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Helgesson, Alf

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A study of the religious and cultural impact of Protestant Christianity in the Tsonga of Southern Mozambique

by Alf Helgesson

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts of the University of Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

January 1971.

I declare that the dissertation herewith submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Witwatersrand is entirely my own work and has not previously been submitted for a degree in any other university.

Signed: _____

(Miss Nelly Jacobson)

Johannesburg, January 25, 1974.

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The idea to the present dissertation was born in discussions with Professor John Stanley, as I was beginning to look at the subject "Ewhen traditional religion". I am indebted to Professor Stanley for inspiration and criticism, particularly during the field-work for this study.

Since Professor Stanley's departure for overseas, Dr. A.A.Trotter, Acting Head of the Department of Social Anthropology, has taken over the guidance of this dissertation. Under his leadership, I have been made particularly aware of the dangers of "missionary bias" in a work of this kind, as he helped to sharpen the issues and to cut away weak development material. I thank Dr. Trotter for his patience and keen criticism.

I also want to express my gratitude to all my Ewhen informants, without whom I would have been left with my own prejudices. Some of my missionary colleagues have also been helpful through their keen interest.

All typing of stencils, for which I am truly thankful, has been done by my friends, Miss Gisela Kandiaris and Mrs. Martha Rudolph.

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First and last, I want to thank my wife, who has continuously encouraged me to carry on with both research and writing. Without her loving patience and inspiration, I would have been completely impossible to fulfil this task.

I give thanks to God for health and strength during the years of this study. It is my hope that also this work will serve the furtherance of God's kingdom.

C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTION 1

Forms of field-work v
Personal statement of purpose viii
Abstract ix
Key xi

1. THE TSWA AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT 1

2. THE SOCIAL WORLD OF THE TSWA 5

The political system 8
The importance of the lineage 13
Marriage and family 16
The web of inter-personal ties 22
Some aspects of social life in mine compounds 26

3. TRADITIONAL TSWA BELIEFS 30

The Power of the Sky (Tilo) 32
A richly varied world of spirits 36
Ancestral spirits (tinguluve) 37
Foreign, possessive and sickness-bringing spirits (mandiki) 42
Spirits-of-revenge (mipfhukwa) 48
Vuloyi - the craft of witches 53

4. INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY 58

The historical picture 58
How Christianity was presented 63
Using the Tshwa language 64
Teaching 65
Christian villager (vitalala) 67
Hygiene teaching 68
The Bible 69
The doctrine of sanctification 72
Preaching, sacraments and place of worship 73
To conclude 77

5. WHY DID THEY BECOME CHRISTIANS? 79

Reasons for wanting to become Christians 81

1. "Wanted to read and write" 82
2. "Prompted by a dream" 83
3. "Attracted by peace and fellowship (kurula ni wunlengeli)" 85
A. Kurula ('peace') 85
B. Wunlengeli ('fellowship') 87
4. "Prompted by parents" 97
5. "Attracted by Christian singing" 98
6. "Prompted by a certain Bible verse" 99
7. "Was helped at hospital" 100
8. "Attracted by hygiene" 101

6. THE QUEST FOR LIFE 104

The wutoni concept 104
'Sufficient life' sought 106
Tshwa Christian search for life 109

7. WORSHIP, SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENTS 115

Traditional worship 115
Unity of traditional worship and sacrifice 116
Rites of life crises 117
Memorial rites 119
Rites of the soil 122
Observations regarding Tshwa traditional worship 127

Christian worship 131
Regularity 131
Liturgical order 132
Singing and processing 133
Dedication 135
Prayer in public worship 136
Role of prayer outside of public worship 138
Special occasions of worship 140
Christian memorial services (tiniha) 141
Christian agricultural rites 143
Sacraments 144
'Sacrifice' in Christian context 153
Observations on Tshwa Christian worship as compared to traditional 156

8. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH 162

Introductory survey 162

Traditional conception of illness 165
What is the nature of sickness? 165

Why does sickness come? 167
By whom has the sickness been sent? 171
Observations concerning traditional concepts of illness 174

The role of diviners and curers 177
The n'anga 177
Herbalists 179

Traditional cures 179
Prophylactic measures 180
Restoration of broken relationships with spirits 181
Confession 182
Dealing with witchcraft 187
Purification rites 188
Medicines 189

Changes wrought through Christian and other outside influences 190
Hospitals and hygiene 190
Present attitudes to sickness 191
Spiritual significance still vital 194
Christian attitude to cures 199
Analysis of the question "Hospitals or n'anga"? 202

Conclusions 207

9. LAW, SIN AND SALVATION 209

Good and evil 210
Good produces 'life' 210
Good is normal 212
Evil influences from the outside ("externalization") 213
Some symbols for 'good' and 'evil' 214
Christian ethics introduces conflict 216
Externalization in Christian context 218

Law and legalism 219
The nature of law 219
The Law of Christ 221
Legalistic outlook analyzed 222

Sin, punishment and restitution 224
Sin against whom? 225
Old sins and new 229
Sins have consequences 231
Reconciliation urgently needed 234

Social or religious salvation? 239

10. DEATH AND LIFE ETERNAL 242

The nature of death 243
The burial 244
Removing the death contamination 247
A Christian funeral 249
Christians and death 250
Christian influence on non-Christian attitudes 255
Ancestral spirits and Christian Faith 257
What has 'Eternal life' in store? 260
Heaven and the tinguluve 264
Fear of hell is a weak factor 265
Eschatology in a cyclical context 267

11. TOWARDS SOME CONCLUSIONS: ADDITION OR DISPLACEMENT? 269

BIBLIOGRAPHY 280

INTRODUCTION

Christianity, introduced into Africa simultaneously with white civilisation, came with the pronounced purpose of "lifting the African out of the darkness of heathenism". At that time - approximately 100 years ago - Africans were assumed to have no culture of their own. Undoubtedly, many non-Africans still cling to this belief. There were even doubts as to whether Africans had any religion at all, beyond purely magical superstitions. Christianity, therefore, came to replace heathenism, or, maybe even to fill a cultural and religious vacuum.

During a century of mission activity in Africa, Christian Churches have been organized all over the continent, and in many instances they are now entirely under African leadership. Nevertheless, it seems as though 'heathenism' is still a strong force, as witchcraft beliefs are said to be on the increase, and ancestral spirits are being approached also by Christians.(1) It was, perhaps naively, believed in Church circles that customs and beliefs which had been consciously repudiated by a person would no longer play any important part in his thinking. After the acceptance of the Christian teaching that, e.g. ancestors are not to be approached by prayer and sacrifice, it was surmised that the Christian would no longer pay any attention to his dead forebears. In this connection, it is important to listen to Malinowski's statement:

> "Every nominal Christian child learns a great deal about the influence which the ancestral ghosts exercise and the cult by which they can be propitiated. Under the stress of emotional crisis, the indigenous belief becomes stronger than the alien creed". (2)

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(1) Cf. H.G. Williamson, Akan Religion and Christian Faith, pp. 145 and 167

(2) B. Malinowski, in Methods of Study of Culture Contact in Africa, p. xxix

During the last decade, many important studies were made into the field of contact between African culture and the Christian faith, both from anthropological, sociological and political angles. Investigations made by, for instance, Vilakazi among the Zulus, and Mayer among the Xhosa people of South Africa,[3] clearly show the great impact Christianity has made upon respective peoples, but demonstrate also the evident discrepancy between professed beliefs and factual standards. Mayer's term detailed the dichotomy between 'tribal people', exemplified by the 'red' Xhosa, and the Christians, called 'School people', frequently indicating that the 'tribal' people are at an treason against their own culture to have any dealings with the Christian Church.

Idowu, and others, attempt to show that such 'rituals, At present betwixt an Africa, emerge from the Christian Faith.[4] Margaret Field, also her insight into anthropology and psychiatry, reveals the growing influence of traditional religion, in the case of the failure of the Christian Church.[5] From an African theological viewpoint, Abasua divines Christ for the Church in Africa, if it does not immediately change its attitude towards the inheritance of African culture,[6] and Aziti speaks with conviction of the bankruptcy of 'Mission Christianity'.[7] Against such a background, Barrett's projection of an avalanche-like spread and growth of the Christian Church in Africa until the end of this century appear both unrealistic and - frightening.[8]

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(3) A. Vilakazi: Zulu Transformations ; P. Mayer, Townsmen or Tribesmen

(4) E. Bolaji Idowu, Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans

(5) M.J. Field, Search for Security , op. cit. pp.113, 118

(6) E.A. Adegbola, 'The Christian Church and African Heritage', in E. Bolaji Idowu, Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans.

(7) J. Aziti, African Religion and Philosophy , p.233

The present study is an attempt to go beyond 'official' Christianity, trying to dig below outer appearances and pious attitudes, possibly to find some of the fundamental causes of conflict which seems to be inevitable as Christianity meets African [illegible], in other words, to discover whether or not Christianity, as it is now being presented, meets the deeper needs of the African.

It might be utterly presumptuous to apply this small investigation to 'the African', as it deals only with a small elite of Africa's population, if it were not for the fact that the problems of the Church seem to be more alike all over the continent. However, knowing the limitations of my research, I do not pretend to do more than indicate a few facets as found among the Tsonga people of Mozambique, as practical points of departure for a discussion which I feel is already much overdue.

I have, therefore, often had to make this investigation a cultural, and to some extent a conceptual, one, trying more to find out what people feel and believe than what they actually do when going to church. Several structural aspects of culture and religion have been left out, although a certain structural framework is necessary, in order to understand thoughts and beliefs.

The main thrust of this study is a continuous comparison between traditional Tsonga beliefs and attitudes with those found within the Tsonga Christian community, with the object of establishing the character of and reasons behind misunderstandings, open conflicts, and syncretistic developments.

Two limitations of this dissertation should be pointed out:

1. It deals exclusively with the Tsonga people within the

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(1) D.B. Barrett, "AD 2000: 350 million Christians in Africa" in International Review of Missions, Vol. 59, Jan. 1970, pp. 39-54

[illegible] context. In a Roman Catholic-dominated country like Bechuanaland, this may seem strange, but it was necessary to make this limitation for practical reasons. From my personal experience of work among the Tshwa people, it appears that problems within the Roman Catholic sphere may present themselves with different emphases, and possibly warrant a separate investigation.

b) The main field-work, on which this dissertation is based, was done among Tshwa men working in the Transvaal mines or on farms. This fact may seem unduly restricting, as much a field-work people might apply to very specialized type of material, with all informants being men in a specific, rather artificial life situation. I do not hesitate to state, however, that this is decidedly even more important than may appear at first glance. Although, for practical reasons, each man supplied more genealogical information, it cannot be stressed enough that they are in no sense of implication to be regarded as untypical or as peripheral Tshwa members, as will be shown later. [1] They are never exposed to a kind of 'involuntary incapsulation', leaving them well within the tribal sphere during their contract periods at the mines. In spite of their temporary absence, they remain a vital active part of their home community.

c) Furthermore, I would count my 25 years of missionary work among the Tshwa as an asset, somewhat balancing the potential liability of most informants being mine workers. Through my knowledge of the Tshwa language and continued interest in their traditional customs and beliefs, I have during frequent visits to Bechuanaland, been able to check and recheck statements and attitudes, as well as questions raised by the information.

d) Three of the 11 main informants were interviewed in their home country.

At present, many Tshwa are living in some of the cities

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(1) See "The Social World of the Tshwa", p. 27

by overall

of knowledge, and possibly to support my argument.

The ages of the informants were divided as follows: Four in the group between 17 and 25 years, five between 30 and 40. Nine in the group between 45 and 60, and one informant claimed to be 85 years of age. Three of the informants had grown up in non-Christian homes, while the rest had been influenced by Christianity through one or two parents. At the time of the interviews, all were professing Christians.

The informants were partly selected on the basis of people of wide geographical variation. The following regions

Vilamalai	1
Kharaiyur	1
Perumalpuram	1
Karrankudi	1
Cumbum	1
Madurai	1
Pandu	1
	7

Only one of my informants was not a pastor or evangelist, while three were ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church with their six-years' pastoral training based on primary education. Out of the remainder, only three had gone to school, one of whom had also taken training to catechist. The other 13 had no formal education, but were all literate because of literacy programs within the Church, except those who had never taken the step of conversion to Christian faith.

Besides these 20 informants, several other Christians in Nagercoil, including a few women, were consulted concerning questions, and reacting to proposed explanations. My frequent, extended visits to villages were through the years basis of personal acquaintance by personal teaching of the culture, and for giving opportunities to put explanation into proper perspective.

Without revealing the identity of any informant, I want to express my feelings of gratitude to each

people, who opened their hearts and minds to a much greater extent than I had ever imagined - even to the point of sometimes painful self-revelation. Their spontaneous spirit of cooperation made very little participation necessary on my part. As I see it, my reward is that I succeeded in recording all information faithfully given.

Personal statement of purpose

As I am personally convinced that the Christian faith has a tremendous value in store for anyone who approaches it in spiritual humility and intellectual openness, I am a missionary in Africa with the avowed purpose of helping Africans explore the full wealth of Christianity. It follows, therefore, that I regard the Christian Church both as a divine institution and an association of human beings.

In this investigation, however, I have attempted to divest myself as much as possible of my missionary bias, in an honest effort to approach the actual problems from an Anthropological point of view, presenting the facts as found, without passing any value judgments on either side. In every attempt at explanation of various phenomena, it has been my purpose to raise questions rather than to give final answers or recommendations.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to (a) establish such data of Tshwa traditional culture and beliefs as may be a living part of a Tshwa person's mind, and (b) investigate how the message of Protestant Christianity has been received into such a frame of reference. Right through the dissertation, I continuously compare our findings and suggestions with results of similar investigations in other parts of Africa.

As very little has been published about Tshwa traditional culture, I begin with a survey of the social structure of Tshwa society, indicating some friction because of outside influence. This is followed by a summary of Tshwa traditional beliefs.

The Protestant influence on the Tshwa is then presented from a historical viewpoint, and the initial response to this presentation is sought in an investigation of my informants' stated reasons for "wanting to become Christians".

An attempt to crystallize the "highest good" for the Tshwa is made in the chapter on "quest for life". It is suggested that 'sufficient life' is the Tshwa ideal which gives guidance and inspiration for action both within traditional and Christian context. It is observed, however, that certain trends gradually change this ideal in the modern setting particularly for Christians. This chapter introduces the main body of the dissertation, in which I investigate in several different spheres how the 'search for life' in the traditional meaning and the new Christian ideal of "the better life" interpenetrate each other, even within the same person.

The 'quest for life' is then followed through the area of worship, and it is found that, while 'life' traditionally is sought mainly in worship, this is only partly true in the Christian context. We continue this investigation in the field of sickness and health and observe that modern hospital treatment may leave the Tshwa frustrated spiritually and mentally even as it helps them physically. In the fields of

morals, it is found that Christian ethics introduces conflicts, as Tshwa people traditionally seek 'life' partly through right relationships within the group, while Protestantism insists on a break of such relationships as may be deemed harmful. It is also found that the contrasts in value conception potentially plunge Tshwa into inner conflicts, when trying to apply Christian ethics.

The final sphere to be investigated is death and accompanying attitudes, and we soon find that this area is more decisively marked by Christian influence than other parts of Tshwa life. In spite of a regular Protestant rejection of beliefs in ancestral spirits, it is probable that Christian teaching on 'eternal life' has strongly contributed to this remarkable change.

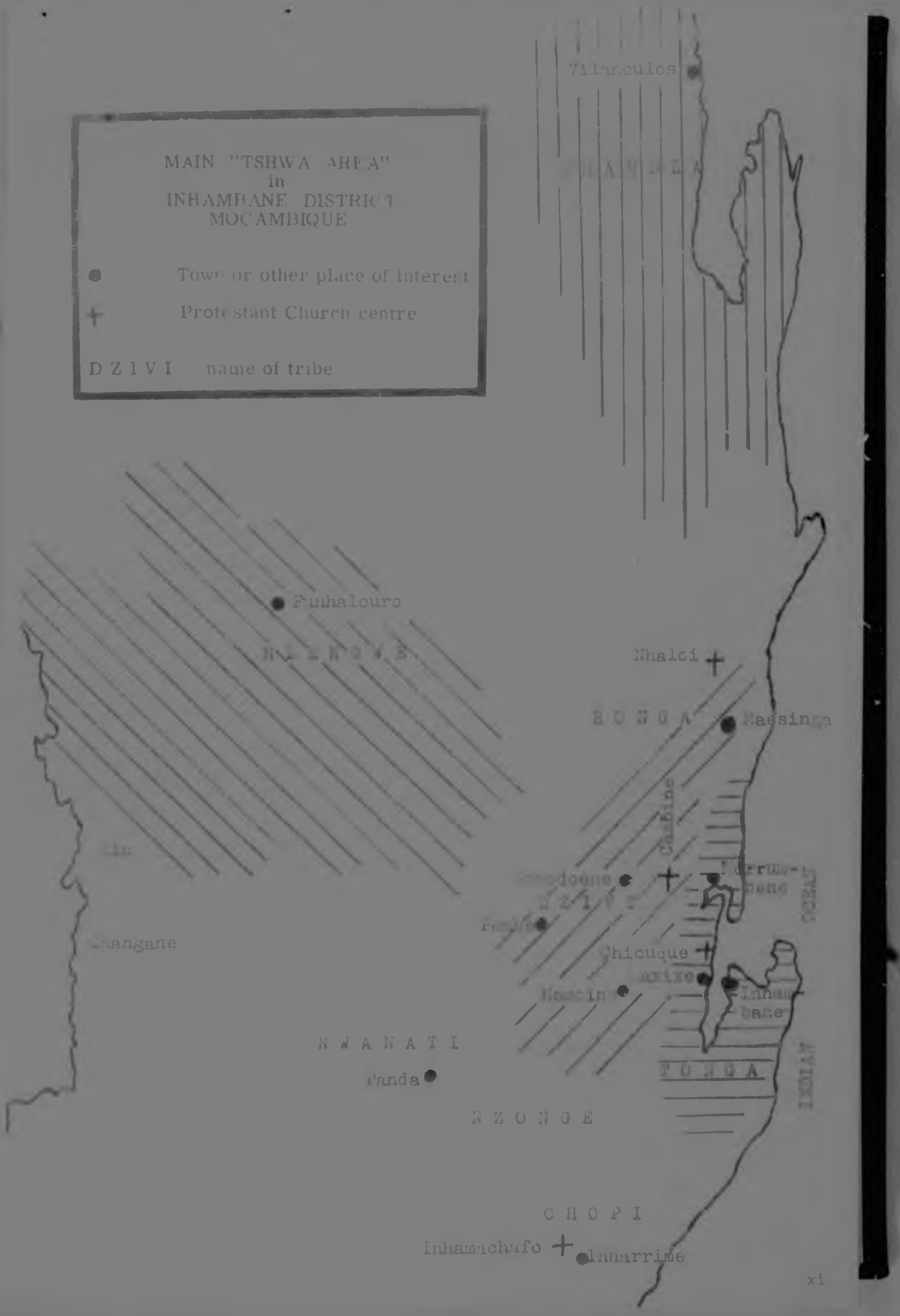
In a final chapter, I summarize some of the findings and draw certain conclusions.

MAIN "TSHWA AREA"
in
INHAMBANE DISTRICT
MOCAMBIQUE

● Town or other place of interest

+ Protestant Church centre

D Z I V I name of tribe



1. THE TSHWA AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT

The Tshwa are a tribal group in Moçambique, occupying roughly the country between the two rivers Limpopo and Save apart from European settlements, - with the important exception of the coastal stretch from Limpopo to Morrumbene, where the Chopi and Tonga tribes are settled. (See map). The majority of the Tshwa are concentrated between the Indian Ocean and the Changane river, i.e. within the administrative district of Inhambane, with population density increasing towards the coast. The region bordering on Rhodesia is only sparsely populated. (1)

Among themselves, the Tshwa distinguish three large groups, which I will refer to as tribes: The Dzivi, Hlengwe and Mhandla. First on the present scene were the Hlengwe, according to their own traditions coming from the Zimbabwe region to settle in what is now the Western part of the Tshwa area, probably towards the end of the 15th century. The Mhandla originated as a branch lineage (nyangwa = "gate") of the Hlengwe, which later settled around present Homoine. (2)

During the first half of the 17th century, the Dzivi moved to this same region from settlements either in present Eastern Transvaal, or Swaziland. (3) They started out by paying tribute to the chief of the Mhandla, but a Dzivi revolt resulted in the Mhandla being driven northwards, finally settling in the present Vilanculos region. Subsequently, the Dzivi chiefs became recognized as overlords both by Hlengwe and Mhandla. Gradually they confirmed their new sta-

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(1) Atlas de Moçambique, p. 24

(2) E. Mucambe, Matimu ya VaTshwa , p. 5

(3) A. Mucombo, Mulaveteli wa ntumbuluko wa VaTshwa , p. 44

tus by the strategic location of new Dzivi settlements, forming a buffer zone between the Mhandla in the North and their own capital at Homoine.(4)

Two smaller groups should also be mentioned as belonging to the Tshwa, although they will play no specific part in this dissertation: The Nwamati, also called Makwakwa, traditionally placed South of the Hlengwe; and the Nzonge (Gwambe) in their traditional homeland between the Dzivi and the Chopi.(5)

How this group of different tribes came to be known as Tshwa, and how the Tshwa language was formed can at present be only matters of conjecture. The fact remains that, through history, these groups became united to such an extent that present members identify themselves as Tshwa first of all.

It is obvious that these tribes are more connected through their present common language, Tshwa,(6) than by any wide claims to common ancestry. Dialects can be distinguished, according to the groups mentioned, probably pointing to the explanation that several smaller languages merged into one through the influence of the ruling Dzivi.

According to Doke's classification, Tshwa is one of the three languages within the so-called "Shangana-Tsonga" group. The two others are Ronga, spoken around Lourenço Marques, and Tsonga which is predominant in the region South of the Limpopo

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(4) A. Mucombo, op. cit., pp. [illegible] - 46

(5) Cf. C.E. Fuller, "Ethnohistory in the study of culture change in Southeast Africa" in Bascom-Herskovitz,(ed), Continuity and change in African cultures, p.11

(6) The language is distinguished from the people by the prefix "xi-", while the people are designated by personal prefixes "mu-" in sing.. "va-" in plural. Thus: Xitshwa = the language Tshwa; Mutshwa (plur. Vatshwa) = a Tshwa person

river to within 50 miles North of Lourenço Marques. (7) Thus, the Tshwa-speaking people are seen as part of the great "Thonga" tribe, (8) amply described in the Junod studies from the beginning of this century. However, in spite of the relationship between the mentioned languages and several similarities in customs, I maintain that Tshwa culture is so distinct from the "Thonga" that it warrants a far better treatment than being summarily dismissed as "the Northern clans". (9) Evidence points to stronger similarities with Karanga, Venda and Ndau than are found among the "Thonga".

It has been estimated that there are approximately 600,000 Tshwa in the area mentioned. The Chopi and Tonga groups are considerably smaller, not reaching a combined figure of 100,000, although many Chopi and Tonga are found living among the Tshwa, more or less assimilated into their culture. A numerically insignificant tribe is called Ronga, now living West of Massinga, in the midst of 'Tshwa territory'. As they have a language of their own, although only partly used, and distinguish themselves through certain cultural

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(7) D.T. Cole, "Doke's classification of Bantu languages", in African Studies, Vol. 18, pp. 197-213

(8) For clarification, the following list is given:
Thonga - in anthropological circles commonly used joint designation of the Ronga, Tsonga and Tshwa peoples in S. Moçambique, purportedly introduced by Nguni rulers (N. Mbanze, "Ngango wa Mutshwa", p. 1)
Tsonga - tribal group living mainly South of Limpopo river in Moçambique, as well as in North-eastern Transvaal; often called "Shangaan".
Tonga - tribe located around town of Inhambane in Moçambique and along coast towards Vilanculos; mainly fishermen and traders; language quite distinct from "Shangana-Tsonga" group; also called "Koka".

(9) See e.g. H.A. Junod, Life of a South African Tribe, I, p. 269

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(9) See e.g. H.A. Junod, Life of a South African Tribe, I, p. 269

feat..., they ... great anthropological interest. In spite of this, they seem to have escaped any systematic research, so far. These Ronga are claimed to be the original inhabitants of a large part of the present Dzivi and Mhandla areas, but are now rapidly being integrated into Tshwa culture. In order to distinguish these Ronga from the Ronga people near Lourenço Marques, the former will be called "Massinga-Ronga" wherever they appear in this dissertation.

The Tshwa area forms part of the Portuguese province of Moçambique, with the administrative centre of the region in the town of Inhambane. The Portuguese arrived in the area as early as 1498, about the time when the Hlengwe moved to their present location. For centuries, Portuguese influence in this part of Moçambique was concentrated to certain coastal areas, around Inhambane, Sofala (close to present Beira), and at the mouth of Rio do Espirito Santo, where we now find Lourenço Marques. Their indirect material influence, however, was very important, as they brought along new kinds of grain and other useful plants, e.g. maize, cassava and peanuts, which were eagerly adopted by the indigenous people. (10)

Before 19..0, the Tshwa tribes were more directly involved, fro... a political point of view, with the Nguni rulers, who dominated the interior of Southern Moçam...ique for the larger part of the 19th century. They were originally Zulu warriors who, under their leader Soshangane, had fled from the dominance of the Zulu king Dingane. (11) Theirs was a time of great upheaval in these parts of the country. Many Ndau people were transferred southwards from North of the Save River. This was also the time when many Chopi moved into Tshwa country and became assimilated into Tshwa life. (12)

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(10) A.F. de Silva e Lona, Dos primeros trabalhos dos Portugueses no Monomotapa, p. 26

(11) J.D. Omer-Cooper, The Zulu aftermath, pp. 58-60

(12) Ibid., p.661

...'petrification' of the in-
...connect, and the influence of
...rail to a larger
...which pro-
...

...ating low-
...towards the
...memory, and pro-
...the region of
...used for
...ture of cash cultivation,
...villages, active part
...,afri-
...ncrease
...found
...trees or
...and prepa-
...Women too usually collect trees are also
...ploughs in dry fields. Attempts to combine cocoa
...with rice have no favourable prospects.

...relationship
...ng and cassava play the
...used, but is now of less import-
...ance. The second crop of maize has increasing summer in the
...ploughing. Dry season beans introduced through
...fluential activities of the Methodist mission station.
...Other. The main cash crops are groundnuts and cotton are raised.
...supplies are green blades of some clovers (maconge).
...growing of cocoa may constitute into another cash-crop,
...should cultivation of cocoa seem to be limited to
...areas.

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(1) ... Agnew, A Pioneer Missionary ...

[illegible] seasons, and different years. Even so, the ratio [illegible] of the fringe parts of all Mozambique, excluding only [illegible] the Rhodesian border. [13] Droughts always constitute a potential threat against [illegible] agriculture.

To supplement the income from their agriculture, it became customary for men from the Tsetse area to take seasonal work in the gold and coal mines of South Africa. This migration began during the last two decades of the 19th century, when the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley, and gold at Johannesburg spread the rumors of wealth that money had become available. Fairly soon local recruiting of mine labor was organized in Southern Mozambique, and at present more than 50 percent of the active labor force in South African mines originate from the Southern part of Mozambique, the majority being Tsonga, Chopi and Shangaan. This implies that about 100,000 men from the area concerned are continuously away from their home country, i.e. the center is deserted, and the social and cultural life of whole areas is subject to one from the other. Alan Harries-Jenkins describes this generation gap in the relatively unimportant role played by the "Shangaan men in subsistence agriculture". [14] This may have been a contributing factor, especially during the first half of this century, but the lack of more opportunities outside of agriculture in their own area is probably the principal reason for this great movement of migratory labour.

Cattle play an insignificant role in the life of the Tsonga. There is evidence that the stock of cattle was severely diminished through Nguni military raiding, and that cattle were commonly used for the payment of bride-wealth (nahowolo

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(13) Atlas de Moçambique, p. 11

(14) A. Alan-Harries, O movimento migratorio de trabalhadores entre Moçambique e Africa do Sul p. 29

before their time. (16) At present, cattle are exceptions, but goats, sheep and hens are very common domestic animals. To supplement their meat supply, several Tshwa hunt in the bush, game being considered fairly abundant.

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(16) A. Rita-Ferreira, op. cit. pp. 42-43

2. THE SOCIAL WORLD OF THE TSHWA

The political system

In tracing the history of the Tshwa, we find old tales that follow the Hlengwe far back into the time when they were still living in what is now Rhodesia. (1) Several of their big chiefs (hosi-ya-ngoma lit. "chief of the drum") (2) are said to have been great warriors, making life miserable for neighbouring tribes. Some time after their moving to the present homeland, (3) the Hlengwe chief Shigomba decided to divide his chiefdom and give the eastern part of it to his son-in-law, Xivilele, who then became the first hosi-ya-ngoma of the Mhandla people. In spite of the Dzivi beginning their time in this area as subjects (valuveli) of this Mhandla chief, they also had their 'chief-of-the drum', Yingwane. After their successful revolt against the Mhandla, Yingwane came to be regarded as the great Tshwa chief, and the chiefs of the other tribes paid tribute to him. This was the beginning of the Dzivi domination. (4)

Each tribe continued, however, with its own chief-of-the-drum, who ruled over his subjects. And they did not rule only people who claimed to be related to the chief. Different groups had been conquered during the course of history, and these were also counted into respective chiefdoms. We see, therefore, that even long ago it was true also among the Tshwa that...

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(1) E.A. Mucambe, Matima ya Vatshwa , p. 5

(2) Cf. Krige, The Realm of a Rain Queen, p. 127, and Bullock, The Mashona, p. 281, footnote

(3) See map facing p. 1

(4) E.A. Mucambe, op. cit. p. 24, p. 27

> "... membership of a tribe is determined... more by allegiance to a chief than by birth, and the unity of the tribe depends fundamentally on the common loyalty of the tribesmen to their chief". (5)

Every chief-of-the-drum had several sub-chiefs, who also functioned as the chief's main counsellors. Thus, at the same time as they were the great chief's servants, they tempered his absolute power through their council. The inferior status of these sub-chiefs - in relation to the chief-of-the-drum - emerges in the term used for their designation. They were called hosi-ya-tala, which actually means "chief-of-the-rubbish-heap". Behind this name we see the importance of the continuous payment of tribute (kuluva), made by all subjects through the hosi-ya-tala. No part of this was, as a rule, taken directly to the chief-of-the-drum, but was brought to the village of the sub-chief, from which selected parts of the tribute were forwarded to his superior.

Every sub-chief, in his turn, had his own counsellors (manghanakana), who were each entrusted with a section of his sub-chiefdom and could act as judges in minor matters. It appears that "chiefs-of-the-rubbish-heap" very often were related to the "chief-of-the-drum", either by representing a certain nyangwa ("gate", i.e. branch lineage), (6) or through maternal or affinal kinship, and a manghanakana often had a similar standing in relation to his hosi-ya-tala. The political power was thus prudently supported by kinship bonds, utilizing the superhumanly sanctioned emphasis on unity of the kin-group in keeping the chiefdom intact. As these several degrees of chieftainship after establishment all became hereditary, the system obviously promoted a strong conservatism. (7)

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(5) W. Hoernle, "Social organisation" in I. Schapera, Bantu-speaking tribes of South Africa, p. 69

(6) A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde (ed), African systems of kinship and marriage, p. 14

(7) Cf. Krige, op. cit. pp. 173-175;

In spite of a well worked-out system of chieftainship, no remarkably great rulers are known among the Tshwa. They never developed a strong centralized government similar to Monomotapa of the Karanga or the great chiefs of the Zulu.

As in other parts of Africa, a Tshwa chief had the sacred duty of representing his whole tribe before the superhuman Powers. This did not only imply a duty to sacrifice to his own ancestral spirits for rain and fertility of the tribal soil. His own life and health was seen as a symbol of the life of the tribe itself. As Hoebel has expressed it:

> "In Africa, again and again, (the chief) symbolizes the tribal soul: a soul that must be hale and vigorous, else the tribe wanes and dies". (8)

This was particularly true concerning the chief-of-the-drum, but with passage of time and increase of population, some of his ritual functions came to be performed by the hosi-ya-tala in each section of the chiefdom. Thus, through the chief, all people in his chiefdom expected to find life-power (wutoma) for their land. This traditional concept is still of utmost importance in the life of the Tshwa.

Not surprisingly, this has become one area of continuous conflict since the introduction of Christianity among the Tshwa. My informants agreed that "chieftainship and Christian faith are impossible to combine" (9) and gave several examples of Christian men - even pastors - who had "lapsed back into traditional beliefs" after becoming chiefs. Old female members of the chief's patrilineage (vahahani) were said to put constant pressure on an incumbent who may hesitate about sacrificing to his ancestors: "Do you want to see your land die, and die yourself with it?"

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(8) E.A. Hoebel, Man in the primitive world, p. 501

(9) Some informants even regarded chieftainship as a "sin". See p. 229

Another sphere in which modern conflict may be expected is the marital status of the chief. Reports indicate that chiefs of first and second rank are usually polygynous, and some informants indicate that a chief cannot be regarded as "great", if he has only one wife. As Protestant Churches in the area have from the beginning taken a very strong stand against polygyny, this is another reason why traditional chieftainship and Christian faith are difficult to combine.

Probably, a chief's polygyny was formerly encouraged for political reasons by families sending a daughter as wife to the chief, to win political favour. (10) This procedure, however, was unknown to my informants, but, on the other hand, several made it clear that....

> ".... these days only chiefs can afford having more than one wife, because they get money all the time (through payment of tribute). The best they can do, then, is to use this money for nzhowolo (bridewealth). But for me, working for a salary, my money would get finished if I had to clothe two wives".

It should be noted that, while the chief represented all his people in his prayers for fertility, each lineage within his chiefdom carried on with its own rites addressed to its own ancestors. "The Great-one-of-the-lineage (wahombe wa lixaka) was usually the leader in such undertakings. His leadership had no territorial significance. He personified the whole lineage and asked for life and health for his group, wherever its members may reside, especially in times of crisis.

The division of roles between chiefs and "great ones of the lineages" is probably even more conspicuous in modern times, as the former are now somewhat integrated into the Portuguese administrative system. As far as I can judge, great efforts have often been made by the white rulers to keep the traditional patterns of Tshwa chieftainship - al-

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(10) Cf. H. Kuper, An African aristocracy , p. 93

though the incumbents are bound to play a secondary role.

The chief-of-the-drum is now called Regulo and has, as a rule, quite a large area under him. His sub-chiefs (hosi-ya-tala) have now the title Cabo. These chiefs all draw salary from the Portuguese administration, and beyond that they are entitled to the tribute coming from their people (kuluva). I am told that a man coming home from a period of work in the Transvaal mines will "luva" his Cabo by giving him 100 escudos (R 2-50). Other people staying in their villages pay some maize or cashew-nuts as their tribute. When wild animals are killed, certain parts must be given to the chief.

I am not able to say how the modern relationship between the Regulo and the Cabo is worked out, but a Cabo takes at least part of the tribute to his Regulo.

Every Cabo divides his district into parts (zipanze) and installs counsellors (manghanakana) as his own sub-chiefs. These are "not even known by the Portuguese administration", i.e. they draw no regular salary. They are the collectors of tribute for the Cabo, and "they can come back home with something. As people do not pay tribute in beer any longer, but in peanuts, or cashew-nuts, he may sell what he has received as his part".

I am not fully acquainted with the present extent of jurisdiction of these three types of chiefs, but I know that they act as judges in certain cases and have some right to fine the culprit.

Although there is, in general, no reason to believe that chiefs over-step their authority, it is not surprising that their rights create a certain opposition among people. Informants showed evidence of a belief that the chief asks his ancestral spirits to send trouble among people in his chiefdom so that he may have cases to judge (and get paid). Two of my informants, independently of each other, volunteered a description of an installation of a chief (in different parts of the area), where a prayer with the following contents was said to be part of the ritual:

"Let them quarrel, let them beat each other, let them cut each other, so that there will be people coming to be judged... so that this chief gets something to eat... "

"Xisola-hosi, sola u nukile" ("If you want to criticize the chief, do it from a distance") says a Tshwa proverb, which could be applicable in many other parts of the world. It is possible, however, that the attitudes expressed through these informants are not too uncommon among the Tshwa. It is also wellknown that the Tshwa chief must protect himself against the witchcraft of anyone wanting to harm him. "A chief can get certain amulets (zitshungulo) to prevent people from casting a spell over him".

The importance of the lineage

I have combined observations from my long acquaintance with the Tshwa people with statements from informants, to give the following outline of one aspect of the kinship system:

In traditional Tshwa society, the lineage (lixaka) is the most important kin group, to which this definition is applicable:

"An agnatic lineage consists of an original male ancestor and all his descendants through males of three, four, five or n generations. The lineage group consists of all the members of a lineage alive at a given time".(11)

Every Tshwa lineage is marked by the name of the man who counts as its founder. This name is called xibongo (related to the verb ku bonga = "to thank; to praise"), and is at the end of the list of paternal ancestors, which a Tshwa person normally can recite.

Such knowledge is obviously a means of strengthening an individual's identification with his kin group. It also establishes, for the living, the unseen ancestors as part of the lineage group. The most senior male member of a lineage, Wahombe wa lixaka ("The Great-one-of-the-lineage"), is the

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(11) A.R.Radcliffe-Brown and D.Forde, op. cit. p. 14

recognized leader of this group, but he is well aware that the "real" kin elders are watching from beyond the grave.

The lineage is the primary group through which Tshwa persons expect "life" (*wuhwa*).[12] It is therefore necessary that the lineage be maintained intact and united. This aim is furthered by keeping "right relationships" both with the ancestors and within the group.[13]

Such relationships between living lineage members, which may be expressed as a system of mutual rights and obligations, are mainly based upon the three factors of sex, age, and primogeniture.

Difference of status between the sexes is primarily based upon the fact that only men can continue their own lineage. "A woman belongs to the lineage of her father, but her children do not".[14] As a *nahani* (actually a designation of "father's sister", but used in general for female members of the agnatic lineage), the woman will continue to play a role in her own lineage, even after her marriage. With age, this role can become very important. But the *nahani* can never carry the name of her lineage over into new generations, nor can she be part of any line of succession.

Generally speaking, the older a person is, the higher is his status, and consequently, the more respect is he for she) entitled to. The climbing up the status ladder among the Tshwa is thus not frustrated or stopped as in a western society, where retirement from a job which has given a person his status suddenly places him down in a much lower position.

In spite of this, primogeniture (*wutwana*) is another principle that often overrules differences in life-years. This principle works vertically, making the generation gap a

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(12) See chapter on "Quest for life", pp. 104

(13) On "right relationships", see further pp. 226 ff.

(14) A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, *op. cit.* p. 14

determining status factor. It also works horizontally, differentiating within a group of siblings, or between classificatory brothers and sisters. The generation of a man's father always has precedence over his own, even if some of his father's brothers (who are all called "father") may be younger than himself. (15)

The great respect for Father (Baba), which is instilled into every Tshwa child, is by extension shown to all whom a person calls "Father", as well as to all whom he calls hahani. (16) This includes all lineage members of his father's generation.

Furthermore, respect must be shown for any lineage member of the opposite sex. The lineage is bound to keep together, and just because of this necessity, no sexual relations of any kind may occur between lineage members, no matter how distantly related they may appear to be.

> "The violent emotions engendered by sexual affection would blast and disrupt family unity built upon the earlier established filial-fraternal affections..... Overt sexual rivalry within the functioning kinship group cannot be permitted". (17)

For this reason, the Tshwa concept of incest (xixaka) is extended to all who are members of the same agnatic lineage, and upheld by strong sanctions.

The seriousness with which members of a lineage regard sexual rivalry is also indicated by the custom called

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(15) This is quite possible in a context of polygyny!

(16) The word hahani probably means 'little father'. Junod states that hahani derives from the Ronga word rarana (= "little father"; diminutive of raru = father), "as r often changes into h in Thonga phonetics". H.A. Junod, Life of a South African tribe, I, p. 427

(17) E.A. Hoebel, op. cit. p. 290

masungayi. The principle of this custom is that no men of the same lineage should share the same woman. If this should happen, a curse will be hanging over their heads, and these men are not allowed to see each other any more.

Institutionalized respect and avoidance reflect potential strain in the relationships involved. This would be especially true in the father-son relationship but also in other connections within the lineage group. Witchcraft accusations often fall on a mahani, particularly in cases of barrenness or abortions on the part of her brother's children. It is recognized that such conflicts are dangerous for the whole lineage group. Without lineage unity, life for its members is at low ebb.

Hoernle's words about the lineage in Bantu-speaking tribes are certainly relevant also to the Tshwa people:

> "The lineage undoubtedly is the most important purely kinship group among most of the tribes, the group which exercises most social control over the people and within which lives in the most intimate social contact and the most stable system of reciprocal rights and duties". (18)

Influences from outside, both cultural and religious, has diminished the importance of the lineage group among Tshwa. It will later be shown how Christian worship and ethics tend to remove the crucial importance of lineage unity and 'right relationships'. (19) Simultaneously, a stronger emphasis on the conjugal family can be discerned.

Marriage and family

Polygyny is a well established custom in the traditional Tshwa society. Not only for chiefs, but also for ordinary men, the traditional ideal is to have several wives. Mbanze

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(18) W. Hoernle, op. cit. p. 80

(19) See further pp. 225 ff.

conc[illegible]. Some like money more than anything [illegible]se. [illegible] have lots of cattle .. For us [illegible] wives". (20)

[illegible] Tshwa man [illegible]. The fairly even dis- [illegible] impossibility. [illegible] been based upon the ex- [illegible] nzhowolo (bride-wealth), availability of riches [illegible] nzhowolo determined [illegible], the number of [illegible] a man may have.

[illegible] (nzhowolo) [illegible] the man's [illegible] group of his future wife's people, a new relationship was [illegible] between two lineages. The man's kin gained potential [illegible] child-bearing power, while the woman's lineage was compensated through nzhowolo, which could, in turn, be used to acquire a [illegible] similar child-bearing power into that kinship group. (21) A [illegible] marriage, therefore, had the character of a contract between [illegible] different kin groups, with nzhowolo guaranteeing its con- [illegible] tinuity as long as the conditions implied by the nzhowolo [illegible] custom were fulfilled.

Nzhowolo [illegible] as "child-price", as Jeffreys has [illegible] pointed out. (22) It [illegible] the wife for which nzhowolo had [illegible] been paid should not conceive, her lineage had the obligation [illegible] of giving similar women to their children in her place. This [illegible] was [illegible] provided for in the term of hlazana, by [illegible] which a male woman's brother's daughter is called. This [illegible] word is derived from the verb ku hlaza (= to wash), indicating [illegible] that this girl would by the normal choice of the lineage to

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(20) [illegible] Mbanze, Nganga wa Rutshwa, p. 101

(21) Cf. Krige, The Realm of a Rain-Queen, p. 75

(22) A.D.P. Jeffreys, "O lobolo é o preço da criança (Bol. da Sociedade de Estudos da Prov. de Moçambique, XXXI, No 132, Jul-Set., 1962)

be sent to 'wash' the womb of her [illegible] (father's sister) of the shame that follows sterility. This custom may, of course, be seen as a variation on the polygynous [illegible] tamination of death, clinging to the husband even if he had died, would also, in principle, be 'washed' away by hlazana. (23)

Nzhowolo has through the ages played an important role as guarantee against easy divorces. [illegible] pect his wife's kin to return the nzhowolo without good reasons. His own kin would also prevail on him to fulfil his obligations to his wife for which nznowolo had been paid. This insistence would, of course, be the more vehement if the man took any other wife.

The concept of nzhowolo ("bride-wealth") has been explained in some detail - and in the [illegible] - as background to changes and even outright attacks which it has been exposed to since the introductio[illegible] Christianity. It is true that information from a large number of areas now indicates that nzhowolo is still being paid in the majority of cases. But there are modern instances where parents freely state that they will not accept any nzhowolo payment for their daughters. Furthermore, some Churches in Mocambique have taken a definite stand against the nzhowolo custom, making it clear in their teaching that "a good Christian should have nothing to do with this custom". (24)

In spite of such declarations, however, the nzhowolo custom comes back in another form: parents refusing to receive nzhowolo [illegible]

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(23) See "Death and Life Eternal . . . 48

(24) Although no official statement from the Protestant Churches working among the Tonga is known, particularly the Presbyterian Church, working among Ronga and Tsonga has taken a strong stand on this issue. It is remarkable that in the "Bhengu movement", lobolo ("bride-wealth") is the only Xhosa custom insisted upon! (A.A. Dubb, The role of the Church in an urban African society, [illegible]

son-in-law: This may mean paying an amount similar to the traditional nzhowolo, but without the accompanying stabilizing conditions. (25)

Another change in attitude is indicated by the fact that it is now mainly the young man's responsibility (not his kin's) to supply the money for his bride-wealth. The first contract period at the Transvaal mines is usually connected with this need.

Such a shift in responsibility reflects a continuous change in attitude towards the marriage connection itself. The bond between man and wife now seems to supersede the traditional one between their respective kinship groups. There is some evidence that this trend opens the door to more frequent divorces.

From a structural point of view, it would appear that a Tshwa woman has her lowest status as a wife. She is an outsider in her husband's lineage group with many obligations and few rights. In general, a newly married wife is not much more than a servant to her parents-in-law, and indirectly to her husband. This agrees in principle with "the Zulu attitude that a woman is a minor and must submit meekly to her husband... ... and whose whole purpose in life is to serve and satisfy him and his lineage". (26) It should be pointed out, however, that the young wife normally has several other women - wives of her husband's brothers - to relate to on fairly free terms. This appears to be one definite advantage of the patrilineal extended family (27) in comparison to the conjugal one living in isolation from the kin (see below).

The period of "apprenticeship" (kukoroka) of the new wife

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(25) Cf. P.C. Lloyd, Africa in social change, p. 376

(26) A. Vilakazi, Zulu transformations, p. 33

(27) Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, African systems of kinship and marriage, p. 5

was also the time when she was introduced into customs and regulations of her husband's lineage. It also helped the young couple over the difficult time of transition, especially as far as food is concerned.

The wife's standing in her husband's lineage can, as a rule, be enhanced only through the children she bears. As a mother, she becomes the nucleus of a new "house" (yindlu) and will be honoured by her husband as well as by children and parents-in-law.

It is also as a mother that a woman becomes the important link to the warm relationship which is usually experienced between children and their maternal grandparents, as well as the mother's brother.

It is customary that a Tshwa boy spends some years of his early childhood in the home of his maternal grandparents, or of his mother's brother. Both grandparents and mother's brother are called by the same term, Kokwane (plur. vakokwane), indicating that the same kind of behaviour is expected before them all. One informant recalled his maternal grandfather's love towards himself and other young relatives living in his home. "He always took good care of us, and he wanted to teach us as much as possible of sacrifices and other Tshwa customs".

While children's relations with uterine relatives are thus free and easy, much respect and even avoidance is traditionally expected from the husband in connection with the same set of relatives. Such rules make relations particularly difficult with his mother-in-law and his wife's elder sisters, who were all called vakokati, while he may be on freer terms with the younger sisters of his wife, the tinhombe.

Some of these strict avoidance regulations have lost their rationale in modern times, and "it now happens that a son-in-law eats with his mother-in-law without even thinking about avoidance". Also in other respects, the traditional rules concerning family life are in a process of change. The custom of kukoroka is now, according to reports, completely

abandoned. "Now they just get married and go to live at once wherever they wish".

An increased preoccupation with the conjugal family, at the expense of the extended one, is also an indication of changes which have come through the gradual introduction of money in the subsistence economic system of the Tshwa. In the subsistence economy, every village harvested, at least in principle, as much as their neighbours. Monetary economy, on the other hand, distinguishes those who have from those who have not and fosters individualistic attitudes towards belongings. (28)

Such attitudes are further strengthened nowadays in the urban situation, where so many Tshwa conjugal families live far away from their relatives, although they, in general, keep some contact with their rural kin group.

Modern specific emphasis on the conjugal family introduces great psychological pressure in case no children are born in a marriage. Informants' statements indicate clearly that offspring are still regarded as the necessary fruit of a union, although modern Tshwa parents in general do not regard a large number of children as a particular blessing.

The traditional solution in cases of barrenness - as the wife's kin group sent another woman to "wash" her womb - is, of course, totally unacceptable in Christian context. All Protestant Churches in the Tshwa area now - similar to most other Christian Churches coming to Africa from outside the continent (29) - from the beginning completely refused to

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(28) Cf. P. Bohannan, "The Impact of Money on an African subsistence economy", in Readings in Anthropology, ed. by Jennings-Hoebel p. 390

(29) E.A. Ansorge, "The Christian Church and African writing", in Dan Denzal (ed), Christianity in Africa as seen by the Africans p. 132

accept traditional polygyny as a valid form of marriage. It is claimed by informants that the present picture presents easier and more frequent divorces among Tshwa Christians (for those who have not been married in Church, or by civil ceremony), and, on the other hand, many men taking a second wife "in secrecy".

The uncertainty concerning offspring is, in fact, the stated main reason why such a large percentage of the Methodist Episcopal Church constituency do not enter marriage by Church ceremonies. This fact is reflected by the large number of Tshwa Christians who remain as "members on trial", (30) as church marriage is a firm condition for becoming a "full member". (31)

The web of inter-personal ties

In traditional Tshwa society, the ideal was that kinsmen lived together in a constant inter-relation of obligations and rights, depending upon the need and status ascribed by the structure of relationship. Thus, the neighbour (muakelane: plur. vakelane, lit. meaning "the one building together") was ideally a kinsman, either of the same lineage, or through cognatic or affinal relationship. However, in several parts of the Tshwa area, this kind of ideal situation was rather fictitious, and as time passed, it became even further removed from reality.

As people of other tribes entered a Tshwa chiefdom with the intention to settle there, they had to pay their respect to the ruling chief by certain gifts (ku luva), and they were then, normally, given land on which to build.

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(30) Of a total constituency within the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1967 of 51,203, adult members "on trial" were 10,198. (Relatório Oficial da Conferência Anual da Igreja Metodista no Sudeste da África, 1967)

(31) This is a local regulation, not valid in Methodist Churches in other countries.

