

THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS CHANGE  
WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED  
AFRICAN SOCIETIES

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Thesis presented for the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
University of London

1967



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ABSTRACT

In the introductory chapter the twofold aim of the thesis is stated. In the first place it tries to show that the three main streams in modern anthropological thought: the historical, the typological, and the logical-structural approach, are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. In the second place the thesis attempts to gain a better understanding of processes of religious change. Anthropologists have tried to do so, by comparing exotic and spectacular aspects of these processes from all over the world. In this thesis equal attention is paid to less spectacular aspects, and processes of religious change are put into a context, the analysis of which brings out three sets of factors, which must always be considered: 1. the traditional social system and religion; 2. the economic, political, and social changes, which take place at the time of the religious changes; 3. the internal dynamics of new religious associations and movements.

The next part of the thesis describes processes of religious change among the Kongo, Ganda, and Zulu. The chapter on the Kongo describes the prophetic movement known as Ngunzism.

The chapter on the Ganda gives a detailed account of the introduction of the new religions, and of the further development of the Anglican Church, and some religious movements connected with this development. The chapter on the Zulu reviews the early missionary enterprise, and the emergence and growth of different types of independent churches.

The concluding chapter compares first the different historical developments to bring out their unique character. Then a typology is developed to facilitate a systematic comparison of common elements of new religious associations and movements. Another typology is given to help to understand better the actual processes of change. Lastly a definition of religion is given, which shows that the category of religious change is a logically sound generalization.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. The theoretical background

Before looking at any special problem we have to pay some attention to the point of view we shall adopt and to the means we shall use to see it as clearly as possible. If this is not done explicitly, it is very likely that discussions on the material presented will become confused, because of uncertainty about the framework within which one is talking. Different points of view lead to different questions and even if the answers are framed with the help of the same terms and concepts, these terms and concepts will have different meanings according to the context in which they appear. This is especially necessary in social anthropology where theoretical approaches differ considerably and seem very often diametrically opposed.

From GLUCKMAN (1955 p.1 ff.) we have learnt how the peace in the feud is maintained in tribal societies and I think that it is useful to regard anthropological discussions in a similar way. To speak of feuds in social anthropology is not too strong an expression, if one sees the vigour with which new approaches are pushed forward and the polemics which they cause. Characteristically views of people, who are drawn into the feud, are seen in a bi-polar perspective. On one side is the right approach and all other approaches are therefore wrong and lumped together easily.

The simplest model which could explain the peace in the feud requires three terms, two of which are always in alliance, while the third is in opposition. If A and B are together, C opposes, but at other occasions B is linked with C, and A is in

opposition etc. In constructing such a model we shall have to consider first three basic tendencies which we find in anthropological thought and which could be compared to three co-ordinates, with the help of which we can determine exactly our actual position in the theoretical space. I have of course to exaggerate the basic trends which we shall never find in reality, as they are limits which will never be reached. These basic tendencies are revealed as it were in the feud, where the protagonists themselves tend to exaggerate their position.

The first trend was advocated by Radcliffe-Brown. He considered social anthropology as a natural science concerned with the concrete reality of the process of social life which has to be observed, described, compared and classified (RADCLIFFE-BROWN 1952 p.4, p.86). The method presupposes that social facts hang together and that there is a possibility of intersubjective agreement about the identity and difference of social facts. This can be done by being explicit about the operations which we use to establish our definitions. Explanation within this framework is the description of some regularities and the demonstration of the circumstances under which they occur. These circumstances should impart a meaning to the observed relations as they imply some intrinsic requiredness or fitness.

To give an example. We know that there is a relation between X and Y; there is also a relation between X and Z and one between Y and Z. We explain the relation between X and Y-if we show in our description that Z makes up the set of circumstances which brings X and Y together. This result is often formulated with the help of the concept of social function. The function of X is its contribution to the maintenance of the system, formed by X, Y and Z. The type of explanation we get when we follow this method, is a typology which should aim at the reduction of a maximum number of co-varying facts to a minimum number of



independent variables. A good example is Richards' study of residence in matrilineal societies (RADCLIFFE-BROWN and FORDE 1950 p.207 ff.), which reduced the different modes of residence to one factor; the problem of authority over children which has to be divided between their father and their mother's brother.

This method is objective, empirical, and inductive and therefore as a science opposed to humanities which are subjective and speculative.

The second opposition was brought out most clearly by Evans-Pritchard, partly in reaction against this view of Radcliffe-Brown on the subject. Social anthropologists, he says, dominated, consciously or unconsciously, from the beginnings of their subject by positivist philosophy, have aimed, explicitly or implicitly, and for the most part still aim - for this is what it comes to - at proving that man is an automaton and at discovering sociological laws in terms of which his actions, ideas and beliefs can be explained and in the light of which they can be planned and controlled. This approach implies that human societies are natural systems which can be reduced to variables. History sees man in a different way, and eschews, in the light of experience, rigid formulations of any kind. Societies are seen as systems only because social life must have a pattern of some kind, in as much as man, being a reasonable creature, has to live in a world in which his relations with those around him are ordered and intelligible (EVANS-PRITCHARD 1950).

But as grammatical and phonological systems do not impose any restrictions on the communications people want to make, so also social structure does not limit the essential moral quality of social relations, if I understand Evans-Pritchard rightly. And anthropologists are like historians who work at the level of consciousness, trying to describe what choices

individuals make in terms of their assessment of the situation.

The opposition in this case is between the nomothetic and the idiographic method: the former aiming at the establishment of laws explaining events as examples of universally valid principles, the latter seeking a full description of particular cases, which are unique because they depend upon moral choices.

The third trend has been presented by Leach in his challenging lecture which called for a rethinking of anthropology (LEACH 1961 p.1 ff.). He argues that it is wrong to think of a culture or a society as an empirical whole, made up of a number of readily identifiable parts, and to compare societies to see whether or not the same kinds of parts are present in these societies. Instead we have to think about society in a mathematical way and to be concerned with the principles of operation of partial systems. A society is an assemblage of variables in which a certain pattern is not manifest as an empirical fact, but as a mathematical generalization. If one feels that one has to start with assumptions, then let them be logical i.e. mathematical assumptions and expect the same structural pattern to turn up in any society.

This point of view is based upon another assumption which has been made explicit by LEVI-STRAUSS (1963 p.103). He claims that "every human mind is a locus of virtual experience where what goes on in the minds of men, however remote they may be, can be investigated". This means that the social and cultural reality, which is man-made and a product of the human mind, can be explained by reference to our own reasoning because the human mind is presumably everywhere the same.

This approach opposes the idea to the empirical reality; or rather it assumes that ideas are more real than the world

around us as it presents itself to our senses.

In an article which questions the existence of the so called dual organizations LEVI-STRAUSS (1958 p.147 ff.) argues that the moieties in a diametrical system are defined in opposition to one another, and that the apparent symmetry of their structure creates the illusion of a closed system. A characteristic of this dualism is the heterogeneous nature of certain symbols which translate the antithesis of the moieties. E.g. among the Winnebago the dualism between high and low is represented by the sky on the one hand and earth + water on the other. Such oppositions are in fact triads, disguised as dyads with the help of a logical subterfuge. In this way a whole, which really consists of a pole and an axis, is treated as if it were made up of two equal terms. Although I do not claim that the method of explanation used by Levi-Strauss is the only valid one, it does explain what we find, when we scrutinize the oppositional pairs which I described, as another example of this way of thinking.

