and culture around, in similar manner as did Kempton Park and Codesa , in the manner in which the South African constitution has pointed out the possibilities and potential to human kind, for skilful, patient processes, informed by Botho, an IKS philosophy and institution, which became a “determinant of a people’s history by the “positive” influence it exerted on the evolution of relationships between (South Africans) who lived within an apartheid environment and within their society and among different societies., among them and how these unique” fruits” of history, have been made to dangle, stimulate a willingness which must bloom to commitment, for peace and freedom in our country, on the continent and in the globe?

What should have happened here, in our country, so that we rigorously put the issue of culture of negotiation on the agenda of our nation, to buttress the one other “fruit” of Codesa: Reconciliation, to permeate communities, societies and the nation? How could this have been done such that it is owned by all the citizens and pursued with dignity and integrity? Is there a possibility for a partnership to be negotiated, through the institutions of higher learning, through Government Departments, through the Private sector, through the Religious bodies, through Bongaka and through Allopathic institutions, for these two institutions: Bongaka and Allopathic institution? If we recall that these institutions are the guardians and custodians of national health in our country, may I dare and say, perhaps that process of negotiation, makes narrow the negotiation for the reconciliation of white people and black people! However it would be wise to say the negotiations for social cohesion must, while not neglecting parts of the whole, be broadened to include negotiations for what iARi calls Leloko,(the broad family) which anthropologists call extended family and the diversity of other family structures, as foundations of this diverse nation of South Africans.

The doors of the comprehensive diversity of our country, must be opened! That can only happen if the motive force which keeps the wheels of our country spinning-the Government, the People and the private sector-in partnership, and through bench marking our ideas globally, ensure that the standing state of our country, based on the organised means of production for the quality of its commodities and the contribution of those commodities to the viability, capacity and quality of our country to manage itself and its finances spin with precision- and I must add, to ensure quality of all forms of life and to create and sustain a liveable environment.

In other words, a consciousness is necessary within the engine of tourism and among its members, which is uncompromising in seeking partnerships, creating a culture for relationships within the nation and among nations through those things which are most unique, and are of utter quality for our country. While I am aware of the potential of the tourism industry to contribute to the economy of our country, I think that creativity must not be for its sake nor must it be dictated to by commercialisation; but creativity must be based on all the unique expressions of, within and about the nation's qualities, and a commitment to the deep search for creativity about the uniqueness and character of the diversity of this beautiful South African African nation. The quality and uniqueness of the South African cultural expressions and heritage must sparkle like diamonds, it is then only, that as they express this uniqueness and quality, they can attract the eyes, the ears, the taste, the feelings and smell of nations-meaning, it is only then that the consciousness of the human race can be raised and attracted to this Southern tip of our continent.

The negotiations for a democratic South Africa, the constituting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the emergence of the non- racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa, all, did attract, did inspire and did raise a consciousness about the bounds of possibilities for the human race, to create a better world. The profile and the position of our country were transformed for the best. It is the ethics, honesty and values, the culture and the history expressed by these processes, which touched the hearts and the minds of humanity, and whispered to their inner being saying- "...look..."! The tourism industry in our Country was then, only then, primed.

We must interpret what I have said so far, as some of the beginning, which is consciously nurtured, created and crafted, for the emergence of the renaissance processes of Africans and Africa within the global context of the 21st century.

What is the African Renaissance?

It is the entrenchment of the African discourse; it is the furtherance of progressive Pan Africanism within the global context; it is the regeneration, the reawakening, the rebirth, the recreation, reclamation and nurturing of Africans and Africa, to take its and their position and responsibilities in the world, in partnership with other countries. "It is simultaneously the fruit and a determinant of a people's history by the positive...influences it exerts on relationship between "... (Africans) ..." within their" communities, societies and nations, "as well as among different..." communities, societies and countries in the world. As defined here, the African Renaissance processes, will negate the mononess of the globe, and contribute to a most dynamic Global environment, which is diverse in character, which affirms and confirms the human spirit to be the unbreakable particle of creation in the universe, which most diverse in its possibilities.

Therefore given the subject at hand, which I understand to consist of processes, programs and projects, it is my view that, in whatever our country plans in this regard, it must do so as a country, and within the context of the Continent and of the world. The content of the processes to engage the task before us must be informed by that strategy; I have been suggesting, in the unfolding of this

presentation, that the key content of these processes, must emerge from the partnerships which will have shifted the discourse of our country from where it is now, to where it shimmers and sparkles to being a focused African one; that will emanate from an understanding of culture, and the history of our country, the continent and the world; it will also emanate from engaging with the objective reality of the poor of our country, through programs which shift them into full participants in their social and economic upliftment, based on their knowledge, to a large extent, the IKS, so that they too can enter the centre of activities which shape the future of our country.

Conclusion and recommendations:

1. Amilcar Cabral has left a legacy for our being able to innovate what culture must mean for our continent.
2. It means fruits of history
3. It means determinant of history
4. It can be positive or negative in its influence on relations
5. It impacts on people and societies as they interact with nature and their environment
6. Culture enables human beings to effect and affect the breadth of life and the universe

The Department of Tourism must therefore be guided by the understanding of Culture. The Department must interact with other Departments, NGOs, Institutions of Higher Learning, the private sector, and relevant and appropriate Tourism sectors internationally, to set the dynamic pace of and tourism.

The deeper meaning to the cultural definition by Cabral must be that a people's culture-in our case, the emancipation of the African Voice within the context of the national diversity must be engaged with the objective to produce a quality of cultural expressions emanating from the "fruits" and a "Culture" which express the true history of the country- negative or positive. We must then ask the question: how do we become creative with these to express, to determine, to resolve, to come to a deeper understanding, of the contradictions within this, our nation, and to express their dialectics.

Our key National agenda: to be able and to transform and redress our "negatives" to "positives" and nurture the skills to express these in the best possible ways as issues of human experience.

The Department must engage and specialise on issues of IKS with the view to protect the knowledge, to promote it, to incubate and innovate it.

The Department must have a centre within it, which engages with the private sector and NGOs to prime the expression, to nurture, to promote and to use the fruits thereof, of the Renaissance of our country and the continent, as a gift from this part of the globe to the world

Create a 2 way system of communication, on issues of tourism and creativity for tourism with and about the nation and with and about the continent and with and about the world.

The most important contribution of the Department to South Africa must be, in action, to nurture the growth and development of national creativity, through its promotion, protection and innovation, with the objective to boost and buttress, national cohesion based on the national diversity.

Mongane Wally Serote