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(30) Of a total constituency within the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1967 of 31,383, adult members "on trial" were 10,1[illegible]. (Relatório Oficial da Conferência Anual da Igreja Metodista no Sudeste da Africa, 1967)

(31) This is a local regulation, not valid in Methodist Churches in other countries.

As a rule, relations with such newcomers were friendly and peaceful. Hospitality to strangers is, as among other Bantu-speaking peoples, a traditional duty among the Tshwa,(32) and the close living together with neighbours often developed satisfactory patterns of mutual assistance.

Friction did arise, however, both between kinsmen and in relation to neighbours. Conflicts between father and son, or between mother-in-law and son-in-law, were, for instance, not unusual. Such friction, however, called for quick reconciliation along structural lines.(33) This was possible as kinship obligations are defined in terms of more specific relationships than neighbourly obligations. Friction within the latter sphere could therefore not always be dealt with in an institutionalized way. This was particularly true when relationships were new and implied the proximity of people of widely different tribes and customs.

This kind of friction is said to be quite usual in the modern urban situation. At a church conference in 1966, held by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the "living close to people of all kinds of tribes in the cities" was taken up as one of the serious problems facing modern Christian Tshwa.

In the rural areas, work cooperation among neighbours, for instance in agriculture and house building, lessened any potential strain, and giving and taking in marriage increased communication between people of different groups.

Agriculture has certainly played an important part in easing relationships, as "all people digging together" gathered at the agricultural sacrifices several times a year. Sacrifices for rain were also made on a communal basis, rather than along kinship lines.

Companionship of a social nature was also found at occasions

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(32) Cf. M. Hunter, Reaction to conquest, p. 34.

(33) See below pp. 234 ff.

of sacrifices, both agricultural ones and kinship rituals. Communal drinking - with the accompanying free talk - was a necessary part of any sacrifice. On these occasions, generosity (wuhumu) on the part of the arranging headman was highly praised. Music and dancing often accompanied the drinking, except at specially solemn gatherings because of some serious curse (khombo) on the kin.

For the smaller group of a village, such social companionship was fostered, e.g., at the men's conversations in the special place for men (bandlomi), which surely gave satisfaction and a deep sense of belonging. The women's gatherings at the place-of-the-pots (khumbarini) together with the small children, when the chores of the day were done, for talking and story-telling, were equally full of both fun and depth.

Hunting expeditions together with men from the vicinity widened the sense of community both by providing togetherness and by necessitating a mutual trust in order to succeed in the hunt without hurting one another.

Companionship of a social nature did not always imply any obligations between the partakers, at least not beyond the immediate occasion. Fellow-hunters had duties towards each other as long as the hunt lasted. Mutual assistance at work meant helping e.g. with building a house, and the reward came in form of beer - and conversation. But beyond that, few obligations existed towards persons outside of the own kin. The wuhumu-ideal (generosity) could make some persons spend large parts of their belongings on meat and drink at some feasts, but this was more for enhancing one's status than fulfilling an obligation. However, attitudes similar to the rules about hospitality towards strangers were commendable in the case of needy ones in the neighbourhood. In times of hunger, mutual assistance extended far beyond ordinary neighbourliness.

Several proverbs emphasize this kind of attitude: "A kuvuna vanwani ku ti yekela mhuvu" (= "To help others is to lay up stores for oneself"), and "A kutsona munhu kulahla"

(= "Not to give to a person is to bury him"). It was well to be prudent, however, so that the person you had helped would remember his benefactor. The proverb "Loku u hanyisa xisiwana, tsema ndleve"! (= "If you save a poor man, cut his ear") is a relevant advice in this direction.

But when a severe accident, sickness or death struck the family, it was usually the kin-group that went into action. All such events were counted as curses (makhombo), and sinister powers were discerned as active agents behind them. Often witchcraft was suspected in all these cases, and any involvement might lead to allegations impossible to disprove. Sickness and death were often believed to be caused by revenging spirits, aiming their attacks on the kin-group as such. Furthermore, death contamination was thought of as a contagious evil influence, which clings to everyone connected with the stricken people or village. (34)

Consequently, neighbours and strangers kept their distance in such times of distress. A sense of mutual solidarity between those living together could go far in times of other types of need, but in crises of this nature solidarity did not, by custom, extend beyond the boundaries of the lineage and affinal kin.

In such cases, the traditional Tshwa acted in a way similar to other tribes in Southeast Africa:

> "One should not be interpreted as saying that the non-Christians are not generous or solicitous about strangers", Vilakazi says about the Zulus. "But the fact of the matter is that among Zulus there are certain duties which are the function of the kinsmen first and foremost and which people would be reluctant to perform for a stranger. Burying a dead person, for example; or visiting and providing creature comfort for the sick". (35)

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(34) See further pp. 243-245

(35) A. Vilakazi, op. cit. p. 30; Cf. M. Hunter, op. cit. pp. 228 and 350

Some aspects of social life in mine compounds

As tens of thousands of Tshwa men are always at work in the Transvaal mines, and most of my informants were interviewed while residing in some mine compound, it is important to establish some features of the social life in such a situation.

Each mine compound gets its supply of African labour through a widespread network of agencies. Recruiting stations for this purpose are placed at strategic spots in rural parts of Southern Africa, including Southern Moçambique until the 22nd parallel. In principle, a work-seeking man goes to one of these recruiting stations, signs a contract for one year's work in any Transvaal mine, and is subsequently transported by the recruiting company to the mine needing labour. Once at the mine, most Moçambique men seem to sign on for another six months of work, before being transported back to the home region.

Obviously, this closed recruiting system, with only limited possibility for the work-seeking man to choose place and conditions of work, aims at making the transfer from home village to work situation as swift and painless as possible. This type of migratory labour supply is no phase in an ordinary urbanisation process. At least as far as Moçambique labourers are concerned, it rather appears to be a conscious

incapsulation effort, seeking to keep the men's minds constantly turned towards their homelands, while they sell their labour to the mine.

A mine compound is a self-contained unit. Most men spend all their free time within the compound area. Food is supplied by the mine, and shops specially stocked with items appealing to rural Africans are part of the compound unit. "Bars" with both European and African types of strong drink cater to the compound dwellers.

After the first few months of work, the major part of the worker's wages is sent directly to the recruiting station in

his home-region, to be paid out on his return home. This is another dominant factor in keeping the migrant's attention directed towards his home country during his contract period at the mines. The "Deferred Pay" system leaves little cash in the man's pocket, thus removing incentive to go to town for any extensive shopping. Restrictions on Moçambique compound workers to visit urban African townships further discourage communication with people outside of the compound area.

Migrant labourers in the Transvaal mines, thus, cannot be classified as urbanised, either from a structural viewpoint or a cultural one. On the whole, they are tribesmen who are integral parts of life in their tribal areas, temporarily absent "to fight with the stones", in order to improve their life in the home village.

Important similarities with the Red Xhosa in East London can readily be found. (36) But there are differences at least on two points:

a) Incapsulation of Red Xhosa in East London is voluntary. There is no power outside of his own cultural sphere imposing any incapsulation. For the mine workers, on the other hand, the whole labour supply system is geared towards an incapsulation process, in which little choice is left to the individual.

b) The Red Xhosa is 'incapsulated' in his own tribal culture and values, while the Tshwa compound worker, e.g., is rather kept within the influence of the larger geographical sphere of his homeland. In the compound, a Tshwa is generally classed with the 'Nyambaan" group (from the name of the principal town in the home area, Inhambane), together with Tonga and Chopi, and sometimes Tsonga ("Shanghaan"), who all understand some form of the Tshwa language.

In this connection, it is also important to observe that

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(36) P. Mayer, Townsmen or tribesmen, especially pp. 93-94

[illegible] working on Christian Tshwa as well as [illegible]-Christians.

[illegible] Tshwa and Thlamkane [illegible] are usually housed together [illegible] the members of the compound, twenty men - or, in newer [illegible] - live together in each room. All activities [illegible] of regular work and customs are shared in this [illegible] One man is appointed as room leader, responsible for [illegible] and all others have to obey him in everything that has [illegible] their living together.

[illegible] Tshwa also keep close together in all leisure [illegible] activities. They eat, drink - and talk - together, sometimes [illegible] beer-brewing - basket, working on creative embroidery [illegible] knitting of warm jersey. Even more compound-accustomed men [illegible] with themselves as tailors, cobblers or barbers. In their [illegible] recreations they enter into communication with one of [illegible] members of the compound. But, beyond that, the network [illegible] Tshwa men is a necessary guide to us of the close-knit [illegible] confined to men who speak the own language and who, [illegible] originally, stem from the same limited home region.[36] [illegible] capable of the way home is usually limited his contacts to [illegible] people in other relatives, living in other rooms or [illegible] compounds. On weekends, trips to visit relatives in [illegible] abroad also belong to the pattern. Such visits keep [illegible] Tshwa men in constant contact with events at home.

Little diversification of recreations available to compatriot [illegible] is an important factor for keeping [illegible] such a network of relationships close-knit.[39] Dancing competitions are held regularly, but even there communication [illegible] by way of other tribes is probably very limited. Sports

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(37) P. Mayer, op. cit., p. [illegible].

(38) [illegible], p. 34. Cf. amakhaya-groups among Red Xhosa

(39) [illegible], p. [illegible]

activities sponsored by the home attract a few, and literacy classes are attended by some. But even there, the reference group is the men speaking the same language. Women activities in compounds induce some grouping of tribal companions, but, in general, churches are also tied to specific language groups. This aspect will be further developed pp. 92 - 93.

3. TRADITIONAL TSHWA BELIEFS

All through this presentation we will keep comparing what is traditional with the modern, in order to understand what is happening in Tshwa life. Thus, more features of traditional religion and similar beliefs will be gradually introduced. It is, however, necessary to make a somewhat systematic presentation of the salient features of Tshwa traditional beliefs, to give a background to subsequent presentations and arguments.

There has been no effort on my part to reconstruct Tshwa religion and traditional customs as they might have been many years back, before European influence had had time to assert itself. What is described in this chapter has been found as a live part of the thinking of those men - most of whom are Christians - who served as my informants. Facts about religion and traditions coming readily from Tshwa Christians may be assumed to be part of the frame of reference, into which they will fit everything coming to them from the outside.

For the Tshwa, the world of religion is the world of spirits. Even if there are many religious symbols, like trees or shrines set aside for worship, drums "belonging to the spirits", and certain vessels only used for sacred purposes, idolatry as such is completely unknown. "Fetishes" or amulets do not fall into this category, as they are always amulets but not worshipped.

The Tshwa spirit beliefs do not mean, however, that they should be classified as animists, as this term implies belief that all things have personalised spirits in them. The Tshwa believe in several kinds of spirits, all of them emanating from and directly re-

ferable to persons. But they do not believe that trees, wells, stones, etc., have spirits living in them, as the theoretical "animist" ought to do. (1) The branches of a tree may be moved by a spirit, a well may be ruled over by another spirit, and animals may be sent by a spiritual force, but these spirits are, again, the essence of a person, either dead or alive.

For the Tshwa, spirits are not inherent in natural phenomena, though these may be infused by a human, personal will. Similarly, a 'doctor' is believed to infuse healing power into his medicines by saying the 'right' words over them before use. In other words, the Tshwa see a personal will behind most events. Nothing "just happens". There must be someone "sending" the event for some special reason, whether the "sender" is a witch or a spirit of a dead person, either related or unrelated to the afflicted individual.

It thus becomes evident that the Tshwa believe in an ordered universe, although the elements of this order may differ essentially from European cosmology. The Tshwa expect the soil to give them food, and they see no reason why their health should be unstable at all, unless laws laid down in Nature, or certain personal relationships have been violated. It would, therefore, appear that Tshwa cosmological concepts are ethically determined.

They also count on the existence of evil forces, attempting to destroy the order of their universe, but even there personal power is involved, making it possible somehow to deal with the affliction in a

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(1) Cf. H.R.Hays, From ape to angel, pp. 93-94.

rational manner -- although their reasoning is based on completely different assumptions than western scientific thinking.

The Power of the Sky (Tilo)

When faced with events which seem to defeat explanation, as, for instance, lightning, or the birth of albinos, the Tshwa ascribe them to the mysterious Sky-Power called Tilo (= "Sky," "Heaven"). By doing so, they have, in fact, expelled the actual event from their ethical universe, into the mysterious realm where events happen without any tangible reason. Although such an affliction has been named by referring it to Tilo, this connection implies that no remedy can be sought, and no blame laid. The Tshwa proverb makes this clear: "You cannot fight with the Sky" (A kulwi ni Tilo).

Tilo is not spoken of very often, but it is nevertheless the important backdrop against which the other spirits perform their actions. This reluctance to speak about Tilo is reflected in the following example:

> A Tonga man pointed out that during his childhood he and his brothers were admonished not to mention the name of Nungungulu (which now is used as the Christian name for God, both among Tonga and Tshwa people but which is one traditional Tonga name for Tilo). Only the alternative names Nyamavale (= The One of many colours), or Nyakhombokulu (= The One with the wide face) could be used.

The primary reason why Tilo is not mentioned so often is probably the fact that there was no organ-

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(2) It may seem most natural to translate the Tshwa word Tilo by the English equivalent "Heaven." However, "Heaven" is a loaded word to many people, immediately calling forth certain associations formed by various beliefs. To avoid our "reading in" Christian concepts into the Tshwa beliefs in Tilo, I have preferred to use the more neutral translation "Sky Power."

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ized direct worship to this Sky Power. Even if many traditional beliefs were verbalized and forwarded to new generations by teaching and telling, it should be observed that doctrinal teaching as such was no important element of Tahwa religion. Doctrines were taken for granted, as part of Nature, or part of Creation (Ntumbuluko), and often mentioned in passing during the course of an evening's story-telling. Doctrines were also "acted out" in symbolic actions at the occasions of sacrifice. Furthermore, they were etched dramatically on the minds when mentioned by a diviner as the cause of a dreaded affliction.

As the Sky Power was not worshipped, and thus the belief in this Power was never reinforced by any symbolic sacrificial acts, it is not surprising that some Tahwa claim that they know nothing of Tilo, except as a place "up in the sky." Still, I find that informants over 45 years of age all know of this Power, while the younger generation pleads almost complete ignorance. Maybe the falling into disuse of traditional forms of story-telling, and the modern custom of sending children away to schools, outside of parental control and influence, contribute to this state of affairs.

Characteristics of the Sky Power (Tilo)

The atmospheric aspect of the Sky Power is the most obvious one, being implied in names like "The One who speaks by himself," i.e., through lightning and thunder (Nwamwalwulayece), or "The One who thunders and rains" (Mizinzelakuna). Prayers for rain are normally addressed to the ancestors (tinguluve), but the strange rite of kole wo lava vula (special supplication for rain) shows that the final authority in this matter is the Sky Power.(3)

(3) See "Worship, sacrifice and sacraments," p.126

Lightning made people dread Tilo. It strikes anywhere, and nobody can feel secure from the attack from above. It does not necessarily follow that the Sky Power was thought of only as evil, even if one informant stated: "I see that the Tshwa formerly saw all evil as coming from Tilo."

As the ultimate giver of the 'cool' blessing of rain,[4] Tilo was seen as the Supreme Life-giving Power, the ultimate source of everything necessary to make life satisfactory. It would seem that this function was clouded in people's minds by the many ancestral spirits who were popularly conceived of as senders of blessings (and curses!).

A personal greeting might be formulated: "May the Sky provide for you so that you may live (many) days" (A Tilo a ri ku vekele mbuva mu hanya hi masiku).[5]

It must be stressed, however, that for most people the Sky Power was conceived of as a mysterious threat. It was the source of everything unusual or unexplainable. Their attitudes towards Tilo thus became ambivalent, leaning over, however, on the negative side.

While normal children always inspire gratefulness to the ancestral spirits, abnormal babies are commonly seen as signs of Sky Power activity. A certain person who had been born as a cripple "with the arms almost sitting on his thighs," was called "wa Tilo" (= From the Sky).

In the case of twin-births, I am not certain whether they are regarded as caused by Tilo or not. Junod does not hesitate on this point, seeing that twins were called "children of heaven" (vana va Tilo) among the Ronga people around Lourenço Marques.[6]

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(4)Cf. description of 'cool' and 'hot,' pp. 214-15
(5)E. Muianga, Landikuzwi, p. 58.
(6)H.A. Junod, Life of a South African Tribe, II, 433.

I hold it most probable that Tshwa formerly also saw twin-births in this way, although clear evidence is hard to come by among modern Tshwa, even non-Christians.

Albino-births are regarded as caused by the Sky Power. The very word ndlati (= albino) is the same word as the one used for "lightning" in the closely related Tsonga language. The albino and the lightning are evidently known as sent by the same Power. Strong evidence of belief among Tshwa Christians that albinos come as a result of spiteful actions and words against God, further strengthens this point.

One traditional name of Tilo takes the Sky Power out of the exclusively spatial context. It is the name Mutangi, which has been explained as "Nya titanga tontlhe" (= "of all ages"). This name gives a clear indication of the One who is and has been from the very beginning, although the epithet "eternal" hardly would fit, as Mbiti reminds us that for Africans "time is a two-dimensional phenomenon, with a long past, a present, and virtually no future."(7) Still, we find at least the germ of 'eternity' among the Tshwa, in their proverb: "The Sky does not die, but people do" (Tilo a kifi, kufa vanhu).(8)

I am fully aware that the Tshwa belief in Tilo corresponds with similar beliefs among most other African peoples, although we find them pronounced in much greater detail in certain parts of Africa. There is also a modern trend, both among African and European writers on Africa, to speak of the "Sky Power" of African beliefs in Judeo-Christian terms, simply using the name God."(9) I agree fully with the biblical reference used in this connection that

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(7) J. Mbiti, African religions and philosophy, p. 17.
(8) See further pp. 260-265
(9) J. Mbiti, ibid., pp. 30-31; E.B. Idowu, "God," in Dickson-Ellingworth (ed), Biblical revelation and African beliefs; D. Forrester, Religion in Africa, p. 59.

God "in past generations ... did not leave himself without witness,"(10) and I hope that my whole treatment of Tshwa religion and culture will reveal my tremendous respect for the same. Still, I suggest that translating Tilo by the name "God" would only tend to confuse the issue, without bringing forth any practical advantages. Particularly as we are here attempting to compare new and old, I am satisfied that the rendering "Sky Power" or even better retaining the Tshwa name Tilo, will best serve our purpose.

A richly varied world of spirits

Besides the Sky Power, there are four different types of spiritual beings populating the Tshwa world:

1. ancestral spirits (tinguluve);
2. spirits-of-revenge (mipfhukwa or vanyamikwa-xani);
3. foreign, possessive and sickness-bringing spirits (mandiki);
4. ghosts zigono or ziphoka).

Of these, only the first kind are spirits belonging to my own kin. It is, of course, realized that all different kin-groups have their ancestral spirits (tinguluve), but I need never be concerned with the late grandfathers and great-grandfathers of other lineages than my own, as they know me as little as I know them. Tinguluve are strictly kept within the own kin.

In spite of this, the dead of other lineages can exert some influence on my life. But in such cases they take on some new quality, or a special reason is explained, and ~~the name of the dead changes~~. An ancestral spirit (nguluve; plur. tinguluve) can never influence a person who does not belong to his

(10) Acts 14: 16-17 (RSV)

own kin. But under certain circumstances, this same spirit-of-a-dead may enter a strange village to kill persons who are alleged to have done something evil against him or his relatives. This spirit is then no longer a nguluve. He has changed activity, address and name, and has become a mupfhukwa or nyamukwaxani ("spirit of revenge").

Ancestral spirits (tinguluve) are often believed to send sickness to their people, but there are also other spiritual beings which are particularly obtrusive in this respect. Besides sicknesses sent by the mentioned "spirits-of-revenge," certain sicknesses are ascribed to ndiki, who, in general, are spirits of foreigners dead long ago.

Even among Europeans, ghosts are believed to be spirits of dead persons "coming back." The difference one notes among the Tshwa is that their ghosts (zigono) are not spirits of their own dead, but again appearances of dead persons belonging to other kinship groups. Many interesting data could be related about Tshwa ghost beliefs, but in this thesis I will leave them out, as they have no strong bearing upon the subject at hand.

What has been said so far confirms in principle Junod's observation about shikwembu (ancestral spirit) among the Tsonga and Ronga peoples: "Every human being at his death turns into a shikwembu and becomes an ancestor-god for his descendants and a hostile spirit as regards his former enemies."(11)

Ancestral spirits (tinguluve)

Every Tshwa person who dies becomes a nguluve (= "spirit of a dead of my own kin"). His connection with his kin group is at least as strong after his death as before. He remains an integral part of the kinship system. Death seems to be regarded as

(11) H.A. Junod, op. cit., II, p. 77.

the supreme step to the height of social prestige. His influence is more direct and stronger, and the reasons for his actions are beyond question.

It is recognized, however, that spirits of dead children and of persons who die childless, have less influence than other _tinguluve_:

> "A dead child cannot ask its father for a sacrifice. Nor could a childless spirit be sacrificed to. To whom should he go and request food and clothing? Such spirits would have to eat left-overs."

Thus the plight of the childless person was clearly illuminated, simultaneously pointing out the tremendous importance of having children of one's own. "A dead childless brother could go to his brother and ask for attention," but this clearly implied a secondary position.

The most important of all _tinguluve_ are the father's father and the father's father's father of the kin elder, always being the most honoured guests at the big, regular sacrifice during the winter season (_mbonbo ya wombe_), or at the _bandha_ (occasion for "weeping for the dead"). Thus, the social order was maintained, and reinforced, by paying special attention to the top figures of the own family or lineage.[12] However, when some crisis occurred, the object of the sacrifice of propitiation would always be specially indicated by the divining bones, and most informants agreed that there was some special _nguluve_ in their various lineages who was known as a trouble-maker, dwelling (through the bones), and getting, far more attention than other ancestral spirits.

> "A person who has lived an evil life is counted as a _nguluve_ after his death, but he will be a troublesome _nguluve_. The divining bones will always point to him in connection with some troubles."

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(12) Cf. M. Fortes, "Some reflections on ancestor worship in Africa" in _African systems of thought_, p. 133.

...on, it could be foun..., ...ificed because of havi... ...and now kept troubli... (Tiovane among the ... ...phembe among the Kh...

...inguluve ... the family,[1] the ti... ...ormed of everything impor... ...viously, it ... ...guluve had any supernatural ...ati...n. This was possibl... ...deal state of the tingu... (ku etl-la). However, thi... ... the tinguluve could be ... descendants:

...nformant stated that this ku etlela ...ans not necessarily mean "sleep." The ...erior translation of this verb is "to lie ...own." He gave the example of a snake lying ...down, noticing what is going on but without ...making the least movement. It is this strik... ...ing position as regards the tinguluve -- ...hat the worshippers fear.

...s was necessary to report when people ...were ready to clear land or harvest. Everythin... ...brought [illegible] from outside, e.g., anim... ...was also reported to the tinguluve. ...Even the prayers at times of sacrifice often took ...the form of reporting, as in lawuta.

[1] ...hen a person discovering a new well or water ...hole had been killed and his blood had to mingle ...with the new water. The water would thus be ...purified and would be flow freely. ...Leonard prefers to call them "spiritual ...effects." Bantu Religion, p. 50.

ll such repor[illegible]nd, on the other hand observation that th[illegible]rit-of-a-dead must go [illegible] close relative[illegible] attention, are evidence of the mutual inte[illegible]ence between the ancestral spirits and their p[illegible]. The living looked to their tinguluve as their [illegible]iate source of life and strength. They trus[illegible] their tinguluve for help in all respects. Good he[illegible]lth in the family as well as among the domestic [illegible]ls was a sign of ancestral blessings, and a narrow escape from an accident would be ascribed to the ancestors' watchful care.

A special case of blessing, mentioned by most informants, was fi[illegible] something unexpectedly. Even today, findin[illegible] in the street or on the path seems immediately to direct the thought to the tinguluve, and such money must not be spent unwisely. It s[illegible]uld be share[illegible] with one of the elders in the family, preferably [illegible] father, or invested in livestock, etc.

When everythin[illegible]t smoothly, the attitude towards the tinguluve was a happy one. But when sickness came to [illegible] or beasts, when the fields were scorched by a [illegible]rciless sun, or when hopes for offspring were th[illegible], this attitude changed to fear. "Tinguluve ti [illegible]luve" (= "The ancestors are quarreling") was a [illegible]on expression, when signs of this nature were [illegible], and the diviner's help was sought to find out what needed to be done to avert the danger. If it [illegible] found that the tinguluve were causing the misfortune, they were usually propitiated through a sacrifice.[15]

Although "the tinguluve are kept strictly within the own kin," one special set of these spirits has an influence that stretches beyond the boundaries of their own lineage. The tinguluve of the

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(15) See further "Worship, sacrifice and sacraments," pp. 117-1[illegible]

chief's lineage have territorial significance in their capacity of "owners of the land." Thus, rain and other fertility blessings are primarily expected from them, and sacrifices for rain and agricultural success are directed towards them on behalf of all people within the chiefdom, irrespective of kin membership. Everyone is therefore expected to contribute to such communal rites, which are separated from the 'rites of life crises' performed along kinship lines. This dichotomy is observed also among other peoples in Africa:

> "At planting time, each local community carries out rites to ask for rain and good crops, and these are community rites in which the mizimu (ancestral spirits) are not involved. But each family though it contributes beer for the general rite also privately asks its own mizimu for assistance." (16)

Later on in this dissertation I will attempt to demonstrate that this dichotomy between communal (or calendaric) rites and crises rites of the kin group may even have influenced the Tshwa in their response to Christianity.(17)

Tinguluve and the Sky Power (Tilo)

Among a few of the Tshwa of today I have found the notion that the tinguluve were not worshipped at all, but used exclusively as media for worshipping Tilo, the Sky Power.(18) Personally I believe this is a recent adaptation, but there is evidence that the tinguluve were believed to have ready access to Tilo and were thus regarded as mediators between living humans and the remote Power of the Sky. The following prayer, recollected by

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(16) E. Colson, The Plateau Tonga of N. Rhodesia, p. 3.
(17) See p. 273-275
(18) Cf. Cullen-Young; in Smith, African Ideas of God, p. 49).

an informant, certainly implies cooperation between these Powers: "You tinguluve, stand up together with Mandlani (one of the names for Tilo), and fight for us!"

Only one ceremony is on record where there seems to have been a direct approach to Tilo without the tinguluve as mediators. This is the so-called kole wo lava vula (special supplication for rain). It should be observed that this ceremony was performed only in times of unbearable drought and first after all other rain ritual resources had been exhausted.[19]

Foreign, possessive and sickness-bringing spirits (Mandiki)

While tinguluve are closely intertwined with traditional Tshwa life, two other spiritual agents have become naturalised into Tshwa culture, in spite of having a somewhat foreign flavour. The first kind of these spirits is the ndiki (plur: mandiki), which can be classified as a "foreign, possessive and sickness-bringing spirit." Mandiki are at present recognised as being quite common in Tshwa country, and sickness is consequently often divined as being caused by these spirits. On the other hand, I have never heard that mandiki have been accused of causing somebody's death.

Any Tshwa informant would know that mandiki originate from the Zulu and Ndau peoples, with the main stress on the latter. During the troubled years of the 19th century, many Zulu and Ndau warriors died in the Tshwa area, often without possibility of a proper burial.[20] The spirits of

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(19) See "Worship, sacrifice and sacraments," p. 126 for description.

(20) "One day while visiting a place where a battle had been fought I came across a number of skeletons ...", W.T. Hogue, D. Harry Arnow, A Pioneer Missionary, p. 75.

these warriors are believed to cling like black-jacks to persons who happen to step on their graves, and such persons come back home sick. Sometimes this kind of sickness is a form of mental derangement, sometimes it may be a serious shivering, but the type of sickness is not the determining factor, as any kind of illness may be diagnosed by the diviner as coming from a mandiki.

Also among the Zulu people "amandiki" are known, and they are likewise claimed to be of recent origin, "coming from the North."(21) It appears that similar beliefs are common in a large part of Africa, as the mashave among the Shona and the masabe of the Tonga (Zambia) are all claimed to be spirits "of a foreign man or woman who died there."(22)

Nowadays most mandiki are believed to have had several "hosts" since the time of warfare, and when a possessed person dies, his mandiki hover around looking for another suitable host. It is recognized that certain persons are more prone to becoming possessed than others. "Mandiki love some persons." Such mandiki which are temporarily without a human host are believed to stay close to a path or road, often at a crossroads, ready to settle on the right kind of person. One informant gave a drastic illustration as to how mandiki tend to cluster at certain places: "As one or other another goes to the same place to urinate, these free' mandiki are drawn to gather at special spots."

Mandiki are always talked about in plural, because it is believed that a possessed person always

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(21) B.G. Lee, "Spirit Possession among the Zulu," in Beattie-Middleton (ed), Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa, p. 130.

(22) M. Gelfand, Shona Religion, p. 84; E. Colson, op. cit., p. 4.

has more than one ndiki. In popular belief, there seems to be an ongoing process of growth in kinds and numbers, similar to such a process in Rhodesia.(23) Several animal spirits have come into the picture among the Tshwa, for instance the baboon spirit and a hyena spirit. There is also the "ndiki ga xilungu" (= the white man's spirit), not indicating that a white man could be possessed by mandiki, but that a ndiki emanating from some white man may cling to a possessed person!

It was claimed that a "ndiki ga xilungu" made a certain person eat only rice (no maize or cassava) and forced him always to be dressed in a jacket and to keep playing the guitar!(24) This is so much more remarkable, as other mandiki are said to fear everything "that belongs to civilisation." School books and most written or printed material seem to call for mandiki's presence. The Bible is greatly feared. It is also said that any lamp being lit when there are mandiki around will be put out by the spirits. Only "ordinary" fire can be tolerated. This seems to be one of mandiki's weak spots, where counter-measures are said to have been taken by persons wanting to be free from these spirits.

The obvious conflict between mandiki and modern civilisation suggests the possibility that the spirit possession connected with this comparatively new cult may be a cathartic expression in the face of frustrations brought by cultural and religious pressure from outside. The evidence that mandiki-possession actually is on the increase, and that traditional 'doctors' nowadays usually appear in the 'new' form of vanyamisoro (sing. nyamusoro), i.e., pos-

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(23) Cf. M. Gelfand, op. cit., pp. 88 ff.
(24) Cf. Ibid., p. 90.

sessed by mandiki, is no direct proof of this explanation but provides basis for a working hypothesis well worth further investigation.(25)

A mandiki-possessed person is no longer his own. He has to follow the whims of the spirits, who often speak to him in dreams, because he knows that sickness will come if he disobeys. Many are said to spend large sums of money on strange pieces of clothing and other paraphernalia, which are believed to indicate the kind of mandiki which has the person in his power. It is also commonly believed that mandiki make the possessed person do many things contrary to his own will. It would seem that, in such cases, he acts as an unknowing medium. As a 'doctor' performing under the influence of mandiki, he would claim total amnesia in regard to the period when "the spirit is upon him."

This is not the place for an investigation of mandiki possession from a psychological viewpoint. I find, however, that Margaret Field's research into spirit possession in Ghana supplies potentially important clues to the phenomenon, as she sets the "dissociated mind" at the centre of her discussion.(27) However, it is imperative to remember that this is an 'explanation' completely foreign to Tshwa (or 'African') culture, and, while I admittedly search for rational explanations, I reiterate Asamoa's exhortation that "we should be able to acknowledge that the spiritual world in which the African believes is a reality."(28)

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(25) Cf. L.G. Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 133, where the author suggests a similar reason for changes in language used by mandiki-possessed.
(26) Cf. M. Field, *Search for security*, p. 57.
(27) *Ibid.*, pp. 52-56.
(28) E.A. Asamoa, "The Christian Church and African heritage," in Ans Dessai, *Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans*, p. 134.

Establishing a relationship with mandiki (kutwazisa)

When the diagnosis has been confirmed that foreign, possessive, sickness-bringing spirits (mandiki) have settled in a certain person, the patient will first be told to get clothing of a certain kind,(29) as well as the usual drums of a special design.

Subsequently a date is set for the actual treatment, called kutwazisa. This word is clearly connected with the Zulu verb "ukuthwasa", used as a designation for 'possession' by ancestral spirits. It means a 'coming out,' or 'emergence,' as of the new moon or the reappearance of a planet or constellation."(30) The Tonga corresponding term, kutwazisa, is in the causative form, and would mean "to make (something) emerge." The treatment is, therefore, not what is normally implied by the word "exorcism," which would mean the expulsion of the spirits. It is rather designed to "make the mandiki come out," so that a relationship can be stabilized with them and they may be able to "start working" through their new host. It is assumed that the initial sickness, caused by the mandiki, will disappear as soon as the mandiki "feel free to work" again.

At this curing function, the nyamusoro (see above) works himself into a dissociated state of frenzy, created through the steady drone of the special ndiki drums, the deafening clatter of the tinjhele (tins filled with dried corn), and his own and his acolytes' repetitive singing.(31) His body begins shivering (kucheruka) and in a trance, he begins to

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(29) In principle, these clothes are to show from what tribe the mandiki are, e.g., the Ndau or Zulu tribe. Nowadays there are certain types of cloth, available in shops, called 'mandiki-cloth."

(30) G.G. Lee, "Spirit Possession among the Zulu," in Mattie-Middleton (ed), Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa, p. 134.

(31) Note strong similarities with the induction of dissociation in Bhuna (M. Field, op. cit., pp. 56-57.)

speak with a strange sounding voice. He has then 'caught' the patient's mandiki (or, at least one of them), who are forced to reveal their names.

This element of finding the name of the spiritual agent, which will be observed also in the case of 'spirits-of-revenge,' is of crucial importance for the continuance of the treatment. The same urge to know the name of the spirit is seen behind the necessity to ask the divining bones to reveal what spirit or Power is causing the affliction. Lienhardt found a similar concept among the Dinka in Sudan:

> In divination an attempt is made to specify a Power as the grounds of a particular human condition. Until its name is known, it remains as it were latent and undefined within the affective condition of the suffering individual, and action cannot be taken to remove it or propitiate it until it has been identified." (32)

When the names are known, the mandiki (through the diviner) immediately proceed to give their new host their rules for "peaceful co-existence." He is told to erect a special altar (a forked pole) in his hut, where he must perform regular sacrifices to his mandiki. He is also ordered to smear himself with red ochre (ntsunhi) as a sign of his new relationship, and is given rules of behaviour according to the nature of the mandiki.

This treatment obviously leads the patient into a completely new type of life. He will, as a rule, not be able successfully to combine the role of "ordinary" Tshwa with his role as 'possessed,' and after some time, he will probably emerge as a nyamusoro ("mandiki-doctor").

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(32) G. Lienhardt, Divinity and Experience, p. 148.

Spirits-of-revenge (Mipfhukwa or Vanyamikwaxani)

The second type of spirit, not fully traditional in Tshwa life but now very common and important, is the so-called mupfhukwa (plur: mipfhukwa). It should be classified as a "spirit-of-revenge," closely connected with witches and with the influence of mandiki-possessed 'doctors' (vanyamisoro).

The name mupfhukwa is derived from the Tsonga verb ku pfhukwa (Tshwa: ku vukwa, or ku vuxwa = to be waked up), and indicates "a person who is being woken up," i.e., from the dead. Another name for the same phenomenon is nyamukwaxani (plur: vanyamikwaxani) of unknown etymological derivation. We will here use the shorter form mupfhukwa.

All Tshwa agree that the mipfhukwa originally came from the Ndau people.(33) This tribe has a reputation of 'specializing' in occult phenomena, and their influence became strongly felt during the latter part of last century. It is recognized that many traditional 'doctors' in Tshwa country are of Ndau origin. In the case of mipfhukwa, there is a clear connection with the similar "revenging spirit" among the Shona in Rhodesia. This is called ngozi (= anger?) and is reported to have the same general characteristics as mupfhukwa.(34)

The Mipfhukwa-system

Although commonly known, the belief in mipfhukwa is rather complicated, and it is probable that several of the informants were unaware of the "system" involved, even if they knew the different sides of the phenomenon. Through comparison of several informants' accounts, it has been possible to arrive

(33) Cf. mandiki, p. 42
(34) M. Gelfand, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

at the following pictures, which I also have checked with my most knowledgeable informants:

There are certain mipfhukwa medicines (tisinya ta wupfhukwa) obtainable from certain 'doctors,' which can be inserted under the skin. These medicines are said to be found mostly in the Vilanculos area, possibly because of close proximity to Ndau territory. In general, it is older men who seek this kind of medicine. Women are hardly ever said to "wake up" as mipfhukwa.

It is believed that a person cannot live long after having had mipfhukwa medicine inserted in him. "The medicine wants to work."

Treatment with mipfhukwa medicine is always done in secrecy, as persons seeking this always have a grudge against somebody else. Such treatment is regarded as a preparation for revenge which cannot be had during his lifetime. Furthermore, if this revenge should not hit the person concerned, it will reach his family or kin-group, aiming at its utter destruction.

The reason for revenge by way of mipfhukwa is most often witchcraft (wuloyi). It is said that a mupfhukwa comes to a certain village because someone of the residing kin-group has 'eaten his flesh,' i.e., killed him by wuloyi. After death, the person who has taken the mipfhukwa medicine now has the upper hand and punishes the relatives of his 'killer' until they pay him special attention.

Another reason for this kind of revenge after death is said to be theft, which has always been regarded in a serious light by Tshwa. A person having taken a blanket from somebody else was said to be afflicted by the owner coming back as mupfhukwa, and had to repay the value of the blanket several times over.

The first sign of a person's "waking up" after death is repeated sickness among his own living relatives. A diviner (nyanguru) is then called in, and he may "catch" the spirit of the dead person in question. This spirit then speaks through the diviner, explaining that he is so-and-so, father or grandfather of the people in the village, and that he has come back to them, asking them to take special care of him. He then requests a hut to be built for him in his former home village, and a young relative, usually a boy, is set aside to keep this house in order.

Subsequently, a small hut is built in the village, and the diviner indicates which person should be the care-taker. A sacrifice is then performed at one side of this hut, to bid a special "welcome back" to the waking relative. He has now come back to his village by 'wunguluve," i.e., by ancestorhood, but he is not regarded as an ordinary nguluve, as these spirits normally do not make themselves noticed by these methods. It is important to observe that this spirit is neither called nor regarded as munfhukwa in his own kin-group.

When the sacrifice has been performed, the sickness in the family is expected to end, and the "owner" of the spirit, i.e., the present living leader of the kin-group residing in the village, may send the spirit on errands: "Go to so-and-so because they have taken women from us!" etc.

Thus this spirit-of-a-dead can be sent by his relative on sinister errands and cause havoc in another kin group, as well as go where he himself wishes to have revenge on his own evil-doers. It is also claimed that such a spirit can be used by certain valoyi (witches), but this seems to be a deviation from the normal "mipfhukwa-system."

Treatment in case of affliction by spirit-of-revenge (_mufuukwa_)

In a dissociated, 'possessed' state, the _nyamuzuro_ _ki_-doctor (_nyamuzuro_) 'catches' the offending spirit, which proceeds to tell the enquirers -- through the diviner -- his name and home village. He also explains that he has come to take revenge on those of their kin-group, giving his reasons for this revenge. On further questioning by the afflicted party, the 'caught' spirit-of-revenge states his conditions, on which he may be willing to renounce his right to further revenge.

Three items appear to be obligatory in such conditions: 1) a sum of money; 2) an animal to be sacrificed, usually a goat; 3) "the head of a person" (_hloko ya munhu_), meaning a girl from the afflicted kin-group, who will be dedicated to the spirit-of-revenge as his 'wife.' The amount of money may vary in each case. Informants mentioned sums in the range of R50. The girl to be 'dedicated' must leave her home village for a completely new type of life.

The _nyamuzuro_ will then lead the party from the afflicted village to the alleged home village of the spirit-of-revenge (_mufhukwa_). On arrival, the party is said to be greeted by the villagers. The _nyamuzuro_ then 'addresses' the spirit again, and he explains their purpose of coming. The structure of ritual then calls for the village leader to accept the money, and to sacrifice the goat at the side of the spirit's hut. The girl is simultaneously dedicated to serve the spirit in his own village.

Persons dedicated to a mupfhukwa

One or two persons may be dedicated as "care-takers" of the spoon's spirit-hut. A boy of the spirit's own family is often set aside for this purpose. As such a person -- a relative of the spirit -- could be considered to be in close touch with the spirit, he would normally have to be of the same sex as the spirit himself. The second person, however, acting from behind, is always of the opposite sex, as she is regarded as the mate of the spirit.

These 'dedicated' young persons are charged with the upkeep of the spirit hut, keeping the fire going, etc. Generally, they sleep in the hut, but when the girl reaches puberty and normally is given in marriage to a man of the spirit's kin-group, she will stay in her future husband's hut. These care-takers are said to lead normal lives, taking part in all activities in the village. Sometimes they dress in white and are covered with red ochre (ntsu-sunu), but this appears not seem to be an integral part of the ritual.

When such a boy grew up, or the girl was married by her family for a normal type of marriage, they could be "cleansed" by a special ceremony and replaced by someone else. This act, in respect of a girl, is described in another connection in this dissertation.(35)

wuloyi -- the craft of witches

One power, strongly influencing the thinking and action of the Tonga, is wuloyi. This word is usually translated "witchcraft," but I beg to draw

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(35) See "Worship, sacrifice and sacraments," p. 140

the attention to the fact that "magic in general" is no synonym of wuloyi. It rather expresses "the craft of witches," implying that certain persons, particularly women, have special occult power which they use to the detriment of others, and, simultaneously to some advantage for themselves. Such persons are called valoyi (sing. noyi), which we would translate "witch" or, in applicable (few) cases, 'wizard'. Wuloyi, then, denotes the power, knowledge and activity of the valoyi.

The most harmless of witches' activities seems to be the removal of "the power and the taste" from food of various kinds. "A noyi (witch) can make so that we drink this tea and eat the bread but we won't feel satisfied, nor taste anything. Or, if we have meat and a noyi gets hold of it, we may eat but never get filled, nor will the meat taste anything. And beer treated by a noyi does not make you drunk at all ..."

This presumed power of removing the essence of food or drink has no connection with the poisoning of food, sometimes ascribed to witches. It seems rather to be in line with the alleged noyi activity of kutshivela ("to transfer power"). When, e.g., a farmer discovers that his own maize does not grow well at all, while his neighbour's fields carry a good crop, foul play is suspected. The assumption is then that the successful farmer is a noyi who has used his power of kutshivela to transfer the power of growth from a neighbour's fields to his own.

Persons thought to possess strange and sinister powers by which they may live an easy life at other people's expense are hated and admired at the same time. Thus, valoyi are said to be clever (va tlhari-hile), and the proverb "Votlhariha va hanya hi nyuko wa zipumbu" (= "The clever ones live by the sweat of fools") would indicate a grudging admiration for the

valoyi. They are seen as people who, through their special powers, can have more than their share of the coveted blessing of 'life.'

The word novi may sometimes be used without any evil meaning implied, to indicate a certain person who is particularly clever in some field. However, stories of suspicion and hatred against the one who seems to be getting more than his share are very common. There is the young man who was able to build a stone house before his own father could do the same. We hear of the man coming from the mines in the Transvaal with some money saved. As he buys cattle, sheep, and builds a better house, there is jealousy and suspicion among the neighbours, and evil consequences for the successful one. Even as they arouse suspicion because of their alleged wuloyi, other persons use the same kind of power to plot their destruction.

This is the inevitable explanation among Pedi, when a successful person gets into trouble. He may get sick himself, or his wife has a spontaneous abortion, or the house gets destroyed by fire: wuloyi at work, of course!

This pattern would suggest that wuloyi activities mainly spring from two sources:

a. selfish desire to enhance one's own life at the expense of others;

b. Jealousy against others when this success is denied oneself.

There is the mother-in-law sending sickness on her son-in-law because his wife gets nice dresses while she is not given the same attention. There is the childless sister allegedly using wuloyi to kill her sister's newborn baby because of her hysterical jealousy. There is the old woman sending a festering sore on her grandchild, because its father did not give her a pound on his return from the mines....

How does a witch perform?

There are mainly four types of activity ascribed to the valoyi (witches), besides 'being clever' and the power of mutsule:

1. A vayi (witch) can fly by night. Several informants told of cases where they had been attacked by some human agency when in the dream. They woke up shaking, or it was more usual, after the vayi's alleged attempt to strangle them. In another case, the woman was flying in the dream, only to convey a message about a sickness afflicting the sleeper. In all cases they were women flying naked.

Their flying range seems to be rather limited. Three miles was a possible distance (indicated by well-known places), but ten miles was considered too far for a vayi. "She would not get back before sunrise."

A flying vayi can enter into some other village and leave sickness or death as a token of her activity. "It is the valoyi's job to eat the flesh of people." It is easy to imagine that a sick person, whose body shrinks, can be the victim of as "eaten" by valoyi. It is all done mysteriously, and help must come very quickly. So the diviner is consulted.

2. Valoyi can use animals as their servants. The most common animals in this respect seem to be the hyena, owl and cole-cat, but snakes and lions -- and even flies -- are mentioned. The hyena can be sent to catch goats, while the owl figures mainly as an evil omen. The sound of a xikhova or xikuhulu-huhu (owl) in the village when the sun has gone down puts an immediate scare into people and can be interpreted in only one way: there is wulayi in the village. Cole-cats were said to have robbed certain fields of peanuts, while neighbouring fields (belonging to the same witch) were untouched by the intruders. And flies may be used to suck human

fat from sores, enabling the noyi to attain magical dominion over the person in question.

One variation of (2) is when the noyi herself is believed to change into a certain animal. Hyenas and owls were mentioned in this respect, and there does not seem to be any clear distinction between the two methods.

3. Valoyi are also believed to send certain sicknesses without any tangible means at all. This may be a slight variation on the main theme, as this type of valoyi are said to have a certain medicine inserted into their body so that any person who hits them or does any evil act against them, gets sick before sundown. "A va biwi" (= "They must not be beaten"). Such persons do not take revenge themselves, but sickness -- for instance some change in the pigmentation of the skin -- comes without fail, and there is no cure.

4. The least common activity of a noyi -- but also the most terrible one -- seems to be the use of poison in the food or drink of her victim. This kind of wuloyi is sometimes distinguished from the types mentioned above and referred to in English as "sorcery" as distinct from "witchcraft,"(36) but so far I have only heard of this type among the Tshwa as one variation of the witch's activity.(37)

Obviously such complicate beliefs in the power of witches have produced methods of how to deal with this potential threat. Some of these methods will be described later on in this thesis.(38)

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(36) Cf. J. Middleton, and E.H. Winter, Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa, p. 2.
(37) Cf. also R. LeVine, in same volume, p. 227.
(38) See "Pursuit of Wealth," p. 107

4. INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY

The historical picture

The Tonga and Chopi people had many contacts with people outside of their own area before the end of the nineteenth century. Eighteen-seventy-three was remembered as the "year of Jaiman," i.e., when the diamond mines in Kimberley were opened (1) and even before this time migration had begun to plantations in the British colony of Natal.(2)

Undoubtedly, many returning from their experiences in the South African mines or the sugar plantations in Natal, had much to relate of "the religion of white men," and some had already adopted the new faith. Still, the first experience of Christianity for many Chopi and Tonga must have been a second or third hand acquaintance with Roman Catholic practices as they could be seen in the town of Inhambane.

It is only reasonable to suppose that a few Tonga in and around the town of Inhambane had been baptized in the Roman Catholic church at the time when the first Protestant missionaries appeared in the region. However, it is an historical fact that no real mission effort had been started among the Tonga or the Chopi by Roman Catholics at that time.

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(1) H.A. Junod, Life of a South African tribe, II, p. 505.

(2) When the British governor of Natal, Shepstone, agreed to the installation of Cetshwayo as king of the Zulus, in 1872, he negotiated a special treaty with him to facilitate the passing of Thonga from southern Mozambique through Zulu territory. (See Hedges, Analysis of a social situation in Zululand, p. 37, as quoted in Alto-Comissário, O movimento migratório de trabalhadores entre Moçambique e a Africa do Sul, p. 11).

It was during the last fifteen years of Nguni rule that the first Protestant missionaries entered the Tshwa areas.[3] The "American Board of Commissioners and Foreign Mission" sent some representatives from their settlements in Natal to investigate the possibilities of establishing new mission work further north, along the coast of the Indian Ocean. The first mission station in the new area was built near the Inhambane Bay in 1883 at Mongwe, north of Maxixe, where R. Fichardt began work among the Tonga people, who made their living mainly as fishermen. Other missionaries left the fairly safe coastline and ventured into the bush country west and north-west of Inhambane. Thus, W.H. Wilcox settled at Makodweni, and H.P. Junod was welcomed by the Tshwa chief Mukhambi to build on his ground near the live spring of water which was the Mukhambi lineage's sacred place of ancestral sacrifice.

Only slightly later than the "American Board" representatives, some missionaries sent out by the Free Methodist Church of America arrived at Inhambane (1895). The first were the Kelleys, and a young man, H. Agnew, who immediately proceeded to establish their work south-west of Inhambane, at a place called Komeni on the border between the Tonga and the Chopi. After many difficult years of constant malaria attacks and several untimely deaths among their missionaries, the work was largely left in the hands of a few African converts, being visited annually by Agnew who had moved to the Transvaal.[4]

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Roman Catholic Church also began a new missionary

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(3) See "The Tshwa and their environment," p.4
(4) W.P. Hogue, H. Percy Agnew, a pioneer missionary, pp. 55, 100, 124, 241.

activity, and in 1910 the number of Roman Catholic missionaries in active work in Moçambique had grown to 67. Progress among Africans must have been slow, however, as Padre António da Silva reports that the total number of confessions of all Catholics in Moçambique was 1905 in the year 1909, compared to 1500 confessions in 1886.