The first opposition we found was between science and humanities. The latter consists of philosophy, trying to make generalizations about man and the world he experiences, as well as of history, attempting to describe particular people at some specific place and time. Thus we see that the term humanities is an ambiguous category.

The nomothetic method, which we found in opposition to the idiographic method, is concerned with two radically different ways of establishing laws. The search for general principles of how things operate could be compared with theoretical physics. Here hypotheses are deducted from logical possibilities and tested in laboratories, where all disturbing factors are

removed and one occurrence proves or disproves the explanation. It is the Galileian method, the antithesis of which is the Aristotelian method, consisting of the giving of names to observed phenomena on the basis of common characteristics and of the connection of these characteristics within a restricted field of phenomena. Exceptions are not regarded if their frequency is not too great, but in this way we miss both the specific and the universal and we are left with types which have their own nature, which is just enough to explain, that phenomena thus classified show with statistical regularity certain characteristics, which are typical.

The Aristotelian method made a difference between heavy and light bodies: the former are of such a nature that they go down, while the characteristics of the latter is that they go up. Galileo did not recognize this difference because we know nothing of the nature of bodies. He simply stuck to what we observe: an accelerated movement which can be explained by a mathematical definition deduced from logical assumptions and tested by a controlled experiment. Yet, we do well to keep in mind that, faced with a complex situation with multiplex relations between many variable factors, laws established in the Galileian way seem to be of as little help in science as in social anthropology. Metereology or geology cannot be said to have a greater capacity to predict than the social sciences. At the level of the uncontrollable and complex reality we simply have to make do with Aristoteleian typologies.

The ambiguous term in our last oppositional pair is the empirical reality. Is the reality social anthropology deals with unique, or is it governed by laws which subsume invariably related facts under one new term? This is really a question of the free will and BEATTIE (1964 p.45) is wrong in thinking that we have a free will because it is a fact of experience.

If we reflect on this experience we might well come to a different conclusion. Whatever the case may be believed to be, we have seen that the inductive empirical method led to typologies, the explanatory value of which can be doubted, and which certainly left room for Evans-Pritchard's assertions about the unique character of human behaviour.

The very ambiguity of the terms makes cross cutting alliances possible. But these alliances shift in each case, which in turn is possible because each term presupposes already the existence of the other two. There is no description without a degree of abstraction, comparison and generalization, which is only possible with the help of ideas, which become a reality in their own right as soon as they are conceived by the human mind. The idiographic method is in alliance with the empirical-inductive approach with regard to its subject matter; and with the idealistic approach insofar as historical evidence is grasped and assimilated by a single mind, so that a total culture can be studied as a whole and contained by a single mind. The idealistic approach is thus part of the humanities; but, insofar as it tries to discover universal principles which govern unique occurrences, it is also scientific. The empirical-inductive method also tries to discover general laws; but, insofar as it binds itself to observable facts rather than principles of thought, it is bound to remain idiographic.

The point of view from which I shall look at the material presented in this thesis should do full justice to this theoretical argument. It will be my aim to show that the three different trends in modern anthropological thought are not mutually exclusive but complementary by applying them to one problem area. First I shall give a historical account

of some processes of religious change, using the idiographic method. Secondly I shall develop a typology which should classify different phenomena of religious change according to the features which they have in common, and which should justify the use of the same concepts and terms in describing unique events. In the third place I have to show that the different unique religious phenomena are examples of a general principle, responsible for a common underlying structure which can be found back in all cases everywhere.

## 2. The problem and its setting.

One cannot say that anthropologists have paid much attention to the systematic comparison of religious changes in Africa. Anthropologists have been mainly interested in the writing of synchronic monographs of one kind or another, while neglecting comparison and the study of social change. "In the continually and rapidly growing literature of Africanist anthropology, the proportion concerned directly with comparative and cross-cultural work is still small, both in quantity and significance". (GULLIVER 1965 p.73). "To date, the bulk of writing on social change in Africa has only been descriptive, tentative in its methods, and uninformed by a firm theoretical background" (ibid. p.86).

It is hoped that this thesis will be a contribution to the further development of these two important aspects of anthropological research which received so little attention from Africanist anthropologists. This means by implication, that here religious change is considered to be an aspect of social change. Admittedly it can also be treated as a psychological or a theological problem, but in my opinion religion, as an

object of anthropological research, should be treated as a social phenomenon. It involves individuals who play specific roles which are interrelated and it consists of ideas and expected patterns of aim-directed behaviour which show some system and which can be learned.

One of the few British anthropologists who has paid attention to a comparison of some phenomena of religious change in Africa is MAIR (1959, 1963). She is especially interested in the appearance of new religious movements which are led by prophets who claim direct revelation. In Africa they can be found in the Lower Congo and in South Africa. She tries to place these movements in the context of millenarian cults, which promise the solution of all problems, brought about by some miraculous event. This is very often connected with a belief in a Saviour, who will perform this feat and destroy all wicked people, or with witch-finding movements which aim at the establishment of a similar happy state of existence without evil. Other examples of millenarianism elsewhere are the well known cargo cults of Melanesia. These cargo cults have been very much in the centre of anthropological interest. (cf. WORSLEY 1957; JARVIE 1962). Generally speaking it seems that anthropologists have been fascinated by the problem of such exotic religious phenomena which cried out for an explanation, because the beliefs seemed so obviously irrational and because the rites appeared to be without any social function in terms of the maintenance of the social structure.

In Africa the attention paid to these more spectacular aspects of religious change does not reflect their relative importance compared to other aspects of this process. In South Africa only 10% of the African population belongs to independent

churches, many of which are moreover not at all different in doctrine and ritual from western churches, to which 40 % of the African population belongs (Union Census 1960).

Estimates of the Lower Congo are more difficult to come by, but during the last years of colonial rule, when the Belgian administration became rather tolerant in its attitude, the prophetic movement among the Kongo claimed only 60,000 adherents (RAYMAEKERS 1959). This is not much compared to a population of at least one million Kongo in the Belgian Congo alone, and it is certainly far less than the number of adherents of the Roman Catholic church and the Protestant missions.

The most frequent explanation of these strange movements is that they are caused by the impact of the western world. A simple correlation between the appearance of these cults and the absence of political representation was suggested by MAIR (1958). BEATTIE (1966) suggested that all these cults exhibit the conviction that a ritual, dramatic performance will somehow bring about a desired end. They are ritual responses to social change, involving the proliferation, often extravagant and unrestrained, of symbolic representations.

To me this lumping together of exotic and spectacular religious phenomena from all over the world is a very unsatisfactory treatment, as are the attempts to explain them with reference to one causal factor: the impact of the western world which establishes relationships of dominance and subjection (MAIR 1963 p.173) or the situation of social change which is responsible for deprivation and distress (BEATTIE 1966 p.170).

If we want to gain a better understanding of such movements we should see them as aspects of a process of religious change, a far more important aspect of which may be the transition of



large proportions of the population to forms of orthodox Christianity. Explanations in terms of relationships of dominance and subjection, or of deprivation and distress, only indicate sufficient causes and not final ones. It may well be that these conditions can be found in all cases in which millenarian cults exist, but the reverse does not hold true. Indeed, one could argue that in every society segments of the population may feel deprivation and distress at times and that situations of dominance and subjection are common to every social arrangement, because people cannot, all the time, do exactly as they like.

If we agree that we should treat particular new religious movements as a class of phenomena, which can be subsumed under the heading of religious change, we must first of all ascertain the factors which could influence religious change in any society. Any process of religious change must be related to these factors; their interrelations must be investigated and their relative importance ascertained. Only after this has been done, we can start to make comparisons between aspects of religious change in different societies.