Also for the Protestant missionaries, progress was very slow, and disappointment mingled with lack of missionary personnel prompted also the "American Board" to withdraw its missionaries from the Inhambane region in 1896, moving them back to Natal. One missionary, Mr. Erwin Inhambe, refused to leave the people at Inhambane, and during his rest period in America, he was accepted as a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church (not to be confused with the African Methodist Episcopal Church), under which he returned to Inhambane in 1893. During the years of missionary absence, however, the work had not stagnated. One of the earliest converts, Tiyora Navess, had taken charge of the little school and church at Makodweni and inspired somebody else to do the same at Gambine. Thus, Hinbarne returned to a more hopeful situation than the one he had left three years earlier. In 1897, the Methodist Episcopal Church in U.S.A. sent more missionaries to Inhambane, and from the turn of the century the Methodist work grew steadily, centered around Cumbine and Chicuque near Inhambane.(6)

As soon as African mine workers began flowing to Johannesburg, [illegible] societies already at

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(5) A. da Silva, "[illegible] Estatística de Moçambique," in [illegible], pp. 681-2.

(6) J.A. Sorenson, [illegible] och Methodistmunder i Inhambane, pp. [illegible]. Cf. Gonçalves, Protestantismo em Africa, II, pp. 117-118.

work in South African style and the nine compounds to preach and teach. The first Methodist missionary whose established regular station work in the compounds in 1877. This effort proved successful, particularly among [illegible]-speaking men, and converts from different parts of the Johannesburg region contributed to the spread of Christian influence in their home country. In the beginning of the present century, free Methodist [illegible] were able to re-settle permanently, this time at Lemmechafe, near Lourenço Marques, the oldest seaport of Mozambique.

The Methodist Episcopal Church waited until 1913 actively to enter the classical work in nine compounds around Johannesburg. Since then the work has spread to a number of larger areas in southern Mozambique, partly by means of young men converted in the cities, and partly by new initiatives to extend the work in the areas [illegible] northwest of Lourenço Marques, until it now reaches the river Save to the north and extends beyond Inhambane and Inhoto in the northwest. The [illegible] Mission meanwhile opened work in the Inhambane area, at Khaloyi (1932). Another mission organization entering the same region because of its [illegible] mission work was the Seventh-day Baptist Mission, which is now established in the vicinity of Lourenço Marques. The American Board Mission has also come back to its old field the same way and now has congregations in the Lourenço Marques and Manica regions.

Even within the "non-Methodist" denominations, it appears that the Protestant influence on the Tsonga has been fairly undivided. The Methodist Episcopal Church has carried the major share of the work through the years. The "runner-up" is the free Methodist Church, which is completely separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church as far as organi-

sation and administration are concerned, but the doctrinal roots of the two missions are the same.

The Methodist Episcopal Tshwa hymnal is now being used by all Protestant denominations in the region. The translation of the Bible into the Tshwa language was done through Methodist missionaries, and the early establishment of schools and printing press contributed greatly to the overall influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church. As this work accelerated before other Protestant missions were activated in the region, it is no wonder that the Methodist Episcopal Church is well entrenched in the life of the Tshwa.

It is almost unbelievable that so few purely African independent churches exist in Tshwa country. The handful of known ones -- even shuttling back and forth between the mines and the home area have ample opportunity of getting into contact with independent churches -- are outside of mining communities. Still, one Ethiopian or Zionist type of churches appear to have very few representatives in the southern part of Moçambique. The early Portuguese policy of discouraging splinter groups from spreading in Moçambique has probably worked as a strong deterrent. A few Zionist groups do exist, however, but beyond them, only one splinter group has emerged in the Tshwa region. This is the "Igreja Luz Africana" (the Church of the African Light), which broke away from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1961 or 1962 (version). The Igreja Luz Africana is still existing in southern Moçambique as well as around Johannesburg, but it does not seem to have any impact or influence.(7)

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(7) Administrator C. da Freitas, however, lists as many as 11 Ethiopian and 11 Zionist churches active in the province of Moçambique (J.J. Gonçalves, Dos Felupes ao Africa, I, p. 175, footnote).

was presented to them. I will do this in the form of purely descriptive observations, based upon information from missionaries and Tshwa Christians, as well as my personal experiences.

Using the Tshwa language

Without casting a value judgment, it can nonetheless be said that, with dictionaries & new type of white man entered the lives of the Tonga and the Tshwa. These men came to settle on the west side of the Zambezi Rift, and even some distance away from the sea, they lived closer to the Tonga or ate more coot <u>valunga</u> (white men) cared to do. They built their houses differently from the Tshwa hut, of course, and carried fresh provisions from places far away. Several of them came to live in the bush like the Tshwa did themselves, far away from other <u>valunga</u>.

From a Tshwa viewpoint, the strangest fact of all was possibly the way these white men talked to the Tshwa in a different way. They tried to understand what Tshwa were saying in their own language, pointing here and pointing there, asking the eternal question, '<u>Kini leza?</u>' (what is called)[10] Even if the Tshwa thought that the strangers pronounced their language in a strange way, it did not take very long before there was some real communication between him and the Tshwa people who were living close by. The strangers employed a couple of boys to help him in the house, and they also learnt his exotic language fairly fluently.

Early some of the missionaries, wishing to begin the work of translating Tshwa into writing, and the little printing press at Nakodumi, a few miles west of Dombwe, began translating the first Tshwa

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(10) C.T. Rowse, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 25.

spelling charts. Rev. Busley then started the first school at Zambine, [illegible] after the mission work had begun in the area [illegible] few boys came to learn "how some lines on paper could speak their own language."

Teaching

Naturally, the written word was used before it was written in order to spread the Christian message across to the Tshwa around Inhaca and Nasodwana. Story-telling is still greatly loved by the Tshwa, and they call "kariyani wa nyanyani" (= appr.: here comes a story!) stirs up an incredible interest in a group of Tshwa people. They did not mind listening to the new kind of stories that the missionaries had to tell. But there was strong resistance as missionaries made it clear that they wanted the Tshwa to leave their old ways and traditions and learn more about the central figure in the missionary stories: Jesus. The old generation and adamantly they did not want to become <u>x-kimuni</u> (white men). They made it difficult even for their sons when these wanted to go to school. One teacher at Mary recalls that boys had to be employed for some odd jobs on the condition that they could spend three hours a day in school, learning to read. About 1895, however, it was reported by the same writer that the school at Zambine [illegible] than a hundred boys from the villages in the neighbourhood.(11)

Even if many boys learned to read and write, it is estimated that [illegible] about ten persons became converted to Christianity during the first ten years of Protestant missionary activity among the Tshwa. Meanwhile, the New Testament was being translated

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(11) J.A. Forrest, [illegible] op. cit., p. 50; cf. W.F. Hogue, op. cit., p. [illegible].

to the Tshwa langu[illegible] by [illegible]ilcox and Richards, [illegible]or - ing together with t[illegible] converts Tizora Navess an[illegible] Davida Maperre. [illegible]he first edition of the [illegible] New Test[illegible]ment c[illegible]me of[illegible] the press at Makodweni, this meant an entirely n[illegible]ld to all boys who were learning to read. [illegible] born leader, and [illegible] influence over the boys at Mocodoene (as Mako[illegible]ni now is written) and Cambine became decisive for [illegible], and the number of converts started to rise. [illegible] outside villages as [illegible]lists. But their first task in the new situ[illegible] was always to gather the boys around them to teach them to read. Thus many village schools w[illegible]rted, and it is probable that some chiefs r[illegible] the opening of schools in their villages as [illegible] ru[illegible]ent and advantageous step for improving the relati[illegible] with the White authorities.(12) These schools bec[illegible] focal points in the sp[illegible] of the Protestant [illegible]n work among the Tshwa until the Portuguese admi[illegible]tion in 192[illegible] withdrew the rights of Protestant [illegible]ssions to have any schools outside of their [illegible]y registered centres (*sedes*). All primary educati[illegible] was then put into the han[illegible] of the Roman Catholic church, according to the agreement between the Vatican and the Portuguese State. Thus, we find that the observation of Pedro Antônio da Silva is correct [illegible]t least as far as the beginning of Protestant mis[illegible] is concerned: 'Their most important activity i[illegible] school and the printing press.'(13)

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(12) Cf. [illegible]. Andersson, *Churches at the grass-roots*, p. [illegible].

(13) *Moçambique*, p. [illegible].

Christian villages (mitalela)

In close connection with the village school, Christian worship was introduced into the village and Christian ethics was taught. Some people who insisted on the traditional Lahwa ways and customs moved away from the village. In other cases a group of Christians moved from their old surroundings and built a new Christian village. Such a village was often planned slightly differently from the usual Lahwa pattern: two rows of houses bordered upon the village "street," and the village leader's house and the little church (doubling up as a school building) were at the top of the row. This type of Christian village (mitalela) has disappeared long ago, but such close living together with other new converts must have had a tremendous importance for the spiritual and cultural growth of the inhabitants, as well as for their ethical discipline.

> "In that faith of yesterday, living in mitalela, it was not easy to do what one wished to," said one informant, "because the Evangelist (village leader) was like a Chief (Gabo). He knew his people well. He showed every one of us where we were allowed to build, and we had to build in straight lines like believers (!). It was not easy for a person in such a place to go to a traditional sacrifice. If you were not present in church (every night), he demanded to know the reason. But today it is easy to go astray, because we do not live like that any more ...

In these Christian villages, missionaries encouraged tree-planting, of many kinds and certain better agricultural methods, but it was not until in the 1920's that proper agricultural training began with a missionary especially qualified for this task.

Hygiene teaching

Hygiene was [illegible] primary aim of the Protestant missionaries. [illegible] field until 1910, but [illegible]ating of sores and t[illegible] of elementary hygien[illegible] missionary routine much earlier. Bathroom[illegible] important sign of [illegible]ristian village, and the message of digging latrines went literally along with the one of Christian f[illegible]th. It is still quite common to hear a report on how many latrines have been dug during the last [illegible]uarter, when the Methodi[illegible] Quarterly Conference[illegible] in session in some Tshwa congregations.

It was along this line that the first leadership training courses [illegible]ine were started during the time of World War I. [illegible] were called in to Xikola xa Basiselela (school of cleanliness) and were taught how to [illegible]ach and to teach the Spelle[illegible] along with Hygiene. [illegible] courses gradually developed into proper [illegible]s[illegible]l training courses, and teaching of hygiene [illegible] taken over by the medical personnel at the [illegible] hospital at Chicuque and the medical outposts at Lurdes and Shalel (Lourenço).

It is interesting to note that at least one important Portuguese [illegible] source sees the facts emphasized up till this point as signs of Protestant missionaries not being [illegible] anxious to save souls for eternity as Catholic missionaries are:

> "The first ones (Catholics) are troubled by not being able to make more and more natives convert, as their sons all have their souls' immortal destiny in view. The Protestant missionaries do not have this worry, as they concentrate more on the earthly life, even if many of them do not forget the eternal life."(14)

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(14) A. da Silva Rego, Alguns problemas sociológico-missionários da África negra, p. 119.

Judging from the top pricrity presently given by Tshwa Christians to the religious value of 'eternal life,' it would seem that this observation is not valid as far as Protestant missions in the Inhambane region are concerned. Evidently, practical teaching and the preaching about 'eternal life' went hand in hand in this Protestant venture.(15)

The Bible

Although school and literacy work figure largely in the Protestant beginnings in Tshwa country, it is evident that the Bible has been the focal point right from the start. The aim that kept the work going of making Tshwa a written language was to "make God's Word, the Bible, known to the heathen Tshwa." This was also the ultimate aim of the literacy work. As soon as a pupil had finished the first Speller, he was introduced to the New Testament.

A tremendous interest seems to have been aroused by the printing of the first Tshwa edition of the Old Testament in the beginning of this century. Later it has been discovered that so many grave mistakes were included in that edition that it was impossible for the modern translator, Rev. J.A. Ferreon, to make a revision of the old edition. He insisted that a completely new translation was the only possibility.(16)

Nevertheless, the first Tshwa Bible was so loved that many Christians of the older generation refused to recognize the 1955 translation. The

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(15) See "Death and eternal life," p. 261. Cf. W.T. Hogue, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

(16) An entirely new translation of the whole Bible was prepared under the guidance of J.A. Ferreon and printed in 1955 by the American Bible Society.

Bible became known as "the Book" (Bhuku). Nowadays, the new translation has taken over completely, and the Bible is a best-seller among Tshwa, particularly in the Transvaal mine compounds, even if the price corresponds to two days' wages for a young worker!

Protestant missionaries were, however, not satisfied by only producing the Bible in the Tshwa language. They also taught the Bible very diligently. Village leaders were urged to use it regularly in morning and evening worship in their villages, and sets of Bible lessons soon appeared in the little monthly paper Kuca ka Lixo (= The Dawn of the Morning) which was distributed free of charge. This paper has been issued regularly since 1904. Several books and booklets were produced during the first quarter of this century, and with very few exceptions they dealt with certain books or chapters of the Bible.

As the Protestant missions to the Tshwa operated in a spiritual climate that was -- at least on the white side -- entirely dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, this strong emphasis on the Bible is easy to understand. Undoubtedly, Protestant missionaries felt as their bounden duty to "open up" the Bible to people living in a country where it still remained a closed book, except for priests.(17) Roman Catholics were taught to base their absolute security in the Holy Catholic Church. Protestants, on the other

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(17) This is also the point at which Protestant Missions have been criticised by official sources. José Júlio Gonçalves, in Protestantismo e Africa, says: "As we speak of simplification we do not mean adaptation. They (the Protestants) practice this, too as we have shown, but we can indicate one phenomenon in which Protestantism did not use adaptation, and whose consequences certainly were not brilliant: the indiscriminate distribution of Bibles, not adapted to the pre-existent African mentality. Out of this have surged different manifestations of an Africanized Protestantism." (Vol. II, p. 248)

hand, based by tradition their absolute security on the Bible, believed it as "the infallible Word of God." Thus, the doctrine of verbal inspiration of the Bible guided Protestant missionaries in their teaching. No theological or historical criticism of the Bible was taken into account, as most missionaries to the Tshwa would have classified themselves as "fundamentalists." Even though a few missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the past and several more at present could not be counted into the fundamentalist group, the main doctrinal influence in the Tshwa churches is still very definitely based upon the dogma of verbal inspiration.

The doctrine of Sanctification

As the Protestant influence on the Tshwa has come almost exclusively from Methodist sources, the Methodist doctrine of sanctification has played a significant role in forming the Christian faith among these people. Strangely enough, the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church from the time of the beginning of Methodist missions in Moçambique has no doctrinal statement on this issue, which has through the centuries been regarded as the key Methodist doctrine. However, the 1968 "Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church" has the following statement on "Sanctification":

> "We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words, and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord." (18)

(18) Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 1968, p. 47.

Sanctification was the belief that the whole personality can change and become totally engaged in a constant effort of living according to God's will.

It seems that this central Methodist doctrine had at least three direct consequences for the missionary teaching among the Tshwa:

1. Entrance into the new faith could only be through the gate of conversion, which preferably should be according to a certain pattern, including coming forward to the place in front of the pulpit for prayer and tearful repentance.

Evidently, it was soon clear to missionaries (and to some Africans) that this method could be used without any "change of heart" being involved. A few quotations from S. Jones's journal concerning his labours in the mine compounds illustrate this point:

> "One meeting 11 present, and one with 40 present. Second meeting a Church preacher present. Meeting chiefly of Zulus. Sixteen came forward. Do not know how many were in earnest ...
>
> ... from 1 to 5 p.m. at Knights Deep, about 75 present. Good time. About a dozen forward. Three were in earnest, Jonase especially so ..." (19)

While we are not told what criteria were used to determine how many conversions were "in earnest," it is obvious that such 'dedication' early became a form associated with Protestant worship.(20)

2. The new convert had to make an absolute break with his old life. Missionaries taught that everything belonging to Tshwa customs and traditions

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(19) W.T. Hogue, op. cit., p. 227.

(20) Cf. "Worship, Sacrifice and Sacraments," p. 135.

was "inspired by [illegible]" and would have to be left unconditionally. The convert was required to look at his old personal and social life as evil.(21) Thirdly he should move to a 'Christian village,' so that his transfer from one way of life to a completely new one could be facilitated.

3. Great emphasis was placed upon God's commandments, "The Law." The new ethics was completely to replace the pagan one, and the ethical field was soon to become the most important one for Tshwa Christians. What we now see as a strong legalistic trait in the whole Tshwa Protestant community may partly be a negative reflection of the emphasis on the doctrine of sanctification, although the problem of legalism in Christian churches appears to be a continent-wide issue.(22)

Preaching, Sacraments and place of worship

Most elements of worship were transferred directly from the American scene. As in many other African countries, hymns were translated by missionaries from the English language, and American tunes were introduced. Adhering to the overseas Methodist tradition, the worship service lacked strict liturgical order, the main elements being sermon, singing and prayer. On some occasions, testimonies from believers (non-preachers) became part of the service. Possibly, such unstructured "free worship service" was

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(21) Such an attitude condemning everything African is deplorable from a modern point of view, but seems understandable in its contemporary setting. One pioneer missionary, cut off from outside contact, felt that "all was new and wild and strange to him, and they saw no human beings day after day but uncivilized Africans in their disgusting and repulsive appearances." (J.T. Hogue, op. cit., p. 56.

(22) See "Law, sin and salvation," p. 222.

particularly stressed in this country, in contrast to the Roman Catholic elaborated liturgy. Free prayer (i.e., not bound to any written formula) became a significant mark of Tshwa Protestant worship. Even such liturgical elements as candles or robes were, in the beginning, frowned upon.

Preaching was from the start the most important part of the Tshwa Protestant worship service. Very soon after the conversion of the first Tshwa men, some of them were allowed to 'preach.' It must soon have become the goal for many men within the Christian community to reach the stage when they could call themselves vaxumayeli (preachers) and have the right to stand up in a local meeting to open the Bible and give his exhortation based on the Bible verse he may have selected. The vaxumayeli also had the right to lead the group in prayer and took, consequently, a similar function as the "Great-one of the lineage" (wahombe wa lixaka) in approaching the supernatural Powers.

The pulpit had the most prominent place in the simple church buildings that were constructed in the Christian Tshwa villages. It was called xiluvelo (= "place where you pay your respects to the chief"; from ku luva).(23) Quite possibly, this name was attached to the pulpit because this was regarded as the place from which the "Word of the Lord" went out to the congregation, and consequently, this was also where repentant sinners came to bow down "before the Lord" and ask for forgiveness.(24)

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(23) Junod mentions that the main hut in a village, i.e., the headman's own, where "people come to pay homage to him," is called shilubelo. H.A. Junod, op. cit., I, pp. 312-313. Cf. chapter on "Social world of the Tshwa," p. 9.

(24) Note that the Tshwa word for "Lord" is Hosi, which literally means "Chief."

century methodist pew-
, the pulpit was put at the
short walls of the church, indi-
preaching. In front
-- instead of an altar --
preacher's bible and
occasionally the elements of
would be arranged.

arrangement
Protestant church



1. table; sometimes used for lord's supper
2. chair for preacher
3. benches for village elders
4. entrances for preacher and village elders

Evidently a few traditional Tshwa customs were considered safe enough to be kept, as the seating arrangement in a Tshwa rural church from the beginning seems to have followed the principle of the Tshwa hut, where the left side as one enters is regarded as the women's part, while the right hand side belongs to the man.(25) If there were benches in the church, these would be used mainly on the right hand side, for the men, and the Christian Elders of the village had their honoured place on both sides of the preacher, facing the congregation.

In keeping with the principle of non-liturgical worship, the importance of sacraments was, in general, toned down. This was the case particularly in regard to the Lord's Supper, which was served only occasionally. This use of affairs may have been caused, at least partly, by the lack of persons allowed to administer the Lord's Supper, as for many years nobody else but ordained missionaries were permitted to do so. It could also be another sign of a conscious desire to distinguish Protestant worship from the sacrament-dominated Catholic liturgy.

Nobody was accepted as member of the Free Methodist or Methodist Episcopal Churches without baptism, and this sacrament was from the beginning preceded by a lengthy period of instruction. This instruction was soon taken over by African leaders, who thus rapidly attained the responsible position of having to judge whether or not a convert would be ready to receive baptism. When an ordained missionary came visiting the neighbourhood, the local African evangelist presented his baptismal candidates for the sacrament. Sometimes such occasions developed into mass baptisms, where as many as 160 persons might be

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(25) cf. H.A. Jones, op. cit., I, pp. 138, 187.

baptised in one day.(26)

To conclude

Protestant Christianity presented itself to the Tshwa with the three-pronged approach of "Preaching, Teaching and Healing," which has been used in mission situations all over the world.

Practical methods, as teaching literacy and providing small booklets in Tshwa, were primarily used by missionaries in order to gain the confidence of the people. The preached message was connected with the daily life in the villages, through lessons in agriculture and hygiene. Special efforts were made to get close to the Tshwa by always using their language, and African men were early used as assistants in preaching and teaching.

The ultimate aim of the missionaries to proclaim the Christian message and to establish Christian congregations was the keynote in all work. This is where some peculiarities of Methodism became conspicuous, for instance in the doctrine of sanctification, the great emphasis on preaching, and the organization of converts into 'classes' led by lay preachers or "exhorters." In the absolute demand on the convert to renounce all traditional customs and beliefs, Methodist missionaries shared the common attitude of their day.

Through the years, many tens of thousands of Tshwa have responded to the message primarily proclaimed by the missionaries, and become converted. Churches have been established, and Africans are now in responsible positions of leadership. The election in 1964 of the first Tshwa bishop within the Methodist Episcopal Church of Mozambique, Bishop

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(26) J.A. Persson, op. cit., p. 53.

Escrivão Zunguze, represented an important step in this process.

On the other hand, there are undoubtedly many thousands of Tshwa who once became Christians but have left the Church again, and many others who would barely count themselves as nominal Christians.

As we in the following chapter ask the question what prompted many Tshwa to transfer their loyalty from their traditions and customs to Christianity, we will further on seek to find out what kind of attitudes and beliefs were fostered among the Tshwa through this type of presentation of Christianity, and possibly why many after a superficial acquaintance with the Christian faith have turned back to their traditional beliefs.

5. WHY DID THEY BECOME CHRISTIANS?

We have seen how Protestant Christianity was, and is being, presented to the Tshwa people. Now we must find some answers to the question why many of these people chose to become 'believers'.

Before the introduction of Christianity, religion had never been a matter of choice for the Tshwa. Worshipping the ancestors and obeying the laws purporting to come from them was as natural heritage to the Tshwa as the soil on which they walked. Sacrifice, agriculture, hunting, child-birth, laws - all these were part of their ntumbuluko (= "that which developed by itself", i.e. "nature", or "creation"), and as such they were all factual matters, never subject to 'belief' (xikholwa). New features brought into the religious and ethical system by the diviners (e.g. Ndau teaching about revenging spirits) were easily assimilated, as they were only additions, fitting snugly into slots apparently needing to be filled.

To be sure, foreign cultural influence had already been felt, particularly by those men who had gone to work in Natal or Transvaal. (1)

But Christianity challenged the Tshwa to make a clean break with their entire spiritual and cultural heritage, to take the step away from their ntumbuluko and become 'believers' (nakholwa). Surely, this was like walking into the unknown. And still some Tshwa made the change.

What prompted the first Tshwa Christians to take this step? Was it the reputation of White people to be powerful, that helped arouse a curiosity, particularly among young men? Andersson's observations about beginnings in the Congo give an affirmative reply to this question. (2) Did thus non-

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(1) See further pp. 6 and 58

(2) E. Andersson, op. cit., pp. 48-51

religious motives figure largely in early Tshwa conversions, or did some Tshwa become Christians because the religious or ethical message of the missionaries struck a responsive note in them?

True answers to these questions are not to be found, and speculations will not lead us very far. Let us therefore look at the present picture, trying to establish the reasons why some Tshwa of today become Christians.

A sample of 20 informants does not give enough back ground for any statistical calculations. Furthermore, all my informants were men, and I am therefore not preter ing to know what would prompt Tshwa people in general to want to become Christians. Nevertheless, I submit that my field-work among Tshwa men in mining compounds, stretching over a period of almost t o years, gave me ample and intimate insights into these men's way of thinking, which may be of greater value than any statistics in this field. My 20 years of missionary work among the Tshwa may also be mentioned as a supplementary source of information.

Nine of my informants grew up in Christian homes, i.e. at least one of the parents was Christian, and there was a definite Christian influence in the home-life. The eleven informants coming from a non-Christian background did not experience any conscious Christian influence at all in the parental village, except in two cases. Of these, one had a brother who had become Christian, while the informant was still a child at home. In the second case, the parents - in spite of being non-Christians - urged their sons to go to school, and one elder brother had already gone before the informant.

As we are not aiming at statistical accuracy, I have also recorded the answer given by the only one among my informants who never became a 'believer'. He was once "very close to joining the Free Methodists' but was kept back as he became "sick because of [illegible]". His reply is recorded as No. 8 in the table below.

Reasons for wanting to become Christians

	Christ. home	Christ. influence	Non-Christ. home	Total
1. "wanted to read and write".	3	(1)	1	5
2. "prompted by a dream".	4			4
3. "Attracted by peace and fellowship" (Anziehung und Wohlwollen)			3	3
4. "Prompted by parents".	3			3
5. "Attracted by Christian singing".			2	2
6. "Prompted by a certain Bible-verse".		(1)	1	1
7. "was saved at hospital".			1	1
8. "Attracted by hygiene".			1	1
	9	(2)	11	20

Comments on "Reasons for wanting to become Christians"

1. "Wanted to Read and Write"

It is not surprising that "reading and writing" tops the list of reasons. Many Tshwa still find it difficult to distinguish between xikholwa (= faith) and xikola (= school). Teaching how to read and write was the first regular activity of Protestant missionaries among the Tshwa.[3] Today, the crowds of boys and girls going to school in Moçambique are, of course, just as eager to master these primary tools of learning as young people in other parts of Africa. In most cases, 'going to school' also means a specific connection with the sponsoring Church, either this is Roman Catholic or Protestant.

In the mine compound in the Transvaal, the rooms where Christians are allowed to stay together are often referred to as "school". And every illiterate newcomer to such a room - at least a Protestant one - is taken on as a new pupil in the small literacy class.

Reading and writing are seen as the key to the new life described as xilungu. This word with the same stem - lungu as in mulungu (= white man) comprises all that is connected with the white man's world. Or - in other terms - it takes in everything that does not belong to traditional Tshwa culture. Above all, x'lungu means a world where money is of primary importance. Therefore, it is perfectly understandable if young men, who have missed their chance of going to school during boyhood and, consequently, cannot normally expect well-paid jobs, see the literacy class of the Protestant mission as a glimmer of hope.

Does this produce "school Christians", i.e. persons who agree to church going, etc., in order to obtain certain educational advantages?

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(3) See chapter on "How Christianity was introduced" p. 65

To my knowledge, no statistics are available following up the careers of boys and girls who have finished their primary studies at the Methodist school at Caskins or Chicuque. Indications are, however, that a large percentage of these students do not maintain any vital interest in church activities once they have left school. It is possible that the obligatory church attendance for school students is somehow connected with this subsequent loss of interest.

In the nine centres, several young men undoubtedly enter the 'Christian' road with the explicit purpose of only learning how to read. They may even have been conditioned by their fellows against any further acquaintance of the faith (xikholwa). Thus, there are many who go back to non-Christian ways when the first spurt is finished. On the other hand, many continue in the Christian ways.

The factor of schools and education as an important attraction to Christianity is by no means limited to the Tshwa. Probably, this factor accounts for a vast number of African becoming Christians all over the continent. This was found by Anderson in the Congo, [4] and Taylor says that "to a great extent Christianity has become a classless religion". [5] Thus, from a Christian point of view, this factor may have ambiguous value, promptually creating the impression that the Christian faith is a necessary gate to higher education but irrelevant to ordinary life.

c. "Tempted by a dream"

In the traditional context, ancestral spirits (tinguluve) can make their will known through dreams. This may express itself as a warning, a prophecy of a coming calamity or

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(4) J. Anderson, op. cit., p. 41-43

(5) J. Taylor: The Primal Vision, p. 9

sometimes of a blessing.

Dreams have an immediate, undoubted importance to Tshwa. What they have seen in a dream is just as real as anything seen in broad daylight. Furthermore, the dream is often conceived of as an order, a basis for action.

The situations of the four informants stating that a dream prompted them to accept the Christian faith all suggest that some period of preparation had preceded the actual decision. The 'Christian dream" did not come out of the blue. It was rather a culmination of some kind of personal crisis. Two examples may suffice:

a) A man was living in a 'heathen" compound room, in spite of having had several contacts with the church in the home village. One night he dreamed of home and suddenly he heard a voice calling out: 'You must believe! You must believe!' The next day he moved to a "Methodist" room in the compound. Later, another dream made it clear to him that he should become a pastor.

b) 'In 1949 I experienced what it is to be visited by God. It was in Witbank, in the mine hospital there. I was one of those involved in the train accident at Waterval-boven.

Then I fell asleep. I felt like God showed Himself to me.... not that I saw Him but I understood that He was very near and He told me: 'You shall not die. You will see your family again Now you shall sing the song No. 152'. (4)

After that dream there was no doubt any longer. I had been living in a 'Christian' compound room but just hanging on. Now I knew that I could never leave the faith!"

In spite of their previous contact with the Christian Church, these dreamers were still hesitant about becoming

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(4) No. 152 in "Tihimu ta Ivangeli", the Tshwa Methodist Hymn-book:

A Jehova nza ku lava	O, Jehova, I want
Ku enza ka wena.	to do Your will.
Nzihe Moya wa ku Basa,	Give me the Holy
	Spirit,
Nza wu lava lezi.	I want it now.

Christians It is not clear, however, whether the push provided by the dream created stronger faith or stimulated a decision for fear of possible consequences.

The decisive urge experienced in the dream seems to indicate that dreams continue to play as important a role among Christian Tshwa as in the traditional community. This is borne out by many dream tales coming from my informants. Orders given to a person through a dream - either it is "to pray constantly" or "not to hesitate about going back to the mines" or "not to drink water from a cup of enamel" - are all taken seriously and must be immediately carried out. (7)

5. "Attracted by peace and fellowship" (kurula ni wuhlengeli)

A. kurula ("Peace")

The Tshwa word kurula means "peace, quietness". In connection with a person it can get the meaning of "poise".

What an outsider sees of kurula in the Christian group, attracting him to enter it himself, would appear to be some quality that in his mind distinguishes Christians from the group as presently belonging to. Naturally, this depends to a large extent on his personal experience. A critical event - e.g. a bitter conflict or some treatment that seems unjust - may inspire a person to seek for an escape. The Christian Church might, in such a case, seem to offer a suitable alternative.

Objective evidence in this respect is difficult to isolate. In a compound, negative reasons for leaving the

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(7) Cf. Sundkler's description of the role of dreams among Zionists and other independent churches in Bantu Prophets in South Africa, pp. 265 - 270

traditional surroundings are more explicit than positive ones for joining the Church. Statements like "I was afraid of being beaten", "I wanted to keep my things from being stolen", "I did not want to be forced to buy liquor", or "I wanted to escape from being used as a woman" have all been made by several young men, asked to explain why they transferred to a "Christian" compound room. The fact that the four activities mentioned are actively censured in most Christian groups suggests the reason why the Christian room was chosen as the alternative.

However, these four statements should not be seen as proofs that all these activities escaped from are integral parts of traditional Tshwa culture. Drinking certainly is, even if new types of liquor introduced through contacts with Europeans may have new effects on the users. Fighting, particularly in connection with drinking, is not uncommon in traditional context, even if fighters may be driven away from the place of sacrifice, in order "not to destroy the mhamba" (act of worship). But theft and homosexual activities were certainly severely censured also in traditional society.(8) More common stealing nowadays must be partly blamed on modern individualistic concepts concerning belongings. Possibly, the absence of magical threats against the potential thief has removed a psychological bar against stealing.(9) The reasons for more liberal attitudes among compound dwellers towards homosexual relations may, in addition to the unnatural, long separation from female company, be sought in the absence of effective moral sanctions from the kinship group.(10)

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(8) A. Mucomba, op. cit., p. 34

(9) Ibid.

(10) See section on "Some aspects of social life in mine compounds", p. 77, for difference between 'incapsulation' of Tshwa compound dwellers and red Xhosa in East London, for whom rural sanctions of kin still exert great influence.

[illegible] <u>mandiki</u> possession is an ordinary element of traditional life.[1] Another is witchcraft allegations, sometimes resulting in bitter feuds between accusers and defendants. Some informants gave examples of families having been completely split up because of witchcraft accusations, supported by (or, alternatively, arising from) a diviner. As it is recognised by them that <u>mandiki</u> spirits can be controlled through Christian prayer,[2] and that African diviners are quite accused of using witchcraft against anybody, the Christian community would seem peaceful in comparison.

It is, therefore, probable that the <u>kurula</u> (peace) which converts seek [illegible] Christianity is, at least initially, by the absence of some unruly elements (traditional or [illegible]) than a positive appreciation of any Christian virtue.

[illegible]

In pursuing [illegible] part of this 'attraction' expressed by the word <u>ondjangoli</u>, we are not only dealing with the initial reasons of [illegible] informants for becoming Christians. It [illegible] interesting that a large number of informants saw as the main [illegible] in the statement "What is you regard as most important in Christianity?" is [illegible], necessary to penetrate this concept in greater detail.

The [illegible] were <u>ondjangoli</u> is usually translated 'fellowship'. But this is a rather vague term, the real meaning of which may be found somewhere between the poles of superficial [illegible] and deep moral commitment, according to what different [illegible] may read into the concept.

Etymologically, the word <u>ondjangoli</u> is derived from the verb <u>ku djangola</u>, meaning 'to be together', indicating a [illegible] not only between a relationship but making it into a [illegible] experience. A group of hunters, for instance, had

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(1) [illegible] "Some traditional beliefs", p. 42

(2) [illegible] description of such Christian "exorcism" on p. [illegible]

wuhlengeli, particularly if they went out to kill a lion that had been harrassing herds in the vicinity, or to kill an elephant which had destroyed the fields. Women working together to brew beer for some ceremony had wuhlengeli and people joining forces to defend themselves against a common enemy had a strong sense of wuhlengeli.

As many words of the Tshwa language have been infused with new shades of meaning because of their being used in a Christian context, it may be raised that the same has happened to the term wuhlengeli.(14) There is also the possibility that persons outside of the Christian community would recognize certain elements of Christian wuhlengeli, which insiders do not regard as of decisive importance. We will scrutinize this concept in several different categories, in an attempt to approach some kind of definition of Christian wuhlengeli.

a. Wuhlengeli as situational association for social purposes

On becoming part of a Protestant Church, a large sector of the traditional social life was cut away for Tshwa Christians as they were now forbidden to take part in kinship functions and communal gatherings.

Ordinarily, social association among Christians means getting together in church for worship and singing, and conversation before and after the meeting. The non-liturgical form of worship probably contributes to a more intimate interrelation between partakers than a strictly liturgical ritual. Lay participation in preaching, exhortation and testimony, especially in the small rural church, provides for a kind of

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(13) A. Mucombo, Nkutsulani wa Matimu ya Vatshwa, p. 18 ff

(14) "Bandla", originally meaning "men's meeting place" is now the term for "church"; xiluvelo, meaning "hut of village headman", is now "pulpit"; kululama, meaning "being straight" is now "righteousness".

social relationship which may [illegible] reminiscen[illegible] of g[illegible]therings around the ev[illegible]ning fir[illegible] in the men's place (bandleni) or for the women at the plac[illegible] - of - the - pots (khombarini). (15)

There have been few positive efforts to creat[illegible] any special forms of social fellowship within the Church, except in work among children [illegible]nd youth. One youn[illegible] le[illegible]der for girls, speaking in [illegible] conferenc[illegible], expressed the need for [illegible]or exploration in this field: "When we [illegible]irls have our meetings, we play and dance [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. [illegible] we must do this, and we must get guidance of how to play and dance in a Christian way".

Even if informants confirm that "frequent gatherings in a peaceful and joyful spirit" make a distinction between Christian and traditional association, it would appear that such situational companionship is no decisive factor in constituting Christian wuhlengeli. On the other hand, situational association among Christians may possibly be characterized by a certain spirit because of wuhlengeli experienced at a different level.

b. **Wuhlengeli** beyond the boundaries of kinship belonging

From a Christian (and "western") viewpoint, it is often seen as a positive value that Christianity helps a man break out from the limitations of his kin-group. From another angle, however, such broken kinship relations may cause continuing friction and conflict within the Tshwa community.

If purely social criteria are used, the only reason for wanting to break away from the kin-group may be the desire to flee from its mutual obligations. A man may want to "live his own life", free from the responsibility that kinship-belonging imposes on every member of the group. This process, facilitated by modern communication and city life, is fairly well known also among the Tshwa. Persons availing themselves of this opportunity are aware that "they reject certain of their

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(15) [illegible] "Social world of the Tshwa", p. 24

traditional obligations, thereby losing rights associated with them". (16) But modern economic activities provide the possibility of rejecting one's kinship responsibility without starving to death. The group member may come to regard himself as economically independent at least as long as he can be useful to the modern economic system. If he, meanwhile, has been "washed off" (17) by his kin-group, such independence may land him in serious trouble when he is too old to work.

I suggest, however, that these are not the criteria for Tshwa Christians to break away from the kin-group. There are examples of such escapes, but, on the whole, it appears that Christian Tshwa retain a sense of social and economic obligation towards their kinsmen, although the kin-group acknowledged by them may be reduced in scope. Frequent visits of Christian mine workers to their non-Christian kinsmen in different compounds are an indication that kinship wuhlengeli still plays an important part.

Nevertheless, with regard to religious, in general, step short at the religious question. Several informants mentioned pressure on them from relatives to take part in kinship functions, e.g. sacrifices to ancestors. As they had refused, friction had ensued. One informant stated explicitly that "he had had to move away from his father's village because of constant pressure from his father's side. Thus, when a religious criterion is applied to kinship wuhlengeli, the Christian usually breaks away. Consequently, he will have to seek fellowship in the group which determines his way of action.

Some informants spoke highly of the "non-kin" Christian fellowship which "does not look at the face of a man", but does not as a matter of principle belong. However, any association which builds its existence solely on the break-up of other groups may suffer because of its negative

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(16) E. Barton, "The Restructuring of Social Relationships" in A. Southall, (ed.) Social Change in Modern Africa, p. 123

(17) Cf. A. Mayer, Townsmen or Tribesmen, p. 13?

foundation. It can only become of positive value when supplied with new norms and purposes, which are accepted by members as valid. (18)

The peculiar situation of the Tshwa Christian seems to be that he is caught in a loyalty crisis between the social aspects of his kinship structure which he accepts, and the religious ones which he renounces. As, from a traditional viewpoint, these two aspects are inseparably intertwined, the Christian is probably seen as a rebel, who has rejected his kinship-belonging in toto. What this implies in a community which has not yet provided any alternative social structure - except what can be found in a system foreign to Tshwa culture - can only be vaguely perceived.

It appears, therefore, that a wuhlengeli ("fellowship") solely built on the criterion of being beyond the boundaries of the kinship structure is, at least at present, a destructive force in Tshwa society, potentially leading an individual into a crisis of identity. I would judge that, in a wider context, the so-called process of "de-tribalization" is, therefore, potentially destructive in a social sense, as it is primarily a negative phenomenon. It is conceivable that the ethical flux - resulting i.a. in criminality of an extent totally unknown in traditional society - which now seems to characterize parts of the urban African population in Southern Africa, is rooted in the declining importance of kinship structures and sanctions.

From this viewpoint, then, the Christian wuhlengeli, unbound by kinship limitations, seems primarily as an escape, a substitute for the fellowship normally found in the kinship group. What distinguishes this wuhlengeli, however, from the process of "de-tribalization" is that new norms accepted as the foundation of association have obviously infused a positive spirit of relationship, providing a sense of new identity and belonging to a larger reference group which is defined both by ethical and social criteria.

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(18) Cf. M. Banton, op. cit. p. 115

In a mine compound group, e.g., where, in general new association patterns have to be formed, it appears to be easier for persons of different kin groups, and different tribes (although within the same language group), to relate within a Christian context than in a non-Christian one. Through long association neighbourliness ordinarily evens out tribal or lineage differences also between non-Christians, [19] but in a situation where men continuously see new-comers from other clans or tribes entering their own community, I have observed that frictions quickly arise. [20]

Tribal frictions are certainly not completely absent in the Christian compound group, either. But, as the "non-kin" relation, in fact, [illegible] the Christian community appears to have certain social machinery at its disposal, aiding to bridging tribal differences. The weekly joint compound services of Christian men from all of Southern Mozambique - irrespective of denomination - are probably been a strong positive force in this direction.

In spite of the professed non-tribalism, it would seem that <u>within</u> eli outside of the language group is extremely limited even in the Christian [illegible] community. An [illegible] in the course of intimate communication, contacts made across language barriers during work hours seem to have no bearing on Tshwa Christians' leisure activities. Living arrangements in compounds seem to encourage this attitude. [21] It is, in fact, possible that the Church group in a compound is seen as a kind of <u>amakhaya</u> group, although the terms of reference are wider than in the case of 'real' home in East London. [22] A man entering a compound with the claim that he belongs to one of the Churches active in his home region will,

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(19) See "The Tshwa social world", p. 23

(20) At least once a week, "new-ones" arrive to the compound from various tribal areas.

(21) Compound social life is described on pp. 26-29

in general have no difficulty in getting accepted into the company of the respective Church group in that compound. Obviously, the language is here important for association, but the essential "home" criterion is the Church, offering wuhlengeli even to persons previously unknown to other group members but manifestly conforming to the accepted norms and behaviour of the group.

It thus appears that Christian wuhlengeli is mainly based on accepted norms as criteria of association, rather than on any "breaking away" from kinship belongings.

c. The wuhlengeli of group action

It remains to see whether the interpretation of the word wuhlengeli implied by the etymological derivation from the verb kuhlengela, "to do together", is valid in relation to "Christian fellowship". Traditional examples of this interpretation were related in the beginning of this section.

As a positive sign of wuhlengeli ("fellowship") among Christians, working together, for instance in building churches, was quoted by some informants. Missionary activity like providing agricultural training at Canbine, hospitals and schools, are other examples of what Christians do together. Another popular example of wuhlengeli is the recent building of water-tanks in a part of Pshwa country (Muronga) where drought always has presented a problem. What makes this project especially significant is the fact that it was wholly initiated and mainly financed by Pshwa Christians. These examples of Christian wuhlengeli indicate the possibility of working together to improve the community.

Frequent group activities in the work of worship or lessons (both of religious and practical nature, e.g. hygiene) add to the sense of belonging among Christians. In several local situations, both in compounds and in the home country, in-groups of Christians develop with very frequent mutual associations, mainly connected with joint church activities. Such

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(22) B. Mayer, op. cit. 94, 99-101

developments depend largely upon efficient local leadership.

It is well known that joint action of certain groups of people can provide a strong sense of togetherness and mutual satisfaction. This often finds expression in the term "team spirit". Thus, women brewing beer together have a sense of joint accomplishment which binds them together, at least temporarily. Likewise, the members of an orchestra often experience the joint satisfaction and joy of performing together. Nevertheless, this is fundamentally a situational association, which does not necessarily carry any obligations at all outside of the temporary joint action.

This is the point where I find that the joint action of a group of Tshwa Christians differs, at least in principle. It could be said that Christians joining forces in building water-tanks act in this way <u>because</u> they have <u>wuhlengeli</u>. The "fellowship", then, is not situational, generated by the action, but the action may be seen as a fruit of the group feeling. No doubt, this <u>wuhlengeli</u>, manifesting itself in creative group action, is one aspect of the "attraction" on people outside of the Church.

d. <u>Wuhlengeli</u> of the group apart

For the outsider, joint action, peaceful togetherness, and even what may be interpreted as certain freedom from kinship obligations, are probably the elements of <u>wuhlengeli</u> ("fellowship") among Christians that appear attractive. For a person on the inside of the Christian community, however, these values may be conceived as growing out of the common bond between all those who have manifestly accepted the same conditions and norms of association. In other words, the principal criterion of Christian <u>wuhlengeli</u> is one of <u>identity with the group apart</u>. It follows that the bond of fellowship within such a group is strengthened in accordance with its members' degree of acknowledging their common norms and goals. But, in spite of these potential differences in degree, the essential bond harks back to the voluntary act of joining the group.

The same criterion can be applied, for instance, to a political group with specific, partly ethically determined conditions of membership, and well defin goals. Such groups all tend to be totalitarian, embracing all aspects of life, into which the group attempts to apply its ideology.

The distinction between such different "groups a art' lies in the character of the norms of association, which, in the case of Christians, can be assumed to be fundamentally based on the message of Christian faith and ethics. However, as Banton has pointed out, "these norms can never be entirely new. If they are to have meaning, they must have some relation to people's experience of the world". (23) Consequently, Christian wuhlengeli among Tshwa is different from the corresponding "fellowship" in a European group of dedicated Christians, because of each group having selected those elements in Christianity which are particularly meaningful in its own cultural context.

Nevertheless, we know as a fact that the norms of association within Tshwa rotestant Churches have, to a very large extent, been determined by forces outside of Tshwa indigenous culture. We may, therefore, reasonably expect tension and even conflict as long as such dual selection determines the standards of the group.

I find it clearly demonstrated that such conflict exists among Tshwa Christians, sometimes even making group members apply a double standard to their actions. This is one expressed reason why many baptized Tshwa never take the step into "full membership" of the Church. If they did, and subsequently fell below the professed standard, they would be punished by a loss of status, usually reversing them to the position of "baptized, preparatory member".

Several areas of such tension and potential conflict will be investigated in the following chapters of this dissertation.

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(23) M. Banton. op. cit. p. 11

e. The Christian group partly replacing the kin-group

Undoubtedly, it is in the case of serious accidents, sickness or death, that wuhlengeli ("fellowship") among Tshwa Christians best expresses itself in meaningful action. These are critical periods for the afflicted individuals, in which the kin group traditionally is solely involved. (24)

As Africans nowadays are often far away from their kin, the latent threat of such crises may build a feeling of insecurity. This is probably the main reason why Burial societies have become so popular among African people in cities. (25) With not enough kinsmen around, one has to trust one's own financial contributions to a common fund, in order to secure a proper burial.

The serious accident most frequently mentioned by informants is fire and consequent total loss of belongings. As fire is often considered to be caused by witchcraft - or, in the case of lightning, by Filo, the Sky Power (26) - people outside of the kin group would naturally be reluctant to take any measures. However, three different cases of fire, where Christians from large areas had assisted with gifts and cash donations, were mentioned as examples of wuhlengeli. These Christian Tshwa probably interpret the accident in the same way as non-Christians, but different attitudes towards action in such cases distinguish the two communities from each other. (27)

The inter-relation between Tshwa traditional medicine and modern medical treatment will be dealt with in the chapter on "Pursuit of Health". In connection with the concept of wuhlengeli among Christians, particularly women, I refer to the well documented custom of visiting the sick for prayer and

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(24) See "Tshwa social world", p. 7

(25) P. Mayer, op. cit. p. 1

(26) See "Traditional Tshwa beliefs", p. 3

(27) . Vilakazi, Zulu Transformations, pp. 29-30

assistance. (26) This custom is well borne out also among men in mine hospitals. Several informants mentioned special prayer vigils for sick Church members. Examples where the Church group had collected money to help a sick person to the hospital at Chicuque were mentioned by two informants.

When death occurs in a Christian Tshwa family, kinsmen do their share, but they usually leave it to Church leaders to perform the funeral. It is customary for Christians of various denominations to attend the burial of one of their number, irrespective of kinship belonging, or status. In cases of death of Christian men in a mine compound, the whole group of Christians from Southern Moçambique are called upon to attend the burial as well as a memorial service. It is also customary to make a collection, partly for the 'funeral tea', partly for the family of the deceased.

f. Conclusion

It is not true to say that all dealings between Christians are done in a spirit of genuine mutual solidarity. Strife and envy have their place also in the Church. But, the fact clearly emerges from the material, that Tshwa persons within a Christian community, having to some extent rejected the obligations and responsibilities of the kinship group, become members of an enlarged reference group, in which new criteria for solidarity are used, giving rise to increased sense of security and satisfaction. Judged by the sense of mutual solidarity, based upon socially accepted standards, is the main element in Christian solidarity.

4. "Prompted by parents"

It is clear from the outset that informants giving the information that they "were prompted by their parents" to join the Church, are about those who grew up in Christian homes. They were baptized as infants and became accustomed through the

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(26) A.A. Dubb, The role of the church in an urban African society p. 117-121 and Pilakazi, op. cit. p. 29

years to church services, singing and "peace and fellowship". For such persons, the positive features that make Christianity attractive to non-Christians may not shine as brightly. They seem often to concentrate their attention upon the negative features of the Church, e.g. the moral code that in Tshwa context tends to be extremely legalistic. This may be one strong reason why many Tshwa growing up in Christian homes seem to lose interest when they become old enough to decide for themselves.

In the case of one informant, the lure from the "outside" became too strong for him. Not far away from his home, "modern dancing" (kukina bhungi) to the sound of grammophone records was arranged every Sunday. Week after week he and his brothers slipped away from the house after dark. In spite of being beaten severely by their father, (a Church lay leader), when their escape was discovered, they persisted. To get money to pay for each tune, they took eggs from the family's hens which they sold to some whites living nearby.

Finally, the brother got such a hard beating from their father that they were "afraid of getting killed if the beating continued. So they relented, and my informant adds: "Father promised me a new white shirt if I joined the Methodist youth Group. So I did. And I am happy now that I left the dancing, because there are so many who get venereal diseases at such places".

It is open to question whether such prompting produces permanent results. In the above case, the person in question began to see that there were certain side-effects involved had he indulged on his own way. In other cases, however, too strong prompting undoubtedly has produced opposite results, particularly among young people who have had some educational opportunity.

3. "Attraction by Christian Singing"

The difference between traditional singing and Christian singing is clear. Christian songs in the Protestant sphere have been

songs and hymns. These "Songs
(Nimbo za Evangili), as the Methodist Episco-
have become firmly integrated into
together with the little booklet
"Revival" issued after the most re-
by the Free Methodist Mission, they
powerful inspiration to all Tonga
Christians.