The first factor is the traditional social system and religion, which must be known before any discussion of change in general can take place. We need a reliable base-line as a yardstick with which we can measure what has changed, and how important the traditional factor still is in the contemporary situation. It is also essential for understanding how important the traditional factor has been in causing certain types of change to take place rather than other types. The second factor consists of the actual economic, political, and social changes, which influence the people who decide to participate in new religious movements and associations or not. Situations of social change must be expected to be different

for different sections of the population. We must therefore be specific about the connections between particular aspects of religious change and of social change. In the third place we must take into account the internal dynamics of new religious associations and movements. Religious change may be caused by conflicting pressures of discrepant values and principles, inherent in the religious beliefs themselves, or by the incompatible demands of the institutionalization of the internal structure of religious associations and movements, and the accommodation of individual initiatives.

Neither should we expect these factors to be of equal importance in all processes of social change, nor should we assume their interrelations to be of the same nature. It is quite possible that in certain cases religious change causes political or social change, or that there is at least an interdependence between these factors of such a nature, that it becomes impossible to speak about causes and effects. It is therefore important to give explicit information about all factors, whatever kind of influence they exert, because only then we shall be able to judge their relative importance, when we start comparing processes of religious change in different societies.

This frame of reference involving three factors: the traditional social system and religion; economic, political, and social changes; the internal dynamics of religious associations and movements; was suggested by the different interpretations which emerged from the analyses of processes of religious change among the three peoples I selected for this thesis. They are the Kongo and the Zulu who gained prominence as examples of peoples where the spectacular aspects of religious change are well represented, mainly through the studies of BALANDIER (1963) and DOUTRELOUX (1965), and of SUNDKLER (1961)

respectively. As a contrasting example I choose the Ganda, where more normal western types of churches developed, the growth of one of which has been well described by TAYLOR (1958).

Balandier stresses very much the general changes in the society, and Doutreloux the traditional background, but both fail to see the importance of the internal dynamics of the new religious associations and movements, especially with regard to the beginnings of the prophetic movement. Sundkler is quite adequate in his treatment of the traditional elements, and the internal developments, but not at all with regard to the importance of political and social changes, and he fails to see the opportunities for African initiative outside the new religious associations. Taylor is inadequate in his treatment of the traditional social system and religion and this makes the acceptance of Christianity by the Ganda more puzzling to him than I think it really is.

My description of the particular processes of change in each society will pay equal attention to each of these three factors under the following headings:-

1. An outline of the traditional social system.
2. An outline of the traditional religion.
3. The changing society.
4. Some processes of religious change.

I shall discuss more explicitly the interrelations between the different factors and their relative importance, in a dialogue with existing interpretations with which I agree or disagree, under the following heading:-

5. The interpretation of some processes of religious change.
- At the beginning of each chapter, dealing with one society, I shall give a list of the authorities on which it is based. Only if they disagree among themselves on facts, vital for the argument, I shall give detailed references. I shall always

do this in my reviews and criticisms of different interpretations.

In this description and analysis of historical processes, the idiographic aspect is clearly of greater importance than the other two trends in anthropological thought, which I discussed in the first section of this chapter. I tried to select only such cases where enough material would be available to describe processes of religious change over a considerable span of time, without the need for interpolation because of lack of sufficient documentation for certain intermediate periods. The choice of my examples was also limited by the practical necessity to allow enough space for a rather intensive treatment of each case, and to make comparison not too difficult through too many factors which would have to be surveyed at the same time.

Certain processes of religious change have not been treated extensively, like the influence of the Islam or prophetic movements virtually unconnected with the influence of foreign religions. But as it is, I believe that the thesis does make some progress towards a better understanding of religious change in Africa by not concentrating on the exotic aspects of these processes alone; by taking into account more fully the different contexts of social change in general as well as the background of the traditional culture; and by comparing phenomena in respect of qualities which are socially important, i.e. intrinsic to the systematic complexes which are being compared.

Yet comparison can have different aims. It can be used to bring out more clearly the unique aspects of situations. In the first section of the concluding chapter I shall concentrate on showing how different the historical developments in the three societies were. Of course, this can only be done by

taking into account, at least implicitly, what they have in common. This aspect of comparison will be treated explicitly in the second part of this concluding chapter. It will be an attempt to develop a typological approach to the problem of religious change, which brings all the material together in one framework, and which helps to compare common features in a systematic way. The third section of this last chapter will be devoted to some inspired guesswork, in order to find a possible general structural pattern in the circumstances of special cases. They will be compared with an ideal structure, which should be typical of the human mind in general, rather than with one another to bring out the unique or the typical.

The last chapter as a whole should prove the validity of the model of explanation in social anthropology, as developed in the first part of this chapter, by showing that the three different theoretical approaches can be usefully applied to one problem area.

### Summary

In the first part of this chapter I tried to develop a model of anthropological theory, which does justice to the diversity of current anthropological thought, while it shows at the same time that each different approach implies in fact the existence of the other points of view. The three trends which I discerned may be labelled as the idiographic method, the typological approach, and the idealistic-deductive procedure. One aim of the thesis is to show that they are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary to one another.

In the second part of this chapter I showed how much attention anthropologists had paid to spectacular and exotic aspects of religious change. I believe that a better understanding can be gained by taking into account in each case three factors:-  
1. the traditional social system and religion; 2. the economic,

political and social changes, which take place at the time of the religious changes; 3. the internal dynamics of new religious associations and movements. Only after the interrelations between these three factors, and their relative importance, have been analysed, can we embark upon a useful comparison of our materials.

## CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS CHANGE AMONG THE KONGO1. Introduction.

In this chapter I shall deal with some aspects of what has been called "Ngunzism", derived from the word ngunza, which means herald or prophet. The religious movement is also known as "kimbanguism", after one of the most influential and earliest leaders: Simon Kimbangu. The movement is well known from the very detailed study by ANDERSSON (1958) and a long article by VAN WING (1958), whereas the newest developments were covered by RAYMAEKERS (1959). BALANDIER (1963) and DOUTRELOUX (1965) are interesting mainly for the connections they see with other social phenomena and for their different theoretical frameworks. There was not enough material available to cover the history of the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions adequately; yet those aspects which are relevant for our understanding of Ngunzism have been analysed by ANDERSSON (1958).

Today the Kongo live in the north western corner of Portuguese Angola and on both sides of the river Congo, in the two Congo states and in Cabinda - to the east as far as the Stanley Pool, and to the north as far as the Niari valley. In Congo Kinshasa there are about one million of them; in Congo Brazzaville and Cabinda about half a million; no reliable information is available for Angola. The Kongo have a common language and a tradition of common origin.

When the Portuguese arrived at the beginning of the sixteenth century, they found to the south of the river Congo

the Kingdom of the Kongo. It was divided into six provinces, one of which was under direct rule of the king. The provincial rulers recognized him as supreme judge and paid regularly tribute to him. The town where he lived was the place of origin for all clans; from there they had migrated into all directions. The capital was called San Salvador by the Portuguese, who established a colonial government about 1560, mainly to protect their slave trading interests. At the same time there was an invasion by the Yaka from the east, which caused great disruptions and new migrations after they had withdrawn. From this time onwards the provinces asserted their independence. Within them rivalries developed between the clan to which the provincial ruler traditionally belonged, and which had given its name to the area, and the other clans in the area, which had migrated at the same time or later. It even came to separations and wars between the inhabitants of the same province. There is no doubt that the situation was aggravated by the slave trade.

To the north of the river the kingdom of Loango was very important. Its inhabitants acknowledged that they were migrants from San Salvador, but they were completely independent. The people who live in this region now are no longer considered to be Kongo in the proper sense of the word by BALANDIER (1963 p.518), although they still claim descent from San Salvador (DOUTRELOUX 1965 p.230). Such arbitrary divisions are fairly common among writers of books on the Kongo. Each seems to have his own nomenclature. Another difficulty is that they often do not distinguish between the name of a region acknowledged by all inhabitants as "our tribal name", and the same name applied to the descent group which gave its name to the region, but the members of which are only a part of the inhabitants of the area. The name of this descent group



is also used to indicate other clans, which settled in the same area or elsewhere and which recognized the authority of its head, who had been the leader of all these clans at the time of the migrations. In many cases this does not co-incide with the "tribal name of our country" (VAN WING 1959 p.53).

The name Bakongo as used by Balandier denotes those groups who crossed the river Congo after 1600. They settled between the tribes which constituted the Loango kingdom to the west, and the totally unrelated Teke to the east and north. He divides them into Kongo, living in the Boko district in Congo Brazzaville, along the river which forms the border with Congo Kinshasa there; the Ladi or Lari, living to the north and west of Brazzaville; and the Sundi who crossed the river further downwards and moved then to the east and north east (BALANDIER 1963 p.288). The Kongo and Sundi also live in Congo Kinshasa. When speaking about the Kongo, I shall mean all the Kongo speaking people. The Bakongo to which Balandier refers will be called the Sundi-Ladi-Kongo of Congo Brazzaville. The Kongo who are a part of this group, but who also live in Congo Kinshasa, will be called the Kongo tribe.

Ngunzism developed mainly in the area between the Inkisi and Lukunga rivers, down to the south as far as the railway, and to the north, in the neighbouring country, on the other side of the river Congo, as far as the Foulakari river. The area is rather hilly, mainly savanna with forests along the rivers, and near the villages, where they were planted to improve the ground for the cultivation of manioc. There are two rain seasons which provide plenty of rain for agriculture.

The information concerning the traditional social system and religion is quite extensive. VAN WING (1959) has written a very good monograph about the Mpangu, who belong to the eastern

tribes of the Kongo in Congo Kinshasa. BALANDIER (1963) makes much use of this source in his description of the characteristics of the Sundi-Ladi-Kongo of Congo Brazzaville. SORET (1958) has covered most of the existing literature on the north western Kongo tribes. Both authors have a first hand acquaintance of the modern situation in Congo Brazzaville. Changes in the economic and social conditions in the district where the Mpangu live have been described by BRUYNS (1951). The newest political developments were covered by SEGAL (1963). These authors will be used in the following outline of traditional and modern conditions to set the scene for our description of Ngunzism.

## 2. An outline of the traditional social system (1)

The clan is the largest exogamous unit and consists of all matrilineal descendants of an ancestress, male and female, alive and dead. The living clan members are divided into lineages. They are typically formed by the descendants of a common ancestress, five generations back. The grown up male members of a lineage normally form the core of a village. The other inhabitants are the wives, who belong to another clan, together with their young children, who have not yet reached puberty; and slaves with their children, who remain dependants of their master, except when they are born from a free woman. Slaves are normally treated like other members of the household, but they have no known clan membership. They find their place in the kinship system according to the rule: the relation between a slave and Ego is the inversion of the relation which exists between Ego and the relative to whom the slave has been attached, and who typically has a superior position with regard to Ego.

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(1) In this and the following section I use the ethnographic present, as most information was collected at first hand, but at different times between 1900 and 1960.

Men who want to acquire a large and powerful household invest in female slaves who bear them children, who are not under the authority of their mothers' brothers.

The village headman is normally the eldest son of the eldest daughter of the lineage ancestress. If she had more daughters, each with sons, these groups of full brothers with their dependants will constitute more or less autonomous units under the authority of the eldest males. These are also the smallest economic units. All the land is precisely divided between different lineages and also quite often between the constituent groups of a village, especially if there are lineages from different clans in one village, which is not uncommon.

If the legitimate successor of the head of the village has not got the required ability, the headman can choose another successor, who may be outside his own lineage or even the son of a slave. The succession goes from elder brother to younger brother and then, if the collateral line has died out, to the eldest son of the eldest sister. The council of elders has to approve of the new appointment. All married male members of the clan who live in the village are members of the council. In rank below the elders are the mothers who have born many children to the clan, and who are now living with their sons in their old age. Below them are the young members of the clan: the unmarried men and women. Young children live with their fathers. The movement between lineages of wives who come, and of older children who return, does not happen at random. The customary cross cousin marriage causes grandchildren to go back to the lineages of their grandfathers. As alternating generations are equivalent, grandfathers can marry those granddaughters who are equivalent to cross cousins.

The headman has to take care that people observe the

ancestral customs and he must hold court if disputes arise. His person is sacred as the representative of the clan and incarnation of the ancestors, because of his genealogical position. He is also the priest who conducts the annual rites at the village burial ground. Even more important are the so called "crowned chiefs", belonging to the most senior lineage of the clan and in the possession of special regalia. Lineages of the same depth are always ranked according to the order of birth of the founding ancestresses. In certain areas the number of crowned chiefs has not increased in proportion to the increase of population and the fission of clans. Their functions are partly taken over by the clan elder, who has the same genealogical position as the crowned chief in his own clan. Crowned chiefs are pre-eminently the chiefs of the clan. They are designated at meetings which are attended by all clan members. At these reunions the histories and genealogies of all lineages are recounted, and their members are urged to forget the disputes, which have been between them. The designation takes place well before the old chief dies and so allows for a careful education of the candidate. He has to act as the supreme judge in case of disputes between lineages. It is therefore necessary that the crowned chief has a profound knowledge of the judicial process, which is wholly conducted in the language of proverbs, and of the clan history. His main function, however, is the worship of the ancestors.

Villages sometimes make war on each other, to exact direct vengeance for a violation of property rights or an accidental injury. After a few people have been killed, peace negotiations start. The guilty party has to pay fines and also slaves for the people that were killed. But because the

most powerful village is in fact capable of dictating the conditions, the dispute is not really closed, and may be the cause for new fighting, into which other villages may be drawn as allies.

The staple food is manioc, but there are many other kinds of vegetables like potatoes, yams, groundnuts and maize. The women take care of planting and reaping, the men clear the ground, if necessary. They also take care of the banana plantations and the palms which provide oil, wine and raffia.

The market plays a very important role in the economy, but it is also a place where the people from different villages and clans come together in peace on absolutely neutral ground. It is a centre for the diffusion of information, goods, and new songs and dances. There are two types of market. One type is held every day of the fourdays' week at a different place, so that every village has at least one market in a week within reasonable distance. Transactions involve food, crockery, tools, cloth, gunpowder (primitive flint guns are widely used) etc. The other type is part of one of the lines of big markets which stretch for hundreds of miles through Kongo country. They are held every eight days, not on the same but on successive eighth days and also at different places along the established route. Here the caravans from the coast and those from inland areas pass with European goods going into one direction, and slaves and ivory going into the other. There are various forms of money like glass beads, copper rods, and pieces of cloth.