A further source for new hymns, sung by a choir at
Mission services, small unaccompanied groups sometimes present
such hymns. But these new creations are almost exclusively
translations of western songs or hymns, picked up via a visitor
or some convert from another Christian group. So far, no real
effort at creating Christian songs in African style has been
made among the Tonga. It would rather appear that there exists
a certain resistance against such efforts among Christian
converts. Certain pure Gospel instruments, as, e.g. the shila
(a small-sized gourd used as rhythm instrument)
and ntimbo (gourds used as rhythm instrument)
or ntimba (a clay vessel with dry seeds used as a rattle)
are rarely (if ever) seen, at least in Methodist Episcopal
church conferences. Such instruments seem to contribute to a
strange "orientalization" of foreign tunes, especially as far
as rhythm is concerned. But they have not yet been allowed
for the playing of purely African music in church context.

We must now ask ourselves how these informants react
to African singing and its decisive attraction for them, against
this background. It would seem that it is the highly appre-
ciated and often practiced group singing that was the main
attraction. One of the informants specifies that it was the
singing of a visiting choir from the Methodist Girls' School
in Choma that "made the longing for home" and caused him
tears in the last missing months.

"Troubled by a certain Girls' voice"

This has to be classified as a special case, even if the

decisive power in a particular Bible verse [illegible] connection with the "dream cases". There a certain song figured largely, and in another dream the text Romans 13:1 was said to be the turning point for the man in question.

In this case, the informant found the faith under a table. I was sitting with some other boys, idly talking, when I suddenly caught sight of a slip of paper under the table. It was a torn page from the New Testament, where only one verse, Matthew 7:19, was readable. I read it, and was amazed at the Great Person in the Sky who is able to burn all the male trees (those which do not bear fruit!) in the forest. I wanted to know more about that Great Person. So I went to the believers'.

Undoubtedly, this man had had some previous Christian influence, in spite of growing up in a non-Christian home. His brother had become a Christian, and the very fact that he could read indicates that he had had at least some contact with a school.

I do not exclude the possibility that this is the "conversion story", which this person, who later became a pastor, has told many times in sermons and testimonies. This does not decrease the value of the information, but it is possible that the form of the story has been influenced by many tellings.

7. "Was healed at hospital"

As far as I know, no statistics are available to show how many persons might have been influenced through a mission hospital to become Christian. Possibly, there are many who see the Christian message "materialized" in the care and cure at the hospital. This could be a kind of interaction between preaching and teaching in the home village and the curing of the sick.

However, it probably does not take long before the patient locates the curing power exclusively in the white man's medicine, or the skill of a certain physician rather than connecting it with the Christian message. It will be found out that

any hospital can be of help to sick people.[29]

In this actual case, the informant had lung TP His constant cougning made him consult a diviner, wh advised him to divorce his wif, as she was killing him through wuloyi (witchcraft). s he hesitated, somebody advised him to go to Chicuque mission hospital. There he got treatment, and as he was getting better he was told severely by the doctor that he had to stay away from drinking liquor. As he "knew his weakness in regard to liquor", he decided to go to church regularly, "so that the believers should help him keep sober". Obviously, he had kept his intention alive.

The medical advice given in this case had no specific Christian flavour. What prompted this informant to become converted was his immediate need to change company at home, as drinking is an integral part of Tshwa traditional society. The Protestant Church was the suitable alternative, as drinking is severely censured both in the Methodist Episcopal and the Free Methodist Churches.

3. "Attracted by Hygiene"

"I saw that the Christians had a different way of washing themselves"; is the literal quotation from the old informant, who was the only one in my actual sample, who did not take the step away from his traditional way of life. He stated that he had been "close to join the Free Methodists" at a certain time, but he had remained a non-Christian.

Hygiene teaching was started early by missionaries among the Tshwa.[30] Even today, it is a regular feature of a 'quarterly conference', comprising delegates from several villages, to hear a report from the 'Hygiene Committee' (Kometi ya Basiselelo), indicating the number of latrines built

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(29) The role of mission hospitals will be touched upon in the chapter on "Terms of Health".

(30) See "How Christianity was introduced", p. 68

during the quarter, or the state of the water holes in the vicinity. In some areas, the Church groups have obtained special shovels, designed to dig the deep holes necessary for this purpose.

The Church has also kept teaching the Tshwa that water for drinking must be boiled before use, to help prevent some sicknesses, notably bilharzia. Teams of teachers, sometimes sent out by the Church to visit villages, have continuously advised both Christians and non-Christians how to help themselves to prevent malaria, bilharzia, or other intestinal parasites, as well as TB and venereal diseases. A major effort to prevent the further spread of bilharzia was made some years ago at Cambine, when facilities for washing and bathing were built completely separated from the infested river. Against smallpox, large vaccination campaigns were early performed by personnel at mission hospitals. (11)

Another feature of the work for better hygiene is the teaching of child-care, and providing opportunities for mothers to wash their children under hygienic conditions. Maternity wards early became part of mission hospital establishments.

Even if the man in this actual case did not become a Christian, it is highly probable that many Tshwa through the years have been attracted to Christianity because of hygiene teaching. But it is just as certain that this factor is of small importance as an "attraction" nowadays, as modern hygiene, also in the Tshwa area, has lost its character of being a "Christian speciality". Ideas of hygiene have been spread through teaching in mine compounds, as well as in all types of schools. Government-built maternity centres are a

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(11) Unfortunately, it cannot be claimed that work to prevent bilharzia and intestinal parasites has met with great success. There is evidence that bilharzia is spreading in the area, and one authority estimated that 80 percent of the population are infected with some kind of intestinal parasites.

common sight along roads in the Tshwa area, and toilet hygiene is getting common in all types of villages.

This modern spread of hygiene does not alter the fact that Tshwa Christians consider cleanliness, both personal and communal, as a sign which necessarily must be part of Christian living.

6. THE QUEST FOR LIFE

The wutomi concept

> "Suddenly I realized that I had forgotten to tie my wutomi around my hips. When I undressed after the bath. My heart began beating hard, I felt sweaty and almost dizzy but I rushed back to the river to search in the grass. How I jumped for joy when I found my wutomi and I promised myself never to forget it again".

The informant, now a Christian man, vividly recalled the memory from his childhood, indicating in his manner of telling how important a certain amulet had been to him. It had been his wutomi, his 'life", given to him by a n'anga (diviner and/or herbalist) during a period of sickness.

Wutomi is the highest good for the Tshwa. This word is usually translated 'life", 'health", but it also includes everything that the Tshwa experiences as good for himself, his family, his kraal and domestic animals. Loss of wutomi most commonly means loss of health. But it is as true that a healthy man who has lost his only donkey or who sees his cattle wither away a diseased man, will feel that his wutomi in not what it ought to be. When sickness comes to his family, his wutomi is gone once more, and quarrels and enmity with people close by are other factors lowering the wutomi.

Wutomi, then, has (at least) the following integral factors:

a) Healthy life for self, family, kin group and neighbours;
b) Procreation, and fertility of fields and domestic animals;
c) Appropriate status increase and right relationships;
d) Appropriate increase of property.

By extension, certain agents which are deemed to further or create "life" are also given the name wutomi. This is why the above-mentioned amulet was called by this term. Similarly, the testicles, from which life-power issues, may be called wutomi.

It seems almost impossible to capture the wutomi concept in some English word. "Life" covers it partly, and we may come closer to reality by the qualification "complete life". But we have not yet come to the heart of the matter.

I judge that the Tshwa expression wutomi is similar to the Luba concept which inspired Placide Tempels' expression "vital force". (2) The principle for enhancing wutomi is probably the same as what Edwin Smith called "dynamism". (3) Neither of these two commonly used terms, however, seem satisfactory as far as the Tshwa are concerned. It is interesting to observe that some African specialists on religions, writing recently on African customs and religion, are questioning these terms in a wider context. (4)

I do not intend to enter into a full discussion of these terms, but a few observations may be relevant: It appears that the expressions "vital force" and "dynamism" give a mechanized picture of the li[illegible] at least as far as the Tshwa are concerned. It i[illegible]ularly difficult to see the person, [illegible] as a "force". (5) Rather a person is participating in a life-stream or life-power, tapping the resources available to all human beings, and to all nature. This life-stream coming from the Sky-Power (Yalo), and existing in ntumbuluko ("Creation" or "Nature") ideally upholds and [illegible] through the person to his descendants. There is also constant inter-relation between the life-stream in the person and in the part of nature to which he is connected. A few quotations from the Tshwa may illustrate this:

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(1) Concerning 'right relationships', see pp. 14-16 and p. 225 ff. for details.

(2) P. Tempels, Bantu Philosophy, p. 30

(3) E. Smith, (ed), African Ideas of God, p. 27

(4) J. Mbiti, African religions and philosophy, p. 16, footnote, also V. Mulago, "Vital Participation" in Dickson-Ellingworth, (ed), Biblical revelation and African beliefs, p. 137, footnote, and p. 145, footnote

(5) P. Tempels, op. cit. p. 30

"If the tree of sacrifice withers, my wutomi is gone in that village."

"My wutomi is low when it happens that my goats or cattle die."

"If a man commits adultery, his sin can make his little child sick."

In view of this, it seems that Vincent Mulago's expression 'vital participation' conveys most distinctly the principle underlying the quest for wutomi also among the Tshwa. (6)

Maybe the analogy of an irrigation system can somehow clarify this idea of 'vital participation':

a. The life-stream of ntumbuluko, originating with Tilo (The Sky Power) is the main river, available to all nature;

b. Every lineage has its canals to this great stream of life, the ancestral spirits being the "flood-gates".

c. The individual participates in the life-stream solely through the canal of his lineage and of the lineage 'owning' his land;

d. The stream passes through him to his descendants, etc;

e. Life (wutomi) is enhanced through clear connection;

f. Life is decreased by the clogging of canals, either unintentional default, or through other beings' diverting life to themselves.

'Sufficient Life' is sought

The main reason why 'dynamism' does not fit well into the picture, is that it seems to imply a forceful, creative, and continuous development, which is, in fact, the opposite of the quest for life that I have found among the Tshwa.

Replying to the daily question "Wa hanya Re?" ("How are you?", lit. 'Do you live?'), a Tshwa person says "Ha hanya" ("We live"), or "Ha nemo" ("We have it", i.e. wutomi). Often he adds the words "a ha wa kwanira" ("He haven't got them".

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(6) V. Mulago, op. cit, pp. 157 ff.

i.e. any complaints to tell).

The point in these examples is that Tshwa customarily do not use expressions denoting "good health" or "perfect condition", as a European may do. The ideal state for the Tshwa is the normal, the sufficient (wutomi gi eneleko).

Too little of wutomi means a negative "no-life" (wutomi gi hava). In fact, people often say "we have died" (hi file), when they experience 'no-life'. On the other hand, it is no true that too much of this coveted substance (wutomi go tala) is not welcome at all. It is rather a curse on a person being told that he has got "much life". "Uyawutomi nzi wanal" ("You of / much / life"!) is a serious curse, which may be used to a hated, unsociable person, particularly if he seems unduly successful. Significantly, an interchangeable expression for wutomi (without go tala) is wamoyi ("livers", from ku hanya = to live).

In the Tshwa quest for the standard, the normal, the sufficient, excesses in any direction are thus regarded as evil. The following diagram may help to make the wutomi concept clear:

"Much-life" (wutomi go tala)	Too long Too much Too successful and not "helpful"
Sufficient life (wutomi gi eneleko)	Health for self, family, kingroup, neighbours Procreation, and fertility - fields, animals Appropriate status increase; right relationships Appropriate increase of property
"No-life" (wutomi gi hava)	Sickness and death Barrenness; drought - hunger Accident and loss Wrong relationships; loneliness

We do not know exactly why the traditional Tshwa set a restriction on the quest for life. It may be surmised that it was caused by a constant feeling of insecurity. Life was

and is - a continuous battle against sickness, loss and death. Under such circumstances, it would be foolhardy to challenge the superhuman powers by striving to attain a higher level than the 'sufficient' one.

Nevertheless, I would judge that the quest for unity of the group living together was the main reason for desiring 'the normal', 'the sufficient'.

> "The Bantu believe firmly in a vital communion or lifebond which creates solidarity between members of the same family or clan... Every effort must be directed to the preservation, maintenance, growth and perpetuation of this common treasure. The pitiless elimination of everything which hinders this end, and the encouragement at all costs of everything which furthers it: this is the last word in Bantu customs and institutions, wisdom and philosophy". (7)

To preserve such a unity, it was imperative that no one should have more than his appropriate share.

In this quest for 'sufficient life', the Tshwa are in line with several other African peoples, for instance the Akan of Ghana, of whom it has been said:

> "There is a traditional pattern of life, itself the <u>nsemmoa</u> nnuan, sanctioned by spirit-ancestors and gods, expressing itself in Akan institutions and behaviour patterns.... The appropriate appeasement, the necessary arbitration to restore the <u>status quo</u>, itself the perfect pattern for human life. Thus there is no concept of spiritual progress towards, nor of gross spiritual decline from a static ideal, but only a traditional pattern of life to be maintained through piety and obedience". (8)

'Piety and obedience' played a primary role also in the life of the Tshwa. As the ancestral spirits were seen as "flood-gates", regulating the flow of <u>watomi</u> into the lineage, it seems to follow that the "right relationship" sought for

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(7) V. Mulago, <u>op. cit.</u> pp. 139-140

(8) D.P. Williamson, <u>Akan Religion and the Christian Faith</u>, p. 141. See also J.D. Krige, "The Lovedu of the Transvaal" in <u>African Worlds</u>, p. 56

as part of the goal of 'sufficient life' were also instruments to reach it. After investigating whether Christianity has changed the traditional ideal of 'sufficient life' we will probe into the role of Tshwa worship in attaining this ideal.

Tshwa Christian search for life

From a Christian viewpoint, the Tshwa quest for wutomi (9) seems to indicate that the concept "abundant life", playing a prominent part as an ideal in Christian teaching, would be most acceptable to Tshwa. This concept is usually interpreted by missionaries as the infusion of ethical strength, courage and joy through a new relationship to God through Christ. For a Christian, 'abundant life' opens new possibilities, through "the vigour of its health, the splendour of its adventure, and the exciting possibilities it puts within the realm of anyone". (10)

Few informants, however, gave an indication of understanding that the concept 'abundant life' had the above-mentioned implications. In general, I found the following two interpretations of this concept:

a) A "new way of living", characterized partly in negative terms as "leaving the old customs and behaviour", partly as "following the Lord Christ". This way of living was seen as advantageous from a practical point of view. No new insights into 'how to keep healthy' or 'to take care of children' were included. Several informants referred to this new way of living as a "better life" (wutomi wa maana).

b) The most common view was that 'abundant life' means "life after death", or "life without end" (wutomi wa yinzukriwa).

To probe further into the Tshwa Christian understanding of the 'quest for life', it is relevant also to investigate the

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(9) John 10:10

(10) The Interpreters' Bible, Vol. VIII, p. 648

Tshwa interpretation of Jesus as Saviour. In the Tshwa language, the word Saviour has been translated Muhanyisi. This term is derived from the causative form of the verb ku hanya (= to live). Thus, Muhanyisi means "The One who causes to live". In secular connections, the same word may be used of someone saving another from drowning. I have also heard it applied to a doctor, who helped a certain person to regain health.

What does it mean to Tshwa that Jesus is Muhanyisi? Two different informants answer:

> "To begin with, I say that He was the one who gave His life for our sake, so that we receive life. Our ancestors lived their lives, too. But there was nothing further which they looked forward to. When a man died, he was finished. They just thought he was dead. But we believe that when we leave this world, we have another life which we receive because of the coming of Jesus. Thus, when we speak of Jesus as Muhanyisi, it means that He gives us eternal life".

> "He does not give us the kind of life which shows itself when we walk.... I believe He gives us life in our spirits... in what we do... in accordance with what He showed us (of better living) while He was on earth".

While statements from the majority of my informants agree with the first of the above quotations, the second must be regarded as an exception. It is quoted here to indicate the range of interpretation of "life" in Tshwa Christian context, and - from a Christian viewpoint - the degree of understanding the 'new life in Christ'. It should be noted that also here the concept of "a better life" (wutomi ga chukwana) is referred to.

The designation of Jesus as Saviour (Muhanyisi) is generally understood as lifegiver after death. My material leads me to conclude that Jesus is not believed to play an important part in most Tshwa Christians' quest for life here and now.

It therefore appears that this quest for life 'here and now', also among Christians, is essentially cast in traditional

as the fund

However, in speaking about 'sufficient life', it should be realised that we have isolated and frozen an institutional ideal, which individually has a number of individual variations. Within the framework of traditional Tshwa society, these were kept in a balance. But with greater freedom of movement, and greater influence of Christianity and Western civilisation, the range of variation inevitably increases. It would appear that we are left with a more fluid ideal, continually being modified as further outside influence infiltrates the Tshwa way of life, both for Christian and non-Christian.

It is probable that intensive research on this very point would reveal greater modifications in some areas than in others. So too, variables like age, status, education and sex would also indicate different patterns. With the material in hand, however, and certain interpolations from my experience among the Tshwa, I can only point out some tendencies, and the individual ideal of the Christian should be sought somewhere along the sliding scale between the traditional ideal and the existence of each modern crowd. We are again reminded that, in this scheme, the traditional ideal is still the point of reference as to 'the highest good'.

To be sure, four trends of change should be noted:

1. There is a loosening of emphasis, which stresses certain interests within the 'sufficient life' ideal at the expense of others. Less emphasis is being put on kinship relations outside of the immediate family, and, on the whole, the traditional concept of 'right relationships' between persons is receding from its place of primary importance.

The qualification 'appropriate' concerning status increase and the increase of property was conditioned by the necessary correlation between birth rights, age, and traditional concepts

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(11) See page 107

of propriety. Influence of education and outside modes of living is rapidly corroding these values, with the consequence that increase of status and property is now more commonly expected on grounds of education and efficiency.

Barrenness remains a curse also among the majority of Christians, while the stress on a large number of children as a particular blessing is becoming weaker!

2. "Much-life" has become more attractive. The line between 'sufficient life' and 'much-life' is much thinner than it used to be. Undoubtedly, traditional sanctions on too great a success still play a role. But less importance of kinship relations and 'right relationships' has established a trend towards individuality. There is also a tendency to measure success more in materialistic terms.

3. Certain 'modern' additions are being made to the traditional ideal. These are described in rather diffuse terms, as "modern living", "better ways of taking care of the family", etc. Education is another important addition, mainly expressed in straight academic terms. 'Practical education' has not yet been given a similar status value.

4. Religious additions: While 'right relationships' between persons are being deprived of their primary importance, the relationship with God has been given a decisive position. Even if this mainly comes to the surface in a negative sense, as "Sin against God", the significant fact is the stronger religious emphasis on the 'right relationships' concept. The social aspect of this factor now applies more to relations with persons within the Church than outside, even if neighbourliness is a highly praised Christian virtue. However, such 'right relationship' does not seem to have the same moral urgency as in a traditional context. For the Christian, the 'moral imperative' is now the "Law", (12) and the decisive

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(12) Variously referred to as 'The Law of God', 'The Law of Christ' or 'the law of the Church'.

relation in this respect is with God and/or with the leaders of the Church, in so far as they are considered custodians of "the Law of Christ". (13)

Judging from the emphasis made by informants, the most important religious addition to the traditional ideal of wutomi is the Christian concept of 'eternal life'. It is open to question whether this should even be included at this point, as it falls, in fact, completely outside of the scope of the traditonal 'sufficient life'. I have reason to believe, however, that this concept figures largely in the thinking of many Christian Tshwa as part of the 'better life' (wutomi ga chukwana) which they look for in Christianity. (14)

The important religious value of this Christian concept is further borne out by statements from other Bantu-speaking peoples. Monica Wilson says about the Nyakyusa Christians:

> "The supreme attraction, mentioned again and again as the reason for conversion, is: 'There is life'.... and it is life in a world to come rather than 'more abundant life' here and now that is spoken of". (15)

It is evident from the above that new values present themselves to a Tshwa person becoming a 'believer', either as additions to the old, or as alternatives. Great potential differences appear between the poles of 'better life' and the traditional ideal of 'sufficient life'. A conflict between the traditional 'vital participation' and more modern (Christian?) stress on the role of the individual, is already recognized in the decreased importance of the kin group outside of the immediate family.

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(13) This whole matter will be developed in detail in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation".

(14) 'Eternal life' as a Tshwa Christian concept will be taken up for detailed discussion in the chapter on "Death and Life Eternal".

(15) M. Wilson, Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa, p. 187

Even recognizing these differences, however, it must be remembered that these two groups among the Tshwa, Christians and non-Christians, are both embarked upon a continuous quest for life (wutomi), and that their basic values are quite similar.

In our continued investigation of "The Tshwa Response to Christianity", we will attempt to make clear in which areas s and by which means this wutomi is being sought, and to what extent satisfaction appears to be obtained, either through traditional or Christian methods. This part of the dissertation will follow these lines:

a) The next chapter, "Worship, Sacrifice and Sacraments" deals with the establishing and keeping of right relationships with superhuman powers through ritual action, both within traditional and Christian context.

b) The chapter on "Pursuit of Health" probes into traditional concepts of sickness and cures, particularly 'social' causation and healing, in comparison with modern and Christian concepts.

c) Moral norms and social relationships are investigated in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation", penetrating into the ontological reasons of the conflict between traditional and Christian ethics.

d) The final chapter connected with 'quest for life' goes into the matters of "Death and Life Eternal", indicating how the Christian concept of 'eternal life' has, to a large extent, changed attitudes towards death and accompanying taboos.

7. WORSHIP, SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENTS

Traditional worship

In the traditional Tshwa society, right relationships were both preconditions for and integral parts of 'sufficient life' (wutomi wa muhelo). Such relationships had both a social aspect and a mystical (religious) one, even if the Tshwa did not consciously make this distinction. In their minds, the tinguluve (ancestral spirits) were as much part of the lineage as their living descendants. However, the ways of relations with the tinguluve were distinct from other social associations.

As the tinguluve were regarded as beings who could approach the Sky Power (Tilo) with requests, it follows that they were channels for the life-power issuing to the whole ntumbuluko ("Creation", "Nature") from the Sky Power. Men were part of this ntumbuluko as well as soil, plants and animals. Broken relations with the tinguluve could result in the clogging of the life-stream canals, with "no-life" as the result.(1)

Right relationship with tinguluve had a moral aspect as well as a ritual one. The laws governing the lineage, including taboos (mikhwiliso) as well as behaviour patterns, were regarded as common heritage from the ancestors and had to be obeyed. This moral part of 'right relationships' will be discussed in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation". It is the ritual aspect of relations with the tinguluve that interests us for the moment.

The question whether the ancestral spirits were actually worshipped, or only approached as part of the kin-group has lately stirred up some discussion. Some African writers

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(1) See pp. 106-107

flatly deny that ancestors ever were worshipped, maintaining that all worship was directed towards God, even in the cases where the ancestors were actually approached. (2) Others indicate that "the idea of mediation where the ancestral spirits are mediators between Mwelungulu (God) and men, is very imperfectly developed. The spirits to be worshipped are the ancestral spirits".

In the case of the Tshwa, some informants have been quick to point out that the worship bestowed upon the tinguluve was really meant for Tilo (The Sky Power). On the other hand, there are those who claim that their people "did not know Tilo at all" and that all worship was aimed at the tinguluve. My standpoint is that the concept of tinguluve as mediators between men and the Sky Power is well established among the Tshwa. However, the living, active religion of the Tshwa was directed towards their tinguluve, and I see no reason why this attention should not be called 'worship' (kambwela).

Unity of traditional worship and sacrifice

For the Tshwa, worship and sacrifice are one and the same. Already could a concept like tinguluve presupposed. Maybe "concrete worship" is a suitable term for this fact. Whether it is a question of meat or a goat to be killed, the concreteness is the same.

One expression of such concrete worship is the simple depositing of some tobacco "at the head of the sleeping place", or a morsel of food on the ground before eating. Such customs are not universal, as far as is known, but they seem to represent personal worship in traditional context, however restricted only to the case of elder men.

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(2) J. Mbiti, African religions and philosophy, p. 26

(3) [illegible], Echo translations, p. 29

Nevertheless, joint worship is the heart of traditional Tshwa religion. Whether the group comprises kinsmen only, as at sacrifices because of sickness, or the whole community is gathered for a rain sacrifice, the superhuman world is approached together. Unity among the worshippers is also important. On some occasions, it is necessary to confess all grudges and quarrels, so that they "do not spoil the sacrifice". At all times, fighting is forbidden at a time of worship. The unity of worshippers is upheld also in a negative sense, as persons knowing that they are ritually unclean are trusted to stay away from the sacrifice, which otherwise would be spoilt through their impurity.[14]

There are two general categories of sacrifice: kinship rituals and communal ones. One kind within the first category may be called "rites of life crises", as the need for them arose from some impending danger within the kinship group. [illegible] of kinship ritual are the "memorial rites" held to commemorate some departed kinsmen who had recently died, or the whole host of ancestral spirits. Communal rites always refer to agriculture and its need of rain and growth. I therefore suggest for them the name "rites of the soil". There were also other sacrifices having to do with war, hunts, etc., but these have to remain as a comparison with present Christian rites, and will, therefore, be left out of the discussion.

Rites of life crises

Whenever sickness, severe accident or death occur in a family, the diviner has to be approached. The result read in the divining bones clarifies to the Tshwa the reason for the actual misfortune. If it is divined that a certain nguluve (ancestral spirit) is angry, the bones will also tell the

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[14] This aspect will be further developed in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation". See p. 214-215

appropriate manner of approaching this trouble-maker, in order to re-establish right and peaceful relationship with him (or her), and thus to bring back status quo to the afflicted group.

A sacrifice is always necessary in such cases, and the onus is on the headman of the lineage, or the father of the family, to prepare for this according to the diviner's instructions. Required ingredients ordinarily include strips of various cloths, to be tied around the sacrificial tree, to "clothe" the spirits; a goat of a special colour, or a fowl, to be killed according to the verdict of the divining bones; and beer made of millet (wuputsu).

The most senior male member of the afflicted kin-group, or an old hanani (female member of the patrilineage), (5) performs the sacrifice turned towards the sacrificial tree in the village, while all gathered kin members silently take place behind. The officiant tells his departed father and paternal grand-father of the reason for the gathering, asking them to call the other ngwave, which has been indicated by the divining bones as cause of the misfortune. He then establishes ceremonial contact with the present spirits by spitting a mouthful of beer on the ground, and proceeds to kill the sacrificial animal. It is noticeable how this ritual depends upon the existing social structure.

Prayers offered by the officiant are always extemporaneous, although the general order of these seems to follow a pattern, and certain phrases are used on all such occasions. The contents of these prayers are very matter-of-fact: "Here is beer. Here is meat. Here are clothes to cover you". This presentation is followed by an invitation to the spirits to partake of what is offered. The misery of the kin-group because of the actual misfortune is then expressed, and the officiant requests "life" (wutomi) for his relatives. He then ends his prayer by asking the spirits to "lie down" and not

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(5) See "The Social World of the Tswa", p. 14

trouble their kin any more.(6)

After proper preparation, the meat of the sacrificed animal(s) is eaten by all partakers. Beer drinking is also an obligatory part of this meal.

If it proves impossible at the occasion to find the prescribed ingredients for the sacrifice, a solemn ritual promise can be made through the process of kurieketa, implying that the requested sacrifice will be made as soon as circumstances will allow. At this ceremony, [illegible] strips of cloth are tied round the sacrificial tree, and certain signs of the intended sacrificial animal, e.g. some feathers of a hen, are stuck into the ground.

Memorial rites

During the winter season, while agricultural activity is low, the whole lineage comes together for a great memorial feast. This is called 'the great sacrifice' (ekaitza ya handia), or the same name is used as for such occasional sacrifices which are offered to commemorate some recently deceased kinsman (ekaitza). At the 'great sacrifice', several animals are killed. The dressing of the liver (ekaitza ya lixaka) who is the efficient cause of this occasion supplies the he-goat, and other elements of the ritual.

As the most prominent means providing of the whole kin-group, 'The Great Sacrifice' obviously fills other functions than purely religious ones. It is an important occasion for social cooperation. Plans for expensive marriages are subjects of conversation. As kinsmen from a distance also make an effort to take part in this occasion, undoubtedly it also functions as a means of news exchange. Nevertheless, it is the religious ceremony that calls the kinsmen together. This

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(6) See comment on "lying down" in "Taboo traditional beliefs", p. 39. Cf. M. Hunter, Reaction to Conquest, p. 247

has, in principle, many similarities with the sacrifice of the rite described above. The main special features are the following:

1. Water plays a special role. The officiant squirts water from his mouth into the face of the sacrificial animal before he kills it with the spear. Water is also sprinkled on the ground in front of the sacrificial tree, where the meat is to be put. "Mat[illegible]ku ti-ti-ti- ku ku kape, hi kuma wutomi". (= "Water says 'cool, cool', (so that) everything is quiet, we get life"].

2. The blood of the [illegible] (or, in the case of a child's lineage, a ram) sacrificed by the officiant, must be "extinguished" (ku timela [illegible]) by the blood of a female animal. Ordinarily this is provided for by the second animal sacrificed being a female. It would seem that this necessity to 'extinguish' the blood, or to 'cool' it, arises from the potential danger of 'heat' (kuhisa).

3. The officiant's prayers on this occasion address themselves to the father, grand-father, great grand-father, etc., as far as names of patrilineal ancestors are remembered. These are then requested to "call all the others to come and share in the feast". Furthermore, prayers do not, in general, deal with actual misfortunes. There is thanksgiving for blessings during the year past, and askings for "wato-i ni makatekwa" (life and strength), for off-spring within the lineage, and fertility of fields and domestic animals. Let 'bad sicknesses' stay far away. If sickness, let it be 'female ones', for which we can find help.... (9) Let hyenas and lions stay

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In.... (9) Let hyenas and lions stay

(7) The important concepts of 'heat' (kuhisa) and 'coolness' (kutimela) will be explored in detail in Chapter on "God, Life and Salvation". See pp. 214-215

(8) See footnote No. 7

(9) Tinkuwa ka watwa (= "bad sicknesses") are strong and difficult sicknesses, for which remedies are hard to find. Smallpox (kisolo) is one example.

far away... etc." Ordinarily, the officiant closes his prayers with the words "It is me, your child, whom you have born.."

4. The climax of the 'Great Sacrifice' is the act of pouring out the pot' (ku halata ngelo). One informant described this in the following manner:

> "There is a big pot into which they throw all kinds of grain, millet, maize, etc., and some meat from the goats that were killed, together with intestines and swanyi (10). Then they pour water and beer into the pot and stir. Then all of that lineage who are waiting for their Ancestors take hold of this pot, everybody! As they are so many, some hold on to the ones standing in front of them, because if you hold somebody who has contact with the pot, you are also holding the pot.
>
> Now, as they take hold of this pot, to pour it out right there, to the tinsulwe, they pray. Everyone of them opens his mouth to say what is in him, and asks for life. There is a big noise, because they pray for themselves".

This interesting form of prayer, which strongly differs from prayers offered by the officiant, as every kinsman here has a possibility to express himself, will be further discussed in the section on "Christian worship". (11)

5. The act of eating the sacrificial meat is done in a special order, each kinship category eating in a group by itself. Certain parts of the animals are ascribed to certain categories. There is also a definite assumption that this meal is eaten together with the ancestors.

6. Pieces of skin from the sacrificed animals are cut out and tied around the wrist of everyone partaking in the ceremony. (12)

Several of the quoted features obviously serve to stress the ideal unity of all kin members. Some re-affirm the super-

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(10) Half digested grass found in goat's stomach

(11) See p. 136

(12) Cf. M. Hunter, op. cit. pp. 250-251

human sanction of the existing social structure, and it becomes clear through the ritual that life" is to be found only within and through the kinship context.

The memorial rites directed to some nguluve who had recently been counted among the living, were usually held either approximately forty days or a full year after the death. This sacrifice was called banjha and proceeded similarly to 'The Great Sacrifice', with the necessary variation that the number of animals was reduced, and prayers were given a slightly different address and contents.

I have not observed that the banjha represents a "welcoming back" ceremony (ukubuyisa) as among the Zulu and Swazi, but I would not exlude this possibility. (13)

Rites of the soil

The reference group in the case of life crises rites is the kin. In all rites of the soil, it is the neighbourhood - a territorially determined group of people. It is true that the 'rites of the soil' also direct themselves towards ancestral spirits (tinguluve), but they are here addressed primarily in their capacity of being 'owners of the land', and not as superhuman caretakers of a kin group.

In principle, the ownership of the soil is vested in the chief's person. As the living representative of the chiefs who ruled before him, "he is the soil", as Junod expresses it. (14) Nevertheless, he must never forget that his is in reality a 'caretaker-government', acting on behalf of the real owners, his ancestors, who lived on and are buried in

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(13) M.H. Soelen, "Religious beliefs and practices" in I. Schapera, (ed), Bantu-Speaking tribes of South Africa, pp. 249-250; H.A. Marwick, The Swazi, p. 225

(14) H.A. Junod, Life of a South African tribe, I, p. 405

owner-

automatically make

owner' of the soil. Or rather, ownership can

ded both from a jural viewpoint and a ritual (mysti-

power for at least 150 years. But they

have no ritual sights over their soil. If somebody

outside settlers with the intention to settle, the chiefs

e the right to give them a portion of land to cultivate

nd to build on (subject to rulings of the Portuguese admini-

stration). They have the final rights of ownership.

But, when it comes to sacrificing for rain and fertility of

heir soil, they are bound to call a person from the Massinga-

Ronga tribe to perform the ceremony.[15] This is to acknow-

ledge the ancestors of the Massinga-Ronga as the owners of

the soil in spite of their descendants having subjugated

by the Tshwa long ago.

In parts of the Tshwa area, where the Hlengwe and Dzivi

have been settled for a longer period of time, Tshwa chiefs

have obtained both jural and ritual rights of ownership.

Rights of the soil are of the Kinship Calendaric rites di-

rectly connected with the seasons of agriculture, and rain

sacrifices in times of drought.

The Calendaric rites of the soil are (a) planting cere-

monies; (b) the "biting" (kuluma) ritual when the new crop

is ready to be eaten, and (c) thanksgiving festival (kunyika

ubonga) after the harvest.

In the initiated Tshwa community, all people digging

together, irrespective of kinship belonging, take part in

these Calendaric rites, as they are considered essential for

'15) In Vilanculos, the Khosa lineage sacrifices for

rain, and in Maxaninga, the Bila.

the whole agricultural process. The principal set of rites is performed close to the chief's village, and this becomes the signal for similar performances at several places in the surrounding area.

Leadership of the calendaric rites is in the hands of the chief, or his ritual representative before the local owners of the soil". This ritual performer may also lead the ceremonies in certain other places, but this task seems often to be delegated to other old men in good ritual standing with the local ancestors. Some informants called such a leader ŋ'anga (medical practitioner), but this feature seems not to be decisive.

The place for these ceremonies is constantly at the foot of certain trees "out in the fields". Such a tree, whatever kind it may be, is called lisiki, a name which speaks of fertility.(16)

Grain of various kinds are used for sacrifice at the lisike, both at the time of planting and at the harvest festival. At the latter occasion, all kinds of produce from the fields are offered in thanksgiving to the 'owners of the soil'. Beer brewed from the new year's crop is then another integral part of the ritual. It is significant that no animals are killed at these sacrifices. Blood should not be shed in the fields.

At the time of planting, seeds are also ceremonially treated. This special rite is called khoholo, and is said to protect the growing seed from the evil influence of witches. Every participant in the khoholo ceremony plants some 'treated' seeds at various kinds in each corner of the fields. The fields are then regarded as being magically "fenced in".

Grains are ritually used also at the kulima ("biting") ceremony, when the new crop is ready to be eaten. All growing plants that were ceremonially protected through the khoholo

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(16) Cf. the expression "I mulilo hi nyimba" ("She is pregnant")

rite are then "released" from the magic sanction. A ritual eating of "wet maize", e.g., (zi-faki zo tsakama) is the signal for common use of the new year's crop. Certain kinds of trees, e.g. the Ehanyi-tree, (17) are also protected by ritual sanctions, and the new fruit has to be properly "bitten" before it is considered safe for use.

Hoes are also given a place in calendaric rites, notably at the time of planting. They are then dedicated at the lisike tree. The officiant 'writes' (ku tsala) on them with medicine, and they are then left by the tree overnight.

Prayers offered at calendaric rites generally take the form of "reporting" to the 'owners of the soil'. They are told by the officiant that "we intend to start digging", or "we are now beginning to eat this year", etc. There are, however, also petitions for normal rain, for blessing of the hoes, and "let not the hoes eat anyone". The harvest festival includes joyous prayers of thanksgiving.

Another feature of the calendaric rites worth noting is that no diviner has any role to play in this connection. Evidently, these ceremonies are so fixed parts of the seasonal rhythm that no further confirmation or new instruction is needed. The case is quite opposite at the rain rites, which may be regarded as 'rites of crisis' of the whole community.

Rain rites are considered of great importance in the traditional Ngwa community. Consequently, no power to perform them can be delegated, as in the case of the calendaric rites. They are performed centrally at a chief's village when an intricate divinatory process has established their necessity. Such informants claim that everyone cultivating in the district, for which the rain rites are being performed, has to make a contribution to this occasion, either in cash or in kind. (18)

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(17) Cf. Scherschmidt, Gaa Wörterbuch, Junod, op. cit. I p. 397

(18) Cf. statement by Colson quoted on p. 41

The main rain rite is the sacrifice to those ancestral spirits, who are considered 'owners of the soil'. This sacrifice may consist of both grain and some domestic animals, all according to the instructions of a special diviner. It is more than probable that other rain rites, of a more magical nature, accompany these sacrifices,[19] but these were either considered unimportant by informants or are not well-known to 'ordinary Tshwa'.

However, the special ceremony of kole wo lavu vula ("ritual to seek for rain") should be properly recorded, for at least two reasons:

a) It is used when all other resources of rain ritual have been exhausted;

b) It is the only known traditional Tshwa ceremony which seems to be an attempt to approach directly the Power of the Sky (Tilo), or being the ultimate source of the 'soul' rain, and thus of 'life' (moya).

The kole wo lavu vula rite has until recently been performed in times of drought. Informants in their twenties mentioned having heard of this ceremony taking place during their boyhood, but they also affirmed that it had not been performed since they grew up. The following description is composed of information from several informants, although the second paragraph is a complete statement from one informant:

> All women past child-bearing age (vaxigama-nzeni) gathered at a place far away from any houses, and every one else was obliged to stay inside. If some woman in the neighborhood was believed to have had an abortion and buried the foetus herself to avoid detection, she was pursued to find the corpse of whom to the secret burial place. There the woman was asked or dragged only in grass skirts, due to the pouring of the foetus and went in a weird dancing procession to the dump spot, where it was re-buried. Then, knowing of burial spots was placed and an important part of kole wo lavu

(19) Cf. W.M. Endelen, op. cit., pp. 66-69

vula.

"Then the whole group of old women continued their weird dancing, accompanied by their own obscene songs, in which they poured forth their utter misery. They cursed the Sky (ku yuvula Tilo), shouting "You who just live and live!" (Muhanyi nzi wena! Muhanyi nzi wena!) They threw dirt towards heaven and bent over to show their nakedness to the Sky Power - the strongest curse available to a Tshwa woman. Then Tilo had to drive them away, and he had nothing else but the rain to use as his instrument. Thus, after this ceremony, it always rained".

Among other things, we see here another example of the danger caused by 'heat' [20] and the whole rite is geared towards the removal of this curse from the country. Therefore, only non-menstruating women qualify for this rite, and 'heat'-producing sexual [illegible] are prohibited.

One important difference between ordinary approaches to the tinguluve (ancestral spirits) and this rite directed to the Sky Power (Tilo) should be noted: While a certain feeling of awe and respect characterized some parts of the sacrifices to tinguluve, here the cursing of the Sky Power is the basic note. The stark contrast between the human misery and the "muah-life" of the Sky Power is sharply brought into focus.

The purpose of this strange "prayer" therefore seems to be to arouse angry action on the part of a temporarily inactive Sky Power, rather than to evoke his sympathy. One Christian Tshwa commented: "Our fathers knew that God exists, but they merely did not know how to worship Him".

Observations regarding Tshwa traditional worship

I find that the general aim of the various types of traditional Tshwa rituals is "life" (wutomi) for self, kinsmen, neighbours and land. As these rites - with one exception -

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[20] for a detailed discussion of the 'heat' concept, see pp. 214-215

are directed towards departed kinsmen or former inhabitants of the land, there is the underlying assumption that this 'life" should be similar to conditions known to the ancestors during their own life-time. This gives a strong conservative emphasis to the rituals. Excesses or innovations are not requested. It is rather status quo, "sufficient life" (wutomi gi engeleko) that is craved.

It is important to note that, as the Tshwa seek "life" in and through the respective group, they also face adversity together. No individual is left entirely on his own, except if he voluntarily cuts himself off from his kin group (or is shut out because of being suspected of witchcraft).

This group approach to the superhuman world constantly affirms the existing social structure and undoubtedly facilitates and strengthens 'right relationships' between group members, both in terms of moral and actual reality.(21) "The participants develop a bond of fellowship and therefore of esprit de corps which provides mutual support each towards the other".(22)

Recorded acts of individual worship are limited to certain elderly persons, closely tied to recently deceased kin elders. I suggest that such attention should be interpreted in terms of personal attachment, or as an expression of particular filial piety. The ritual closeness to the living (ancestral spirits) of the person approaching them on behalf of his kin-group may also inspire an individual to continuous personal attention. In this context, it is significant to note that elderly Tshwa persons are sometimes called by the same term of respect, ordinarily reserved for the spirits of the depart-

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(21) Cf. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and function in primitive society, p. 156.

(22) J. Beattie, "Sacrifice" in Dickson-Illingworth, (ed), Biblical revelation and African beliefs, p. 73

ed - a custom also found among the Venda. (23)

A pragmatic apprcach towards worship is evident among the Tshwa. Every act of worship has a definitely stated purpose, and certain results are therefore expected from such an act, particularly as it has always been called for through the divinatory process (except calendaric rites). A seasonal regularity marks the calendaric rites of the soil, but even there the different purpose of every act is explicit.

There is an abundance of symbolic ingredients and actions in Tshwa traditional ritual: Water, and 'extinguishing' of blood, to obviate 'heat'; ceremonial spitting (24); cloths to cover the spirits; communal meal eaten together with the spirits; hoes and seed being dedicated; fields magically 'fenced in', etc.

Similar to rituals of many other peoples, ceremonial killing of animals is an integral part of Tshwa traditional worship, except in calendaric rites. The importance of blood, therefore, raises several questions, for which my material provides only insufficient answers. It may be assumed, however, that "blood provides the fullest ground for bridging the gulf which has been caused by sin". (25) This is why it is especially important in rites of life crises, through which 'curses' (khombo) have to be removed. "A curse requests blood" (A khombo gi kombela nkhuu).

As blood is recognized as the seat of life, it also "revivifies the object to whom the offering is made". (26) The several animals killed at "The Great Sacrifice" would seemingly provide such a revivification for the large host of ances-

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(23) D.W. Cruickshank, "Venda names for God", in The Bible Translator, Vol. 21, No 4. Oct. 1970, p. 184

(24) See further on p. 186

(25) H. Sawyerr, op. cit., p. 71

(26) Ibid.

tral spirits. As the blood penetrates into the soil, the abode of the ancestors, it also becomes a living link between the people of the lineage and their tinguluve.

As to frequency, traditional sacrificial rites are still being commonly performed. Some evidence points to the possibility that rain rituals are somewhat losing their importance, although exceptional drought - as in 1970 - calls for great communal efforts in this respect. Also the rites of khoholo are reportedly not as universal as they used to be. Memorial kinship rites, on the other hand, are still regarded as regular and important, particularly in the case of chiefs' lineages. Informants agreed that chiefs who refuse to perform such kinship rites will have extreme difficulties in keeping their true status among the people. The kind of rites, however, which seem to continue most universally in use, are 'rites of life crises'.

In spite of the mentioned conservatism, certain modifications of the described rituals may take place because of various outside influence, but there is nothing to suggest that the significance of these is in any process of immediate change among non-Christian Tshwa. In spite of the common saying that "the tinguluve are afraid of trousers", i.e. modern clothing (a tinguluve ti tsoya swibhulukwi), (27) modernization of ways of living, which by no means is limited to Christian Tshwa, has seemingly not diminished the importance of the ancestors to any great extent. This refers particularly to the ancestors of the own kin. In this respect, I find the Tshwa situation more akin to what Mitchell and Mayer found in Salisbury and in East London, than to Junod's experience among the Tsonga. (28)

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(27) This could also mean that the cult of the tinguluve demands strict adherence to traditional regulations, also as regards dress.

(28) J.C. Mitchell, "The meaning in misfortune for urban

Christian Worship

Regularity

We have established that worshipful attendance to the ancestral spirits, by prayer and sacrifice, is the condition sine qua non for attaining 'sufficient life', the highest good for the Tshwa. (28) As this same ideal is included in the Christian value of 'a better life' (wutomi ga chukwana), (29) it would seem logical that Christian worship among Tshwa also aims at reaching the goal of 'life'. As we now turn to scrutinizing Tshwa Christian worship, it is my intention to show how, and to what extent, this assumption is true.

Christian worship has, ideally, both a private and a public side, each one complementing the other. Many Tshwa Christians pray privately, particularly in times of distress, and family worship is used in certain homes. But, on the whole, most Tshwa Christians depend for their regular worship entirely on meetings, and services in church, i.e. public, or group worship.

Regularity is a hallmark of Tshwa Christian worship as in the Christian Church everywhere. Festive seasons provide special emphasis, but the Sunday service is the main source of spiritual nourishment. Many of those who live close to a church take part in the daily morning prayer at the crack of dawn, usually led by some lay leader. A weekday evening meeting is part of the pattern, depending somewhat on local circumstances. Class-meetings for prayer and spiritual education occur frequently, and class sessions for the teaching of

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Africans", in African systems of thought, p. 202; P. Mayer, Townsmen or tribesmen, pp. 191-194; B.A. Pauw, Religion in a Tswana chiefdom, p. 38

(29) See chapter on "Quest for Life", p. 107

(30) See "Quest for Life", p. 111

baptismal candidates are partly used as occasions for worship. (31)

Liturgical order

The fr[illegible], n[illegible]-liturgical worship, which distinguished Protestantism fr[illegible] th[illegible]n Catholic liturgy, (32) is still the principl[illegible] [illegible] freedom, however, is nowadays more a mark on certain [illegible]tems within th[illegible] service than of the actual order. In this r[illegible]spect, it appears that the Free Methodists keep closer to the original freedom than the Methodist Episcopal Church, but this is only An impression on my part. As the Methodist Episcopal hymnal "Tisimu ta Ivangeli" ("Hymns of the Gospel") is accepted and used in all Tshwa Protestant churches, I assu[illegible] with good reasons that the order of worship printed there is rapidly becoming standard in the whole Tshwa area:

"Order of Worship in the Church

(May all services begin at the appointed time. When all people enter the church, may they kneel and pray in their hearts).

1. Hymn from Tisimu ta Ivangeli. People standing.
2. The Apostles' Creed to be read by all, standing.
3. Prayer, ended with the Lord's Prayer. Preacher and people kneeling.
4. A hymn.
5. Lesson from the Old Testament. If a Psalm is read, it shall be read antiphonally, people standing.
6. "Gloria" to be sung, people standing.
7. Lesson from the New Testament
8. Announcements and Offering
9. A hymn, people standing

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(31) The same pattern is seen in Congo Christian churches. See B. Anderson, Churches at the grass-roots, pp. 75-76

(32) See "Introduction of Christianity", p. 73

10. Sermon
11. Prayer, people kneeling
12. A hymn, people standing
13. Doxology, and the Apostles' Benediction, 2 Cor. 13:14". (33)

Even if many worship leaders feel free to introduce occasional changes, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Gloria, the Doxology and the Benediction are fixed items of this order of worship, and constitute a fair amount of regular liturgy. Furthermore, the 'Psalm', indicated in item 5 above has become rather regularized, as this follows the list of several Psalms from the Bible which have been selected for 'daily readings', one for each day of the month. These Psalms are printed in the hymn book and are always read antiphonally. The fact that these are usually referred to as 'the Day' (Siku), indicates that they have become another fixed part of the liturgy.

Singing and preaching

The free elements of worship are hymns, New Testament text, sermon and prayers, and the items of announcements and offering.

Some preachers, ordained or lay, have special gifts of music, which they utilize in bringing new and varied songs and hymns into the worship. In certain places, particularly on mission stations, choirs help to diversify the church music. Variation of presentation, and freedom of selection are thus real possibilities. Nevertheless, there is a tendency to keep the choice of songs and hymns in worship services down to a minimum. Certain hymns of Tisimu ta Ivangeli appear to be very popular, while the bulk remains essentially unknown to most worshippers. This may be a usual occurrence in other countries, but when the total choice is narrowed down to the 200 hymns of Tisimu ta Ivangeli and the few from

(33) Tisimu ta Ivangeli, Music Edition, p. [illegible]

"Rinzelani", (34) this tendency comes into a different perspective.

It therefore seems evident that the hymn-singing element in Tshwa Christian worship is in the process of becoming a more fixed item of liturgy.

The New Testament text is usually the basis for the sermon. However, many Tshwa preachers nowadays seem to prefer using several sermon texts, often utilizing both Old and New Testament. Here the preacher has complete freedom. No set texts are prescribed.

A systematic study of text selection and sermons would certainly reveal many important features of theological trends within Tshwa Christian churches, but no such research has yet been undertaken. However, the manner of selection, and preparation of sermons often points to a certain interpretation of the work of the Holy Spirit. Texts are often seemingly selected on the spur of the moment, (35) and several conversations with both ordained and lay Tshwa preachers in the Transvaal mines revealed that preparation to preach means 'to be open to the immediate guidance of the Spirit', during the actual delivery of the sermon. Some openly scorned any systematic sermon preparation. "You should not preach your own words but what comes to you from the Holy Spirit".