For centuries the Kongo were the middlemen for the trade to and from the Upper Congo. They became rich in goods and this wealth is displayed at burials when all personal property is buried with the deceased, or placed on top of the grave. It

is also used in a potlach-like cycle of festivals, called malaki, at which a lineage invites the lineages from which wives come, personal friends, and people whose only tie with the inviting lineage consists of mutual invitations to such festivals. The inviting lineage has the obligation to provide more food, goods, and entertainment, than it had received on previous occasions. This cannot go on for ever, and from time to time it is decided to start a new cycle. One can also invest money in buying slaves, especially female slaves, who increase the number of adherents of one's household. Sometimes it is also possible to buy new land from other tribes. The Kongo have also the institution of rotating credit associations, and it seems that partners can be groups instead of individuals. This makes it possible to establish and maintain peaceful and commercial relations between hitherto antagonistic groups (BALANDIER 1963 p.347).

### Summary

The Kongo society was characterized by a progressive segmentation. This was such that, when the Independent Congo State was founded in 1885, there was no tribe or clan which was coherent, nor were villages united by a common interest. The only effective power rested in the chiefs of isolated villages, none of which dared to trust its neighbours. But even these villages were faction ridden (VAN WING 1959 p.128). Nevertheless, in the economic sphere many institutions counteracted this segmentation and isolation: market cycles, trade routes, credit associations and malaki competitions. The crowned chiefs (or clan elders) who were acknowledged to be essential for the welfare of the country, and who were recognized as supreme judges, again made people at least feel that they belonged to wider units than their own village.

### 3. An outline of the traditional religion

Nzambi is the Creator Spirit who has made everything and who directs the course of events sovereignly. He has also instituted the ancestral customs which nobody should abolish. Disrespect for one's parents, adultery, and incest come under his special punishment. Fathers curse disobedient sons through the invocation of Nzambi's vengeance. Only humble submission can cause them to revoke this curse. Adultery is punished with a special sickness, and only public confession can cause a cure. Incest causes the most terrible misfortune, and guilty people have to be burnt to avoid further disaster. Nzambi is unique, separate from all that exists, invisible and yet alive, only responsible to himself, independent, incomprehensible and unapproachable, and yet managing things from quite nearby with an absolute efficacy.

Everything that exists has its own nature, a source of known and unknown forces, which are friendly or hostile. The nature of something depends upon its exterior form, by which it is characterized and which corresponds to a name. Each change of form makes a new name necessary. There are four different kinds of being on earth: of stones and minerals, of plants which grow, of animals, and of man. All beings endowed with a special power, vital or otherwise, continue to possess this power as long as they maintain their form. The claws of a leopard, used when certain fetishes are made, are not just symbols, but real sources of power.

Man consists of four elements: a body; blood, which contains the life principle; the perception principle, thought to be located near the ear; and a name. The life principle continues to exist after death. It takes the form of a small, white body, which lives in streams, springs, and pools. The

perception principle disappears at death. If a man sleeps it is away temporarily and this explains his action in dreams. Witches have an evil perception principle, which they change into a miniscule animal, which finds its way into a human body, where it sucks the blood away, so that it dies. The ultimate cause of death is Nzambi, who allows man to be killed through witchcraft, mortal wounds, or poison. In case of death through senility or accident He is believed to interfere more directly.

Spirits are people who continue to exist in a bodily form after death. The dead members of the clan live in villages like the living. Their happy existence, somewhere under the earth, is not enjoyed by criminals and witches. Their spirits haunt around the villages at night: they steal chickens and goats, and even cloth and other manufactured goods. The ancestors control a lineage and the area it occupies, which they have conquered in the past. They "give" fruits to the trees, fish to the rivers, wine to the palms, and harvests to the fields. The wild animals are their goats and the wild birds their chickens. The living members of the lineage have the usufruct of this domain. People who suffered a violent death, especially the primeval ancestors, are very strong, white spirits. Perhaps there are other kinds of spirits, but the Kongo are not sure about it.

The worship of the ancestors of the clan is necessary for fertility, health for oneself and one's dependants, a long life, success in agriculture, in breeding animals, in business, and especially in hunting. The crowned chief performs the act of worship on behalf of the clan, in front of the basket where ancestral power is concentrated. It contains thumbs, hair, and nails of deceased crowned chiefs, of their female



counterparts, who go with them through several rituals at designation and installation, and of albinos, who are considered to be the reincarnation of the great primeval ancestors. The main part of the ritual is an offering of palm wine, which takes place every week. In times of misfortune, the priest puts some earth, soaked with wine, on the breasts of the members of the clan, and he urges them to be at peace with one another.

Individuals make libations at the tomb of an elder brother or mother's brother and express their particular wishes. When the normal treatment of sickness does not have any effect, all the uterine relatives of the patient, who may have caused him to fall ill in a mystical way, have to go through a ritual. This is to prove that they are innocent and to ask the ancestors personally to give vigour and health to their sick relative. Sometimes the ancestors themselves cause sickness, because they want to have more solemn funeral festivals. After the diviner has indicated this cause, a promise is made to the effect that a festival will take place, as soon as the ancestors have restored health. The festival starts with a sacrifice, which is followed by twelve days of dancing and feasting, in which all the members of the clan who were born in the village participate, together with all their relatives-in-law. A libation and an offering of new crockery, to adorn the graves, end the festival.

There are certain relations which allow people to exert a mystical influence which causes sickness. Parents and grandparents have the power to punish insolent children and grandchildren in this way. In case of marriage, all members of the clan of the girl should be satisfied that enough gifts have been given by the clan of the boy, or they will cause sterility

and abortion. This is one example of the influence which all clan members, especially collaterals, have over each other. When a child dies, the diviner indicates very often that one of the uterine relatives, typically one belonging to another lineage living in the same village, is responsible. The accused has to submit to a poison ordeal. Whether he dies or not, the enmity and hate is only aggravated, until the lineages decide to separate. It seems that such accusations are an expression of tensions, which are caused by such factors as land shortage, and the assertion of autonomy by junior lineages.

Real witches have either an innate tendency to use their perception power to destroy other people, or they have acquired this skill through initiation by an old master-witch, who has a very powerful fetish, which enables him to change his perception principle into a small animal-witch. In the same way some people can change themselves into big, ferocious animals. The Kongo believe that the real cause of witchcraft is envy, which causes hatred and maliciousness. When divination shows that uterine relatives are innocent, one continues to look for genuine witches among other relatives, but this may cause such an upheaval and even war, that it is the easiest and least dangerous way to accuse a slave. This is what happens in most cases.

Fetishes are artificial objects, thought to be inhabited by a spirit, who is the dependant of a man. Each fetish has a specific power and activity. A fetish can be operated by anybody who is the legitimate owner of the fetish and who knows the special observations and incantations to make it effective. Fetishes consist of a container - a statue or a bag for example - and a content: a mixture of things belonging

to the three orders of being inferior to man. The content is made of clay, connected with the spirits who live near the streams where one can find it; of plants, which are often thought to have a poisoning or curing effect; and of parts of animals in which their power still resides. Copies containing something of the original mixture, together with new ingredients, can be ordered from the original owner, who also teaches the new owner its proper use.

Fetishes exist to procure fertility, to cure disease, to make witchcraft impossible and to kill witches, to prevent stealing and adultery, and to cause harm to all kinds of enemies. Most fetishes cure a specific disease, and cause it to return to the person who sent it, so that he himself will suffer from it. This will only be successful if the fetish of the victim is stronger than the fetish of the person who sent the sickness in the first place. There is a ready market for new fetishes which are claimed to be stronger than existing ones. To make a fetish work it must normally be activated by the blood of chickens or goats. Although most people have some fetishes, much use is made of the services of specialists. These professional fetish operators are accompanied by helpers, who beat drums and sing fanatically during their manipulations. Sometimes an operator goes into a trance during such sessions. He is paid for his performance.

A special kind of fetish is kept by the village headman. This protects the inhabitants of his village against witchcraft and other enemies. It is said that this fetish is influenced by the ancestral spirit of the founder of the village. To make it work only incantations are employed, and no bloody sacrifices are made. All this corresponds to the cult of the

ancestors to a certain degree. But ancestor worship is kept completely separate from the fetishes. In the hut with the basket with concentrated ancestral power no fetish may be found, nor in any other hut used by the priest.

There is one occasion when fetishes are being used for the welfare of the whole community. This is at the celebration of Kimpassi, which takes place when there is an epidemic disease, an abnormal rate of mortality, or when very few children are born. There may be intervals of 5, 10 or even 20 years between the celebrations. It is an initiation ritual for young people between 12 and 18 years of age; married people do not normally participate. Away from the village a special lodge is built, where the initiates come to die ritually, so that they are able to partake in the power of the primeval ancestors, who suffered an unnatural death, and whose spirits are present in the Kimpassi fetishes. In fact the initiates are believed to become such spirits themselves. During the time they stay in the lodge their behaviour is ruled by many ritual prescriptions. There is much dancing and singing, but only stringed instruments are used. Drums would be inappropriate to the state of ritual death. There is also much sexual licence.

The time spent in the lodge may be anything between a few months and several years. The initiates receive a new name and are taught a new language, derived from the ordinary language through simple mutation rules and the replacement of the most common words. At the end of the period a ritual resurrection takes place and a procession is made at the nearest market. For several weeks the initiates have to behave as if they have to learn again how people should behave. Kimpassi is a secret ritual: no outsiders are allowed to come near the lodge.

### Summary.

The Kongo believed that Nzambi was the invisible and sovereign master of everything and everybody. All other beings which were considered to be forces superior to those of man were divided into two categories; those bound to him through common blood - the ancestors one must honour; and all the others which were so far as possible controlled through fetishes. Misfortune might be caused by the discontent of ancestors; succesful attacks by fetishes; witchcraft, or mysterious power akin to it, operating between uterine kin, and parents and children (or grandparents and grandchildren). Nzambi was only expected to intervene in a few well defined cases, when the basic values of society were violated. Ancestors could be satisfied through funeral festivals; fetishes could be made harmless through the use of more powerful fetishes; divination could discover the identity of people who used mystical power directly.

#### 4. The changing society.

In the sixteenth century the Portuguese established trading posts along the coast to the north and the south of the Congo estuary. They did not penetrate deep inland and San Salvador, occupied in 1560, was relinquished after a time. They rather trained so called pomberos, negro slaves, who directed the caravans which were sent to the Pombo (Stanley Pool). After the expedition of Stanley from Zanzibar across Africa along the Congo river, other Europeans started to realize the tremendous opportunities of a better link than human portorage between the Congo basin and the coast.

Stanley actually built a road, which avoided the cataracts, between 1879 and 1884 and launched a steamship at the Pool. The whole route was secured by means of treaties with indigenious

chiefs. Stanley was working for the consortium which had been set up by Leopold of Belgium to establish a colony in Central Africa. At the same time De Brazza also secured several treaties near the Pool, on behalf of the French government. At the conference of Berlin in 1885 the region inhabited by the Kongo was divided among those who could produce any claims over it: the Portuguese, the French and King Leopold, who became the sovereign of the Independent Congo State.

The "pacification" of the French Congo was rather rapid, yet not without some fighting. The Sundi tribe to the west of Mindouli resisted forcefully under its leader, a famous fetish operator. They were crushed by the superior European forces. But it seems that the Belgians were far more enterprising in their attempts to exploit the region, and that their efforts disrupted the native society much more. Porterage, and levies of food and rubber desorganized village life and caused local rebellions. Police patrols were sufficient to restore order and the responsible chiefs were punished or replaced. It was only the superior force of the Belgians which prevented the Kongo from following the example of their relatives in the neighbouring Angola, who rebelled in 1914 and who burned the houses and property of the Portuguese near the border. They knew it would be useless (VAN WING 1959 p.81).

The railway from Leopoldville to Matadi was to be completed before the end of the century. Compulsory labour service exhausted the population and made it more vulnerable to the sleeping sickness, which swept the country around 1900. The administration decided to make big villages on hill tops, where the population of three or four villages should be concentrated. Nothing could have been more disastrous socially at a time when suspicious about witchcraft, held responsible

for the epidemic outburst, were so common. Moreover the problem of allocation of land and appointment of acceptable leaders was insoluble. When the administration decided to give up this policy of concentration, the people went into hiding in the middle of forests and swamps: breeding places of the tsetse fly. Gradually, after the Belgian government had made itself responsible for the area in 1908, replacing the much criticized personal rule of Leopold, the situation improved. But its division of the country into districts ignored the traditional crowned chiefs and clan elders, as well as the disputes and enmities between clans and lineages. It did not create viable social groups (VAN WING 1959 p.218-9).

In the French part, people also dispersed during the first years of colonial rule in order to escape the mounting pressures of the administration. The pax Gallica made it feasible to live in smaller units. Fission could take place at a lower genealogical level. The government tackled the problem of dispersion seriously about 1930, when it forced people to live near the new roads, which were being built, and near the new railway, which linked Brazzaville with Pointe Noire. The new economic possibilities made people realize the advantages of these new concentrations. Yet customary rights to the ancestral lands made it difficult to take full advantage of the situation. All the members of a lineage have to approve the sale of lineage land and urbanized members still have great interests in the countryside. Now strangers rent land in some cases, if an outright sale is impossible. This pays off when the land is well situated to provide food for sale in the towns.

The French respected the traditional territorial divisions between ethnic units, but they redefined the role of the

traditional chiefs radically. He is no longer a priest, as the majority of the population has been converted (BALANDIER 1963 p.389-90), and his judicial powers have been diminished considerably. He has become a government agent rather than being a representative of the ancestors. Some chiefs left the actual work to their assistant, appointed by the administration, others have manipulated the new system and built up a sort of local dynasties. Some were even promoted to become district chief and made rulers over different clans or even different ethnic groups (BALANDIER 1963 p.391-92).

In both colonies similar economic developments took place. The Kongo seem to have had little difficulty in adapting themselves to the principles of a cash economy. In the countryside cashcrops are grown: manioc and other vegetables, which are sold in the new urban areas, and the palm oil, which is exported. The manioc is sold to relatively poor urban workers, and it gives only a small return. The palm oil business is far more lucrative but subject to heavy fluctuations in world market prices. The development of the towns is remarkable. There are two capitals and two big ports and many smaller towns along the railways which connect the latter with the former. They are all located in the area of the Kongo. They constitute about half of the population of the big towns, whereas the population of the small towns is almost completely made up of Kongo. Much of the work in this area is connected with the handling of goods, which are channelled through this region for a very large part of Central Africa. The bulk of the exports consists of basic commodities and the amount of work depends largely on world market demands for these commodities.