Several Tshwa ministers do have a different understanding of preaching and its preparation, but it appears rather common that Tshwa Christian worshippers are given sermons which are not "prepared" in the usual sense of the word. Obviously, this opens a great possibility for the recurrence of favourite texts and themes. (36)

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(34) "Rinzelani" (= "Wait!") is the name given to a small booklet of hymns and songs, issued by the Free Methodist Church

(35) Cf. B.A. Pauw, op. cit. p. 189

(36) Cf. B.A. Pauw, op. cit. p. 177; and B.G.M. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, pp. 186 and 191

[illegible] the end of the sermon, a common emphasis of [illegible] on 'ku ti nyikela" ("to dedicate oneself"). [illegible] often occurs that one or more persons go [illegible] kneel in front of the pulpit, sometimes approaching [illegible] singing a song of prayer. Once kneeling, the person [illegible] dedicating himself often prays loudly, weeping, [illegible] forgiveness for his sins.

[illegible], such an event is the signal to the whole congregation to kneel, usually continuing the song that has been started, and subsequently everyone in the church is praying [illegible] Some bow their heads, while others gesticulate freely, everyone obviously completely concentrated on his own [illegible] words. Phrases like 'Forgive my sins", and "You [illegible] kind of person I am" are frequently used. [illegible] is a sense of complete freedom of expression, and [illegible] personal release is unconsciously taking place in this [illegible] of joint prayer.(37)

[illegible] dedicating himself' in this fashion may be a [illegible] 'becoming a believer'. More [illegible] themselves, maybe [illegible] or sermon, or in some [illegible] guilt. In this way, such [illegible] type of public [illegible] specific reference to a sinful [illegible] heart, (C 3".

[illegible] prayer, initiated by a person 'dedi[illegible]', warmly smiled by the preacher. [illegible] special attention is paid to the person [illegible] and he goes back to his seat while the [illegible] rises from its kneeling position. [illegible] specific personal assistance is extended

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[illegible]w, op. cit. p. 136

in certain Zionist churches to purchase their healing [illegible] themselves', but in my experience this [illegible] only happens during special 'evangelistic campaigns", where the emphasis is on conversion.

Prayer in public worship

Joint prayer of the type described above has perhaps developed through the introduction of certain patterns [illegible]. It is not improbable, however, that this [illegible] Christian adaptation of the joint prayer at the time of [illegible] ing out the pot' during the 'Great Sacrifice' and at [illegible] healing. We recall that, on these occasions, everyone [illegible] his mouth to say what is in him (to the spirits), and ask [illegible] for life. There is a [illegible] (38) because they pray for themselves.

Two patterns of development are here possible as explanations: (a) Joint prayer of a Pentecostal type possibly introduced by certain missionaries may have aroused a strong and immediate emotional response in Tsonga Christians because of identification with a traditional ritual: (b) [illegible] converted groups in a highly emotional fervour, may have been unconsciously led to utilize a traditional pattern to express their need in a new idiom. Being identified (by missionaries) with a known practice of a certain Christian group, it was subsequently accepted within the Church.

All other acts of prayer in Christian public worship are performed in an orderly fashion, without being bound to set formulas. 'Free prayer' is still a significant mark of Protestant worship. (39) Nevertheless, certain features keep recurring, [illegible]

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(38) See p. 121

(39) See Introduction of Christian [illegible]

The privilege of leading in prayer i mostly reserved for ministers and lay leaders. In small gr , this pattern may be abandoned, and even young people may occasionally be prodded to pray aloud. But these are exceptions. It would not seem improbable that the traditional Tshwa custom of an elder praying on behalf of the group is the model. (40)

In spite of the spontaneity of prayer, certain items and phrases can reasonably be expected to occur. Thanksgiving and praise to God is prominent. Particularly in Free Methodist context I have observed the use of a set phrase "A ri bonglwe!" [= "May it/i.e. the name of Jesus/be thanked!"] The immediate response from the group to this expression is "Amen", whereupon the person leading the prayer continues. The same phrase may be repeated several times during the same prayer.

Furthermore, no Christian Tshwa prayer seems complete without mentioning the sick, both in general as 'those who suffer in hospital', and some particular cases. This refers also to the frequent occasions when prayers of two or more lay leaders immediately succeed each other within the same worship event. A very common petition is also "Give us life" (Mi nyike wutomi).

It is generally understood that 'eternal life' is not something to be especially prayed for. This is rather accepted as "the reward to all who faithfully worship God until the end". (41) Petitions for 'life' may therefore be assumed to move in the more general realm of the traditional ideal of "sufficient life", where health, preservation and fertility of the soil have a prominent place. (42)

Prayer is usually addressed to God – seldom to Christ.

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(40) See pp. 118 ff.

(41) Cf. John 3:16

(42) See p. 107

even if it always ends "in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord". The epithets "Father", "Almighty" (Nyamintamu) or "Lord" are used interchangeably, together with other names of God (Nungungulu). Some persons keep addressing God in prayer as "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob", or "God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego". (43) Even at the risk of over-emphasizing similarities with traditional Tshwa customs, I suggest that this is a reminiscence of the usual address at a Tshwa sacrifice, where all ancestors are called by name to attend. (44)

Role of prayer outside of public worship

Prayer (kukomb[illegible]) is by no means limited to periods of public worship. It is the single item that seems to be the essence of Christian worship among the Tshwa. This, of course, is in agreement with very general observations concerning religious experience.

> "Where prayer arises and sets the soul in motion", writes James in his Varieties of the Religious Experience, "we have - even in the absence of creeds and pious forms - a living religion". (45) Later on he continues: "The conviction that one really accomplishes something through prayer is the outcome of living religion". (46)

In the Tshwa context, prayer was certainly not introduced through Christianity. It was a natural and integral part of traditional worship. While teaching Tshwa christians to direct their prayers to the instead of their ancestors, the Church has also made prayer for more common, and it has been partly freed from the institutional and emotional ties with the act of joint worship. In accordance with the Protestant doctrine of [illegible] of all believers", (47) Tshwa have

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(43) Cf. P. Mumkler, op. cit., p. 195

(44) See p. 120

(45) W. James, Varieties of the Religious Experience, p. 41

(46) Ibid. p. 43

(47) 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Revelations 1:6

been taught that any Christian has the right to approach God directly through prayer.

Judging from conversations with Tshwa Christians in mine compounds, I do not believe that private prayer has yet begun to play a significant role in being a source of spiritual inspiration. This is still primarily sought in joint worship. However, when feelings of acute guilt have been aroused, private prayer appears to be the main key to recover spiritual equilibrium.

Several informants affirm that they confess their sins in private prayer to God, whenever they understand that they have committed a sinful act, and pray for forgiveness. A few mentioned that, in certain instances, they had been praying several times, for a number of days, before they understood that 'they had been forgiven by God'. Obviously, similar prayers are offered during the periods of joint prayer, in connection with 'dedication' (See above). It is to be noted that, in all these cases, confession of sins is done only to God. (48)

Prayer sessions for seriously ill persons are obligations keenly felt and observed by Tshwa Christians. Several informants gave personal examples of intensive prayer periods for somebody sick in the family, or in the Christian community. In many cases, it was noted that the prayed-for person was undergoing medical treatment. One informant gave the following description of prayer sessions for seriously sick:

> "There is no great difference between prayers for sick, and ordinary prayers. It is mainly that, when we offer our daily prayers, we remember our whole life (w.tomi). But at these special times, our hearts pray for and suffer on behalf of the one who is sick.

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(48) This aspect will be further investigated in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation". See p. 235

Our lay leader tells us that someone in the village is suffering, and he sets a day for prayer. On that afternoon we go to the home of the sick person to pray.

Before we begin, we have to abstain from food, and we must pray for ourselves, too. We are also told not to have any intercourse with our wives.

I remember four times when I took part in such prayers. Once we prayed for a woman who had been bitten by a dog. Another time, we prayed for our lay leader's child, who had severe headache and influenza. Here in Johannesburg, we went twice to hospital to pray for friends who had been wounded in mine accidents .."

We note here the element of ritual purity, necessary for the prayer to be effective. This is the only known occasion when prayer must be further 'strengthened' in this manner, although it is possible that strong feelings of guilt, prompting a Christian to periods of private prayer for forgiveness, may also dictate conditions of ritual purity to an individual. (49)

Special occasions of worship

Besides the worship regularity tied to the week, a certain seasonal calendar is followed. The main items are:

1. Christmas, often celebrated with a dramatic presentation of the Nativity, and a joint meal. In Christian communities, the whole Christmas season is a time for daily ecumenical services, for singing, prayer and drama rehearsal.

2. Also in Holy Week and Easter, the dramatic wealth of the gospel narratives is well utilized. Palm Sunday processions are common, and sometimes the Good Friday and Easter events are dramatically portrayed. In certain places, apart from special preaching and prayer services, groups of young people make up the community early on Easter morning with songs commemorating the resurrection of Christ.

3. A Thanksgiving festival (Umuvuko kubonga) at the

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(49) Cf. Communion, p. 151 and chapter on 'Law, Sin and Salvation", p. 211 ff.

end of the agricultural season (May or June) is another joyous occasion. Products from the fields, and domestic animals, are then presented in church as thanks-offerings for the harvest. It is obvious that this is a case of christianizing a traditional rite, (50) and it is often reported that this festival attracts more non-Christians to church than any other occasion.

4. The fight against Drink is marked by a special 'abstinence weekend' in November. At that time, the cashew-fruit will soon ripen, traditionally introducing the season of drinking the strong cashew liquor (sope). The dramatic abilities of Tshwa are utilized once again, and special forces make the lessons penetrating.

5. Certain periods within the year are dedicated to 'revivals' (tivux lelo). Usually a week is then used for daily meetings in church. A special theme is the focus of sermons and teaching, and, as a rule, fund-raising for a particular purpose is part of the 'revival'. The weekend immediately following the revival week is the climax, with services of dedication and offerings. Usually, group prayers and singing continue all through the night between Saturday and Sunday.

6. 'Conferences' also play the role of Christian festivals. Each parish has its 'quarterly conference', where all local church work is reported and discussed. Large crowds of both believers and non-Christians gather for such occasions, and worship services usually become occasions for evangelistic messages. (51)

The same applies on a larger scale to the 'Annual Conference' (generally held during the winter season), where delegates from each parish in Mozambique and the Transvaal alike meet for a week with all ministers of the Church. The last Sunday of the Annual Conference has lately become a very popular rallying point for Christians also from long distances. Almost enthusiastic mass meetings mark that day as the great Christian festival of the year.

Christian memorial services

One feature of the Annual Conference is the memorial ser-

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(50) See p. 123 ff.

(51) Cf. B.A. Pauw, op. cit., pp. 144-145

on the Sunday morning. Another "was certain that the meat we ate had been offered to the tinguluve".

The hesitancy of some ministers in regard to timisa, and the words from my informants, would confirm that private memorial services among the Tshwa are at least potentially syncretistic. As this rite has its roots both in traditional Tshwa custom and in the Roman Catholic usage of "masses for the dead", it seems as if timisa have entered the Protestant context through the backdoor and rapidly gained popularity. As far as I am aware, little positive guidance has been given Tshwa Protestants in this sphere, except for the old rule that "worshipping the ancestors is sinful". The whole matter of Christians' attitudes towards their ancestors will be further discussed in the chapter on "Death and Life Eternal". (52)

Christian agricultural rites

When the Spring rains have begun to fall, Christian farmers take their hoes and some seed to church at dawn of their first day of planting. Prayers are offered for the seed to grow, for sufficient rain, and for the work with the hoes to be blessed. In one instance I was told that seed and hoes are taken to church at night "to sleep there", and to be fetched again at the special prayers offered the following morning.

It is evident that this agricultural rite, together with the thanksgiving service (kunyika wuhonga) have been directly transferred from the traditional context and given a Christian direction. The role of the ancestors (tinsikuru) as givers of 'life' (wutomi) through rain and fertility of the soil has been consciously transferred to God. As the Tshwa traditionally ascribed the ultimate power of giving rain and fertility to the Sky Power (Xilo), the actual change, in this case, is possibly rather slight.

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(52) See p. 257-260

Most informants had not taken part in any special Christian prayer sessions for rain. "Rain is frequently mentioned when we pray in church", one informant said, 'but I do not remember being called to a special rain prayer". During certain times of drought, however, as the first half of 1970, I have had reports of periods of prayer meetings for rain. It would appear that the extent of such activities depends largely upon local leadership. I am not aware of any special forms or rites used in this connection.

Sacraments

Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Free Methodist Church are divided, according to the established order, into 1) 'listeners' (vaingiselli), 2) preparatory members (varinges), and 3) 'full members' (aire ai telebi). The 'listeners' are barely inside the door of the community, beginning to take part in regular worship and to obey Christian ethical disciplines. When they have been found faithful in attending church, they are usually accepted by the local leader into preparatory membership and begin studying the catechism (sjuas ga varinges) together with others preparing for baptism.

This study consists mainly in learning by heart certain answers to questions on basic items of Christian (Protestant) faith: God, Man, Sin, Jesus Christ and salvation through Him, plus doctrines regarding baptism and communion.

During the time of preparation, great stress is also laid on the candidates' acquiring Christian norms of behaviour, and regulations of Church membership, particularly the matter of 'giving', are part of the instruction. 'Christian behaviour' is usually accepted as evidence of a conversion, and, at least in rare instances, the record of regular giving during the time of study is regarded as an important sign of a 'change of heart'.

Such a period of preparation usually extends over several months, and on the eve of a baptismal service, all candidates

are examined by lay leaders and presented to the minister. All who have "passed" the examination and satisfy the leaders in regard to Christian ways of living, will then be baptized in connection with the Sunday service. The method of 'baptism by sprinkling' will be used. Baptism by immersion is prescribed as an alternative form in Methodist Churches, but I have not yet witnessed such a baptism among the Tshwa.

As baptism is the rite without which no one can become a full member of the Church, it can be classified as a rite of transition. In times past, a person being baptized would drop his original name and adopt a 'Christian' one. Thus, he became a new person in a concrete sense. Nowadays, most children are given Portuguese names in their childhood - often in addition to a Tshwa name, which is known only to an inner circle - and the name change at baptism has therefore largely lost its significance.

In general, it seems that baptism is passionately desired' among Tshwa as among other peoples of Africa, (59) because it is still regarded as an inevitable step into modern society. But above all, it is a necessary transition within the church structure. After this sacrament, a person has the right to call himself a 'believer'.

The function of baptism is understood as purification from sin. Water can remove the dirt and filth'. Several informants stressed, however, that the sacrament must be received in active faith and repentance (ku tsinzwisela). Sometimes, "it will have no effect". Questioned what will happen if those who 'have also sin' after baptism, informants answered: "Then they will know that they have sinned and have to seek God's forgiveness in prayer and through Holy Communion".

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(59) J. Taylor, Processes of growth in an African Church, p. 19

What parallels, if any, with baptism can be found within the traditional Tshwa system of worship?

Water is used for instance at the "Great Sacrifice" (mhamba ya lovhedzi), to 'cool' the [illegible], and is, in general, regarded as a symbol of 'coolness' (vutitimela). This quality describes the state of ritual purity as distinguished from the contaminated state of 'heat' (kuhisa). As also medicated water was sprinkled by the n'anga (medical practitioner) on all kinsmen contaminated by the death contagion, (54) it can be surmised that the symbolic use of water in the sacrament of baptism is readily accepted.

A significant parallel to the function of baptism as a purification rite is found in the act of purification by the blood of a girl who has been dedicated to a 'spirit-of-revenge' (mupfhukwa). (55)

This purification by blood in respect of a young woman who was to be married outside of the mupfhukwa's kin, was vividly described by an informant:

"... Then we went there. They had called a n'anga, and had procured two roosters, one white and one black, and also a goat.

To start with, the n'anga killed the two roosters, sometime in the afternoon. He explained to the mupfhukwa: 'Your wife has grown up. She is getting married now. But we give you another one who will stay with you.' As he sacrificed the two roosters, he also dedicated the new young girl.

Then they took both of the goat. Two men held its forelegs, and two held its hindlegs, and one held the head. Then the n'anga cut the goat, while saying, "We cleanse you, or cleanse you (in connection), so well into your marriage..." and he said many things, until the goat's blood was finished.

The woman was sitting with the goat, so all the blood streamed over her body. When they had finished, all the

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(54) See chapter on "Death and Life Eternal", p. 247

(55) See "Traditional Tshwa Beliefs", pp. 52-53

roasted and finished before morning.
The young woman was washed in blood. She had to sleep that night with the blood still on her. In the morning they warmed up water and washed her, to finish all the blood on her head as well as on her body. She was then given new clothes, and the n'anga took away the old ones...'

...trans.tion, baptism may be compared ...tion rites; circumcision for boys (ku kin... ku engesa wukwara), and "entering the house" (ku engesa nzvimbi) for girls at the first menstruation. ...similarities between these two sets of rites, and baptism ... more significance than to form. ... signified the passing from a lower stage of ... changing the child into a full-fledged per... (social). ... like the idea of a covenant, or rather ... coincides [with] participation with a new community. ... circumcision of a boy, "the shedding of his ... ground binds him mystically to the living-dead ... (66) In both ... phenomenological parallels with ... interpretation of circumcision as ... (1971 reprint ... 1 fee, suggested by Eliade, ... thinking about baptism.

... no suggestion of baptism having supplanted any of ... traditional rites. I have no recent in... ... initiation ... definite evidence that circumcision is ... frequently as in the past, a great deal ... significance has been lost, however, as the ... usually performed in a medical clinic. ... with the rare exception of traditional rites

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... Mbiti, op. cit. p. ...

... Barnes, White and Culverwell as quoted by ..., op. cit. p. 67

of purification and transition, the sacrament of baptism is celebrated by sprinkling among Tshwa Protestants (and Roman Catholics of course!) presents a rather matter-of-fact picture, where the intellectual preparation and understanding is far more conspicuous than the symbolic act. It seems appropriate to question whether this form of baptism satisfies the demonstrated Tshwa desire for symbolism. It is worth noting that "adult baptism by full immersion is adopted by most [sects] (in Africa)". [60] Zionists in Zululand "point out that in most Mission Churches only the [body] is washed and purified. Whereas sin and pollution cling to all the [body]'. [60] While literal interpretation of the Bible may play a role in such partiality for immersion, it would appear probable that baptism by immersion is more meaningful than sprinkling to Africans. Parrinder concludes that "there are reasons why all Churches [in Africa] should not adopt baptism by immersion". (61)

This section on sacraments has so far referred to the baptism of adults, at present representing approximately half of the baptisms performed, at least in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The other half are baptisms of infants born to Christian parents (62) - make a solemn profession of faith and confirm themselves in the Christian faith.

According to the Methodist [Discipline], "every baptized child shall be entered into a [class] as soon as

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(59) G. Parrinder, Religion in an African City

(60) G. Oosthuizen, pp. cit.

(61) G. Parrinder, op. cit.

(62) Dual-parental baptism [shows] a tendency to [overlook] [children] as [co-operative] [members] [of the] Methodist [church] [and] stresses [dependence] on [the] role.

about the age of twelve. But there is evidence that several young baptized persons are not given any systematic teaching of the Christian faith - outside of what they learn from sermons and Sunday School lessons. The fact that no ceremony has yet been adopted to climax the teaching of baptized children - like 'confirmation' in certain Churches - probably decreases the incentive among Church leaders to pay serious attention to such instruction.

While Baptism is a sacrament which a person uses only once in a lifetime, as he is made part of a new community, Holy Communion is a repeated act by which this community is kept together through a mystical bond, which ties members to each other, and to the Divine Power.

Both Sundkler and Mbiti have observed that Holy Communion (or "The Lord's Supper" / Xilalelo xa Hosi / as it is usually called among Tsonga Christians) has lost much of its importance in so-called independent Churches.(63) Baptism, on the other hand, is extremely important in these connections, to the extent that it has become an often repeated ritual of purification. It is interesting to note that, in Zulu independent Churches, Holy Communion has also been made into a rite of purification. "The Zionist prophet proves that the most important thing about Communion is the washing of the feet".(64)

In many Protestant Churches, sacraments have always been regarded as of secondary importance in the life of worship, while preaching of the word comes in the first place. This aspect may be particularly conspicuous in situations where Protestants find themselves outnumbered by Roman Catholics. In Mozambique, such an attitude towards sacraments (particularly its Holy Communion) was instilled in Protestant Christianity was introduced in the area.(65) Also for practical

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(63) J. Mbiti, op. cit. p. [illegible] B. Sundkler, op. cit. p. 2[illegible]

(64) Ibid. p. [illegible]

(65) "Intervention of Christianity", p. 70

reasons - as ordained missionaries only were allowed to officiate - celebration of the Lord's Supper became limited to certain large gatherings visited by some missionary. Even today, when all fully ordained African ministers have the right to serve this sacrament, the early established frequency pattern is still prevalent. In certain places, the Lord's Supper is celebrated every month, but usually is served only once a quarter.

In spite of such infrequency, it is important to note that Holy Communion is held in great awe and respect, whenever it is celebrated. "It is the Christians' mhamba (act of sacrifice)".

Nothing particular needs to be said about the ritual itself, as performed among the Tshwa, as this faithfully follows the liturgical directions translated from the Methodist Ritual from America.

In the Tshwa interpretation of the Lord's Supper, three aspects stand out:

1. Purification from sin;
2. Remembrance of the work of Jesus Christ;
3. Communion with Christ

The element of 'purification from sins' is primary. The Communion table is the place "where sins can be left". One informant qualified a similar statement by saying that "baptized persons only can have their sins forgiven in the Lord's Supper". Again, baptism is seen as the condition for entering the community, of which the Lord's Supper is a continuing privilege.

A few informants mentioned that every communicant should take time before the Lord's Supper to pray and confess his sins before God, so that all your sins are forgiven when you approach the table". The significance here should not be primarily attached to the time factor, but to the fact of confess-

ion. This is the crucial matter, without which no purification can be expected. Thus, I have found no evidence of any magical belief ascribing 'supernatural power' to the elements of this sacrament. (66) Andersson mentions "the dread of unconfessed sins" on taking part in the Communion, (67) and this is the probable reason why some Tshwa see confession to God as a necessary preparation. It should be observed that confession again is only made privately "before God alone".

"If you eat the Lord's Supper without being purified (na u nga basangi) you will get into trouble", is an expression, however, which points to a different kind of preparation. We are here brought back to the belief that 'hot' persons could destroy the sacred act, not only for themselves but for all partakers. (68) Informants as well as some ministers state that a menstruating woman, for instance, ought not to take part in a Communion service. Other forms of 'heat' should also be avoided on this occasion. However, some added the modern note that "nowadays people are not so strict as they should be about these things". (69)

This element of ritual purification brings up a comparison between the Lord's Supper and mhamba (act of sacrifice). The same kind of ritual purity is expected on both occasions.

Two other important parallels can be drawn between the mhamba and the sacrament: 1) They are both acts of remembrance; 2) The element of communion with superhuman powers is conspicuous both in the traditional sacrifice and the Tshwa Christian understanding of the Lord's Supper. It was found also among the Nyakyusa, that "Holy Communion... is felt to

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(66) E. Andersson, op. cit. p. 169; See further chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation", p. 235 f.

(67) E. Andersson, op. cit. p. 170

(68) See pp. 214-215

(69) Cf. B. Sundkler, op. cit. p. 216

replace.... the sacrifice and the communion with the shades".(70)

The difference between these two acts, apart from ritual details, lies primarily in the different objects of remembrance and communion. A further fundamental difference is found in the Christian doctrine that 'sacrifices are no more necessary". The very sacrament of the Lord's Supper is, indeed, a continuous remembrance to a Christian that "Christ died for his sins".(71)

A further striking parallel between traditional rites and this sacrament is found in the expression of one informant: "The Lord's Supper is the eating of mifa-lungo of the believers".(72) As the partaking of this medicated porridge at the ritual death purification is traditionally believed to remove the death contagion (khombo wa kufa) from the kin group, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper would purify every partaker from contamination of sin, which is the 'death contagion" barring non-believers from attaining the 'eternal life'.

The symbolic act of eating strikes a resonant note in Tshwa people, as eating together, in fact, has the deep significance of a covenant. At the ritual act of reconciliation between two quarrelling parties, eating and drinking plays a decisive role,(73) and we have already seen eating as an obligatory part of each sacrificial rite. The symbolic meaning of eating the Lord's Supper as an act of reconciliation with God and a renewal of a covenant within the group is therefore readily accepted by Tshwa Christians as meaningful.

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(70) M. Wilson, Communal rituals of the Nyakyusa, p.176

(71) Hebrews 10:12-14

(72) See chapter on "Death and Life Eternal", p. 247

(73) See chapter on "Pursuit of Health", p. 183

A statement by Mulago on this point seems to indicate that such symbolic meaning of eating is commonly understood in other parts of Africa:

> 'Communion through food only takes place between those who are, or wish to be, on peaceful, friendly or brotherly terms. Eating from the same dish or drinking from the same straw, means entering into interaction with someone else, letting his vital influence be exchanged with one's own. That is why a man under tabu would contaminate all who ate or drank with him. (74)

'Sacrifice' in Christian context

When Christian worship is compared to traditional Tshwa worship, one is struck by the fact that the 'concreteness', so significant and obligatory at the traditional sacrifice, seems to have been completely removed. Tshwa Christians worship much more regularly than their non-Christian counterparts, but they appear to come empty-handed to church. Is Christian worship then completely abstract?

The former section on the Lord's Supper pointed out that, from a doctrinal angle, sacrifice is no longer necessary in a Christian context. This doctrine exonerates the Tshwa Christian from traditional obligations, simultaneously refuting all arguments that ancestors might need to be approached in a traditional manner. The term 'sacrifice' (kupahula, or muphahlelo) as part of Christian teaching, is only used in a figurative sense, e.g. "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1), or "the sacrificial offering of your faith" (Phil. 2:17).

The concept of sacrifice, however, is used in the realm of 'Christian stewardship', through which all Christians are taught to give regular support to the Church. The ideal of 'tithing', i.e. giving a tenth of one's income 'to God' is set before the eyes of Christians, but it is recognized that

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(74) V. Mulago, op. cit. p. 135

very few take this challenge seriously. (This, of course, applies not only to Tshwa).

In similarity with Church practice all over Africa, (75) the main local support in Tshwa Churches is built on a "ticket system", with an established, monthly or quarterly, amount which every member is expected to contribute. In Moçambique, this amount is now 15 escudos, (37 cents) a quarter. In the Transvaal mines, where cash is more readily available, the comparative figure has for long been 90 cents per quarter. A large part of the miners' contributions is sent to supplement the economy of the Church in their home country.

It should be added that a system of voluntary pledges has recently been introduced, counting the existing obligatory amount as the minimum pledge.

On top of monthly or quarterly dues, every member is expected to contribute to some special collections, frequently connected with 'revival weeks'. The most popular of these is the offering at the Harvest Thanksgiving (Kunyika kubonga). It should be noted that this last occasion mainly calls for collections in kind.

It would seem that even those who faithfully discharge their monthly or quarterly duties in regard to the Church never get anywhere near the expenses involved in the traditional system of sacrifice. Liberal giving does not appear to be necessary in the Christian context. Even the set rates "are difficult to keep" according to some informants - an observation that agrees well with my own experience of work among Tshwa Christians. Such a spirit is strongly contrasted against reports from, e.g. the 'Bhengu Church' in East London, where "members feel 'proud' to spend so much money in church, and they spend, in general, more than in other churches". (76)

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(75) See e.g. E. Andersson, op. cit. p. 67 or B.A. Pauw, op. cit. p. 81

(76) A.A. Dubb, The role of the church in an urban African society, II p. 76

It must be added, however, that a slight increase in per capita giving has been noted over the last few years, at least in certain areas. But the fact that the Church was regarded by Tshwa as an endowment, supplied and continuously supported from sources outside of their control, has without doubt been a crippling factor as far as local giving is concerned - however necessary the mission support from abroad has been, and continues to be.

Several other observations should be noted as potential reasons for the apparent disproportion between Christian 'giving' and sacrifices in the traditional context:

1. Regularity in giving is a foreign factor. In a situation of subsistence economy, regular giving is necessarily a great difficulty, as harvest periods (in good years) provide abundance, while relative poverty is the mark of other parts of the year.

2. The system of tithing is seen as "the law of the Church". This "law" is not regarded as obligatory in the same sense as the traditional law, considered as coming from the ancestors. It is neither supported by any supernatural sanctions against the offender, nor is it upheld with force like the law of the Portuguese administration. This "law of the Church" appeals to the dedicated spirit of the 'universe', while somewhat retaining the honorary flavour of a law imposed from outside.

3. Individual giving to the Church is contrasted to the traditional group responsibility, with the onus on the elder to provide a major part.

4. There is, of course, nothing to suggest that traditional sacrifices were necessarily given in a spirit of open willingness. But, as the fee to the diviner (u'angol) was a necessary condition for 'making the ropes speak', the sacrifice itself - made according to the requirements of the divining bones - was an absolute condition for restoring 'life' to the

kin group. The same observation is valid concerning other expenses, which may be requested by the bones in a critical situation: for propitiation of a 'spirit-of-revenge' or some mandiki (Sickness-bringing spirits) even if these fall somewhat outside of the present discussion. (77)

This leads me to note that the primary obligation on traditional Tshwa to 'give to their ancestors' is connected with 'rites of life crises'. The amount of giving in connection with communal rites ('rites of the soil') is insignificant and peripheral. I believe, therefore, that one main reason for inertia in Christian 'giving' lies in the fact that Christian worship is seen as a 'communal ritual' and has not yet entered into the sphere of 'crises rites'. In other words, the question of 'life' or death does not hinge upon the gift to God.

Observations on Tshwa Christian worship as compared to traditional

It is obvious from the preceding parts of this chapter that Christian worship is far richer in intellectual and doctrinal contents than the traditional. The emphasis on Bible reading and preaching with all teaching of doctrine and appeal to the understanding of the worshipper have no counterparts in the Tshwa act of sacrifice. Whatever doctrine taught in the traditional context was given as the moral of stories told by the evening fire, or as mythological background to a crisis as revealed by the diviner. Regular appeals to the intellect for the understanding of mythical and doctrinal foundation of religious beliefs are not found within the traditional pattern.

Symbolic action and teaching, on the other hand, have an insignificant place in Protestant context, while traditional worship abounds with symbolic expressions of contact with the

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(77) About these rites, see pp. [illegible] and 62

world of the spirits. Agricultural Christian rites at planting and harvesting have preserved a similar symbolism as the traditional ones; sacraments are symbolic representations of mystical bonds with the Divine; dramatic presentations at Christmas and Easter are concrete, non-intellectual expressions of faith. But, in the regular Christian worship, it is only prayer, and sometimes the collection, that can be classified as symbolic. As church buildings also in general are very sparsely decorated, it is true that the "service tends to rely almost exclusively on the ear and is in danger of being too intellectualistic". (78)

From a Christian angle, this seems to be one point of potential failure in any attempt to liberate Christian worship from foreign dress. It is even possible that a spiritual superficiality may be covered by such an intellectualistic approach. Taylor's vivid expressions are relevant:

> "By confining the Kingdom of God within the protective walls of the conscious and the rational, (The Church) has left untouched the great depth of the subliminal, and unredeemed the glories of the elemental energies of man".(79)

In spite of being foreign to Tshwa culture, regularity seems to have gained a great importance among Tshwa Christians. "To go to church and to worship" (ku ongena cheeni ku khensa) is the main rule to be kept by every 'believer'. "If I continue faithfully going to church to worship, I am sure that Jesus will give me eternal life when I die". Such convictions were expressed by several informants.

Thus, we perceive a shift in the meaning of 'worship' itself. Every act of worship traditionally had a special explicit purpose. This would also be true of some special occasions within the Christian context. (80) But, generally,

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(78) E. Forrainer, Religion in an African city, p. 156

(79) J. Taylor, The Primal Vision, p. 21

(80) See pp. 140-141

the regular Christian worship develops into a habit which is seen as meritorious in itself, not unlike a similar concept found among many European Christians. With the Christian emphasis on constant 'fellowship with God' (81) as a given, this new meaning of regular worship is readily understood. But it should be pointed out that this stands in sharp contrast to the traditional concept that any contact with the spiritual world outside of what has been called for through the diviner was not only superfluous but actually dangerous! Obviously, the Christian spiritual world is approached less fearfully than the traditional one.

A similar observation was made among the Nyakyusa:

> "There is a gulf fixed between the pagan conception of 'driving off' the shades (ancestral spirits) and the heroes lest by 'dressing over' a man they bring sadness and death, and the Christian ideal of union with God".(82)

About regular worship, however, some informants added that going to church "by custom only" (hi kutolovela) or just "by following somebody there" (hi xidinga) may not help at all. 'Faith', and particularly 'strong faith' (kukholwa ka ntamu), would be necessary to make church-going effective. 'Dedication' is therefore regarded as an integral part of true worship. (83)

Such 'strong faith' is not meant in a doctrinal sense. It is rather "faith in the power of God". A Christian should believe that God can make him immune to all attacks of evil powers, as the pastor does when he prays "firm" against all evil designs of witches.

This search for God's power may be seen as part of the

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(81) Cf., e.g., John 2:1-11; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:19

(82) M. Wilson, Communal rituals among the Nyakyusa, p. 187

(83) See p. 135

'quest for life', dealt with in detail in the previous chapter. Traditional Tshwa worship is the condition for attaining the ideal of 'sufficient life', and it has already been indicated that 'life' (wutomi) is also asked for in many instances of Christian worship. Particularly when praying for sick persons, this concept is uppermost in the worshippers' minds.

Going one step further, however, we find in informants' statements that such prayers are mainly regarded as supplementary to hospital treatment. Naturally, herbal and/or magical medicines figure largely in traditional healing, and the crises sacrifices (with prayers for 'life') may therefore be seen as supplementary, too. But there is one fundamental difference: Tshwa rites of life crises aim at removing the cause of the sickness, as this is understood in accordance with traditional custom. The pronounced purpose of Christian prayers for the sick, on the other hand, is to supplement hospital treatment in removing the sickness itself, without bothering about the causes as interpreted in the Tshwa frame of reference. This difference, which I find crucial is the reason why I maintain that no true rites of life crises are found within Christian Tshwa worship. (84)

I find it, therefore, demonstrated that the Christian ideal of "a better life" (wutomi wa chuku...) is only partly sought through Christian worship. Both health and fertility of the soil are nowadays partly related to improved knowledge. Increase of status and property can be found through clever-ness and efficient work, opening the gate to the coveted 'modern living'. Education is, of course, sought through schools or projects of adult education. (85)

What aspects, then, of "the better life" are sought through

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(84) This statement better will be further investigated in "Pursuit of Health", pp. 295-304

(85) Cf. pp. 111-113

Christian worship

Sin against God was seen as a new [illegible] "no-life", as demonstrated in the previous chapter. I suggest that all other ingredients of "no-life" are regarded by Christians as consequences of sin against God. Thus, 'right relationships' with God becomes the key to avoiding 'no-life' and opening the possibilities to reach - through various agencies - "the better life". Obviously, this same 'right relationship' is the necessary condition for attaining 'eternal life'.

The main function of Tshwa Christian worship, then, is to establish and continue such a relationship to God which is regarded as 'right' according to Christian understanding. Various elements of worship services are clearly designed for this purpose, and a direct approach to God through private confession and prayer (often connected with Holy Communion) is seen as the way to restore a broken relationship.

It will be further investigated in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation" (p.) whether, and to what extent, this stress on 'right relationship' to God has diminished the importance of 'right relationship' with fellow men. In the case of kinsmen, Tshwa Christians obviously do not pay as great attention to relationships as custom calls for. 'Right relationship' with God, pursued directly or through the Church, obviates the necessity of seeking 'life' through the channels of senior kinsmen.

It seems, therefore, that Christian worship - and Christian belief on the whole - removes the [illegible] from the vital participation, which was seen as the leading principle of his traditional world-view. (87)

Even if most Tshwa Christians worship in groups, it is therefore evident that much more stress is laid on the individ-

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(86) See pp. [illegible]

(87) See p. 106

dual in the Christian context than in tr itional worship. Tahwa persons are called as individuals by the Protestant Churches to 'dedicate' themselves. It is the personal response rather than an existing structure that is the foundation of the Christian Tahwa worship.

Thus, 'vital participation' with spirits, people and Nature is the principle of traditional worship, while the individual search - in fellowship with other Christians - for a better, un-ending life is the mark of worship in the Christian context.

8. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

Introductory survey

In the Tshwa quest for life, health is, of course, a primary factor. Wutomi ('life') is often used to denote "health", indicating the great appreciation of this state.

In a modern society, health is deemed the normal state, and acute struggle against sickness is, in the case of an individual, normally a temporary affair. Among the Tshwa, on the other hand, it would seem that full health is more an exception than the rule. It is even possible that certain types of ill-health are not recognized as sickness, as they may be seen as part of daily life. Chronic malaria seems almost universal, and many intestinal parasites sap the strength of Tshwa persons. One mission doctor in the Tshwa area has estimated that at least 80% of the population suffer from some kind of intestinal worm. (1)

All rivers in the Tshwa region are infested with the specific kind of snail which acts as host of bilharzia-producing parasites. As rivers are generally used for bathing, washing of clothes, and as sources for household water, it follows that a majority of the population are suffering from bilharzia, which, i.a., affects the urinary system. There is a possibility that bilharzia may be one cause of the liver cirrhosis ("hardening of the liver"), a lethal illness which is much more common in the Tshwa area than, e.g., in U.S.A. (2)

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(1) Hookworm was especially noted.

(2) A mission doctor mentioned that he had seen only three or four cases of this illness during several years of study and practice in U.S.A., but in the mission hospital at Chicuque, mainly serving the Tshwa and Tonga tribes, he had had one hundred cases of liver cirrhosis in one single year.

Syphilis and gonorrhea have spread through contacts with white 'civilisation', and tuberculosis of the lungs has probably increased because of more frequent contacts with people outside of the home sphere, and possibly because of hard mine work. However, tuberculosis has a long history among the Tshwa, having a devastating effect on people whose power of resistance has been weakened by other illnesses and under-nourishment.

Smallpox has a special place among the diseases of the Tshwa. It used to come in the form of terrifying epidemics, and in spite of great efforts in vaccination of the population, smallpox appeared in epidemic form at several instances during the 19[illegible]. It seems now to be decreasing, however, and maybe it is even disappearing among the Tshwa.

Another difficult disease is leprosy (Hansen's disease), and a leprosy camp has long been the only place where persons with this disease could live. (3) Thanks to modern treatment, however, leprosy is now being cured in many cases, and, hopefully, may soon become a dreaded disease of the past.

One more condition which appears to be significant in the health picture of the Tshwa is the common occurrence of hernia. While this is normally not regarded as a disease, the Tshwa think of it in this category.

Similar patterns of sickness would probably be found all over Africa, as testimonies from, for instance, Rhodesia and Ghana indicate. "Most people have some chronic ailment and endure it with fortitude as long as they are stably adjusted". (4) Furthermore, certain conditions of living and environment often make these sicknesses more serious than necessary. The pursuit of health, for Tshwa and other Africans,

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(3) The leprosy camp at Peles, near Chicuque, run by by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(4) Margaret Field, Search for Security, p. 107

is, therefore, a perpetual struggle against heavy odds.

Malnutrition - or an unbalanced diet - is one ubiquitous reason why various illnesses meet with such weak resistance.(5) Hygienic rules play none, or a very insignificant role in this struggle. The danger of contagion in the case of leprosy and tuberculosis is recognized, and certain isolation of patients seems to be the rule. However, effective isolation is almost impossible in rural conditions.

The spread of intestinal parasites is encouraged where toilet hygiene is limited. A barefoot person therefore invites hook-worm, etc., often nullifying the results of recent hospital treatment. Rivers are often used as toilets. Thus, eggs from the bilharzia parasite, developed within the urinary system, enter the water, and the various circle starts afresh.

Some screening of new houses is being done, as a precaution against the malaria mosquito, but, in general, the Tshwa seem to pay only slight attention to this hazard.

Apart from organic illnesses, anxiety figures as a potential reason for many ill-health conditions, which sometimes cannot be specifically diagnosed. No research has been done among the Tshwa in this respect, but observations indicate that Margaret Field's statement in regard to people in Ghana, seeking help at 'shrines' is applicable here also, at least to a large extent:

> "The majority of those ... complaining of sickness do not appear to have anything organically wrong, but they are in anxiety. They complain of palpitations, pains all over, headache, trembling, giddiness, and darkness in front of their eyes". (6)

The common fear of witchcraft, emerging in frequent allegations, is an indicator of deep-rooted anxieties. Reports from informants also tell of fairly common mental disturbances in the form of depressions and transient acute psychoses.

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(5) Cf. B. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in S. Africa, p.22

(6) M. Field. op. cit. p. 113

Traditional Conception of Illness

What is the nature of sickness?

Folk-medicine everywhere uses rather vague terms in describing sicknesses, stressing the complaint to the ailing part of the body, or describing the character of pain. In some cases, "pain all over" may be the only possible expression. This would be true also in countries which are highly developed from an educational viewpoint, while, of course, more specific perception of the actual illness varies with the individual. A definite diagnosis is set only after proper investigation by a qualified person. I find a similar process in the Tshwa community.

Expressions used by sick persons are, for instance:

"Nsi ne ni ntloo" ("I have a head") = headache;

"Nsi ambiwa hi lomu kaya" ("I am affected by the inside") = stomach trouble;

"Nsi ne ni xitlhavi" ("I have a piercing pain") = often some sickness connected with the chest;

"Na loma loma apuya" ("It is biting in there") = colic pain.

Such expressions as normally result in a limited anatomical knowledge, which ordinary Tshwa persons apparently share with people of all cultures. It is probably reinforced by the fact that sick persons are often emotionally disturbed and have difficulty in thinking objectively.

In spite of such ignorance, there are definite names of several clearly distinguishable sicknesses, possibly used only after diagnosis by a medical practitioner (n'anga):

xitshungu	(hilleresia)
xikeki	(smallpox)
rihliri	(measles, or scarlet fever)
hipa	(syphilis)
xihlekelo	(gonorrhea)
tsiwa or ndzaz	(tuberculosis, or any serious lung disease)
[illegible]	(leprosy - Hansen's disease)
nita	(hernia)
xirima	(epilepsy) etc.

Nevertheless, these names do not say what the sickness consists of. They are rather names of symptoms. It is, in fact, apparent that Tsnwa have a very slight interest in the "What?" question.

Two general observations, however, should be made as potential answers to the question "What is it that ails me?":

a. Blood is generally seen as the seat of life. Therefore, it figures as a primary factor in case of illness. One very common expression is "vanhu va babyako hakuva nkhata ni nvama zi hashane" (= "people who are sick because the blood and the flesh do not agree"). This is used for sickness in general and would indicate a conflict between the body and its life-giving source. Often this conflict is acutely felt when "the blood is boiling" - one expression for fever. (7)

b. Several conditions are connected with a "snake" (nyoka) which is believed to live in the abdomen. A similar belief seems to be shared by some neighbouring peoples, for instance the Tsonga and Lovedu. (8) Serious diarrhea (gastro-enteritis) among children is called nyokani (= lit. "the little snake"), and is ascribed to the activities of such a snake, as well as certain convulsions which, we are reminded by medical authorities, "at their age are commonly caused by round-worms". (9)

Tshwa also conceive of a "special" snake, causing epileptic fits (nyoka ya kichiri). How this snake enters the body, and why it goes into certain persons and not into all, seem to be matters of uncertainty.

The tendency among Tshwa not to be preoccupied with the "Why?" - question of illness distinguishes their conception of illness clearly from that of modern medicine. While the explanation that bacterias entering the body make a person

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(7) Cf. E. & J.D. Krige, Realm of a Rain-queen, p. 212

(8) D. Earthy, Valenge Women, p. 62-63; Krige, op. cit. 212

(9) M. Field, op. cit. p. 119

sick" is of fundamental value in modern medical treatment, the two main questions for the Tshwa remain:

a) "Why did the bacterias enter?", and

b) "By whom were they sent?"

Why does sickness come?

The commonsense of the Tshwa tells them that some sicknesses have perfectly natural and obvious causes. Dirty water or spoiled food are seen as potential causes of stomach complaints. Mukhuhlwane (several types and degrees of influenza, and often one stage of malaria) is blamed on sudden changes of weather and temperature. The relationship between heavy drinking and physical weakness is fairly generally recognized. The fact that contagion is understood as one cause of leprosy and tuberculosis has already been mentioned, but it is significant that no proper isolation seems to be called for in the case of smallpox or scarlet fever.

As the diviner/medical practitioner (n'anga) is approached on behalf of the sick person, however, "natural" causes will very seldom be found. The diviner's verdict moves rather within a different category of values, often finding the cause of sickness in a broken relationship of some kind. This may be the relation to the kin-group as a whole, in its capacity of custodian of common values expressed as "taboo regulations". Or it may be an offence against the 'right' relationship with a certain person, either living or dead. I will refer to the first of these damaged relationships as "breaking of taboos", and to the second type as "sinning".

Prohibitions against eating certain kinds of food are enforced by the assumption that such eating would cause immediate sickness (unspecified). Thus, e.g., children, and women before childbirth, are not allowed to eat eggs. Liver is called "the meat of the elders" (nyama ya madota) and thus strictly reserved for persons of that category.

Several taboos in connection with the burial and ritual purification after death are potential causes of illness,

apart from the fact that the power of resistance against any disease is for every kin-member at this time at low ebb. (10)

The most common sickness-bringing taboos connected with death are, however, tied to the property of the deceased. All things owned by him must be properly purified and appropriately divided among his right heirs. Anyone breaking this taboo, is automatically under the curse of xivenze (an expression used concerning improperly inherited articles), and will fall ill.

Within the sphere of sexual transgressions, there are two different kinds of taboos, or rather two types of consequences:

Certain taboos bring sickness, or even death, on the offender himself, while others bring a curse upon the family (mate or children) of the trespasser.

In the first group, we find the prohibition against sexual relations with a menstruating woman. Hernia (siha), certain urethral troubles, or swelling of penis or testicles (konze) are regarded as direct consequences of breach against this taboo.

The second taboo of this kind concerns relations with a woman who has had an abortion or who has not yet been ritually purified after the death of her husband. These two types of illicit relations are believed to lead to the worst kind of [illegible] (gonde), sometimes called (gonde yo lirhanzi), where death will inevitably follow. (11)

[illegible] of the offender's family, [illegible] against incest (vikoka). (12)

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(10) See "Death and Life Eternal", p. 244

(11) This taboo is well-known also to some neighbouring peoples. Among the Lendu, 50 percent of the deaths of men during a certain period were attributed to this most dreaded disease. (Kris, op. cit p. 221)

(12) See "The social work of the Tshwa", p. 15

It is also taboo for a man to have relations with another woman during the time immediately after birth, while the wife is "Mungoza". (13) Similarly, it is taboo for a woman to have intercourse with another man while she is yet nursing. Breaches of both taboos will bring sickness on the child.

The authority of the n'anga (diviner/medical practioner) and his treatment is upheld by the notion that disobedience against his regulations will bring dreadful consequences. Particularly in cases where the n'anga has been requested to provide a 'medicine' which is assumed to work on another person for a special, sometimes dangerous purpose, the regulations must be followed in minute detail.

One interesting aspect of such a taboo is that the punishment seems to be mental derangement, and not primarily physical illness.

On the borderline between taboo and "sins" we find certain prohibitions connected with the state of 'heat' (kuhisa) (14).

Some of these taboos (ziyilayila), particularly those connected with death or sexual transgressions, have certain social implications. On the other hand, broken social relationships, understood as causing sickness and other misfortunes, are generally referred to by Tshwa as kuonha ("sinning"). It emerges, in fact, that "sin" for the Tshwa is mainly to be found in the social realm. (15)

Among the most dangerous sickness-producing sins are anger, adultery, theft, and - of course - the practice of witchcraft.

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(13) The new mother remains in a marginal state until the rite of "strengthening the child" (kutiyisa mwana) has been performed. This is done some months after the birth, and is fundamentally a confirmation of the husband's fatherhood.

(14) As the concept of 'heat' will be dealt with in the chapter on "Law, Sin and Salvation", few details are taken up here.

(15) See further "Law, Sin and Salvation", pp. 225 ff.

Anger often produces a serious break-up of relationships between individuals or groups. This danger among Tshwa, however, usually follows certain lines of the kinship structure, and it is uncommon that it reverses the direction. When, for instance, a father is angry with his child - even if the 'child' is an adult - this is regarded as part of normal processes. Such anger would not, as a rule, have any dangerous consequences. But if, on the other hand, a grown-up child is angry with his father, there is danger at hand. This may cause bitterness (xiviti) in the father's heart.

It is easily perceived that filial anger in a patrilineal society would potentially disrupt the social structure, and it is believed that the ancestral spirits "see the tears of the wronged father" and respond by sending sickness on the angry child.

Adultery in Tshwa vocabularly (wubuyi) does not mean "extramarital relations". It is not seen primarily as a sexual sin, but rather in the category of theft. Thus, intercourse between a married man and an unattached woman is not classified as adultery. But when a man has relations with somebody else's wife, for whom nzhowolo (bride-wealth) has been paid, a serious breach of tribal law is taking place.

Relationships in two directions, at least, are disturbed or broken through adultery. The injured party, i.e. the cuckolded husband and the kin-group of the woman, can be propitiated along structured lines, by paying of an obligatory fine (wukodo). Furthermore, any child resulting from the relationship will be counted as belonging to the injured husband. But there is also a curse hanging over the offenders. If the woman in question becomes pregnant, she will have a very difficult birth, and the man may bring sickness and death upon his own family.

All theft obviously demonstrates a spirit which makes normal relationships impossible. This crime has for long been hated among the Tshwa, and one of the strong injunctions that informants were given in their childhood was "not to steal".

[illegible] punished by the chief,(16) [illegible] the superhuman sanctions [illegible] result in sickness. [illegible] The epidemic disease of smallpox [illegible] as it is, without [illegible] for sin". Therefore - [illegible] the lacking "Traditional cures" [illegible] treatment. It appears that [illegible] as a result of unconfessed sins [illegible] like theft, murder, adultery, or the [illegible]

[illegible] had the sickness been sent

[illegible] in connection with traditional con- [illegible] is probably the most important, as all [illegible] begin by ascertaining what power is [illegible] translated into Tahwa idiom: [illegible] (Mwani a wu dayako?). [illegible] alive or dead, a [illegible] there is usually a per- [illegible] behind an illness. This "sending" of [illegible] related to an explicit sin or breaking [illegible] such as [illegible] a son's anger, or a [illegible] a witch's casting a spell [illegible] certain 'sin of omission', [illegible] to give his mother-in-law [illegible] rightful share.

[illegible] belongs to the un- [illegible] along with spirits- [illegible] (nyihawa), foreign possessive spirits (nandiki), [illegible] (zila), who may all figure in the [illegible]

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(16) [illegible] Sin and Retribution", p. 251

When a child shivers from fever (often because of malaria), this is usually taken as a special sign from the ancestors (tingulove). Recurring dreams about dead people are interpreted as messages. When the sickness coincides with certain conflicts within the kin group, it is unfailingly interpreted as ancestral punishment. It can be assumed that the diviner is aware of kinship tensions and open conflicts.

Nevertheless, it is held that the ancestors do not, as a rule, send death upon their descendants. It is in their own interest that their living relatives should stay alive and healthy in order to perform the necessary sacrifices. If there is a serious breach of kinship law, however, death sent upon the culprit may be divined as issuing from the ancestors. "The abomination must be removed".

Mipfukwa (sing. mupfukwa) are spirits of dead, who are thought to wake up because of certain 'medicines' and are bent on destroying entire kin-groups outside of their own, in which they have found reason to hate. Thus, they are "spirits-of-revenge". (17)

The first sign of mupfukwa activity in a village is sickness, often according to the set pattern of two or three persons falling ill at the same time. If such persons are brought to hospital, "they may get medicine there and get better. But, as they come back home, the sickness flares up again, until they call for a n'anga". If a n'anga is not consulted very soon, it is feared that sickness of this pattern inevitably will lead to death, as a mupfukwa has come to kill. (18)

When it happens that several persons of the same family or kingroup die in quick succession, the suspicion seems

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(17) See "Some traditional beliefs", p. 50

(18) In this respect, these spirits are unlike the midiki, which are not believed to kill.

automatically to fall upon mipfhuko activity, and again a n'anga must be called in for urgent appropriate treatment, so that further deaths might be avoided.

The diagnostic pattern indicating sicknesses caused by mandiki, on the other hand, is not as distinct as in the case of spirits-of-revenge. As these foreign, possessive, and sickness-bringing spirits (19) are believed to come in search for a new host, their presence is not seen in lethal sicknesses or death. It is not a question of punishing because of a broken relationship, but establishing a new one.

Symptoms characteristic in many countries of spirit possession - hysteria, pronounced anxiety, continuous shivering and other motor excitement (20) - give rise to the bulk of mandiki diagnoses. It appears that also other sicknesses ascribed to mandiki, as, for instance, acute lameness of a leg, or "pain all over", may belong to a psycho-somatic category. A sudden onset of the sickness is one of the criteria casting a suspicion on mandiki as the active agents.

The majority of misfortunes, including accidents, illness and death, are according to my informants usually blamed on the activity of witches (vadzidzi). On the other hand, few special categories of sicknesses or symptoms can be discerned in this case. Apparently, any conflict situation, either in the kin-group or in the neighbourhood, lends itself to a witchcraft allegation. I have found only one specific symptom - festering sores - leading the thought more surely than anything else to the dreaded activity of witches.

When, finally, an illness is regarded as hopeless, traditional [illegible] the Sky Power (Tilo) as the active agent. "Wait for Tilo to act! Maybe you will live, maybe you will die...." When a sickness has thus been declared "from Tilo", no treatment is, in general, of any avail.

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(19) See "Traditional Tshwa beliefs", p. 42

(20) Cf. M. Field, op. cit. p. 90, 97

The same applies, in general, to such mental disturbances that are said to be from the Sky Power. The expression "I bilwe hi lipapa la Tilo" ("He has been hit by the wing of the Sky") is often used about persons who display symptoms of mental illness, simultaneously implying that no cure is possible.

Observations concerning traditional concepts of illness

As we keep probing the traditional Tshwa frame of reference, now in connection with their "pursuit of health", it can be clearly established that ill-health is, in general terms, seen as punishment for certain acts, which are conceived of as evil. Illness does not "just happen". Both in purely social terms, and where certain spiritual agents are involved, the majority of illness cases are traced back to some broken relationship. Thus, sickness is commonly understood as socially conditioned, based upon some 'social sin'.

Most reasons for sickness are obviously known to the Tshwa only post factum, as revealed through the divining bones. It also emerges from my material that the guilt associated with the sickness by the diviner is often felt because of the actual sickness, rather than because of the committed sin. In other words, the current 'evil' action is sometimes not clearly experienced as 'sin' until some sickness raises the question as to potential guilt. (21)

Undoubtedly, there can exist a powerful inter-dependence between moral teaching and fear of consequences, even working completely in the subconscious. Particularly in cases of serious breaches of taboo, it is probable that the fear of the dreaded consequences actually produce the expected sickness. A quotation from the Mende in Sierra Leone is appropriate:

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(21) See "Law, Sin and Salvation", p. 212

> "..... the whole process of moral education of the Mende, in this instance on sex-relations, produces in them a built-in mechanism which causes the illness. That is to say that their conscience disapproves of their action and they fall ill". (22)

Particularly in certain organic illnesses, material or 'natural' causes may be perceived by the Tshwa. But my research leads me to the conclusion that such 'natural' causes are considered as secondary at least. This agrees with findings among many other peoples of Africa, as this statement from Ghana confirms:

> "The Zande concept of dual causation therefore insists that, in all particular cases of disease, there is likely to be a social, as well as a natural, factor involved: and that, in some cases, the social factor is dominant". (23)

Margaret Field gives several practical examples of such social causation, exposing the role of conflict as the malignant agent:

> "Simple-hearted people are prone to fall sick when disappointed at finding they have misplaced their trust. Several men came, sick and worrying, because wives, whom they liked wanted to leave them...
>
> Kinship disputes even more than marital disharmony emerges as a potent cause of that anxiety which destroys the sense of physical well-being....
>
> "When a sick child is brought to the shrine, the priest invariably seeks for strife between the parents, a circumstance in which, it is held, no young child can thrive". (24)

As we thus confirm social causation of sickness in Africa, the remarkable fact is that this is the traditional conception of disease. Even if we do not attribute the same

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(22) H. Sawyerr, "Sacrifice" in Dickson-Ellingworth, p. 51

(23) F.W. Welbourn, "Healing as a psychosomatic event" in Witchcraft and Healing ; Cf. M. Wilson, Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa , p. 161

(24) M. Field, op. cit. pp. 114-115, 119

psychological and physiological understanding of psycho-somatic sickness causation to a Tshwa n'anga as to a "Western" physician, it seems that so-called primitive medicine in this respect has been somewhat ahead of developments within medical science. The case for psycho-somatic causation of several illnesses is now well established in modern medicine, but this is a fairly recent development in comparison with traditional African practice. (25)

I suggest that at least as far as the Tshwa are concerned, the prominence of social causes in popular understanding of diseases arises from the basic need for unity within the society. Every conflict between members of the community (kin-group or neighbourhood), is a potentially destructive element, of the same order as disease, and consequently, both are a threat to the unity of society.

Even if Tshwa would not always distinguish between the cause of sickness and the active "sending" agent, it is helpful for our further investigation to note that this agent is very often understood in spiritual terms. Therefore, traditional cure means, in most cases, some dealings with superhuman powers. With special reference to 'right relationships' with the ancestral spirits, Sundkler's discovery in Tanzania is illuminating:

> "I was interested to find, among the Kabaya of Central Africa, that their verb 'to heal', okutamba, also means 'to sacrifice'". (26)

After an investigation of the role of the diviner/medical practitioner among the Tshwa, we will demonstrate how traditional conceptions of disease influence the curing of illness. We will then compare these observations with modern medical activities among the Tshwa, while seeking to establish the attitude of Christians in their pursuit of health.

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(25) Cf. C.M.D. "Sickness behaviour among the Yoruba" in "Witchcraft and Healing", p. 57

(26) B. Sundkler, op. cit. p. 231

The role of diviners and curers

The n'anga

In the maze of social relationships with their great conflict potential, most peoples have found that some authority with decisive power is vitally needed. A chief deals with overt crimes and such social conflicts that develop into blows. But he is not capable to enter the field of hidden conflict or mystical events. The indispensable key to this sphere is the diviner.

A diviner (muhlahlavi wa tihlolo lit: "the one who reads the bones") usually combines his divinatory role with work as medical practitioner. He is thus a n'anga. But it would be unfair - to the n'anga - to compare him with a European physician, in his different roles as diagnostician and performer of the cure. A Tshwa n'anga is more like the hub of wheel, being at the centre of all critical events, private or public, in the neighbourhood. His office is also, in a structural sense, the upholder of the community and its morals. The ideal n'anga is the champion for 'sufficient life' for the society as a whole. The Tshwa express this eloquently in their proverb: "Life' is to be found at the bones" (Wutomi wu kumeka tihlolweni).

It is readily seen that such an ideal picture is found in few individuals, but the Tshwa assumption is nevertheless that a diviner is to be trusted, until proved wrong or unreliable. The institution of divination answers to a deeply felt need among the Tshwa, and this need evidently removes some natural hesitation as to the personal qualities of the incumbent. The diviner/n'anga operates to a large extent in a sphere which for a lay person is veiled in mystery. He is also, usually, approached when the client is in a state of emotional affect.

It is at such impressionable times of personal crisis that the diviner reminds the Tshwa of their time-honoured tribal customs and beliefs, and whenever anything new is

added to the wealth of traditional beliefs, it will come through the gate of the diviner.

Speaking in a similar vein about the key to understanding the great importance of the diviner in Ndembu society in Zambia, Turner says:

> "Since diviners are consulted on many occasions, it is clear that their role as upholders of tribal morality and rectifiers of disturbed social relationships - both structural and contingent - is a vital one in a society without centralized political institutions". (27)

The classical Tshwa divination is made with "the bones" (tihlolo; etymologically derived from the verb ku hlola = to examine). The diviner's collection of astragalus bones from several different animals, plus certain sea shells and some pieces of special wood, are thrown out on a grass-mat, and the diviner points with his rod, explaining what the bones say. Every "throw" is preceded by a question directed to the bones. Each possible category of people in a village or lineage, living or dead, is represented by a special bone or shell. (28) There are four possible positions of each bone, every one having its special meaning, and the answer to each question is determined by this position, as well as the position of the 'bones' in relation to each other.

Naturally, the diviner also uses his intimate knowledge of people in the neighbourhood, and his personal intuition. Thus, the divination is never reduced to an automatic procedure. Turner's observation illuminates this aspect:

> "Diviners try to elicit from their clients responses which give them clues to the current tensions in their groups of origin. Divination, therefore, becomes a form of social analysis, in the course of which hidden conflicts are revealed so that they may be dealt with by traditional and institutional procedures". (29)

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(27) V. Turner, The Drums of Affliction, p. 51

(28) Ancestral spirits (tinguluve), e.g., are represented by the astragalus of wild pig (also called nguluve); chiefs by a sheep's astragalus; a piece of khanyi-wood stands for dangerous medicines, etc. Cf. Junod, II. 543-548

There are also other types of divination among the Tshwa. The kind of n'anga who operates under the influence of mandiki (nyamusoro) divines in a dissociated state of mind. He is said to "catch" a certain spirit, which introduces itself as "the spirit of so-and-so", speaking in a completely different voice - and sometimes a different language - than that of the diviner. This type of divination is of particular use when activities of mandiki, or mifhaka (spirits-of-revenge) are suspected. The "caught" spirit is then believed to be the sickness-or death-bringing agent, and he tells the clients (through the diviner) what they must do, in order to rid themselves of the affliction.

When the cause of crisis has been established, the diviner/n'anga proceeds to explain what ritual and medical cures are necessary. Some informants stated that it often happens that the diviner refers the actual treatment to another n'anga (according to the message of his 'bones'), particularly if someone is known as a 'specialist' on certain illnesses.

Herbalists

Apart from the divining institution and the traditional n'anga, there are also certain persons, mostly old men or women, who are known as possessors of special knowledge of medicinal herbs and plants. Such herbalists are often consulted, and some of them are recognized as 'specialists' on the cure of certain diseases. (30)

Traditional cure

It has been demonstrated that most afflictions are seen by Tshwa as having a social cause, and sometimes a secondary

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(29) V. Turner. op. cit. p.4

(30) Such herbalists are sometimes used openly in Christian context. See pp. 200-201

"natural" causation. It is to be expected that traditional cures attempt to eliminate both types of causes, with stress on the social, in order to re-establish 'life' to the individual or the community.

We find that traditional cures can be classified in the following categories:

1. Prophylactic treatment, which primarily addresses itself to defence against witchcraft attacks;

2. Restoration of broken relationships, either social or with superhuman Powers. This is doubtless the most important category, without which no other treatment is believed to have any lasting effect. Sometimes this cure aims at establishing a new relationship, and in certain instances it is ever seen as prophylactic;

3. Purification rites, which may be seen as complementary to the former category; and

4. Medicines.

Prophylactic measures

Among all peoples, elementary preventive medicine is taught in the family. In Tshwa society, this would include - on top of general admonitions to look out for snakes and to be careful in crossing the river - instruction in Tshwa customs and taboos. Many of these were traditionally taught to the girl at the time of her first menstruation, when her father's sister (mahani) stayed with her several days in a special hut. The boys were given similar instruction, partly by their fathers, partly in their initiation camp (mungi), where circumcision was accompanied by long periods of teaching. The instruction in customs and taboos was always tied together with explanation of respective punishments.

Many kinds of sicknesses could obviously not be avoided by knowledge alone. Against ancestors, nandiki or revenging spirits, no prophylactic measures could avail. But a certain defense against witches appears to be possible. The individual may be protected by an amulet (xitshungulo), which is

specially prepared by a n'anga (medical practitioner) in each individual case, and may contain nails and hair of the person in question, together with certain magical substances.

No Tshwa village is complete without a n'anga having surrounded it with his magic fence. This "strengthening of the village" (ku tiyisa muti) is done by the n'anga digs down his medicine at certain spots around the village, which is then regarded as immune against witches' attacks.

The most common prophylactic treatment in modern medicine is vaccination. This may usually be regarded as a "white man's invention", but it is claimed that the Tshwa had certain medicines used as a kind of vaccination. Particularly when children were going on a trip, the mother would use her phonjo - the term for such preventive medicine - as an ointment, in order to prevent any sickness to fall on her children while they were away.

Restoration of broken relationships with spirits

The three types of spirits which regularly enter into the diagnostic picture are tinguluve (ancestral spirits), tirhukwa ('spirits-of-revenge'), and nandiki (foreign, possessive and sickness bringing spirits).

When the divinatory process has indicated that relationships with tinguluve are broken, whatever sacrifices that may be required are, in general, promptly arranged, or ritually promised. These rites have been described in some detail in the chapter on "Worship, sacrifice and sacraments".(31)

Urgency may be felt very strongly when spirits-of-revenge (mirhukwa) are alleged to have sent the affliction. The ritual treatment will then proceed according to the pattern described earlier in this dissertation.(32)

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(31) See pp. 117-119

(32) See 'Tshwa traditional beliefs', p. 30

The three main items in this rite: (a) a sum of money; (b) a goat; (c) a girl to be dedicated, have no visible bearing on treatment of the actual affliction. But they can all be surmised to play a role in restoring the relationship with *mupfhukwa*, the girl being the constant guarantee from the afflicted kin-group of no more attacks of witchcraft, or theft.

When the diagnosis has been confirmed that foreign, possessive, sickness-bringing spirits (*mandiki*) have settled on a certain person, it is urgent that the new relationship between *mandiki* and their new host be regularized as quickly as possible. This is done mainly through the *kutwazisa* rite, also described earlier. (33)

This 'treatment' leads the patient into a completely new type of life, with new customs and obligations. It even gives him a new religion, as his *mandiki* now take precedence over his own *tingaluve*. It is believed, however, that no more sickness or distress will be brought on this host by the *mandiki* as long as such a special relationship is observed.

Confession

Similar to cases of spiritual sickness-bringing agents, urgency may be felt also when only living persons are involved, because the curse (*kuvenga*) allegedly accompanying some breach of law or taboo is greatly feared. Such confession is often made as a "prophylactic" measure.

As the spoken word of confession is believed to have the power of removing the potential curse, it is possible that confession was traditionally used at a great number of offences. I have recorded five occasions, on which confession is regarded as obligatory in the traditional context:

(1) After adultery.

(2) At childbirth, if a woman has been adulterous;

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(33) See "Tshwa traditional beliefs", p. 46

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...is requested
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(35) It can
...confession is heard not only

...ls of confession after
...ants varied concerning
...of incest. (See

...reconciliation
...relationship has

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(34) E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Nuer Religion, p. 187

(35) See page 111 (on description of sacrifices. Cf. also, op. cit., II, p. 191

been broken because of filial anger (36) is made at the rite called kuphahlelana ("to sacrifice for each other"). Usually, two hens are killed at this ceremony, and beer (or liquor) is shared by the two parties. The younger - a son or daughter - confesses his guilt, and the senior asks his ancestral spirits to remove the curse resting on his child because of his own bitterness (xiviti). It is obvious that the ancestral spirits are believed to listen to this confession, as well as the senior kinsman.

(5) When smallpox comes

A certain medicine called thesa was used to relieve smallpox. This is a fluid taken from the stem of a special bush, used for anointing the eyes of a person suffering from smallpox, or for rectal injection.

But, as it is held that smallpox is a direct punishment for sins, confession is the obligatory and decisive treatment. The elders of the village come to the sick-bed (evidently without realizing the danger of contagion), or to the parents of a sick child, to hear the confession. This may reveal anger and jealousy and sometimes crimes, but, according to informants, it invariably included acts of witchcraft, and often sexual transgressions. (37) In one case, I was told, the gravest sin had been incest, and it was believed by the informant that the confession could not remove the curse of such a terrible sin. 'But confession of witchcraft had often made smallpox turn away from the village'.

Even at the ceremony, it is usual that the confessing person takes water in his mouth and spits it out on the ground with the "pha"-sound before making his statement.

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(36) "Xiviti" is explained on p. 170

(37) Cf. statement from Zionist Churches: 'No confession is regarded as complete until sexual transgressions are mentioned". B. Sundkler, op. cit. 211

This would indicate that the confession is made before both living and dead. (See also below, on "Spitting"). (38)

Not only the Tshwa connect smallpox with superhuman action. In several parts of the world, this disease is seen as a terrible divine visitation. This has been found in India, and similar beliefs are reported from Nigeria, where the Yoruba hold that smallpox is sent as punishment by the god Shopanna:

> "Most people recommended palm wine, both as drink for the patient who, they said, should not be offered water (!), and to placate the spirits of the smallpox deity. Some advocated a sacrifice to Shopanna, an offering of beans cooked with corn to be placed outside with the palm wine. (39)

It has not yet emerged through my research whether the Tshwa regard smallpox as coming from Tilo (The Sky Power), or from the ancestors. But the disease is clearly seen as arising from the mystical realm. Although this apparently is a universal concept, the Tshwa method of treating it through confession has not been specifically found among other peoples, except the Ronga and Tsonga of southern Moçambique. (40)

(6) Observations on confession

In confession, the factor of catharsis is obviously an active ingredient. By removing fear and feelings of guilt, such catharsis may mean a turning point in sickness and may bring a healthy atmosphere to a village, otherwise possibly rent by mistrust and mutual accusations. This observation applies, of course, to a large extent to all types of restored relationships.

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(38) Cf. M. Wilson, Communal Rituals of the Nyakyusa, p. 108

(39) D.M.U. Maclean, "Hospitals or Healers?" in Human Organisation, Vol. 25:2, 1966, 131-139

(40) H.A. Junod, op. cit. II, 465

Confession of sins seems to be used all over Africa as a means of restoring normal and healthy relationships between kinsmen and neighbours. The power of the spoken word to remove anger and hidden resentments is regarded as vital.(41) The power of emotional release through confession in depth has been dramatically described in the case of an Eskimo shaman treating his patient.(42)

The matter of confession, in traditional and Christian context, will be further investigated in "Law, Sin and Salvation".(43)

Ceremonial spitting

A further method of removing the curse when a certain relationship has been broken is to "spit".

My main example of such ceremonial spitting comes from the life of such young people who are dedicated to a spirit-of-revenge (mufhukwa). Usually, a boy from this spirit's own kin, and one or several girls from afflicted kin-groups are set apart to take care of the spirit's hut.(44) Their special standing is emphasized by a rule that nobody is allowed to scold or beat them. If somebody should transgress this law - even if the children have deserved a spanking - he is forced to spit the boy or girl in the head, as an act of reconciliation, or else the spirit is believed to send punishment.

One informant, who was himself dedicated in this way as a young boy, continues:

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(41) H. Watson, op. cit. pp. 160-161; Evans-Pritchard, op. cit. p. 195; cf. V. Turner, op. cit. p. 99

(42) Rasmussen, "An Eskimo Shaman purifies a sick person", in Lessa-Vogt (ed), Reader in Comparative Religion, pp. 410-414

(43) See page 235 ff.

(44) See "Traditional Tshwa beliefs", pp. 52-53

"I could not beat anybody else, either. I was told severely not to hit anybody. I only sat. I was not even allowed to carry a stick. But, if another boy hit me, they would tell him, go and spit!"

It is probable that ceremonial spitting is used in other contexts, too. Thus, the spitting of water into the face of the sacrificial animal, (45) the spitting of beer on to the altar at times of sacrifice, and even the spitting of water before a confession would seem to have the same fundamental meaning of reconciliation.

There is another suggestion, coming from the Nyakyusa, that such ceremonial spitting is, in fact, a symbolic act of confession, "bringing out all anger that is within". (46) The spitting would then, to the eye, have the same role as the voice of confession has to the ear.

Dealing with witchcraft

When preventive measures have proved ineffective, and witchcraft activity has been divined as the cause of some misfortune, the first measure is to establish the identity of the witch. The culprit may be pointed out by the divining bones or she is "smelled out" (kufemia) at a session where the nyamuzoro ("mandiki-doctor") dramatically selects his victim. There may also be a further trial by drinking a strong potion (kunwa mbonzo), and the guilty one is, it is said, felled to the ground by the magic drink. This last method, however, appears to be little used nowadays.

In treating witchcraft, Tahwa society balances on the borderline between restoration and purification. In other words: the primary desire is to restore the culprit to normal social usefulness, by some act of reconciliation, but the evil in witchcraft appears to be almost irredeemable, and the

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(45) "Worship, Sacrifice and Sacrament", p. 120

(46) M. Wilson, op. cit. pp. 160-161

community therefore needs to rid itself of the abomination. It is probable that some gradation of evil takes place and guides the treatment.

In ancient times, a condemned noyi (witch) was killed by being impaled, or forced to hang herself. (47) Nowadays, if separation (purification) is deemed imperative, she may, I am told, be expelled from her kin and forced to live a pitiful existence, probably dying in utter loneliness and misery.

The usual modern treatment, however, is an act of reconciliation. When the witch is "known", the divination process also reveals why she is causing the trouble. The alleged witch is then visited by the afflicted party, with money or other gifts according to the diviner's message. The proper gift is handed over, against a solemn promise from the witch to remove her spell.

Purification rites

It has been demonstrated that Tshwa understanding of contagion does not agree with that of modern medicine, although the two sometimes may coincide. A concept similar to contagion, however, which may be described as a "communal curse", gave rise to a need for joint purification. I have noted such ceremonies in connection with "death contamination" and after a smallpox epidemic. Purification after death within the kin will be described in detail in the chapter on "Death and Life Eternal", (48) and will, consequently, not be taken up here.

Purification after smallpox takes the form of a thorough cleansing of the village, and a sacrifice. The whole village is swept, inside houses and outside. All inhabitants are ceremonially washed in medicated water. All used clothes of persons who have been ill are then taken to a "crossroads", where they are burnt together with the gathered dust and filth from

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(47) Cf. H.A. Junod, op. cit. II, p. 534

(48) See pp. 247-248

the village, plus the medicines left over after the washing. A sacrificial killing of a hen or a goat takes place on the same spot. Unfortunately, informants have not been able to tell, to whom this sacrifice is made.

The symbolic elements of cleansing are obvious in this rite. Furthermore, one observes that the "curse" is left at a crossroads, where any passer-by may pick it up and carry it away.

There are probably other significant elements in this rite of purification. I would suppose that the extinguishing of all fires and rekindling them again, as reported from the Nyakyusa,(49) also takes place among the Tshwa.

Medicines

In several of the methods of treatment already referred to, medicines have been mentioned as one ingredient. Obviously, the "natural" causes of sickness must be dealt with in a different way from the "social", and it should be recognized that several Tshwa herbal medicines have a curing effect on certain illnesses. On the other hand, many 'medicines' in Tshwa context do not have any counterpart in scientific medical treatment. 'Medicines' for luck in hunting, fishing or job-seeking fall in this category. There are also the sinister 'medicines', alleged to cause a person's spirit to wake up after death as a mupfhukwa.(50)

In the Tshwa idiom, 'medicine' is muri. But most commonly, informants refer to various kinds of medicines as "matluka" (leaves) or "tininya" (trees; branches). This affirms that most traditional medicines are leaves, herbs, or parts of certain trees, as, e.g., roots or bark. "Magic substances" play a definite role, and I should imagine that their predominance

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(49) M. Wilson, op. cit. p. 117

(50) See more on "spirits-of-revenge", p. 48

varies from one n'anga to another. Certain products from the sea are used in this way, as well as blood and other parts from animals.

The application of Tshwa medicines is made orally, rectally, or by insertion under the skin (kutlhava). Anointing with medicine is also heard of, but insertion ("injection") figures most commonly in reports.

One indispensable part of treatment with medicine is the spoken word, through which the n'anga infuses the necessary power and "tells the medicine" how to cure the patient. This is probably a common concept in Africa, as confirmed from the Yoruba:

> "Incantations must always accompany the taking of a medicine since the ingredients are powerless in themselves. Without the spoken word, their potency is never activated, they will remain inert, useless material objects. The incantation makes explicit the purpose and power of the mixture and expresses precisely why its constituent parts have been chosen". (51)

Finally, it should be remembered that some Tshwa herbalists specialize in the use of certain herbal medicines without openly utilizing magic.

Changes wrought through Christian and other outside influence

Hospital and hygiene

In the chapter on how Christianity was introduced among the Tshwa, (52) it was said that "Protestant Christianity presented itself to the Tsonga with the three-pronged approach of 'Preaching, Teaching and Healing'". In the beginning, the healing activities were neglected, according to the most crying need, and severely limited because of lack of qualified

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(51) C.M.N. Mncube, "Sickness behaviour among the Yorubas" in Witchcraft and Healing, p. 37

(52) See further on historical development, p. 68

personnel. But with the coming of the first medical doctor to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1910, medical work became more regular. Mission hospitals have since been constructed at Chicuque, near Maxixe, Nhaloi near Massinga, and at Cambine. Clinics have been established at some other places, at least temporarily. Maternity wards are included in all hospital units.

The Portuguese government has established several hospitals and medical posts in the Tshwa area, with an important regional hospital in the town of Inhambane. Medical centres (centros de Saúde) are now situated in Maxixe, Homoine, Morrumbene, Massinga and Vilanculos, i.e. all administrative centres of the district, while medical posts and maternity wards are to be found in many different parts of the area.(53)

The teaching of hygiene and elementary preventive medicine was begun early within the scope of Protestant missions, but it can hardly be said that any regular teaching of Public Health is now part of the work of the Churches.

One form in which practical medicine is taught to the public through Church agencies is the baby clinic on certain mission stations, which have become popular meeting places for mothers in the vicinity. This is where, once a week, mothers and babies are offered postnatal care, and such practical advice finds ready recipients.

Probably, a great deal of hygienic knowledge and elementary understanding of preventive medicine finds its way to the Tshwa area through the many thousands of men who take part in "First aid" courses in the Transvaal mines.

Present attitudes to sickness

As we begin probing what present attitudes are in connection with the pursuit of health, we are reminded again of the

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(53) Atlas de Moçambique, p. 35

great number of variables according to individual background, exposure to outside influence, and personal experience of sickness and healing. What we can establish are certain trends, patterned by the opinions of informants, correlated with my own experience and outside anthropological observations. In the main, these trends refer to 'believers', although it is recognized that the border-line between Christians and non-Christians in these respects is rather fluid, as non-Christians are continuously being influenced from outside of their own culture in matters of hygiene and treatment of sickness.

No doubt, many more Tshwa nowadays know "natural" causes of sickness than in the past. The knowledge of bacteria is spreading, although in popular thought these sickness-bringing agents are more associated with visible dirt than with microbes. One informant, for instance, was convinced that tuberculosis bacteria had entered many people's lungs through the dust stirred up during digging or plowing. In water, visible contaminations may cause concern, while bacterias or microscopic parasites are more difficult to believe in. However, boiling of water before drinking appears to be fairly common, especially in Christian families.

The role of vaccination against smallpox is readily accepted, even if this sickness is still generally regarded as a special punishment for sins. One informant affirmed that "vaccination does not help at all, if the person has committed sins like witchcraft or adultery".

The venereal diseases syphilis (bava) and gonorrhea (sibhokota) are commonly associated with contagion through sexual contact, although one informant insisted that syphilis can be transferred "by using the same soap". They are often referred to as "sicknesses of adultery".

Of the traditional "natural" causes, the "snake" (nyoka) still has an important place. It is said that nyokani ("the little snake"; term for gastro-enteritis and/or convulsions in infants) can only be treated by Tshwa doctors (tin'anga),

as it is caused by a 'snake'. Mothers who in spite of this bring their small children to hospital because of convulsions, complain bitterly if injections are given as part of the treatment. They are afraid that the 'snake' will be embittered by the injection and make the child even worse. Men in compound groups have in general proved sceptical when taught in hygiene lessons that no snake can be living inside a human being. Some informants stress the belief in the nyoka ya zichira, the special 'snake' believed to cause epilepsy. According to them, this 'snake' is especially active at the time of a new moon:

> "Yes, there is a snake inside the man. Here in the compound there is a child of mine, born by my elder brother. His wife was killed by this snake.
>
> The "epilepsy snake" (nyoka ya zichira) can kill a person by throwing him down and he dies immediately. Sometimes it will make him fall into the fire, or into the water. He will have no chance to escape. The water will kill him..."

Among Tonga Christians, some traditional taboos (ziyilayila) have lost their significance, particularly those connected with food and - to some extent - death. Sexual taboos, on the other hand, still figure largely as giving rise to the same ailments as in the past. (54) In the case of ritual taboos and those associated with wun'anga ("traditional art of divination and healing"), attitudes seem to vary.

The demand for being 'ritually pure' when attending Holy Communion (i.e. not being 'hot') appears to be upheld by several pastors, but there is disbelief as to the effectiveness of this demand. Furthermore, I do not find the notion among Christians that a break against this taboo would cause sickness, but "a person who takes communion while 'hot' has a debt before God".

As far as tin'anga are concerned, their tabooed regulations are upheld to the extent that Christians approach them

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(54) See p. 168

in times of affliction. This matter will be dealt with further on in this chapter.

Social sins, for instance anger, jealousy, adultery, and theft, are no longer directly connected with sickness to the same extent as before.

It is true that the anger of an older person, or of a person of a higher status, is still feared within the present middle-aged generation of Christians, but this seems to be founded more on potential displeasure than on fear of sickness.

Anger is thus definitely regarded as evil, but not for the same reasons as before. Bitterness (xiviti) in a non-Christian father because of his Christian son refusing to take part in kinship functions, would be completely disregarded, for religious reasons.

Severe scolding and cursing (kurukatela) was often referred to by informants as a serious social sin, which they urgently would pray God to forgive. The implication was that such cursing could make God send punishment in the form of accident or sickness. Some evidence points to the possibility that this sin is considered most serious if committed against a fellow Christian, but this cannot be adequately confirmed at present.

Adultery is, of course, recognized as sin against the Law of the Church, and, if discovered, it will lead to severe consequences in terms of church discipline. The belief that it would lead to sickness in the family appears to have weakened, at least, if not completely disappeared, unless it is coupled with breach of some taboo, as, for instance, adultery with a woman who has recently had an abortion.

Spiritual sickness causation still vital

Even as certain traditional beliefs regarding sickness causation thus have lost some of their ancient power, and

...readily. I maintain that Tshwa Christians still regard the majority of illness as arising from the mysterious realm of spiritual powers. This applies to the continuing belief in witchcraft, revenging spirits (mipfhukwa) and foreign possessive spirits (mandiki) as illness-producing agents, and to the seemingly universal fear that misfortune can come over a Christ... is sent by God for Satan) as punishment for ... deliberately, as a test of faith.

Christians facing traditional spiritual beliefs

... beliefs in witchcraft and mipfhukwa (spirits-of-revenge) ... still very much part of Tshwa Christians' frame of ... these crude forms of witchcraft beliefs have been ... by many, but the principle of witchcraft seems to ... taken for granted by an overwhelming majority. Sickness ... often seen as a result of witchcraft, and the symptoms ... revealing activity of mipfhukwa in the village (55) are ... widely dreaded by Christians and non-Christians. ... reported examples of Christians following the tra... pattern in propitiating a spirit-of-revenge indicate ... belief is still very active.

The same observation, as far as witchcraft is concerned, ... well documented from all over Africa. (56) Mbiti writes:

> "The majority, if not all, fear it, and many of them have encountered it in their normal life. This mystical power is not fiction: whatever it is, it is a reality, and one with which African peoples have to reckon". (57)

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(55) See p. 172

(56) e.g. Williamson, Akan Religion and the Christian Faith, p. 129; M. Wilson, op. cit. p. 182; A.J. Dubb, op. cit. II, p. 155.

(57) J. Mbiti, op. cit. p. 198

It appears that, among Christian Tshwa, these two types of traditional beliefs have been least influenced by the new Faith. This may indicate that beliefs in witchcraft and in spirits-of-revenge respond to deeply felt needs among Tshwa, to explain - and thus make manageable - influences on [illegible] lives which they regard as utterly threatening.

It can also be suggested that, from a Christian point of view, this state of affairs is due to the attitude missionaries in general have taken in this respect. Witchcraft and belief in "evil spirits" have been dismissed as "irrational", "something in your imagination", or "the works of Satan", and the common advice has been "not to think of such things". The obvious result of this attitude has been one of withdrawal.

The impossibility for Tshwa to accept this missionary attitude has led to the interpretation that witchcraft and mipfhuri were something strictly their own: They are seen as burdens which had to be born by them alone and which were completely out of reach of a white man's perception. However, in public Tshwa Christians adopt the "Christian" attitude towards these beliefs, and, consequently, witchcraft and revenging spirits are hardly even mentioned in a Protestant context, let alone being faced constructively.

Here again, it seems that a similar attitude has been almost universally taken by missionaries, and probably most whites, all over Africa. Some Africans express their doubts about the sincerity of whites in this respect; as Monica Wilson found when a Christian Nyakyusa woman told her: "You just disagree like all Europeans, you do not wish to admit belief in witchcraft, you are just pretending". (56)

A Christian African from Ghana criticised this missionary attitude at a deeper level:

> "The Christian Council pamphlet on witchcraft.... took the position that witchcraft was not a reality

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(56) M. Wilson, op. cit. p. 18.

but only a psychological delusion..... Anybody who knows African Christians intimately will know that no amount of denial on the part of the Church will expel belief in supernatural powers from the minds of the African People.

What often happens as a result of such denunciation is that a state of conflict is created in the mind of the Christian, and he becomes a hypocrite who in official church circles pretends to give the impression that he does not believe in these things, while in his own private life he resorts to practices which are the results of such beliefs". (59)

In the case of foreign, possessive and sickness-bringing spirits' (mandiki), the missionary attitude has been completely opposite to the one regarding witchcraft and spirits-of-revenge. Evidently, a definite spiritual force has been recognized. Mandiki seem to have been equated to demons, mentioned in the Bible, and scriptural examples of exorcism of demons have probably initiated the work among Protestants of exorcising mandiki by prayer. (60)

Such exorcism is still occasionally reported, but it seems to be less common than some years back, while, on the other hand, actual 'possession' by mandiki is said to be on the increase. Some informants ascribed this alleged decline of Christian exorcism to the fact that "some persons have a special power in this respect". One Methodist pastor, formally active at Tamale, was especially mentioned by several informants in connection with "exorcism by prayer". But this kind of healing is now mostly done by Zionists, according to several informants.

The fact that such prayer-exorcism can be performed in "ordinary" Christian congregations is, however, confirmed by the following statement by a pastor-informant:

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(59) E.A. Asante, "The Christian Church and African Heritage" in Jar Dedai, Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans, pp. 130-131

(60) Cf. for instance Luke 9:2 and Acts 19:12

"When I was at Maxavele on a Christmas Day, a woman possessed by mandiki was present in the congregation. I preached about the child Jesus who had come to destroy all the customs of our grand-fathers.... That woman stood up and came forward crying. We had prayer, and I asked her, What makes you cry? She said, I cannot worship because I have mandiki.

Then I said to her, What is your desire? She said, My desire is that I leave the mandiki and follow the Gospel. I said, Do you have things dedicated to the mandiki (ziphahlela) ? She answered, I have. - Will you let us take them and burn them? She said, I will.

A little later I took along an evangelist. We entered her hut, took the mandiki - things and went out along the path, to a crossroads, had prayer there and burned them. Then we broke down the house (where she had worshipped the mandiki) and burned the pieces. We took her brass-rings (masinza) and threw them far away. When we had finished, we had prayer again.

Then I said to her, When you hear the mandiki-drums again, don't go there! Your task is now to follow the Gospel, to love meetings and to go to church again and again. If you leave the church and stop worshipping, the mandiki will come back to you. - Even now she is following the Gospel. She has not yet left it".

(2) God sends sickness

God sends sickness - or allows sickness to come from Satan - as punishment for sins. This belief among the Tshwa Christians appears to be fundamental in their new attitude towards sickness. Many European Christians may have a similar understanding, but in this case it may be the Tshwa traditional belief of the ancestors punishing their descendants' sins by sickness, in a Christian dress.

A few informants insisted that "God does not send trials on Christians, to test their faith. These trials come only from Satan". But, in the main, I found no clear distinction here. One said: "God brings punishment, but He does not kill through his testing". Smallpox was mentioned several times as punishment coming from God. "This may come over you because of some serious sin, like adultery".

It is also part of the Christian concept that cripples and

albinos are sent by God because of the parents' sin. One informant gave the following example from a neighbour of his:

> "A father of an albino baby, whom I know, was totally overcome by grief, as he saw his child. He cursed himself and his wife, and was even angry with God. The midwife asked him to calm himself, as his anger might be punished by God through yet another albino child.
>
> After some time, his wife bore him another albino baby. Then the father was totally stunned. But soon he went to buy some clothes for his two albino children and began speaking of them as his own children. The next time his wife became pregnant, she bore a normal child".

Punishment for sin may even kill, as "God is the one who measures the days of every man". This is one key-phrase which makes it possible for Tshwa to reconcile that witches and spirits may be the active agents, while God is actually allowing the punishment to come. One informant formulated it this way:

> "As many people are so clever, witchcraft must be real. But what I do not believe is that witches can kill a person unless God has already called him, i.e. that the days of that man were finished".

Another expression, obviously frequently used when some severe affliction has struck a Tshwa Christian, is: "God has forsaken me". (Nungungulu i nzi tsikile). This points again to the belief that God may open the door for some other agent to carry out certain punishment. This agent would most often be seen as Satan, and there is evidence that witchcraft and "evil spirits" are sometimes regarded as Satan's instruments.

Christian attitudes to cure

When Christian Tshwa get sick, they often want to be treated at some hospital. The steadily growing flow of patients to hospitals in the Tshwa area confirms this observation. Many non-Christians nowadays also follow the stream to hospital treatment.

However, traditional cures still play a significant role.

No specific research has - to my knowledge - been done in order to find out how large a percentage of hospital patients in the Tshwa area have also been treated by Tshwa traditional doctors (tin'anga). One missionary doctor, active in the region for more than 15 years, estimates that approximately 80 percent of his patients show definite marks of having been treated by a n'anga before going to hospital. (61)

As the majority of these patients are normally counted as Christians, such a statement would indicate that a large number of Christian Tshwa seek help in a hospital after the n'anga has failed to treat him satisfactorily. It has also been reported that certain tin'anga actually "refer" their patients to hospital for definite parts of their treatment, for instance an operation, later to go back to the n'anga to complete the cure.

Similar observations are reported from other parts of Africa. Welbourn says that:

> "... in Uganda it was estimated in 1962 that 90 percent of those admitted to the children's ward at Mulago hospital in Kampala first reported to the hospital at the instance of Ganda diviner, who himself dealt with the 'mystical agents' he regarded (in many cases, I believe, quite honestly) as ultimately responsible". (62)

It should be noted, however, that in the case of the above-quoted estimation regarding the Tshwa, no distinction has been made between herbalists and actual tin'anga. As herbalists, in general, utilise only the pharmaceutical qualities of certain herbs or parts of trees, they are placed by Tshwa Christians in a different category than tin'anga.

I know of at least one instance, where an evangelist, also known as a herbalist, was called in openly to apply his

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(61) Personal communication from R. Simpson, M.D.

(62) F.B. Welbourn, op. cit. p. 15

medicine on a person who had been unsuccessfully treated at hospital. According to the pastor supplying the information, the patient was considered to be dying, and "no modern medicine was of any avail. Then I asked permission to bring in this evangelist, and the day after his treatment, the patient began to get well".

Even allowing for a number of Christian Tshwa going to herbalists in times of sickness, informants' statements confirm that several approach tin'anga. A few relevant quotations:

"Oh, there are many Christians who go to tin'anga. Among those many who ask tin'anga for help, there is one or another who runs to hospital for treatment".

"A Christian mother, whom I know, went to a divinar to find a n'anga who could cure her children. She had two sets of twins, and all had fallen ill on the same day".

"There are such sicknesses which doctors (modern) fail to cure. Then, go to a Tshwa doctor and he will help. This happens many times..."

When questioned on this point, several persons, among them some Church leaders, claim that "only those who are not really converted resort to traditional forms of cure. When a Christian has strong faith, he will never think of going to a n'anga". The report of a Christian village leader who withstood the strong pressure from his kin-group and his wife, who all wished to find out from a divinar "what was killing them", as two of his children had suddenly died, is an example of such 'strong faith'. (It is to be noted that this last pattern is a traditional symptom of spirits-of-revenge (mipfhukwa). Undoubtedly, many more examples of this character could be found.

Nevertheless, it is well demonstrated that a large number of Tshwa Christians utilise traditional cures in case of sickness. This would seem to lead to a loyalty crisis. Williamson, on the other hand, quotes an opinion "that the ability to sustain a dicholomy of mind in the approach to his mixed cultural environment was the African's greatest asset

in his new situation". (63)

My investigation leads me to the opinion that Tshwa Christians in critical situations are actually plunged into a conflict of conscience, particularly when the symptoms give rise to the suspicion that witches or "evil spirits" are involved. In other words, the dividing line in connection with wun'anga ("traditional art of divination and healing") does not primarily run between Christian and non-Christian, but between those who utilize wun'anga with a good conscience, and those who are afraid of being detected.

An illuminating comment on the running battle many Christians in critical situations are fighting with their consciences and sense of loyalty, was given by two informants mentioning three new causes, by which Christians may attract sickness:

1) You may become sick of fear, if you hesitate about eating mifa-lungo or not (in death purification, see p. 247)

2) You may get sick because of secret visits to a n'anga.

3) You may get sick from wearing a xitshungulo (protective amulet).

In short: Sickness may now result from the very customs that Tshwa traditionally regard as protective! From a Christian viewpoint, the test of strength would then be between "strong faith" and weak. The following analysis, however, rather points to a different categorization.

Analysis of the question "Hospital or n'anga"?

It would be completely wrong to state that modern medicine treats the sickness without bothering about the cause. Still, I find that this is the point where modern medicine falls to meet the total need of the Tshwa people.

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(63) R.O. Williamson, op. cit. p. 128, quoting G. Tooth, Studies in Mental Illness in the Gold Coast (1950)

One reason is the obvious difference between scientific views of sickness causation and traditional concepts of the same. To the Tshwa mind, modern medicine is so deeply concerned with the "What?" question, that for them, the more vital questions of "Why?" and "By whom was the sickness sent?" are ignored.

It would appear that modern medicine has by its very nature of being a rationalistic science removed sickness from the mystical realm, in which Tshwa traditionally look for its main cause. Simultaneously, it has given medicines and drugs a leading role in all curing, while introducing a new element of the same rationalistic and material category: surgery.

It is also possible that, although psycho-somatic causation is a well established factor in modern medicine, it plays an inferior role in diagnostics in the Tshwa area, because of limited knowledge of Tshwa psychology. As in Africa "the psychic factor in psycho-somatic medicine is becoming a matter not of individual psychopathology but of failures in interpersonal relationships", (64) it would seem that this type of diagnostics in Africa necessitates sociological and anthropological insights in addition to medical. The matter of "externalization" of guilt (See next chapter) also presents possible complications.

The rationalistic attitude towards sickness which accompanies modern medicine has also been largely adopted by the Church. "To go to hospital" is the Christian way of finding healing. I do not disregard 'prayers for the sick', which are recognized as a Christian duty, but it has already been pointed out that these are mainly regarded as supplementary to hospital treatment, and in no way present any alternative. Nor do they consciously enter the area of spiritual or social sickness causation.

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(64) F.B. Welbourn, op. cit. p. 19

Thus, by allying itself with modern medicine in unrelenting opposition against traditional wun'anga, the official attitude of the Protestant Church in the Tshwa region has led to a side-stepping of the issue of religious, psychological and social sickness causation, which to the Tshwa is of primary importance.

I find two main results of this rationalisation of sickness:

(a) Certain types of sickness are regarded as outside the reach of modern medicine.

(b) It encourages Tshwa to continue approaching the tin'anga to find spiritual causes of illness.

A. In determining "what types of sickness cannot be treated at hospital", informants revealed that this categorization does not relate the kinds of symptoms but rather that of assumed underlying causes. It should also be noted that the efficacy of hospitals as such is not drawn into question, but that certain causes, according to the Tshwa viewpoint, cannot be dealt with by a scientific-medical process. The following statement brings out these two important points:

"When a man is sick because of 'custom', i.e. somebody has made the sick (ka kabyisa), he cannot be treated in hospital. Several persons may have the same kind of sickness, and the majority of these may be cured at hospital, but in this case the hospital fails. He may have headache and gets medicine from the doctors, but he does not get better. Only a Tshwa doctor (n'anga) can help him, because the sickness has been sent on him.

But, on the other hand, if the hospital fails in treating you, when you have not been made sick by somebody else, then a n'anga has no help to give, either".

Most informants agreed that cases of witchcraft, spirits-of-revenge (mipfhukwa), and foreign spirits (mandiki) should be treated by tin'anga. One pointed out the acute danger for a person afflicted by mipfhukwa in going to hospital. "If he does not hurry to find a n'anga, and goes to hospital instead to get cured, the hospital can make him die. And somebody else will follow immediately.... until they begin to see

what is the matter'. This confirms the observation in Ghana by Williamson, that "in a crisis a person turns to the 'appropriate power'".(65)

One pastor-informant objected that people cannot know of such 'mystical' causes, unless they go to a diviner, and concluded that, "if only people could keep away from the diviner, those old beliefs would soon die". We are realistic, however, that certain patterns of symptoms seem to lead the suspicion in definite directions,(66) and in such cases the diviner's role is more to confirm the diagnosis than to reveal.

Of specific illnesses that are believed to be completely cured by traditional doctors, while modern medicine "can only temporarily relieve the complaint", a [illegible] (pinkwara) and rheumatism (ayonkwa) are most frequently mentioned. In these cases, reference is made to evil spirits rather than to actual sin/guilt. The difficulties in connection with hospital treatment of ayonkwa have already been demonstrated.(67)

b. My material adequately proves that "to the African mind, disease is closely linked with religion".(68) As modern medicine removes it from the religious-mystical realm, Tatar pastors to source for the spiritual cause in another context. So far, the Protestant Church seems to have ignored this aspect, except in encouraging 'prayer for the sick'. Confession, inspired by sickness,(69) is also in Protestant context, an exception.

"We had prayer for a friend of mine, whose penis had

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(65) S.G. Williamson, op. cit. p. 180

(66) See pp. 172-173

(67) See p. 195

(68) G. Parrinder. Religion in an African City. p. 131

(69) See Confession in traditional context, pp. 182-185

swollen because of playing with a menstruating girl. This boy had been treated with "Tshwa branches" (medicines). But, as his father was a class leader, and he was a Christian himself, the pastor was called for prayer. But they did not tell the pastor who led the prayer anything about the nature of the sickness, or the treatment".

Another example:

"We who pray for a sick person do not know anything else but praying for him. But he himself will know what to do... by going to the bones (diviner)".

Some informants mentioned that certain persons "had been prayed for by the Zionists and become healed. And now they continue to worship with the Zionists". Even if such remarks without exception were given in a condescending tone, it is clear that Tshwa Christians recognize the different attitudes towards healing between their own Church and Zionists. (70)

In a different context, I have stated that "no true life orises rites are found within Christian Tshwa worship". (71) This could indicate that the Protestant Churches are skirting the issues involved in Tshwa traditional concepts of illness. Obviously, this is a factor that tends to strengthen, or at least to keep at bay, the role of the n'anga in the spiritual aspect of illness, while, on the other hand, the belief in his medicines has possible depressed because of the strong reputation of medicines from hospital".

Christianity presents itself as a great spiritual force. But, it may be suggested that modern medicine in its present image among the Tshwa, with which the Church so closely identifies its concept of healing, contributes to decrease the spiritual influence of the new Faith.

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(70) Cf. B. Sundkler, op. cit. pp. 323-324

(71) 'Worship, Sacrifice and Sacraments', p. 159

Conclusions

I find it demonstrated that the question regarding "Hosts of Yin'angw" cannot be answered in the fashion of [illegible], but rather as [illegible] Hospital treatment and traditional healing practices need not be mutually complementary. Some of the latter, using basic traditional pharmaceutical knowledge or simply recognized by Christians, may play an important role as alleviators. Certain patterns of symptoms [illegible] are thought to spiritual causes, which must be treated by spiritual methods, prescribed by a diviner.