The urbanized Kongo keep very much in touch with their relatives in the country, as their rights and obligations as lineage members are still very important. In case of funerals, they will return to their villages. Many people come to town and live with their relatives, who have a job and earn money. But there has been a change in the relation between seniors and juniors. Formerly meat, wine and other luxuries were divided by the seniors among their junior dependants as they liked. There existed an almost slavish dependence. Marriage also depended upon their goodwill, as they had to pay the brideprice. Now juniors own their own brideprice and give their seniors money, cloths, and European goods. Yet they still treat their seniors with respect. Slavery has been abolished officially, but as slaves are still without lineage ties, their customary position does not seem to have changed very much. Fathers acquire gradually more power over their children and polygamy has decreased remarkably. There are many schools and most people seem to be able to read and to write.

Modern organized political activity started in the French Congo when the "Société amicale des originaires de l'Afrique équatoriale française" was founded by Matswa André in Paris in 1926. It received the moral and even material support from the administration. Matswa came from the neighbourhood of Brazzaville, where he had been a clerk at the customs' office before he joined the army. Later he resigned and went to Paris, where he founded this association for mutual assistance and the improvement of the inferior position of his compatriots. From Paris some delegates were sent to organize the association at home. They had much success among the Ladi-Sundi tribes, among which the association became known as the Mikale. A hierarchy of

officials was established and it is remarkable that both the traditional authorities and the new évolués - well educated people with salaried jobs - were equally represented. During 1929 the movement started to define a rudimentary political programme and required from its members an attitude of passive resistance against the administration.

The most important leaders were arrested and Matswa was sent back from Paris to appear at court in Brazzaville on charges of embezzlement. Money had been collected "under false pretences". He and three of his followers were sentenced to three years imprisonment and ten years exile. During the process riots broke out in Brazzaville. The Ladi had been given the impression that Matswa was their liberator, and that the whites had prevented him from carrying out his plans for the advancement of his people. Their reaction was to refuse anything that could be held to be a restitution for the money they had given, and to boycott all attempts of the government for economic improvement and welfare. The Mikale continued to exist. Money collection was in full swing again in 1938. In 1940 and 1941 there were a number of incidents, as the belief existed that the Germans would come and recognize Matswa as king. He was put into prison again, where he died in 1942; other leaders were exiled.

After the second World war, the political involvement of the Africans, leading up to the independence of the French Congo in 1959 and to that of the Belgian Congo in 1961, became increasingly important, as more and more scope was given for activity in local councils etc. The French Congo was more advanced and even allowed to elect deputies to the French Assembly, before De Gaulle's sweeping proposals for a French Commonwealth were accepted in 1958. It then became independent.

The first president of the republic was Youlou. He belonged to the Lari and considered himself to be the heir to Matswa's political legacy. He was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic church in 1946 and became widely known through his work in youth movements and in a local hospital. In 1956 he was elected as Mayor of Brazzaville but suspended by the ecclesiastical authorities for having broken his vows.

In Congo Brazzaville the Kongo have the absolute majority, whereas they are only a minority of less than 10% of the population in Congo Kinshasa. Their leader, Kasavubu, head of the Abako, which was originally a cultural society, pressed for a federal constitution before independence, while other leaders of the Abako even announced plans for a separate state. Eventually Kasavubu became president, and Lumumba premier, under a fairly unitary form of government. After all, the prospect of losing most of the revenues from Katanga under a federal constitution, was also unwelcome to the Kongo, who had no comparable source of revenue in their own area. After independence Tshombe broke away and he was curiously enough supported by Youlou in direct opposition to Kasavubu. Perhaps Youlou saw a possibility of uniting all the Kongo under his leadership if Congo Kinshasa would break up. This did not happen, though; but friendly relations seem definitely to have come to an end.

#### Summary.

The Kongo were drawn into a wider economic system through cashcrops and wage labour, which made them very vulnerable to changes in the global economic conditions. The traditional political system was superseded by a completely new administrative set up by the Belgians; whereas the French

caused a radical redefinition of the traditional role of the existing chiefs. Relations between kinsmen were adjusted to the new economic importance of the young men. Urbanization was very important, but people remained firmly linked to the countryside.

5. Some processes of religious change.

During the first centuries of contact with the Portuguese, Christianity was spread by Roman Catholic missionaries. They seem to have had a superficial success. Large numbers were baptized, but the few sincere Christians were unable to reform the colonial church, which gave way to many local customs and which tolerated slavery and other evils of the Portuguese colonization. The chiefs were most interested in the church, as it was a new type of organization, which could establish a greater unity in the segmented society of the Kongo. It contributed to a degree of stability in San Salvador until the middle of the seventeenth century. At the end of that century Christianity had virtually ceased to exist, except for a few odd customs and ritual objects, mainly crosses, which were used as fetiches.

Not only did European political powers become interested in the area of the Kongo after Stanley's crossing of the continent, but the missionary societies also. The Baptist Missionary Society established itself at the south bank, to the north of the railway which was to be built, and it also founded a station at San Salvador in Angola. The Swedish missionaries were active on both sides of the border which runs from the river Congo northwards. The Roman Catholic missions established themselves firmly to the north and west of Brazzaville among the Lari tribe; and to the east of the

Inkisi river among the Mpangu tribe. But spheres of influence did not at all co-incide neatly with tribal or clan boundaries.

At the Protestant missions it took mostly seven years or so, before conversions in any number took place and big fetish burnings revealed a new scepticism towards the old religion. Such early mass movements were followed by periods of stubborn resistance and much conflict, until general attitudes became favourable, not least because people started to value the medical and welfare services, and the education provided by the missionaries. Ambitious people saw the advantages of education in the changing society, of which the missions were a predominant part at that time. The post of evangelist-schoolmaster exercised a strong attraction on the minds of the young people. Schools were overcrowded and all but a very small minority of the pupils became Christians; and many of their parents and their relatives followed their example. Ancestor worship was behind the times now, as Christianity became the fashionable religion, and as the attraction of its material benefits was no longer neutralized by its unpopularity.

The first converts attained a high level of personal commitment. The individual guidance and encouragement of the missionaries helped them to gain a better insight into what Christianity meant to these Europeans, than was possible when the big mass movement got underway. Most of the pastoral work had then to be carried out by African assistants, the quality of whose work varied considerably. Instead of a continual improvement in standards of religion and morals, deterioration set in. Adultery, drunkenness, and pre-Christian customs were common among the members of the congregations. Later, after

1940, the problems were aggravated by the lack of Africans who offered themselves to work in the churches. The State paid far more to its employees and teachers. Education was still under missionary control, but it had become subsidized by the state and the old equation of teachers with evangelists was no longer recognized. The pupils no longer came to learn the word of God, but to learn French and other useful subjects. Against this background should African religious initiatives be seen.

Simon Kimbangu was born at Nkamba in about 1890, in a village under strong influence of the Baptist mission at Ngombe Lutete, to the north of Thysville, on the banks of the river Congo. He went to school and became well acquainted with the bible, which had been available to the Kongo in a complete translation since 1896. Later he went to Leopoldville, where he worked as a house servant. In March 1921 he was called in a dream to go back to his village and to start preaching. Next he had a vision which showed him a child who was sick and whom he was to cure by prayer, and the laying on of hands. He went and cured the child. Rumours about this cure spread rapidly and soon people were flocking to Nkamba in search for healing. His meetings began with the singing of hymns, followed by prayer, the reading of a part of the bible, and a sermon. Then came more prayers, after which the healing of the sick took place. Simon always waited for the choir and during the singing he began to tremble violently, which, it was thought, enabled him to do his work. He would put his hands on the patient's head and say: "In the name of Jesus, be whole again".