[illegible] role is an observation which has been amply documented from many parts of Africa. Margaret Field writes [illegible]

[illegible] Although the medical hospitals recognize their limitations and frequently tell patients with pneumonia, [illegible] children or pulmonary tuberculosis with blood-coughing to go to hospital, they stand firmly on the theory that the primary vulnerability of the patient to the disease is of supernatural origin and until redemptive ritual has been performed the hospital efforts are [illegible]

[illegible] universal value Christian concept as [illegible] sickness as punishment for sins sent or allowed by God"), it appears remarkable that little effort has been made on the part of the Protestant Churches to meet the need [illegible] and those in time the supernatural causes of their sicknesses [illegible] with reconciliation based on these findings.

As several informants state that 'many Christians 'slide back' into traditional beliefs in times of sickness and affliction', it is significant to note that the main method of dealing with Christians 'sliding back' is by a church discipline that may be more apt to cut off an offender from membership than to [illegible] constructively the difficult conflict of conscience in which a sick Yaka Christian often finds himself.

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(1) M. Field, op. cit. p. 117

Returning finally to the oft-quoted statement by Malinowski, "Under the stress of emotional crisis the indigenous belief becomes stronger than the alien creed", [73] I find it, on the whole, confirmed by observations among the Tabwa.

This will undoubtedly continue to be true, at least so long as Christianity remains alien to Tabwa culture in critically important areas of disease causation and affliction prevention, while to the Tabwa mind it is the decisive factor.

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[73] B. Malinowski, in Methods of Study of Culture Contact in Africa, p. xxix.

9. LAW, SIN AND SALVATION

> "A relationship is structured by the rights and obligations of the parties to it. Social change occurs when, and only when, new norms develop as to these rights and obligations, for until new ideas gain general acceptance and become norms any infraction of the existing code will call forth sanctions and result in a reinforcement of the traditional pattern" (1)

The Tshwa society is in a situation where norms at least of two different standards are constantly utilized. Within both "camps", ethical systems are at work, but through their constant inter-penetration, a sense of moral insecurity appears to be fairly wide-spread. Most Christian Tshwa, it would seem, presently have one foot in each of these camps, withdrawing from certain traditional actions for religious reasons while accepting other parts of the ethical code by using social criteria. It is conceivable that a person is censured because of a certain action in one section of society, while the same act calls forth praise in the other context. He may also find himself in an acute conflict of conscience, as has been pointed out in "Pursuit of Health". (2)

It seems, therefore, to be of great importance to attempt an analysis of ethical norms in traditional Tshwa culture, based upon information from my informants, and on my pastoral experience, and to investigate the inter-relation between these and the Christian standards, manifestly accepted by Tshwa Christians but nevertheless foreign to the Tshwa frame of reference.

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(1) M. Banton, "The Restructuring of Social Relationships", in A. Southall, (ed), Social Change in Modern Africa, p. 115

(2) See p.202

In this analysis, as in other parts of this dissertation, I have made a conscious effort to avoid any value judgments in any direction.

Good and evil

The concept of the 'highest good' of the Tswa has been dealt with in some detail in the chapter on "Quest for Life".(5) We are reminded that the summum bonum in the traditional culture is 'sufficient life', and that Christianity has modified this goal to read "the better life", which includes all elements in the traditional ideal, while changing certain emphases and adding a few new items. The most important addition is 'the eternal life', or "unending life" (*wutomi ga pinyuselwa*) which is seen as a guaranteed reward for every Christian 'who conducts himself to worship God and to keep the law of Christ'.

The traditional 'sufficient life' ideal included 'right relationships' as a priority element. It was said that, in the Christian ideal of 'the better life', the emphasis is not as strong on such 'right relationships' in social terms, but rather on right relations with God. This trend should not be overly stressed, but one important aspect of it will be reconsidered further on in this chapter, in speaking about 'confession'.

Good produces 'life'

Another way of expressing the Tswa traditional ideal would be 'the normal', or 'a life fulfilling normal expectations'. Thus, what is normally counted on within Tshwa setting: health, fertility, enough food, and satisfactory social relationships, is 'good'. Fringe benefits, for instance a substantially above average income, are welcomed to some extent, but the fear of 'much-life' is real, and checks the desire for

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(5) See further pp. 106-107

more wealth and success than is 'appropriate'.

From a functional point of view, then, 'good' is whatever contributes to establishing or upholding the 'sufficient life'. "Not until one has understood that for the African 'the ontological good is the ethically good' can one appreciate and understand the moral sense of the African and the direction of ethical pursuit", says Adegbola speaking from a Yoruba experience. (4) In other words, the term 'ethically good' is not attached to certain acts or states of mind as an indelibly written label, but 'good' is what produces good results, conducive to 'life'.

It is 'conducive to life' for a man to have children. Therefore, it is 'good' (and normal) for him to take another wife if his first wife is denied offspring. As a matter of fact, this is provided for through the nzhowolo (bridewealth) institution. (5) It is 'good' for a father to be able to build a large stone house which will enhance his appropriate prestige, but it is not good if the son does this before the father, as this would damage the 'right relationship' determined by the rule of seniority. Sacrifice to the ancestors fall, naturally, in this 'good' category, and assisting the kin group to supply what is needed for a sacrifice, is necessarily 'good', as this helps to enhance 'life' of the group. Likewise, amulets are 'good', as they aim at improving health and 'life' of the person.

By the same token, 'evil' in the traditional sense is what decreases 'life' in the same functional meaning. Broken relationships within the kin-group or community are seen as seriously evil, as they potentially lead to "no-life".

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(4) E.A.A. Adegbola, "The Theological Basis of Ethics" in Dickson-Ellingworth (ed), Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs, p. 18

(5) Nzhowolo (bride-wealth) is further explained on pp. 17-18

Because of the relationships it breaks, and potential sickness in the family, adultery is seen as evil, but extra-marital relations as such are not evil, unless they produce a curse (khombo) because of some broken taboo.

We find, therefore, that an act will be regarded as 'evil' because of its evil results. Anger and its expressions are seen as dangerously evil, as they may call forth bitterness and sickness. Neglect of ancestral spirits is usually not seen as 'evil' until some sickness or accident reminds the kin group of its forgotten duties.

Good is normal

As 'good' is equated with the standard, the normal, the expected behaviour, so it is believed that man normally is 'good'. Goodness, then, is nothing added to the character, like fronting on a matter. Williamson says, with experience from Ghana, "Man as he is, is man as the Creator intended him to be".(7) A man who lives and works for himself and his family and keeps his social relationships inside and outside his kin group intact, is, by definition, 'good'. Evil is then conceived as a breach against the normal, somebody temporarily going "below par" in committing an evil act. 'Good' might be compared to the state of health, while the evil act is the sickness, temporarily disturbing the equilibrium.

Thus, there is no 'evil' man according to Tshwa philosophy, except in one special instance. The witch is intrinsically evil, living and steadily working for the destruction of persons and society as a whole. As Bhila expresses it: "These are practices witchcraft, evil magic and sorcery are

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(6) Several taboos are listed and explained on pp. 167-169

(7) S.G. Williamson, Akan Religion and the Christian Faith, p. 143

the very incarnation of moral evil". (5) This understanding was re-inforced by most of my informants through their strong belief that 'a witch cannot be converted'. As 'good' is normal, and she is opposite to everything normal, she is thus, by definition, evil!

At this point, besides the obvious evilness of alleged results of witchcraft activities, I find valuable guidance in the definition of 'good' from the Ndembu in Zambia:

> "What is good, for Ndembu, is the open, the public, the unconcealed, the sincere. A man is said to be 'good' when he performs his duties from the 'liver', not from calculated policy with a mask of outwards politeness under which malice is concealed..."

The brooding, hidden anger of the witch is the essence of evil, as this is a continuous source of disturbance and destructive of life-enhancing forces.

Evil influences from the outside

("Externalised evil")

As normal man is considered intrinsically 'good', his temporary evil acts cannot come from himself. The famous man, seeing the obvious results of his evil actions (in sickness or misfortune), literally looks behind him to discover what evil force had been the active agent on his hand, leading him to commit a sin or break a taboo. We have already seen how these evil influences are conceptualized in certain spirits or witches. According to informants, witchcraft is most commonly supposed, "forcing a man to be the servant of the witch, to perform terrible acts".

This is an example of so-called "externalisation" of evil, which means that forces from outside lead a person

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(5) J. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p. 215

(6) V. Turner, Drums of Affliction, p. 49

into evil acts, presumably against his own will. "The man is the object acted upon". (10) Another example is the 'possessed person', who is automatically exonerated from all that he does while 'possessed', as the spirits (mandiki) are the active agents. A similar "externalisation" appears to be experienced by Tshwa in their dreams, as visiting or speaking persons or spirits are considered as coming from the outside. Hence, the urgent importance of messages received through dreams.

According to the Tshwa traditional point of view, then, evil action is the result of an evil desire emerging from a 'will' that is considered personal, but outside of the individual's self. Consequently, even if a criminal guilt adheres to the person who acted, he owes it to himself to find out "who sent the evil will upon him".

Some symbols for 'good' and 'evil'

The most common symbolic Tshwa expression for evil is 'hot' (kwoma). This is the humorous opposite of the 'cool' rain with its life-giving power. 'Hot' is considered to be as evil as a mountain fire burning whatever grows in the fields, leaving people and animals to die. Symbolically, 'heat' is contrasted by moist air or certain states having to do with the reproductive organs. Thus, menstruating women are 'hot', and for a period after childbirth, (11) and abortion, the most grave option, for them, 'heat' is experienced as circumcision; and in times of war a man-slayer is 'hot' until he has been properly purified.

'Heat' is also ascribed as the result of improper burial. All known regulations are therefore meticulously

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(10) Q. Lienhardt, Divinity and Experience, pp. 149-150.

(11) Until the time of "kutyisa mwana" (strengthening the child) a ceremony which establishes the husband's fatherhood of the child.

followed while burying a dead, so that the 'cool' rain is not prevented from falling. But certain cases need special care. After an abortion, the foetus must be buried in damp soil in order not to make the country 'hot'. The same applies, e.g., to a man who has died from [illegible].(12)

The most common state of 'heat', however, is created by the act of sexual intercourse, whether it is within the marriage or outside. The day after the sexual act, the two partners are 'hot', but, without performing any special purification, that 'heat' disappears when one night has passed without intercourse.

It is obvious that the 'heat' in itself cannot be seen as 'evil' in ethical terms, as matters thus defined appear to be outside of the sphere normally considered moral. But, similarly to actions which are deemed to be 'evil' because of their negative results, 'heat' is bad because it has a power of potential destruction. 'Hot' persons are prohibited from visiting sick, or a "new" mother, and warned from taking part in a sacrifice, because their 'heat' may disturb the forces of 'life' which on such occasions are particularly delicate. Similar conceptions of 'heat' are reported from several peoples in Africa.(13)

Some informants used the term 'heat' also in the case of death, but it is more likely that 'blackness' falls upon the kin group having been struck by death. Such 'blackness' must be removed by special intricate acts of purification.(14) Black seems to have a distinct significance also among the Nkoya, as the plural, black objects often stand for witchcraft and the death and sickness it produces."(15)

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(12) A fatal disease, reputedly caused by the breach of a serious sexual taboo. See p. 102

(13) Brain, Magic of a Bilharzia ; Sr. Dr. J. Taylor, The Primal Vision, p. 32;

(14) Dos "Death and Life Eternal", p. 24?

(15) V. Turner, op. cit. p. 158

Another observation in this respect is that the skirt of Tshwa Methodist women's 'uniform' is "black to remind of the sins we have been saved from".

To be 'holy', 'pure' and 'right', on the other hand, is to be 'white' (Kubana). 'Whiteness' is the blameless state, the 'cool' state which cannot produce any evil results. One may say that this is the symbolic equivalent of the most important blessing: rain.

'White' is used to translate the Christian term "holy", e.g. in Moya wo-ho Shwe (The Holy Spirit, lit. The White Spirit). Here again, it is noted that the goodness denoted in this case is on "par level". It is the normal state. Actions of good will cannot add to the 'whiteness', only confirm it. Thus, it is rather the absence of evil than a positive goodness.

"Mzhuti" (shadow) is in the Tshwa culture a good element. "A person who has mzhuti is like a big tree, in whose shadow I can rest and find strength. This is completely opposed to the understanding of 'shadow' among some other peoples, notably the Lovedu, where muriti (shadow) "is, on the whole, dangerous, not to the primary intermediary beat, but to others". (16)

Christian ethics introduces conflict

Compared to the Tshwa functional moral (which Mbiti would call 'dynamic ethics') (17) which denotes an act as 'good' or 'evil' according to the result it produces, Christian ethics appear 'static' or 'structural'. By Christian standards, an act is considered intrinsically 'good' or 'evil', regardless of circumstances or results. The Church says, e.g., 'Monogamy

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(16) Krige, op. cit., p. 213

(17) I would not agree with this, as the word dynamic usually implies something forcefully creative. J. Mbiti, op. cit., p. 21

is good'. Thus, taking a second wife is 'evil', even if such an act might result in off-spring. Extra-marital sexual relations are intrinsically evil, whether taboos are broken or not. They are against "The Christian law".

Another example is that modern medicine is 'good', while amulets are shunned as 'evil'. In this situation, many a Christian mother, I am told, is caught in a dilemma between using modern medicine "which might upset the 'snake' in the child" and tying the string with amulets around the child's abdomen - with the risk of being "discovered" by somebody in the Church. The [illegible] start "the amulet which we see according to Pshwa custom as a life-enhancing item, certainly cannot hurt the child". Thus, the 'evil' is not in the amulet, but in the discovery and the shame that might result from it. One informant, then a lay-leader, told how he had had an amulet himself "to protect him against dangers in the mine". When he got sick, he suspected that "God might be angry with him because of the amulet" and decided to burn it. Again, 'evil' was derived from the 'evil' results.

The conflict of conscience and loyalty is obviously real for a Christian man who is asked by his kinsmen to contribute a goat to a sacrifice "because of trouble in the kingroup". By keeping within the Church Law, which summarily prohibits all connections with the ancestral spirits, he will refuse to have anything to do with the sacrifice, simultaneously lowering the 'life' of his kin, both by his refusal to take part in the life-enhancing ritual, and by seriously breaking the 'right relationship'.

The [illegible] that man in himself is 'good' stands, of course, in irreconcilable opposition to the Christian doctrine of man's intrinsic sinfulness. Christianity's message is that all men "like sheep have gone astray" (1Pet

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(1) Isaiah 53:6

but that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners".(19)

I have found nothing among my informants indicating that this conception of "original sin" is understood, except for some formulations from the catechism. Evil and sin are well known entities among Tshwa, but only like dirt soiling the 'whiteness' of their normal state. That "man is born sinful" is a completely foreign thought to Tshwa culture. In the same vein, Williamson writes about the Akan of Ghana: "Christianity in its doctrine of human sinfulness moves in a universe of thought and experience remote from the Akan's".[20]

'Goodness', then, according to Christian standards is something possible to achieve only by way of 'salvation from sin'. Even then, 'goodness' remains a goal rather than a reality.(21) There is evidence that Tshwa Christians consider this 'goodness' as something reachable only in connection with the 'eternal life', and that all one can hope for right now is to keep away from such sinful acts that would spoil the record.

Externalization in Christian context

Although serious conflict between traditional and Christian ethics appears inevitable, the concept of externalization of guilt has been completely adopted within the Christian sphere. In traditional culture, Tshwa externalize the incentive to evil action, mainly by referring it to witchcraft, or some evil spirit. In Christianity, the concept of Satan has lent itself to a similar interpretation, leaving the guilt at least partly externalized.

Several informants affirmed that man is not evil. It is

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(19) 1 Tim. 1:15

(20) J.G. Williamson, op. cit. p. 141

(21) Cf. Matthew 5:48

the spirit of Satan that comes over him, whispering in his ear that he should do certain things". Thus, whether or not a Christian commits some evil acts depends on "how strong [illegible] led back to the necessity of the [illegible] to achieve a "strong [illegible] Thus, the guilt of the Christian [illegible], though of a lesser [illegible], while [illegible] itself harks back to Satan [illegible]

[illegible] the minds of Ishwa Christians, [illegible] superstructure upon the essence of tra- [illegible] witchcraft and spirits-of-revenge. [illegible] witches and mipfukwa, [illegible] [illegible] It is significant that an- [illegible] [illegible] were mentioned as "servants [illegible]

[illegible] witchcraft, parti- [illegible] [illegible] seem to have escaped those [illegible] who used the 'explanation' that "witchcraft [illegible] [illegible] the reality of witchcraft, they [illegible] [illegible] their enemy [illegible] Number One".

Law and Legislation

[illegible] nature of Law

In the Ishwa community, where "the ontological good is the [illegible] [illegible] functional character as [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and keep 'life', as [illegible] conceived it. The only 'legislation' discernable in- [illegible] [illegible] necessity of unity within the kin-group, [illegible] and/or neighbourhood, so that "life may be enhanced". It can

(22) Cf. p. 158

the spirit of Satan that comes over him, whispering in his ear that he should do certain things". Thus, whether or not a Christian commits some evil acts depends on "how strong faith he has". We are here led back to the necessity of the Christian not only to believe in God but to achieve a "strong faith in God's power". (25) Thus, the guilt of the Christian is, in general, thought of in terms of "weak faith", while the primary guilt for the action itself harks back to Satan and his spirits.

It seems clear that, in the minds of Tshwa Christians, Satan has become a superstructure upon the essence of traditional Tshwa evil, namely witchcraft and mirimu(-revenge). Informants mentioned that "Satan uses witches and mipfuwwa, and even mirimi belong to him". It is significant that ancestral spirits (vhadzimu) are never mentioned as "servants of Satan".

It is noteworthy that the concept of witchcraft, particularly, as the essence of evil, seems to have escaped those Christians who use the 'scientific' view that "witchcraft is irrational". By denying the reality of witchcraft, they invariably deny the power which Tshwa associate as their basic Number One.

Law and Loyalties

The nature of law

In the Tshwa community, where "the ontological good is the ethically good", and law has the moral functional guarantee of basic ethics. Its aim is to help preserve and keep 'life' as the Tshwa understand it. The only 'tautology' discernable in this law is the necessity of unity within the kin-group, and/or neighbourhood, as such "life can be preserved". It can

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(25) Cf. p. 188

be said, with Junod, that "the law (*nayo*) is the interest of the clan.". (23) Although unwritten, these laws "have become accepted from their very nature, from the fact that they satisfy the more fundamental and common needs of life in society, as binding and [illegible]". (24)

As we are mainly dealing with the ethical aspect of the law, I do not intend to discuss it in juridical terms, except to draw our attention to the fact that laws imposed from outside of Tshwa culture tend to be regarded as less binding than their own. This has been observed among mine-workers, as far as laws relating to registration, emigration, work contracts, etc., are concerned. The obvious explanation lies in the fact that the Tshwa do not regard these laws as essential to 'life'.

It may be relevant to point out a fundamental difference between Tshwa and European law: While European law deals exclusively in terms of 'rights' and 'wrongs', Tshwa law stays in the sphere of 'good' and 'evil'. Thus, ethical law and juridical law under the Tshwa system do not coincide. By the same token, a juridical law (from statute) which does not clearly demonstrate itself as promoting life' is not felt as obligatory in the same manner.

Two different aspects of 'law' work in the minds of Tshwa, without them making any clear distinction between the two: Taboos (*zivilayila*), and the proper law (*nayo*; plur. *milayo*). On analysis it appears that the Law (*nayo*) deals with all kinds of relationships between persons within the group, i.e. it presents itself as [illegible] It could also be said that the law is identified with the concept of 'right relationships', [illegible] in all Tshwa 'quest for life'.

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(23) H.A. Junod, *Life of a South African tribe*, II p. [illegible]

(24) I. Schapera, "Law and Justice" in *The Bantu-speaking tribes of South Africa*, p. 197.

Taboo, on the other hand, deal with such relationships only in specific cirmcumstances, while in several other cases they have clearly no ethical content at all! This agrees with Adegbola's observation that "the tabu (ewo) prohibits indiscriminately, both morally and a-morally".(25)

The Law, then, regulates life according to structure and purpose of the group, while taboos are like road-signs of warning against a potential hazard, declaring an ordinarily lawful act dangerous at certain times, or for certain persons.

The Law of Christ

To the question "What is it to be a Christian?", the most common answer from Yoruba Christians is: "To follow the Law of Christ". While this law may be called "Law of God", or "The Christian law", or even "the Law of the Church", it is clearly demonstrated that the Christian life is seen in terms of 'following a law'. As this law is believed to lead to the ultimate goal of 'eternal life', it may be surmised that it is considered in the same obligatory category as their own traditional law.

The main contents of this law, obviously, is the Ten Commandments, which are supposed to be known by heart by every baptismal candidate. Some informants gave "the new Christian law", [illegible] as their answer. But more commonly, the gist of the Christian law was: "To leave all old ways of life; to go to church to worship God; to pay the Church dues". The [illegible] of these also came up in some replies, mainly in the negative injunction that "A Christian should never be angry".

From an ethical viewpoint, this puts a strong emphasis on the negative aspect of "leaving the old". Thus, the ethical contents of the Christian law is often seen as a total negation of the traditional life, rather than, for instance "The Sermon on the Mount".

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(25) E.A.A. Adegbola, op. cit. p. 157

(26) Matthew 22:37-39

Legalistic outlook analyzed

A legalistic trend has been found in Christian Churches in several different parts of Africa. Thus, Anderson notes this fact in the Congo, while Dust and Pauw make the same observation among the Khosa and Tswana. (27)

It must be noted that such a legalistic outlook is by no means limited to Christians in Africa. It appears everywhere, from a Christian viewpoint often even as a sign of "shallow understanding of the Christian faith". Nevertheless, legalism in African Christianity seems to be so universal that some specific cause may be suggested.

Those Christians who are an exception to this rule. Legalistic teaching and preaching appears to represent the normal theme. In certain instances, I have personally experienced that preaching on "the unmerited grace of God" may be even resented by certain leaders.

It has been suggested that

> "for the first generation of converts a legalistic attitude almost amounts on the part of the missionaries to natural. It helps them to define the separate identity of their converts. In the next generation, such an attitude, if maintained, will be that of Africans themselves in order to maintain their separate role in their social environment". (28)

I agree wholeheartedly to the necessity of a clearly defined "separate identity" of the first Christian generation in Africa. Furthermore, as we probe the causes of legalism, the Methodist doctrine of 'sanctification' (29) may be regarded as one factor contributing to a legalistic outlook, even if I know that this is not the intention of the doctrine

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(27) E. Anderson, Churches of the Stanleyville, pp. 154-155; A.A. Dubb, op. cit. 1, p. 41; Pauw, Religion in a Tswana Chiefdom, p. 216

(28) Sarpo-Wiredu (ed), African systems of thought, p. 52

(29) See p. 71

as such. Influence, perhaps unconsciously, has also seeped in from the Roman Catholic doctrine of "merit", implying that certain religious acts may make a person more acceptable in the sight of God.

My material, however, leads me to the conclusion that the cause of a legalistic outlook is to be sought at even deeper levels. I suggest that the foundation of legalism in Churches in Africa, apart from certain aspects of Church teaching, lies in a different concept of man, sin and salvation, as this is confronted with the Christian doctrine of "justification by faith alone".

a. It should first be noted that religion among Yahwe was mainly expressed through symbolic action, while the doctrinal foundation of traditional religion was simply taken for granted. Thus, it becomes clear that Christianity as the new 'faith' (ΧΙΚΡΙΣΤΟΣ) had been partly grasped as a set of doctrines, but also as a religion to be expressed in specific actions, considered as 'the Christian law'.

As its transfer to the new 'faith' was accompanied by strong psychological and social tension, it was necessary to conceptualize the new belonging in definitely stated terms. As these 'laws' were conceived as 'conducive to life', i.e. 'eternal life', they were interpreted as obligatory guidelines to live the new necessary 'right relationship', with God. Meanwhile, doctrines were learned but definitely regarded as of secondary importance.

b. The most important reason, from my viewpoint, is that the Yahwe lacks, evidently, the "African" concept of sin, sin and salvation does not loose much footnail for the Pauline doctrine of "justification by faith alone". (30) While this doctrine presupposes the "sinfulness of man in need of redemption", Yahwe our normal man as 'good', and salvation as

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(30) cf. Romans 1:17

freedom from such evil powers as may endanger or prevent the continuous quest for life. Thus, it would appear that the Tswana have no frame in which to fit the mentioned Christian doctrine. Consequently, a legalistic outlook is not only explainable. It seems to be the only feasible "handle", by which the Tswana may get an initial grasp on the Christian faith.

Similar findings are indicated from the Congo in the statement "Most the Congolese speak in the new religion is not a merciful God, but rather a powerful God, who has the power to assure for the betterment on earth", (31). From Ghana comes the echo:

> "Christianity means to man's mind, salvation from sin, not of God's redemptive acts. This evokes no significant response in the mass, and among good Christians in the Church there is slight appreciation of these truths.
>
> This statement is based not only on observed facts in the Church, but also on many years experience of theological training. The two most difficult doctrines to express, and for the students to grasp, are those of Sin and Grace". (32)

As this doctrine has been seen as crucial in Protestantism, (33) this observation would to warrant further research from a theological and practical stand.

Sin, punishment and restitution

Sin (*kgopisa*) in Tswana is sin of action rather than sin of being. "Man is not by nature either 'good' or 'bad' ('evil')

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(31) E. Andersson, op. cit, p. 142

(32) G.D. Williamson, op. cit. p. 147

(33) "For the Martin Luther and John Wesley, this doctrine, prompted virtue, was the turning-point in their lives and became the foundation for their "protestant" message".

except in terms of what he does or does not do". (34) I have found that this conception has been completely carried over by Tshwa into their Christian interpretation of sin.

Informants were asked "When did you sin last?". Such a personal question could obviously not be put until a good, trustful relationship had been built up between the interviewer and the informant, but most replied without seeming embarrassment. With only one exception, the answers referred back to some incident, recent or long ago, which had, at least temporarily, left a sense of guilt.

Most common were examples with cursing involved (kurukateia). One mentioned sickness because of having an amulet, supposedly to protect him from side accidents. Another had to refer back to the occasion a few years back when he had "finally given up the longing for modern dance (kuking onunga). I know I have not sinned since that time, because I have not been sick or had any accident".

It is not my intention to stress these various kinds of actions, considered sinful by the informants, and I did not probe deeper to find out whether or not this "really" was their latent sin. Such questions were, in the context, irrelevant. The primary fact, that "sins are actions" emerged unambiguously. Only one informant, with some background from the Nazarene Church, spoke of the possibility that "he may have sinned many times without even knowing it" - a concept that seems to approach the doctrine of "human sinfulness".

Sin against whom?

Social sin, already referred to, and defined as "breach of relationships", is directed both against the wronged individual and the community as such. No human relationship can be broken without potentially endangering the unity of the group. As the ancestral spirits (tinguluve) are the cus-

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(34) J. White, op. cit. p. 76

todians of kinship unity, social sins are regarded as ultimately directed towards them. Consequently, punishment for such sinful acts can be sent by the tinguluve.

At this point, it is important to stress that, although the tinguluve are approached by sacrifices and prayers, thus being considered in a somewhat divine category, they are above all regarded as elders still vitally belonging to the kin-group. Mbiti's term "living-dead" for the recently departed ancestors (35) and Gelfand's use of the term "spiritual elders" (36) fit well into this argument. The term "social sin", involving breaches of relationships with tinguluve as well as with living persons, will thus be seen appropriate.

In the case of taboos (zipilayila), the direction of a breach is not so clearly defined. Informants referred to them only as "old rules", and there was no seeming understanding of from where the punishment of a broken taboo would be forthcoming. No doubt, there is a feeling that a broken taboo releases an immediate and automatic consequence like touching a live wire, and the active power is not recognized. Radcliffe-Brown gives the following comment:

> "My own observation of the Polynesians suggests to me that in general the native conceives of the change in his ritual status as taking place as the immediate result of such an act of touching ... and that it is only when he proceeds to rationalize the whole system of beliefs that he thinks of the gods and spirits .... as being concerned'. (37)

On analysis, however, I maintain that breaches of taboo are directed against "the kin-group as a whole, in its capacity as custodian of common values". (38)

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(35) J. Mbiti, op. cit. p. .

(36) M. Gelfand, Shona religion , p. 51

(37) A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society , p. 1

(38) See "Pursuit of Health", p. 167

particularly as it is seen that 'curses' (makhombo) arising from the breach of some taboo are potentially disruptive and destructive elements in the life of the group, this explanation would seem strongly supported.

Ritual sin may be regarded in the same category as taboos, as they are not tied to ethical concepts in the same way as social sins. Ritual sins could also be named "ritual impurity", dealing almost exclusively with persons approaching the sacred acts of sacrifice in the state of 'dust' (kuhlasi). Likewise, individuals contaminated by 'death contagion', thus being 'black', are prohibited from taking part in any sacrificial act, except those acting at the purification from death contagion.

The secular nature of ritual sin is clearly demonstrated by the belief that the entire sacrifice is rendered ineffectual by the partaking of a 'dust' person, and that the blessing expected as fruit of the sacrifice may turn into a curse.

In analysis it soon appears that all sins, or potentially evil acts, committed by traditional Tsonga, ultimately are bound to have a social effect, either affecting an individual or the group as a whole. They are all attacks against the unity of society.

It is particularly significant that very few sins are regarded as directed against the Sky Power (Tilo). Only known or wrong ritual might be discovered as the cause why Tilo withholds the blessing of rain". But this was into focus only in years of extreme drought, when the kulo wa leya vula rite was called for. In some instances casting them exhausted. (32)

Already in this rite (ku hlawuka) indicate that no broken relationship was developed between man and Tilo, as there was neither any sacrificial gift, nor any attempt at propitiation or restoration, but rather naming of the Power, who was then in their power to give unto the performers, using his in-

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(32) See "Shangana Conception and Terminology", pp. 125-127

strument, the r in".

In stark contrast to Tshwa traditional views, Christianity sees sin primarily as 'sin against God', whether this refers to so-called 'original sin' or sinful acts wilfully committed. Social effects of sins are, of course, recognized. The larger part of the Ten Commandments themselves deal with social relationships. Nevertheless, social effects of sin are considered as secondary to the broken relationship with God.

Among Tshwa Christians, some confusion of concepts is discernible, as they, in general, unconsciously apply inherited social criteria to sins, while the Christian super-structure inspires religious criteria to be used in their thinking about guilt and restitution. Further to confuse the issue, there is evidence that social sin would primarily be expressed in terms of wrong-doing against other Christians, or against the standards of the Church group. Outside of the Church, the religious taboo again shows up as a decisive factor, determining for the Christian whether a relationship ought to be broken off or not. It would seem that the conscience would be well-nigh unbearable when one is challenged to violate the commandment to "Honour your father and your mother" for religious reasons. Nev-rtheless, I am made to understand that in certain instances breaches against kinship relations may be highly commended as strengthening the 'right relationship' with God and His Church.

It would hardly be true to facts to say that Christianity among the Tshwa has totally replaced 'social sin' with its emphasis on sin as religious. But it emerges clearly that the religious criterion is overshadowing the social one, taking precedence in all cases of doubt.

To sum up, I find a tendency stumbling to push all sin into the religious sphere, making it more an affair between man and God than between man and man. Ethical rules are "the law of Christ"; and thus religious first, and social second at best.

Obviously, all reversals to old traditions are also sins in a religious sense, never determined by social criteria.

Old sins and new

From a Christian point of view, gradation of sin is always a risky undertaking, as it lays stress on the act rather than on the inner spirit of man. It would seem that the 'Bhengu Church' in East London may have acquired a more deeply Christian attitude towards sin than is usually found among the Tswana:

> "In the assembly it is believed that all sins ranging from a white lie to murder are of the same magnitude and that the code of repentance is the same in every case".(40)

On the question whether there are certain sins more evil than others, the sets of killing, adultery, and theft were mentioned by most informants. Killing was generally regarded as worst of these sins, "as this takes away the soul of the man", while theft followed adultery very closely in the estimated gradation. Of other sins mentioned in connection with this question, "laughing at cripple" came first, followed by homosexual acts, cattle-lending (!) and lies.

It is important to observe that all sins mentioned in this list (with the exception of chieftainship) are considered as very evil sins in the traditional context. They are all clearly within the category of 'social sins', although Christians may regard them first of all as sins against God.

The evidence that chieftainship may even be mentioned by some in terms of sin, points to a potential conflict between Christianity and the institution of traditional chief-hood.(41)

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(40) A.A. Imbi, op. cit. II, p. 152

(41) Ibid p. 459

[illegible] objectively substantiated that no action definite-
[illegible] arising from traditional customs and beliefs was mentioned
[illegible] this list of Tswana sins. In this we [illegible] indication that
[illegible] Christians [illegible] all do not consider such side-steps
[illegible] as sins [illegible]. The [illegible] should be made of this absence
[illegible] is possible that we have here an indication that such
[illegible] as are seen to completely religious terms have not yet
[illegible] the wrong conduct in the minds of Tswana Christians.

[illegible] available indicating the type of sin
[illegible] as more often the cause of Church disciplinary action.
[illegible] however, I am left with the impression that
[illegible] cases are in an overwhelming majority. The declin-
[illegible] importance of kinship ties may be a contributing cause of
[illegible] is [illegible]. I am convinced, however, that contin-
[illegible] polygyny in traditional society provides the incentive
[illegible] covert duplicity in sexual matters for many who find little
[illegible] unconvinced conformity to their efforts to remain strictly
[illegible]. The wider interpretation of the term adultery
[illegible] within the Church no doubt plays an important role,
[illegible] placing under sinful status traditionally available, mo-
[illegible] freedoms.

Another sin frequently mentioned by informants, is "mo-
[illegible] dance" in the form of Kwaito bhunga. Most commonly,
bhunga is [illegible] in a village, where owner invites anybody
[illegible] come and take part. Gramophone records with "modern
music" are used, against a fee of [illegible] cents per record. The
main evil - and the great temptation - is seen in the fact
that men and women dance together. This new kilungu custom (42)
is [illegible] the shameless spirit connected with bhungi and
is said to lead to promiscuous sexual relations around the
dance [illegible]. The informants affirmed that the breaking

[illegible], a term derivation of kulungu = white
man, is synonymous for everything belonging
to white civilization.

with traditional customs was very easy compared to their difficulty in leaving bhumpi, in order to become Christians.

Sins have consequences

Crimes of the type listed among "worst sins" were severely punished in ancient times. A thief might be killed for his crime, but more usual was the cutting off of "the hand that had stolen". Alternatively, the eyes were pierced, so that he may no longer see other people's belongings. Cases of adultery were punished by cutting off the ears, at least of the man. If the cuckolded husband was of high status, only death could expiate the crime. (43)

Such overt and direct punishment was preceded by investigation by the chief and his counsellors. But sins, as we have seen, (44) also have more immediate consequences, which imply that no human detection is necessary for evil to reap its rewards. Sickness and accidents are the means striking the guilty. "You cannot be sick or have an accident if you have done nothing evil", said one informant, expressing the opinion of all. Indirectly, this universal concept has served as an effective deterrent through the ages, making people abstain, at least, from entering into forbidden areas of action.

The concept of causal relation between sin and sickness/accidents has followed Tswana into their interpretation of Christianity. Thus, God sends (or allows) sickness as punishment for sins. (45)

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(43) A. Wachsmuth, Setswana, p. 54; J.A. Persson, Barnfödsel och Barnfostran i Inhambane, p. 73

(44) See "Pursuit of Health", pp. 170-171

(45) This concept is developed on pp. 198-199

There is, however, a great difference between the Christian God of Love as source of such punishment, and the inescapable consequence from a broken taboo or sin against kinship relations. It is believed that God forgives when man confesses his sin to Him in prayer, even if some informants told of several days of prayer before they "felt that (they) had been forgiven". In general, such forgiveness does not presuppose any special gift or action, similar to sacrifice in the traditional context. Neither is any other person involved. It can be an affair "between God and oneself".

Kilson has observed among Zulu Christians "a higher disintegration of morals which follows upon the atomization of the individual and the displacement of societal sanctions."(46) In East Africa, a similar moral disintegration is referred back to the declining importance of the ancestor cult:

> Traditionalists denied that ancestral spirits had any relations with the living. This was to cast doubt on the spiritual solidarity of clan society and to take the first steps towards disrupting it. The sense of moral obligation was, consequently, lessened".(47)

The process of individualization may lead into ethical anarchy in any community, doubly so in societies where the unity of the group has been stressed in every avenue of life. Here this process, as among the Tonga, is intensified by a transitional 'generation gap', particularly in the growing number of cases, where the younger generation has had school education, many young Christians find themselves on the border between the externally structured regime and the beckoning sphere of ethical experimentation, rightly or wrongly identified with 'witches'. (48) As fear of incompatible superhuman consciousness has largely been removed through the understand-

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(46) A. Kilson, Zulu Transformations, p. 161

(47) F.B. Welbourn, East African Christian, p. 109

(48) See Junkins 1967

ing that "God forgives", it would seem that the ethical bars of one system have been lowered before the motivation of another has been firmly established.

Sources outside of the Yahwe context, have also found that softer moral attitudes may arise from the Christian teaching about God. It has been said about the Church in Uganda:

> "The belief in the patience of the Christian God has relaxed many ancient fears without substituting a strong sense of the claims of God's righteousness. Very few Christians ask the question, 'How can I please God?'. There is a theoretical belief in heaven and hell, but their fears are more for this world than the next. Even habitual drunkards say, 'Jesus has made us free: we have nothing to fear'." (49)

I do not intend to give the impression that Yahwe Christians excel in moral fibre. On the whole, they seem anxious to follow "the Law of Christ", but I cannot escape the notion that, particularly in the younger generation, there is at least potentially a more permissive moral attitude than was obtainable in the traditional context. The most immediate danger in a sinful act seems to be the detection, leading to church disciplinary action, or - in applicable cases - to judicial investigation. Such fear of detection is, of course, nothing specifically "Yahwe", but it may hark back to the traditional view that "an act is 'evil' if its consequences are evil". (50) It may also be an indication that sins are mainly considered as matters entirely "between God and myself".

I do not yet know how non-Christian Yahwe judge the ethical state of Christians. One field found in Ghana is a rather harsh judgment on Christians and the Church in that country:

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(49) J. Taylor, Processes of growth in an African Church, p. 70

(50) Cf. p. 231

"The main aspersion cast today upon Christians by obosom-worshippers (gods) is that the former trade upon the fact that they are not threatened in this life by any retribution for sin. The obosom makes stern ethical demands: Christian Church membership demands only that delinquency be not found out!... People join Christians because they know that when they are Christians and do wrong God will not kill them". (31)

Reconciliation urgently needed

When a diviner has found the cause of a misfortune, he also tells what is needed to restore the relationship which has somehow been broken. This act of restoration may involve sacrifice, or - in the case of sandaa - expenses to purchase various paraphernalia. It may even include giving up one of the kin concerned to reconcile a spirit-of-revenge.

The urgency in restoration of such relationships, whether they are spiritual or genuinely social, arises from the acute danger which a holy ritual leader, that the children have died "because of a spirit-of-revenge", reconciliation is of utmost urgency, lest yet another kinsman should die.

Another factor explaining this urgency is that "tribal society is... a closed society. Its public opinion drives an offender on to seek restoration into society without intervention and without mercy". (32) It would be unbearable within such a face-to-face community to have 'irreconciled' elements in its midst. Living daily dealing with someone, with whom ordinary relationships are forbidden because of his sin or crime, is, obviously, an impossible situation.

The Tshwa Christian attitude towards individuals who have been disciplined for certain offences against the Law of the Church is often significantly different from that of missionaries. Speaking about another pastor who had been separated

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(31) M. Field, Search for Security, p. 50, p. 52

(32) H. Sawyerr, "Sacrifice", in Dickson-Ellingworth, Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs, p. 70

from his work because of adultery, one experienced Tshwa minister said: "We must remember that this sin is not the end of the man. He must live, and live within the Church!" In other similar cases, missionaries have sometimes expressed surprise at a pastor having been restored into full service only two or three years after his conviction for adultery. I suggest that this urgency, on the part of the Tshwa, is another manifestation of living in a "closed society", where reconciliation is a prerequisite of normal life.

One indispensable condition for such reconciliation, however, is a full confession on the part of the offender. Being proved guilty without confessing the sin is seen as a criterion of a "hardened heart", and no true reconciliation is possible. Separation then becomes the only possible avenue to follow, as in witchcraft cases of old.

In the traditional Tshwa society, confession was used both as an actual "treatment" in cases of misfortune, and as a prophylactic measure, taken to obviate a potential curse caused by a certain sin. [53] In Christian context, confession occurs in both circumstances, but evidence points to a more common use in a prophylactic sense.

The crucial difference between Tshwa Protestant confession and confession in traditional meaning is that, at least in prophylactic terms, a Protestant hardly ever confesses to a fellow man. When a sin has been committed, a Tshwa Christian usually hurries to make his confession in prayer to God. If this can be done in church, as a 'dedication', [54] or at a Holy Communion service, it is regarded as more efficient than a confession done privately. In fact, several informants indicated that confession should always be made at Holy Communion, even if one had already "felt that (they) had been for-

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(53) The process of confession at sickness is described in detail in "Pursuit of Health", pp. 182-185

(54) See p. 135

given". We should note, however, that neither at 'dedication' nor at Holy Communion is it a case of confessing to another human being!

The power of the voice (*ezwi*) is conceived of in very concrete terms by the Tshwa. Thus, the voice of the *n'anga* infuses power and purpose into his medicines. When approached by ghosts, the greatest danger is to answer their questions, as ghosts get power over a person by catching hold of his voice. In confession, the voice is the instrument by which the evil inside the person is concretely poured out of him. The natural corollary is that forgiveness automatically follows a full confession. There is no more evil left inside!

Witchcraft, and possibly incest, are nevertheless transgressions of such magnitude that some informants doubted that confession would help. When revealed by confession at smallpox treatment, they may be forgotten and forgiven, but witchcraft confessions in connection with trials would traditionally lead to death. It is possible, though, that it was the verdict of the *n'anga* or the "*mhonzo*", [55] rather than the actual confession, that led to severe punishment. Mair has found that some African peoples "believe that confession automatically entails absolution" also in witchcraft cases. (56)

As far as I have been able to ascertain, a similar belief in immediate absolution after confession to God through prayer is held by Tsonga Christians. In a few cases it had taken a couple of days before the person in question "felt peace inside", but, in general, immediate forgiveness is counted upon.

One question that remains to be investigated regarding confession in the traditional context is whether an individual confessed the actual truth or made a confession according to established patterns of cultural expectations. It appears

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(55) See "Pursuit of Health", p. 147

(56) Lucy Mair, *Witchcraft*, p. 170

that prophylactic confession, forestalling potential curses, would have no reason to deal with anything but the truth. Confession after conviction, however, as in many witchcraft cases, or when sickness or accident 'reveals' acute guilt may fall into a different category.

Several reports tell of witchcraft confessions, faithfully following established patterns of witchcraft beliefs. We may here deal with similar psychological conditions as those prompting certain persons to "confess" to the police crimes which they have never committed, as they for some reason are ridden with acute guilt feelings. Such culturally expected confessions may, in Tshwa context, be conditioned by the unbearable pressure of societal conviction, and would simultaneously serve as a powerful re-inforcement of the beliefs themselves. Field's observations in Ghana abound with people's self-accusations of witchcraft, even without societal conviction. Such "confessions", it would seem, do not remove the evil from a person but rather confirm and strengthen the feeling of guilt, thus leading to serious mental trouble.

This matter has been insufficiently investigated among Tshwa, and it may be found that there is a potential risk that too close identification of Christian confession with its counterpart in the traditional context would lead to confessions following an expected pattern. At present, this risk seems rather remote as there are few precedents of such Christian patterns, but Sundkler's observation among Zionists in Zululand points to the possibility: "No confession is regarded as complete until sexual transgressions are mentioned by the baptized". (67)

At present, cases of Protestants confessing their sins to a fellow man, minister or lay, are very rare. All informants gave a negative answer to the question: "Do Tshwa Christ-

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(67) B. Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa, p. 211

ians confess their sins to a pastor?".

> "You see', one confided, "if we should go to a pastor and tell him what we do, oh, this would have to be discussed among the church elders (komiti ya madota), and they may cut me off as a church member".

This evidence, and my own experience, make it clear that Tshwa Protestants do not trust their ministers with their secrets. Too often, it seems, sins confessed in complete confidence have been aired by Church leaders in committee sessions and led to disciplinary action. No wonder that Tshwa Christians make their confessions to God only! In one instance, I was told by a young Methodist in a mine compound that he had been to the Catholic 'padre' to confess his sins, because "there is no opportunity for this in our Church".

The tendency among Tshwa Protestants to confess to God only is a sign of the drastically reduced significance of 'social sin' in terms of broken relationships. The relationship that really matters is the one with God, as He is conceived as 'Giver of Life', and this relation can be kept intact without the interference of anyone else, including the Church and its leaders. The Protestant doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers", taken separately, makes any [58]
ecclesiastical organization.

The social difficulty about confession, as I see it, is that the majority of sins which Christians consciously commit, are of a social nature, while the sense of guilt is largely being projected in a religious direction.

Confession, at least in an institutional sense, healed the rift between offender and offended in the traditional society, while the ancestors watched, and often were propitiated, too. On the other hand, the Sky Power (Tilo) was never involved, as there was no relationship between Tilo and men possible to break.

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(58) See Nürnhip, Services and Sacraments", p.160

Most Christians understand both their relationship with God and with the wronged person to be broken by sin, but the only relation that, in general, is restored through the process of confession is the one to God! Thus, the matter is often regarded as finished without any social reconciliation taking place.

As has been demonstrated earlier in this chapter, however, a difference is experienced between in-church social relations and those outside. Restoration of in-church relationships may be seen in more urgent light than others, provided that a reconciliation attempt will not bring any accusations over the offender!

Social or religious salvation.

Evil can never be allowed to have the last word in a human society. The sense of guilt makes man press towards some process of liberation. Thus, sin is unbearable without the possibility of forgiveness, or, in another term: salvation.

Being based on a cyclical world view, Tshwa culture offers a type of salvation that widely differs from the Christian concept. Christianity which is built upon an apocalyptic view of world and life, makes salvation count only partly in the earthly existence, as a preparation for the final salvation, given through 'eternal life'. Against this, we see the Tshwa concept of salvation as dealing entirely with the material world, leading towards the traditional ideal of 'sufficient life'.

Andersson has found that, to the Congolese, "salvation is in fact good health, a long life, prosperous offspring, and abundance of possessions, etc." (59) It would seem that, among the Tshwa these are seen as fruits of salvation rather

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(59) E. Andersson, op. cit. p. 146

than the present itself. When Ishwa state that "our ancestors are our saviours", this indicates a continuous process which might be expressed in terms of "liberation from all powers attacking and decreasing 'life'."

The power and 'usefulness' of Ishwa traditional beliefs are, thus, expressed in terms of magical salvation, or, in other words, an expectation of continuous "deliverance from evil" in this world. The Akan concept of salvation, as "deliverance from calamity", (60) fits well into this picture.

Thus, the 'salvation' elements are ever connected with life after death. Some informants answered the "kingdoms who are coming up in the (divining) bowls are suffering", and give certain evidence that persons who are 'evil' in this life tend to become troublesome also after death, at least in some cases, and no corresponding thought of eternal 'salvation' after death for 'good' people can be found.

As the understanding of 'salvation' and the ways to reach it may have individual variations among modern non-Christian Ishwa, so we must account for individual differences among fellow Christians, as far as the understanding of Christian salvation is concerned. In general, however, my material shows that all Christian Ishwa across denominations project the concept to 'eternal life' only. (61) In other words, 'salvation' is determined by religious criteria.

The concept of religious salvation sought through Christianity and the social salvation expected in Ishwa traditional context, account for possibility of two parallel forces working towards salvation of fellow Christians. The traditional concept of salvation becomes active primarily in situations of crises, where no one knows beforehand. (62) Christianity

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(60) S. G. Williamson, op. cit. p. 109

(61) For explanation of these terms cf. pp. 109-110

(62) See further pp. 205-206

(or, rather, the Church) does not yet assist the Tshwa in accordance with their frame of reference. It is therefore probable that 'social salvation' is sought by many in a syncretistic mixture, while the 'religious salvation' is expected through following "the Law of Christ".

rch) does not yet reflect the Tshwa in accordance with their frame of reference. It is therefore possible that 'social salvation' is sought by many in a syncretistic mixture, while the 'religious salvation' is sought through following "the Law of Christ".

19. DEATH AND LIFE ETERNAL

Among all peoples, death is seen as inevitable, and yet the reality of death is dreaded. Among several peoples of Africa, myths tell of death as an intrusion, not originally intended by the Sky-Power (Tale). Also the Tonga have a mythical explanation of death:

"The old people tell us that death arises from the fatal disagreement between Khuzanyoni and his wife Nwaliwanzi, who were the first people on this earth. They had appeared (ku dawuka) from the reeds in the North, emerging with two animals. Khuzanyoni had a dog, with which he hunted and killed other animals. Nwaliwanzi had a mice cat, which made her happy by killing mice.

One day, the dog died. Khuzanyoni told his wife: My dog has died. Come and help me wake it up again! But Nwaliwanzi refused to help her husband revive his dog. So Khuzanyoni kept quiet and pulled his dog away, throwing it in the forest.

After some time, the cat which had Nwaliwanzi's dog also died. She ran again to her husband: Let us wake up the cat! But Khuzanyoni retorted, saying: What about the other day, when you did not help me to wake up my dog?

Then we two knew that 'life-medicine' (mbulo wa wutabi) died then, they were not able to revive anything on this earth, even until this day. Thus, we all died. (1)

In spite of the realization that death is an inevitable end of all human life, traditional Tonga seek always to uncover ulterior forces behind this dreadful event. Most often viscerally, it spirit-of-revenge, are blamed by the divining bones, thus setting the Tonga in line with most other African peoples. (2) Ancestral spirits are seldom seen

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(1) Translated from Bbuku ya Banga .

(2) Cf. J. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy , p.15

as causes of death. It is obviously in their own interest that their benevolent ancestors continue to live. Sickness-bringing foreign spirits (_ndiki_) would not, in general, be blamed for death, either.

Among Tabwa Christians, the general understanding is that "God has measured our days", and nothing can change this original decision. Whether a person dies young because of an accident, or in his old age, it will all refer back to the fact that "God had made the number of our days different". This does not preclude the possibility of witchcraft to enter into the process. "If we say witches can cause damage, but they cannot take away the soul of the person", said one informant, while another allowed that "even if they can kill - and I believe they can, as there are so many clever people - this cannot be done, unless the days of that person have come to an end, according to God's decision".

The strict measurement of our days is also referred to in the case of prayers for sick people. "People can die in spite of prayers for them if their time has come. We may pray and do everything for a sick, but he still dies".

The nature of death

Death (_kufa_, or _kifo_) is a curse to the Tabwa. Although a continued existence for the spirit-of-the-dead is taken for granted, death itself puts an inevitable end to real life (_watoni_). The common euphemism for death, "_I kumalile_" (= "he has passed") certainly leaves the door open for continued activity, but, as Wahli puts it, "there is nothing to hope for" in death.[3] Other expressions show more clearly that death is the end: "He has disappeared" (_In'wiele_) is often heard in this connection. "_I bibile_" (= lit. "he is evil") is the term which most clearly indicates the great dread with which Tabwa regard death.

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(3) J. Wahli, _op. cit._ p. 165

Not only does death break the kinsman away from his living relatives. It also brings a potential curse on everybody who is related to the dead person. Everyone concerned enters into a liminal state, in which several precautions are necessary, lest death may claim another victim within the group.

Traditionally, the whole kin-group, including those who were married to kin-members, gathered at the stricken village as soon as the drums had announced the death of a kinsman. All ordinary activities were suspended. Particular prohibitions were made against any hard work, as agriculture, or building, while "fetching water and firewood" was allowed as being necessary. All sexual activities were likewise prohibited. All men stayed around their fire, and the women around theirs. No connection between the sexes was allowed until "the weeping had been scattered" (ku lungalasa xirilo).

As these people were now "black" (vantima) because of death, they could not take part in any sacrifices of any kind, outside of the activities in the death village. They were not "cool", "pure" (a ya hesanri), and, consequently, "they just eat".

The principal meaning was that one element making people "black". But, above all, it was the "death contamination" (tinzhaka) that worked this immediate change upon everyone related to the dead person. However a relative may be, the death of a kinsman contuminated him and exposed him to special danger, as he then became particularly prone to accident or ill-health.

The death contamination extended also to the whole village where the deceased had lived, and to all his belongings. Naturally, it emerged from the dead person himself thus making it particularly dangerous to touch the corpse.

The burial

Elements from various informants have been combined to give the following picture:

When a man had died, people gathered outside his house, but nobody ventured in. This was taboo. A few men (madota) were chosen from his close kin, to go in and prepare the corpse for burial. This they did by folding the limbs of the deceased, to make him approximate a foetus-position. However, the corpse must not be tied in this position, as it was believed that the spirit-of-the-dead (nguluve) would be angry if he were tied and could not move freely in the spirit world.

No one else but these men - who were now called "hyenas" (timbisi) - was allowed to have anything to do with the burial itself. Then, they went outside the village to find a suitable spot for the grave, which was dug in such a way that a hollowed cave (muti = "village") was left in one side of its walls. As they removed the corpse from the house, all other people in the village were inside the other houses, with doors closed, as it was taboo to see the corpse.

The corpse was placed lying down in its foetus-position in the cave (muti) and was covered with a grass-mat. Several of the deceased's belongings were placed in the grave, although most usable items were kept on the grave-side, later to be returned to the village.

A few informants mention the killing of a hen in, or at the side of the grave, as an offering to "the other dead of the kin, asking them to receive well the deceased". Few details of this rite are known.

Those kinsmen who had now arrived at the grave, threw some soil into the grave, which was then completely filled by the "hyenas". They took care to remove all impurities in the soil, as roots or stones. Finally, they scratched the covering soil unevenly (ku seletela) to make it impossible to discover except by themselves.

On leaving the grave, one of the "hyenas" took two branches, one alive and one dry. Without looking back, he threw the dead branch back towards the grave, with the words, "Stay with your death" (Sala ni kufa ka wena!). Then he threw the live branch in the direction of the village, saying, "Go with our life" (Tamba ni kuhanya ka hina"!.

During the funeral, the women had been busy sweeping the whole village, "to remove the footprints of the dead". A n'anga had prepared water with medicines, for the first purification, particularly of the "hyenas" but also of everyone who had thrown soil on the grave. They had to be purified in four different ways:

1. They washed hands, arms and feet in medicated water (mati ni matluka).

2. An egg was smashed, and the contents mixed with other medicines, immediately used for a second "wash";

3. Excrement of hens were put on a fire, and all those to be purified inhaled the smoke;

4. The hen giving the eggs used for purification was killed and its liver crushed together with some leaves. This mixture was used for another ceremonial washing.

Another variant is that a pine-apple was crushed and used in one washing "to remove the message of the soil' ku susa mahungu ya misava). [4] One informant also stressed that a hen was only killed when a man had died. In the case of a female deceased, a cock must be killed. [5] Snuff, poured out on a stone, was used by the "hymen", for nasal inhalation.

Even if some local variations in burial rites can be found, the essential actions were the same. The necessity to "scratch" the grave, to make it impossible for witches to discover it, seems to be universal. Likewise, the prohibition against burying "sharp things" in the grave. One informant gave the following incident:

> "An old man had said before he died, 'You must bury me in a sitting position. I also want to hold this table knife in this hand'. Now, the chief said that, 'In my country I do not want to hear of anyone buried sitting, or holding a knife'.
>
> They (the relatives of the deceased) tried to force the matter, until the chief let them bury him sitting, but, he said, 'He must not have a knife in his hand'."

The first purification rites had primarily to do with the impurities emanating from contact with the corpse and the grave. The actual death contamination (timfumba) still adhered to all kinsmen and had to be removed a few days later, in connection with the cleansing of the whole village and all the belongings of the deceased.

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(4) This will be generally considered as belonging to the dead.

( ) Cf. the "extinguishing" of blood in sacrifice, p. 125

Removing the death contamination

About five days after the death - one month when a chief had died - the n'anga returned to the village to lead the rite of purification and "to scatter the weeping" (ku [illegible]). This rite was also called ku-ola-khuma (= spreading out the ...), as the different fires around which the men and the women had gathered during the days of weeping, were now extinguished. All ashes from them were spread over the village, and new fires could not be lit until the cleansing was done.

The n'anga prepared a big pot of water and medicine (leaves). With a branch dipped into this mixture, he sprinkled the whole village [illegible] - lit. "he sowed water of leaves", and all the belongings of the dead, particularly [illegible], hoes and axes. This special attention to belongings made of iron seems to be connected with the danger of burying anything of this nature in the grave: as they were potentially extremely dangerous if left for the use of the dead, they also might cause trouble for the living, if they were not properly purified.

When the village and belongings had thus been purified, all people in the village were likewise sprinkled with medicated water, "left to right and back".

Meanwhile, another pot was cooking. The n'anga here prepared a "porridge" (mawe) of millet or maize, mixing in certain medicines. This was the mu-lomo for unknown etymological derivation, except for the stem "-fa", meaning "death". This porridge was to be shared by everyone contaminated by the death. "In a similar way as communion is eaten", also the n'anga subsequently smeared the rest of the mufu-lumbo around a certain tree in the village. Any kinsman who had not been part in this ceremonial cleansing, was obliged to circle around this tree on arrival in the village, before he would be welcomed to sit down. It was believed that such a ceremony would cleanse him from contamination.

The last rite connected with the purifying medicine was the "pouring out of the pot" of medicine (ku hlatata nsolo). This was done in the same way as at the "Great Sacrifice",(6) and kinsmen not taking part might be sent certain pieces of clothing, which individuals had worn while "pouring".

Besides the purification by medicine, certain symbolic acts were necessary. These were combined in the term ku cinga nchaka ("to shave off the contamination"):

As dangerous as sexual relations were during the period of "weeping", as necessary were they in the rites of purification. However, certain persons only had to perform this act. Furthermore, it had to be done in a ritual way, as coitus interruptus.

When a child had died, the parents were asked by the n'anga to have intercourse, and the following morning they shaved the hair of all mourners, including each other.

In the case of a man leaving a widow, she had to be "washed" (ku hlantela) by a man from her husband's kin-group. This is obviously part of the custom of levirate, but I am told by informants that the man "washing" the widow is not necessarily her new husband. "Any relative of the deceased husband may be designated by the n'anga to perform this act".

The morning after this ritual act, the man and woman are given certain medicines by the n'anga, and then proceed to give water for "washing" to everyone in the village. All hair of the mourners is subsequently shaved off.

The sexual cleansing of a man having been left at his wife's death, has to be performed by a woman from her own kin. Often this is the deceased wife's hlazana (brother's daughter), who is said to do it as a duty. She may then stay in the village as the new wife - and mother of her aunt's children.(7)

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(6) See "Worship, Sacrifice and Sacraments", pp. 120-121

(7) Note that the word hlazana, from the verb ku hlaza = "to wash" is closely connected with "washing off the the contamination".

In case of a woman's kin not sending a girl to "wash the contamination" of her husband, all relation between the man and his affinal kin was broken off. Not even the woman's children were then allowed to have contact with her kin-group.

A Christian funeral

I have personally not taken part in many Ibanwe burials, but the following is an account of my observations of a Christian funeral in Ibanwe country:

"As we arrived, people were standing or sitting everywhere in the stricken village, and ordinary greetings with spontaneousness took considerable time. People seemed rather relaxed, and the conversation turned around most different subjects.

One of the houses in the village was surrounded by persons who, one by one, greeted the husband of the deceased and expressed their grief by the words "ha ri chavila" [we have feared it" - the traditional greeting of mourning], and some gave a few words of comfort from the Bible. The widower responded, thanking the persons for the words and the love expressed by coming to the funeral. He was visibly moved, but I could see little weeping in the village.

In the hut of mourning, where the coffin was open until shortly before the funeral procession, Methodist women, some in their "uniform", were standing silently, not informally. Outside of the door, one sister of the deceased, and one [illegible] were sitting, responding in a silent way to greetings and consolation.

The minister entered the hut, together with as many as could get in, a hymn was sung and prayer said. Then the coffin was carried out by some men, and, led by the minister, all present followed in procession from the village to the special Christian burial place about 300 yards away.

A few sang "I am a visitor on the earth" during the procession, but most people followed silently.

At the graveside - the grave was a rectangular pit, without the "cave" on the side - the coffin was set down, and the burial ritual according to the Methodist tradition was performed by the minister, whereupon the coffin was lowered into the grave.

When the minister had taken a handful of soil and scattered it over the coffin, all present followed his example. Some of the women did this wailing quietly, and the sister of the deceased unwrapped a parcel which she had carried under her arm. The contents were found to be large bundles of women's clothes, obviously dresses and other clothing of the deceased, which the sister placed on the grave. She then went around the grave several times, pouring [illegible] water on the coffin, while another woman poured to [illegible] water from a bottle.

None of these activities brought any visible reaction from anyone. Only when the women began wailing loudly, she was quietly restrained by the minister.

Before the grave was completely filled, most people had returned to the village. Just at the entrance some large basins filled with water had been placed, and everyone, before entering, washed his hands. A few washed their arms, and I noticed the man pouring some water also over his feet.

At a table in the village, the visiting minister sat collecting money from everyone present, making a careful list of all contributions. This was later to be handed to the widower "to comfort him" (ka oravelela). Meanwhile, soups were being prepared on tables, and soon tea was served to all who had taken part in the funeral. A final prayer was offered by the officiating minister before people began leaving the village.

There are obviously many other elements in such a funeral, which cannot be grasped only by observation. Before and after the actual funeral, several different acts were performed, serving to unite the deceased's kin-group. What struck me most, however, was the purely solemn dignity of the whole ceremony, in spite of the simple setting, and, undoubtedly, the almost complete absence of visitors. It would appear that non-Christians keep totally aloof entirely from the Christians, with the possible exception of the non-Methodist pastor of the deceased, performing certain peculiar acts at the grave.

Christians and death

It would seem that the sphere of death and all pertaining rituals have been claimed more decisively through Christian influence than baptism has in the Tshwa traditional culture.

Here, it can be said without hesitation that Christianity does not only mean new attitudes among Christians but a process of cultural change within the wider Tshwa community.

a. Death contamination

Attitudes vary with individuals, but, on the whole, it seems well demonstrated that Tshwa Christians do not worry much about death contamination (tinzhaka). The observable fact is the institutionalized non-fear of such contamination, upheld by manifest behaviour at burials, but several informants give the positive affirmation that "tinzhaka do not adhere to believers". It would seem, though, that this freedom from contamination is - at least in the thinking of many - limited to those of 'strong faith'. "If you are afraid that you may get sick because of contamination, surely you will get sick! But then you are weak in your faith!" This statement may imply that there is, in fact, an evil power in death contamination, but that 'strong faith' surrounds the Christian like a sheltering shield - similar to the 'magic fence' around the village protecting it from witchcraft attacks. On the other hand, it may simply stress the power of fear as a sickness-causing agent.

However this may be, the ordinary Christian attitude towards death contamination removes to a large extent the fear of the corpse, as well as the risk of taking part in funerals. Thus, participation in the traditional sense is no longer felt by believers, and funerals are not limited to the kin-group and local neighbourhood as they have felt constrained to take part. They have rather acquired an obligatory character for all Christians in the neighbourhood, irrespective of Church belongings.

b. Christian and traditional purification

The rite of purification after burial is obligatory among these Christians, as in other parts of Africa. This is the

ceremony of the washing of hands immediately after the return from the grave. (8) Several ministers questioned on this point, claim that this washing "is done only to wash away the dirt of the soil" (as everyone has thrown some soil into the grave), but the immediacy and the structural performance of this ceremony suggest that it is, in fact a Christian adaptation of an ancient ritual. The remarkable fact that such washing of hands is prohibited within the 'Bhengu Church' among the Xhosa in East London, "since this was traditionally done in order to drive away misfortune", further supports this assumption. (9)

The ritual cleansing of all items belonging to the deceased has also, I am told, lost its importance among Christians. "I can take a book belonging to the dead and read it, and nothing will happen to me", said one informant. The act of putting the clothing of the deceased into the grave suggests, however, that the old fear of sickness caused by inherited and not properly purified things (*xiveveze*) may still be real to many persons. "If an ancient text that you are using something inherited from a dead person and feel in your heart that this may be dangerous, then you will certainly be sick!" It must be admitted that the whole area of *xiveveze* in modern context has not yet been adequately investigated.

In the case of the customary purification through eating the *ifa-lezi* partridge, or alternatively, by circling around the tree where this partridge had been roasted, information shows that Christians tend to omit this part. Several mentioned that relatives have attempted to force them to perform this rite before entering their village. Nevertheless, the same informants claimed that they had been able to enter and to

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(8) Cf. A.A. Pauw *Religion in a Tswana chiefdom*, p. 158
A.A. Dubb, *The role of the Church in an urban African society*, II, p. 184

(9) A.A. Dubb, *ibid*.

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levirate would be out of the question as
woman is concerned, as this might poten-
polygynous union, it would not be sur-
to find that the insistence on this sexual purifica-
her own kin-group, as this might be keen on
re-marriage, bringing new ngawolo (bride-wealth)
the severe sanctions placed upon rela-
with 'tainted' women, it would be a rare exception
if she could be married without proper purification.

From a Church point of view, this custom of purification
is another example of the ambivalent notion, particularly in
where sexual relations have led to pregnancy.
The Church, naturally, places such cases in the adultery cate-
gory rather than to give them any special "purification status".

The Bereaved state and the Christian

It is customary for Christians who have been bereaved to
stay quietly in their villages until "the scattering of the
weeping" (ya kongolowo kiring), but they are in no way barred

from taking part in Church services. During the short time between death and burial, some Christian neighbours stay in the village for prayer and practical assistance in preparing the corpse and the grave. Also a few days after the burial, it is usual that the pastor and a group of Church members visit the bereaved fellow-Christians for prayer and comforting conversation. Very often, a special gift collected for the occasion is handed over at that time.

On the day of the funeral, it is customary "to set a date for the end of our special prayers". This corresponds to the traditional 'scattering the weeping' (ku hangalasa xiril), but has kept only one of the symbolism of the original act. "We sing special songs, and the prayers speak of the need of the bereaved", explained one informant, but, beyond this, the occasion warrants no specific ritual. In this poverty of symbolic action, I cannot escape the notion that certain missionary attitudes have stifled the imagination of Christian people, leaving them with what may be described as 'perfectly safe features'.

Beyond those special prayers, there are, with one exception, no manifestations of any recognition of a 'marginal state' in connection with death. I have not noticed any trace of the traditional belief that "persons black by death contamination are especially prone to sickness or accidents". One such, however, is the black clothes of mourning (zilenda), which are said to be Swedish customs. And evidently have been adopted from the bereaved Swedish pastors. One informant gave the following information:

> "When my mother had died, father bought a black shirt, which he wore. And my sister dressed a black dress which she wore. But my brother and myself did not buy anything special at that time.
>
> There are times when they also use something on their heads. This is in relation to the will of the individual, because this does not carry any special significance. But when a person has a dress sewn for her, she may use a piece of the black cloth to tie around her head".

Such black clothes seem to be more common in towns than in the countryside, obviously dependent upon the influence from the Portuguese. As the custom of ceremonial shaving of the hair has been renounced by Christians, and, likewise the traditional custom of tying a strip of palm-leaf around the head (k[illegible] *zilinda*) until the time of "scattering the weeping", such *zilinda* have an obvious function of marking the liminal state. Nevertheless, they do not need to carry any deeper significance than similar customs of mourning dress in several European countries.

Within the Tshwa Protestant community, there does not seem to exist any specific rules regarding zilenda, although I have heard some voices raised against this custom. According to informants, the *zilenda* are removed at the time of "final prayers", but some indicate that this occasion may be delayed until a memorial service 40 days after the death, or even later.

Christian influence on non-Christian attitudes

One final important difference between traditional customs regarding death and burial, and Christian ones, is the widening of the concern outside the kinship limits. As has been pointed out in relation to the Christian understanding of *ubulenzeli* ("fellowship", "sense of belonging"), (10) one decisive distinction of Christian *wunlungeli* is that the Church group always takes a great responsibility for the burial of a member. The kin-group is, of course, not relieved from its obligations, but, in many modern instances where individuals live far away from their kinsmen, this aspect of Christian *wunlungeli* seems to play an outstanding role for the sense of security.

It could be expected that relations between Christians and non-Christians in the sphere of death and burial might

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(10) See this concept developed on pp. 87-97

become rather tense, as strong emotions are stirred up, and customs and manifest values clash. To give an adequate picture of these relationships, thorough investigation among non-Christians would be necessary. My present material indicates, however, that non-Christians are now becoming so used to usages foreign to their own culture that they seem to bear with equanimity any violation of their traditional rules in this realm.

Thus, it is found, that traditional Tshwa - in spite of their own continued emphasis on the necessity of purification rites - accept Christian kinsmen into their fellowship, although they know that the Christians, from their viewpoint, are still contaminated by death. This fact may speak of tolerance, but I would further suggest that these tribesmen probably regard certain Christian rites as having a similar effect on Christians as their own purification ceremonies. Holy Communion may be a pertinent case.

In one instance, we find that non-Christian Tshwa see a positive value also for themselves in Christian burial rites:

"One day, our Chief (Cabe) came, and we sat together, talking. He said, 'As you know, in this region nobody used to walk around at night. There is a river, Nyachanga, where we go for water. But here nobody would go very early in the morning to the river. Why? Our country had so many scaring things [evil spirits] that people were frightened to go in the darkness, for ghosts might attack them. Even you might have stopped soon to go early to the river..

But, since you believers began coming to this country, praying every time there is a death, all these scaring things have run away. Therefore, we do not want to bury a person according to old customs, even if he is no believer. You have to help us to offer prayers, so that our own dead not come back to frighten us".

While we have found that Christianity has not yet penetrated the whole field of life crises rites, leaving the Tshwa in an ambiguous state as far as sickness and accidents are concerned, (11) death is obviously one area where Christian

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(11) See "Pursuit of Health", pp. 203-207

faith makes a significant difference. Wilson made a similar observation among the Nyakyusa, and Andersson gives this example from the Congo:

> A new Christian in the region of Ipini was at the point of death. His wife and his sister-in-law began to weep. He said to them: 'Why are you weeping? You ought only to be praying'." (12)

I suggest that the public nature of a burial has in some measure forced Christian Tshwa to manifest their faith at this occasion much more visibly than in the semi-private atmosphere of sickness. The main reason for the significant changes of attitude as regards death is nevertheless to be found in the great Christian emphasis on 'eternal life', being the hope for the Christian even beyond death.

Ancestral Spirits and Christian Faith

'Life after death' according to traditional Tshwa understanding is a dull copy of ordinary life. While death cuts off visible communion with the departed kinsman, it is not seen as putting the deceased out-of-reach. In a real sense, death is "the final promotion on the social ladder of prestige". (13) It has been amply demonstrated that the spirits of dead kinsmen (tinguluve) are seen as a continuing influence upon their living descendants, and I find that Christian Tshwa continue experiencing this influence to an important extent. The rapid spread of tinsiku, the special type of memorial services, (14) is adequate proof of this fact.

The Protestant Churches among the Tshwa have, together with most other Christian missions in Africa, declared the tinguluve completely out-of-bounds. They have even been said

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(12) G. Andersson, Churches at the grass-roots, p.120
M.E. H. Wilson, Communal rituals of the Nyakyusa pp. 177-179

(13) See further pp. 13-14

(14) Memorial services are described on pp. 142-143

to "belong to Satan", when the rationalistic approach has not prompted missionaries - and their loyal followers - to declare that "the tinguluve do not exist at all". Against such a background, it is important to ponder the significance of the statement from my best educated informant: "The spirit of remembering the tinguluve will take a long time to disappear in the life of us black men". This was not at all said in a vein of rebellion, but as a simple statement of fact.

It would seem that the tinguluve have suffered the same fate among Tshwa Christians as beliefs in witchcraft and spirits-of-revenge. Being declared non-entities in the Christian context, they have stayed outside of a positive Christian influence, but remaining an integral part of people's frame of reference. Thus, Christians have officially left behind all beliefs in their ancestors, while the same have continued playing an important role in their subconscious.

Several informants gave examples of how these beliefs come to the surface at critical turns of life. (15) Only one report will be quoted at this juncture, given by a lay-leader concerning his days as a young Christian:

> "I was becoming desperate, because my wife and I were getting no children. I prayed to God, asking Him again and again, 'Why can I not have a child?' Then, I got a boy, but he died very soon.
>
> I was very disheartened, until I thought I had better talk to my father (baba) and ask him. So I said, 'As you have left this world and become a nguluve, who is going to continue your name? I was born by you, but I have no offspring. As you are together with God bringing us sun children (marumbu), who will continue your name?'
>
> Now this is what amazed me that later on I got a child, and now I have five children!"

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(15) See pp. 117 and 142

This man would probably have been appalled at the thought of worshipping his dead father. But he found it quite natural to talk to him. Whether this conversation should be termed 'prayer' or not is beside the point. What matters most in this connection is the obvious naturalness with which the man continued his contact with his father "beyond the grave".

It is, indeed, remarkable that Christianity has survived among Africans in spite of the rampant violation of kinship laws committed through its rejection of the ancestral spirits (tinguluve). I know that it has been suggested by some white Church leaders in Tshwa country that Christians "should not even think of their deceased relatives". It would seem that such teaching contributes to leaving Tshwa Christians in a cultural vacuum, or in a state of completely divided loyalty, as their dead ones are part and parcel of their own lives.

From a Christian viewpoint, it seems imperative for the Church to come to terms with the tinguluve, taking Tshwa beliefs in them seriously and providing for safe ways and means to remember the dead ancestors without offending the tenets of the Christian faith.

It has even been suggested, outside of Tshwa context, that the role of the ancestral spirits may be a crucial one in opening the gate to new dimensions of Christian faith among Africans. "Is it not time for the Church to learn to give the Communion of Saints the centrality which the soul of Africa craves?" exclaims Taylor, (16) and Parrinder puts a similar observation in the following words:

> "In African life, the dead are of great importance. It is significant that some of the sects have one of their chief times of fasting and seclusion at All Saints. Roman Catholics have masses for the dead. Protestants have memorial services, though too much repetition of these is officially discouraged as tending to excessive expense and display...." (17)

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(16) J. Taylor, The Primal Vision, p. 166

(17) G. Parrinder, Religion in an African city, p. 146

In going deeper into the theological issues involved in this matter, Sundkler quotes a part of the Apostles' Creed, "He (Jesus) descended into Sheol ('Hell')" as a key to an understanding of the life of the deceased ancestors". (18) Without developing this theme in any detail, it is significant to note that this very part of the Apostles' Creed has been cut out of the "Methodist version", which is being used among the Tshwa. (19)

What are 'Tinyaluve' in store?

However important the tinyaluve's role may be, their actual existence does not seem to hold out any promise "beyond the grave". Death does not lose its dread to any degree through the knowledge that the deceased are "promoted" to spiritual elders. Mbiti suggests that this has to do with the absence of belief in the rising "to higher spiritual or ethical heights" after death. "One is simply gathered to one's forefathers, and that is about all. There is no spiritual stature to be acquired; heaven remain thieves, kind people continue to be kind, etc. indefinitely". (20)

The Tshwa tell that the tinyaluve have their abode in the earth. Even if this signifies that they 'own the soil' and have power over its use, they are believed to carry on a rather miserable existence. Like other African departed, they 'acquire more 'power', which is not, however, a reward, but something that comes to them like old age coming upon everyone". (21) Their normal activity in their dark abode is sleep. The performer of a sacrifice usually finishes his prayer to the tinyaluve with the words "Ntsalani Khwotsi!

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(18) G. Sundkler, The Christian Ministry in Africa, p.112

(19) Tindzu ta Ivangeli, p. 262

(20) J. Mbiti, "Eschatology" in Dickson-Ellingworth Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs, pp.165-166

(21) J. Mbiti, op. cit, p. 165;

Humulani, mu nga hi vukeli!" ("Sleep well! Rest, and do not wake up to harm us!").(22)

Another discomforting feature of the timilive's existence is that they are completely dependent upon their living descendants for their continuance.

For the person who dies childless there is also the probability of being forgotten after some time, and thus losing one's personal spirit-existence. "Death becomes, then, a gradual process which is not completed until some years after the actual physical death".(23) Turner refers to this as "social death", which one of my informants termed "the second death, which no Christians do not need to experience". In the case of the Ihembu, this "social death" is dramatically symbolized, when a childless person has died:

> "When an important man dies, a black line is drawn with charcoal from his navel downwards and over his genitals, indicating that his name, and with it certain vital elements of his personality, must never be inherited by the children of his kin". (24)

No similar symbolic action is known from the Tshwa, but the dread of dying childless is as real. It thus becomes clear that the existence of the timilive is rather precarious, having no guarantee of a continuance after death which may seem worth while.

'Eternal life' - the religious summum bonum

This is the background against which the Christian element of 'eternal life' should be seen. In spite of being foreign to the Tshwa culture, it has become the religious summum bonum for Tshwa Christians. "Jesus said, I am going to prepare a

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(22) Cf. p. 49-50

(23) J. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p. 159

(24) V. Turner, Drums of Affliction, p. 28

room for you. If I keep close to Christ, I will have a better life in eternity", was a Tshwa woman's spontaneous response to my question: "What is the best in Christianity?". I am confident that the majority of Tshwa Christians would [illegible] in this affirmation.

Thus, the Christian belief in the reality behind the statement of Jesus that "he who believes in me shall live even if he dies", [illegible] has struck an extraordinarily responsive chord in the Tshwa. It was found, I presume, that no realistic solution to the problem of death was offered within their traditional boundaries. Consequently, this biblical promise, coupled with teaching about heaven as the abode of light and perfect peace and security, became an exceedingly new vision. Continuance in timuluve was seen as a dreary existence at best, sharply contrasted against the bright promise of wutomi ('life') without end, and without the conditions traditionally stipulated for a reverential satisfaction beyond the grave. [illegible]

> "When we believers leave this world, we go to stay in fellowship with the Father. We do not need to be reminded by sacrifices, because all troubles are finished now; the one who has come to the Father can neither trouble nor help those who are left on earth.
>
> The ancestors keep on bringing trouble, because they are still wandering like on earth. And they do not want to suffer alone".

In traditional terms it would seem that the 'medicine of life' (mbhalo wa watomi) which was lost through the disagreement between the first two ancestors, Khuzahyani and Nwidzivanhi, [illegible] has been reinterpreted in the Christian context. This is the point, says Mbiti, where "African religions

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([illegible]) St. John [illegible];

(16) John 11:

([illegible]) [illegible]

and philosophy must admit a defeat", and continues:

> "These traditional religions cannot but remain tribal and nationalistic, since they do not offer for mankind at large, a way of 'escape', a message of 'redemption' (however that may be conceived)". (78)

On the other hand, the objection may be raised that Christianity has directed the thoughts of the believers so vividly towards 'eternal life' that large spheres of life on earth have been left untouched. There is evidence that 'saving the souls for Heaven' was the only pronounced purpose of some pioneer missionaries among the Tshwa. One even gets the impression that some pioneers deemed it hopeless to render any real change to the life of these 'raw heathen", except preparing the way to Heaven. This one-sided purpose was not shared by all, however, and it is possible that many more practical considerations came into the foreground than were ever reported 'home' in articles and letters. (81)

The way the 'eternal life' is understood as "continuing to worship God (so) to keep the law of Christ". The 'legalism' involved in this attitude has been discussed in a former chapter. (82) But at this juncture it is interesting to notice how such 'legalism' may even, in Tshwa thinking, open the gate to 'eternal life' for those outside the Christian sphere. Some informants insisted that tingaluve may have entered Heaven. The door seems reserved to God.

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(78) J. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p. 99

(80) Cf. Christian towards witchcraft/spirits-of-revenge, pp. 196-197

(81) Cf. e.g. Hughes, W. Barry Acres, a Pioneer Missionary, pp. 167, 169

(82) See "Christianity was introduced", pp. 64-68

(83) "God, Man and Salvation", pp. 222-223

Heaven and the tinguluve

With the strong filial bonds engendered by Tshwa traditional culture as a given, it is not surprising to find that Tshwa Christians devote considerable thinking to the fate of their own ancestors. Naturally, such thoughts employ a considerable mixture of traditional concepts and Christian doctrines. One important feature is the insignificant part played by any doctrine of 'hell' and its eternal punishment. Obviously, the very suggestion that all tinguluve - according to some Christian teaching - would suffer in hell, stirs up the defense mechanisms in Tshwa thinking. Therefore, it has been imperative for them somehow to carry their ancestors over into the new context.

In order to solve this problem, some informants leave the tinguluve completely outside of the Christian sphere. They are not to be thought of in Christian terms, and consequently they do neither belong in heaven nor in hell. As one expressed it:

> "The tinguluve have been tested, and it was found that they were not accustomed to God, neither to Satan. They are in between. Tinguluve are people of this earth. Therefore they must stay right here. They have not received the inheritance of Heaven, because they did not work for God. But neither did they work for Satan, and cannot go to the hell .

However, a large number of informants make a clear distinction between 'good tinguluve' and 'bad ones'. This distinction is not primarily based upon the ethical character of these persons during their earthly lives, even if there is some evidence that a morally 'evil' person is believed to become an 'evil' spirit after death.(35) 'Evil' tinguluve are those who keep troubling their living descendants of their existence by 'showing up in the divining bones as a frequent cause of misfortune'. Such tinguluve demonstrate openly,

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(35) Cf. "Traditional Tshwa beliefs", p. 38

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Heaven". When somebody dies with

(to vomit), this is taken as a clear in-

ull of sin and hatred and will surely be

the living home. He is believed

person is now alone as a spirit. "Such a

back from heaven and will keep on

living relatives of living people". On the other hand, if

a good person has died (eyes will closed), "he has entered

heaven".

It should be mentioned here that belief in, but it

seems entirely from different parts of the Tonga area. It

would need further study as we are here dealing with a traditional

belief in persons based upon the understanding that the

tingaluve functioned as mediators between living men and the

Supreme (Tilo). This belief would obviously presuppose the

right and possibility of at least certain tingaluve to have

free access to the abode of Tilo.

Fear of hell is a weak factor

I find Mr. Loraine's conclusion that [illegible] as rule, in general, cannot [illegible] ancestral beliefs. It is understandable to them that [illegible] - according to the common Christian [illegible] fire' [34] - should be used as a [illegible] ly 'good' lives, according to their understanding, [illegible] very act performed with any Christian message. In this point, they are in close agreement with the later Christian missionary, as Paul said to the Athenians: 'God [illegible] of ignorance, but now commands [illegible] mankind ..... to repent'. [35]

The concept of hell is, as here, an [illegible] Christian beliefs. Furthermore, it was established itself in terms considerably different from regular Christian [illegible] ings.

Hell is in Greek, as noted in the [illegible] according to Greek belief. It is clearly distinct from the place where the blessed were to live in eternity together with God the Father. But it is not far away, although passage from one to the other is impossible.

The Tahwa were not even prepared by the three-layer world view which [illegible] have accepted into their Christian faith as an inheritance from Babylonian and Greek mythology, and which made them place hell below the ground. As hell is an entirely new concept to the Tahwa, no traditional name could be used to describe 'place of punishment'. The originally Greek word Hades was therefore adopted in the Tahwa language in the form [illegible].

In this situation, Tahwa Christians have freely adopted their thinking about [illegible] according to the New Testament

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(34) Cfr. e.g. Matthew 10:

(35) Acts 17:30 (NEB)

texts that deal with the subject, for instance Matthew 25:31-46 and Luke 16:19-31. In the latter passage, the suffering Dives is able to look across the gulf between heaven and hell. Thus, the two places cannot be too far apart! In the Matthew passage, the 'evil people' are told "to go to the left", and several informants were as literal in their answers: "Hell is the left part of heaven. God's heaven and Satan's hell are like two towns. But you cannot go from one to the other".

Even if informants confirm the orthodox Christian belief that "evil people who do not obey the law of God go to hell after death", the doctrine definitely plays a subordinate role. The choice at death is rather between "going to heaven for the eternal life" and staying on earth as a troublesome ancestral spirit. Hell seems definitely to be reserved for those who have "served Satan during their lives", i.e. criminals (*ngevenga*) and witches. "They belong to Satan and will go to his place".

Eschatology in a cyclical context

In spite of the extraordinary emphasis on 'eternal life' among Tshwa Christians, this religious hope for the future does not seem to be linked at all with any eschatological theology. As a matter of fact, no thought of "an end to the present world order" was ever mentioned by any informant. I am certain that a considerable amount of eschatological teaching has been given through missionary preaching over the years, but I found little evidence of such teaching having left any significant trace.

This conspicuous absence is no doubt due to the fact that an eschatological end is almost inconceivable for minds steeped in a cyclical worldview. For traditional Tshwa, time literally goes round in circles: circles of seasons and circles of human lives, always starting afresh, and ever coming back to the same points along the circumference. Thus, time con-

not have an end, only a new beginning.

We are reminded again of Mbiti's statement concerning African conception of time:

> "Time is a two-dimensional phenomenon, with a long past, a present and virtually no future... Actual time is therefore what is present and what is past. It moves 'backward' rather than 'forward'; and people set their minds not on future things, but chiefly on what has taken place". (36)

Such a statement seems to contradict the great Tshwa Christian hope for 'eternal life', for this from an orthodox Christian point of view is usually thought of as something in the future. But it seems feasible to assume that such an 'eternal life' is rather conceived of by Tshwa in relation to the presently living generation, and would thus "take place" in the past and the present! In other words, as soon as a Christian would die, and, according to his belief, enter the 'eternal life', he would belong to the past as far as his still living contemporaries are concerned. 'Eternal life', thus, is an on-going concern, parallell with ordinary life, and not something that will begin somewhere in the distant future.

This statement best accords with Mbiti's development of the African concept of time. (37) And again, it reminds us that an eschatological end of time is extremely difficult to concretize from a cyclical scale. Eschatology for Tshwa Christians, then, seems to have only personal implications, as one after the other will leave the earthly scene and transfer to 'eternal life' which is held before him as the unerring hope for every faithful believer.

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(36) J. Mbiti, African religions and philosophy, p. 17

(37) Ibid. p. 17 ff

11. TOWARDS SOME CONCLUSIONS: ADDITION OR DISPLACEMENT ?

"In view of such an account of the cultural differences, it is clear that Christianity is misplaced in Africa", [1] exclaims Ram Desai, a writer with a certain claim to scientific treatment of his subject. His examples of cultural differences vary somewhat from the ones found in this dissertation, but it is conceivable that some of my material might have called forth the same conclusion.

This, however, is not the point at which I come out in this study. Cultural and religious differences between Christianity and 'Western culture' on the one hand, and Tshwa beliefs and customs on the other, have been demonstrated in this dissertation. Some of these have led to a continuous conflict, either openly between the official stand of the Church and any representative of Tshwa traditional life, or in the form of hidden conflicts of conscience in the individual Christian. Other demonstrated differences coexist along with each other, and in a few instances Christian elements seem genuinely to have replaced the traditional.

In spite of a present standstill in numerical expansion, or even a certain decrease, [2] the Protestant Church is now an integral part of Tshwa society. It cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be dismissed as something "misplaced". The relevant question is rather: "Does the Protestant Church meet a truly felt

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(1) R.Desai, "Christianity in danger", in R.Desai (ed), Christianity in Africa as seen by Africans, p.19

(2) In 1960, the Methodist Episcopal Church had a reported constituency of 35,001, while in 1967 it was 31,303 (Relatório Oficial...,1960 and 1967)

need among the Tshwa, or is it mainly the religious sector of xilungu?" (3) In a similar vein, a question may be raised in connection with the historically pronounced purpose of Christianity in Africa "to replace heathenism, or, maybe, even to fill a cultural and religious vacuum.": (4) "Has Christianity replaced Tshwa traditional beliefs and customs, or has it become an addition?"

All answers to such questions must, to some extent, be generalisations. To arrive at some answers, however, I want to make the following statements, based upon material in this dissertation: (5)

1. Protestant Christianity is understood by the Tshwa as an intellectual faith as opposed to their all-inclusive traditional way of life;

2. By applying rationalistic criteria, a large sector of Tshwa traditional beliefs has been left practically untouched by Protestant Christianity;

3. Protestant worship has not entered the vital field of 'rites of life crises', and can, on the whole, be considered as replacing communal rites;

4. A legalistic trend of the Protestantism introduced among the Tshwa has found ready acceptance;

5. Protestant Christianity has provided a sense of community beyond kinship boundaries for those accepting the standards of the 'group apart', but has in the process consciously contributed to the

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(3) Xilungu, with the same stem -lungu as in mulungu ("white man"), a designation for "all that belongs to the white man's world").

(4) See Introduction, p. 1.

(5) Note that, in using the term "Protestant" here, I do not oppose this section of Christianity to the Roman Catholic Church, but it is necessary thus to specify the findings, as my material comes entirely from within the Protestant community among the Tshwa.

disruption of the traditional social structure.

6. Social ethics, regularizing mutual rights and obligations within a given group, have been strongly influenced and partly replaced by individualized, religiously conditioned ethical concepts;

7. Protestant faith has changed traditional attitudes towards death by emphasis on 'eternal life'.

1. An intellectual faith

We have seen that, among the Tshwa as among many other African peoples, "schools became the nurseries of Christian congregations". (6) Even today, many Tshwa make no clear distinction between xikholwa (m'faith) and xikolo (school). These two entities appear to be jointly seen as the cultural aspect of xilungu. For the Tshwa, these two hold, in fact, the key to the larger material advantages of civilisation. Baptism is, at least partly, seen as a 'rite de passage' into the modern world, in which education plays a superior role.

For those to be baptised, the intellectual preparation - learning by heart certain statements formulating the basic Protestant Christian faith - stands out as the most important. Christianity is a belief to be learned. It has also been pointed out that Protestant worship depends much more on an intellectual understanding of the message brought through Bible reading and sermon, than on any symbolic experience of the divine presence. (7)

All doctrines are thus absorbed by the mind, to be known, and repeated on request. But they appear not, in general, to have penetrated deeply into Tshwa cos-

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(6) J. Mbiti, African religions and philosophy, p.232. Cf. p. 65 of this dissertation.

(7) See further pp. 156-157.

mology and spiritual concepts. Purely ethical teaching, on the other hand, is accepted as "the Law of Christ". But not even the Protestant ethics has the all-inclusive view consistent with Tshwa traditional life. (See below, section 6).

In a cultural setting, where life was seen as a complete whole, sought mainly through one process centered around the diviner, Protestantism thus planted the seed of division. Life was divided into compartments which may be satisfied through different channels. (8) Worship, thus, became purely religious, lifted out of its pragmatic applications, so well-known in traditional worship.

My material leads me, then, to conclude that Protestantism, at least in the doctrinal aspect, has in many cases become a superstructure on top of an important layer of traditional substance. This is undoubtedly causing perpetual inner conflict in many a Protestant Tshwa.

2. A large sector of Tshwa traditional beliefs untouched

In principle, all Tshwa spiritual beliefs were declared out-of-bounds by the Protestant Church. One of them - the mandiki-complex - (9) was, however, identified with demons as found in the New Testament and attacked by spiritual methods. (10) Ancestral spirits as well as spirits-of-revenge (11) and witches were all dismissed as irrational. There is clear evidence that beliefs in these spiritual elements are to this day largely untouched by Christian influence,

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(8) Cf. pp. 106 and 159.
(9) About mandiki, see p. 42 ff.
(10) See p. 197 for Christian 'treatment'.
(11) See further pp. 195-196.

and persist strongly below the Protestant superstructure.

3. Rites of life crises not part of Protestant worship

The communal rites - or 'rites of the soil' - were observed by the neighbourhood, a territorial group, without respect to kin membership.(12) They are still considered necessary "for the life of the country", and chiefs are bound to perform such rites.(13)

For the health and 'life' of the individual Tshwa person and his kin-group, however, the imperative rites were the ones performed by his own lineage group: kinship rituals. The kin-group's 'rites of life crises' made afflictions somehow manageable through well structured channels. Christians were advised to seek hospital treatment in all types of sickness, and prayers were encouraged to accompany such treatment. In spite of this, Protestantism has not yet offered the Tshwa a truly spiritual method of dealing with afflictions. It partakes in the 'Western' rationalization of sickness, while the Tshwa mind still reaches for its cause in a mystical sphere.(14)

Certain observations should be made in this context:

(a) As traditional spiritual elements are not "acceptable" within the Protestant community, Christians usually adopt the 'official' attitude in public, while maintaining such spirits as integral parts of their personal world-view. This seems to be another instance of the intellectual Protestant superstructure

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(12) About communal rites, see pp. 122 ff.
(13) Chiefs' duties are described on p. 10.
(14) See pp. 203-205.

on top of persisting traditional beliefs.

(b) The communal rites did not usually place any heavy burden on any individual, except the chiefs, as far as contributions are concerned. Particularly in the case of calendaric agricultural rites, contributions were nominal, as they did not require any sacrificial animal.(15) It seems likely that this understanding of the "cost" of worship has also been taken over by the Protestant community.(16)

(c) No diviner had anything to do with the calendaric communal rites. In all kinship rituals, on the other hand, the diviner was the centre of activity. Nothing was done without his advice or instruction.

The finding that Protestant worship has replaced communal rites but not kinship rituals therefore leads to the explanation that the realm of the diviner has not been penetrated by the Protestant faith. The divinatory process evidently answers to a deeply felt need among Tshwa, particularly by providing the superhuman causes of affliction which Tshwa people demand to know.

Not surprisingly, there is a seemingly irreconcilable opposition between the traditional diviners/medical practitioners (tin'anga)(17) and representatives of the Protestant faith.

(d) As traditional communal rituals are performed by the chief, the Protestant "taking over" of these rites is undoubtedly one cause of a usually latent, but still perceptible conflict between the institution of traditional chieftainship and Protestantism. This does not preclude certain incumbents from taking a positive attitude.(18)

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(15) See p. 124.
(16) See further pp. 153-155.
(17) Cf. pp. 201-2 and 204.
(18) About this conflict, see p. 10.

(e) The own kinship rituals are closer to the heart of the Tshwa than communal rites. The own ancestral spirits (tingululuve) play a more direct role as channels of 'life', and as integral parts of the process of 'vital participation' (19), so essential for the well-being of a Tshwa persons in the traditional context. This is probably why kinship rites reportedly continue as frequently as before.

The recent introduction of timisa (20) into the Protestant sphere give a clear indication of the importance of the departed kinsmen. Even allowing for certain syncretistic tendencies, timisa must be seen as an effort to translate a deeply felt traditional value into Christian terms. However this may be considered by the Protestant Churches at present, it should be a memento as to the potential theological importance of ancestral spirits.

4. A legalistic trend readily accepted

It has been discussed in some detail whether the observed legalistic conception of the Christian faith is the fruit of a specific presentation of the Gospel to the Tshwa, or the natural consequence of the Christian message received within the Tshwa ethical frame of mind. (21) Most probably, both these factors have interacted in creating the existing legalism within Tshwa Protestantism, and a strong emphasis on ethics.

However, ethics have simultaneously been to a large extent changed from strictly social (as in the traditional society) to religious. (See below, section 6).

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(19) See p. 106.

(20) Timisa (adapted from the Portuguese "missa"= mass) are memorial services. See further p.142.

(21) See discussion on pp. 222-224.

5. A sense of community, but disruption of traditional structures

As the Tshwa social structure was inextricably interwoven with all traditional beliefs and customs, it was rejected by the Protestant missions. Tshwa individuals were called to break with family and kin in order to become Christians. It was declared ethically 'good' to make this break as complete as possible.

For those who entered the Protestant 'group apart', a sense of community (wuhlengeli) [22] developed, based partly upon jointly accepted standards, partly on the necessity of separated individuals finding a new solidarity. This wuhlengeli has later become a cherished Tshwa Christian value, extending the sense of community far beyond kinship limitations.

Naturally, these developments within Protestantism have strongly contributed to a disruption of the unity within the kinship structure. We now find Tshwa Protestants largely accepting the traditional social structure when applying strictly social criteria, but rejecting its religious demands. Obviously, this leads to constant tension in both Christian and non-Christian sectors of the community.

Some customs connected with the social structure, as, e.g. ngbawolo (bridewealth), are in a process of continuous change, partly stimulated by the Protestant Churches. As a traditionally legalistic society now finds itself without strict norms in this important respect, the present development indicates less stable attitudes towards the marriage connection. [23]

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(22) See especially pp. 94-97.

(23) Cf. pp. 18-19.

. Individualized, religious ethics versus social ethics

As the ideal of 'vital participation' (24) including 'right relationships' between living and dead, as well as between the various living kin members, social ethics were one foundation of 'life' (wutomi). (25) Human relationships were an immediate threat to the well-being of the group and its individual members.

The Protestant Churches among the Tshwa introduced an ethic primarily based upon a 'right relationship' between individual and God. Naturally, this Christian ethic had certain social implications. But, in the conflict between traditional social loyalties, rejected when religious criteria are used (See above), and the idea of 'right relationships' with God, the Tshwa Protestant seems to opt for the latter. We also find that social ethical values are considered as valid primarily in connections within the 'group apart'.

Individual ethical responsibility is fostered within the Protestant community. The traditional fear of the group being afflicted because of an individual's sins is therefore removed. The most immediate consequence appears to be a tendency to conceal ethical shortcomings, making them "matters between God and the individual", rather than between the individual and the social group of which he is a member. (26)

. Remarkable changes of attitudes towards death

We have found that the sphere of death has undergone the most decisive changes of all traditional

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(24) See pp. 106-107.
(25) About 'social sin', see p. 167 and pp. 226-228.
(26) Cf. p. 233.

customs and beliefs.[27] As such changed attitudes are displayed in an emotionally tense atmosphere, they are bound to make a strong impression on all involved.

We assume that there is an important connection between such change of attitudes and the Christian promise of 'eternal life', as the departed Christian had to be prepared for this continuing life in a completely different manner from the dead who were expected to continue as ancestral spirits (_tingulu va_).

Returning now to the questions in the beginning of this chapter, we find, therefore, that, with the important exception referred to under (7), Protestant Christianity has added to - and in several instances nullified - Tshwa traditional concepts and customs, rather than displaced the same. Several conflicts introduced partly by _xilungu_,[28] partly by the Protestant faith, are still rampant. Many Protestants, therefore, find themselves in a social and cultural uncertainty. Furthermore, several elements within the traditional context are now clamouring for a more positive treatment than has been accorded them by the Protestant Churches.

Within the ongoing process of acculturation, many felt needs among the Tshwa have not yet been met in the Protestant context. The most acute of these may be the need of coming to terms with the traditional world of spirits, which remains an integral part of the Tshwa frame of reference.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that Protestant Christianity assists the Tshwa in finding a religious perspective on the outside influence,

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(27) See, e.g., pp. 256-257.
(28) See note on page 270

which is pressing them from all sides. It help them to find a community stretching wider than their old one. Furthermore, certain features within the Protestant community (e.g. using the Tshwa language in worship, and depending in an increasing degree on African leadership) help Tshwa to find a new identity which, on the social side, may fit in with "modern living". Finally, the strong attachment one finds to the Protestant Churches among many Tshwa, in spite of observed discrepancies, is most certainly based upon a greater religious satisfaction, focussed on the religious "summum bonum" of 'eternal life'.

It is hoped, however, that the Tshwa Protestant community will in the future face more constructively than before certain issues that arise from present conflicts and mutual misunderstandings. Some of these urgent issues are within the following fields:

a) Conflict of cultural factors in sphere of "sin and salvation";

b) Spiritual and social sickness causation;

c) Theological and practical implications of spirit beliefs, particularly ancestral spirits (tinguluve);

d) Disrupted social structures and customs;

e) Symbolism and drama in worship.

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