This faith healing proved that fetishes had become superfluous. It was the power of Nzambi which worked through Simon and there was no longer need for fetishes, which had

never seemed to be very effective. His teaching caused an unheard demand for bibles and hymnbooks. The movement became too big for Kimbangu and from among his close followers he choose new prophets, who established centres all over the region, where they preached and healed after the example of Kimbangu. Soon new candidates just came to Nkamba, and then started to imitate what they had seen and heard. Kimbangu tried to judge whether their symptoms of ecstasy and shaking were really caused by the Holy Spirit, and sometimes he had to exorcise "evil spirits". He opposed any efforts to secede from the missionary churches and enforced their ethical teaching, like the prohibition of polygamy.

The multitudes of people, the excited meetings, and the absence of labourers to make pilgrimages to Nkamba, inevitably drew the attention of the administration to the movement. When the District Commissioner visited Kimbangu, he was treated with open contempt. At this time revolutionary minded radicals at Leopoldville started to use the movement for their own ends: money was collected, propaganda for an independent church was made, and people were encouraged not to pay taxes.

Kimbangu was arrested at the beginning of June, 1921. There was some fighting, although he tried to persuade his followers not to use any force. Kimbangu escaped from the hut which served as prison and was hidden from the whites until September. Many Kongo saw in this escape a miracle, and at this stage people began to believe that the second coming of Christ was imminent and that Kimbangu would be made ruler of Africa by Him. The belief in the resurrection led to the clearing of the graves and of the paths which led from the cemeteries to the villages. The movement changed its character even more when people started to consider baptism as a means

to detect witches. It was said that a person's sincerity was shown by the way water ran off him; if his whole face was not wet when he came up out of the river, this showed that he was a witch, to be banned from the community. People were sometimes forced to undergo this kind of trial. Yet on the whole, the absence of violence to bring about the removal of the whites and to speed up the work of God was remarkable.

The arrest of the group at Kinshasa led to many other arrests, when the police found stencilled leaflets, pamphlets with songs, and even a hagiography of Kimbangu, which had been circulated all over the country. In September Kimbangu decided to go back to Nkamba, where he spent a few days with his close followers in a style, reminiscent of the biblical account of the last days of Christ, before the District Commissioner arrested Simon. He and his followers were brought for a military tribunal. He was charged with the spread of false rumours concerning powers of healing, and even resurrection, with causing unrest by declaring himself to be sent as a Saviour of the black race, and with making the people believe that a new God, more powerful than the state, would come, and that a new national negro church would be founded. The judges gave an even heavier sentence than the prosecutor had asked for, and condemned Kimbangu to death. Despite a violent press campaign and a petition by white colonists, his sentence was remitted to imprisonment for life. Kimbangu was transferred to Elisabethville, where he died in 1950.

The movement became a secret cult. Leaders had to cut themselves off completely from all Europeans, but the rank and file were encouraged to work for the whites and to adopt an attitude of apparent meekness. Prohibitions of polygamy, adultery, and the use of alcohol, were still enforced, however.



The government adopted an attitude of greater tolerance, when everything seemed to have quietened down. But the massive withdrawal from the missionary churches which followed, and a public demonstration at Thysville of several thousand people, had a great impact on the white public opinion. The demonstration was held in January, 1924, to get the release of certain church leaders, who had been arrested by African chiefs, as a threat to their authority. A public enquiry was held, after which a policy of stern repression was initiated.

At some places the movement did not secede from the missionary churches, and this seems to have been due mainly to a sympathetic and understanding attitude of the missionaries concerned. One of them wrote: "It was a revival, by means of which many thousands heathens came to believe in God, and through its agency He revealed much that proved a blessing to them, and to the Christian community" (ANDERSSON 1958 p.76). Initially this was also the case among the Kongo tribe in the Boko district of the French Congo. Swedish missionaries had only fairly recently established a station in this area. Ngombe Lutete, where Kimbangu had had his spiritual home, had already been established in 1881. Ngunzism fired the newly converted Christians with great zeal to preach the gospel to their friends and neighbours. Healing and ecstatic phenomena did not occur at first. But African Christians started to build many new chapels and churches, some of them brick buildings, which could accommodate thousand people or more. They also composed and wrote many new original hymns. Especially young people were attracted by Ngunzism, which caused some anxiety among the old pagan chiefs.

The French administration became worried after what had happened in the Belgian Congo, and suspected that the

Protestant missions in Boko were just a disguise for the dangerous and revolutionary Ngunzism. Some Africans were arrested for having introduced alien elements into the teaching of Christianity, and all the activities of lay men were forbidden, which left a few missionaries with the impossible task to look after a congregation, the numbers of which had multiplied in a very short time. The chiefs were encouraged, or even compelled, to close down meeting houses. The missionaries had done everything they possibly could to please the administration, and it is no wonder that the Kongo felt themselves misunderstood and then deserted by the white missionaries. Ngunzism became firmly established as an independent church as in the Belgian Congo and had to go "underground" in a similar way.

It seemed to have lost much of its expansive force, until in December 1929 messages came from the Belgian Congo that the second coming of Christ was at hand, and that Leopoldville and Brazzaville would be destroyed by a flood. The next year the tension of expectations increased, and meetings were held with disregard for the possible reactions of the whites. In January 1931 the administration reacted, and deported a number of leaders. Letters and pamphlets were found, which revealed how much the movement had become hostile towards the French, the Protestants, the Roman Catholics, and the pagans. A new kingdom and the reign of Cham were expected, when Simon Kimbangu would come back with the "heroes" (ancestors?). Deprived of its leaders, the movement seemed to lapse into resignation, and the resistance to the missions grew weaker.

Ngunzism broke out again in the Belgian Congo in 1934-35, but now at Kinyogi, in the north, on the frontier with Moyen Congo, which district had hardly been touched by the earlier

movement. Its leaders were mainly evangelists of the Swedish mission station. The adherents had to assemble more or less in secrecy, as the administration was still set against any sign of a revival of Ngunzism. At the services there was much singing, apart from the sermon and the prayers, which were pushed more and more into the background. Special features were the public confession of sins, which were quite often revealed by the officiating prophet; the healing of the sick; ordeal by fire - if one was burned while going through the fire this was a sign of insincerity and wickedness. There was almost continual ecstatic dancing and speaking in tongues; and perhaps promiscuity during nocturnal services.

Great importance was attached to the Holy Spirit, who should make Himself known in dreams, in speaking in tongues, ecstasy and body shaking. The teaching of the bible was no longer necessary, as they had received a direct revelation. This was the great difference with the missionaries, who baptized with water alone, whereas they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. There was also the expectation that Simon Kimbangu would take possession of the Kongo throne, and that the whites would leave the country.

The Protestant missionaries found themselves obliged to report the matters to the administration, as they had been asked to do in a special letter from the governor to all missionaries. Arrests and deportations followed in quick succession. The movement was rapidly suppressed, but it was difficult for the missionaries to restore confidence in them again.

The Salvation Army established itself in Brazzaville in 1935 and it soon became extremely popular. This was due to

the influx of Ngunzists, who had gone "underground" and who thought that Simon Kimbangu had come back with the Salvation Army. The letter S on the officers' collars obviously signified Simon. And their ceremonies with uniforms, flags, brass bands, and even drums, were sufficiently different from the things they had come to expect from missionaries, to arouse the highest hopes. But gradually the Ngunzists perceived that the Salvation Army was essentially an organization of whites. Disillusioned they went back to their forests and resumed their secret cult.

But the myth of the return of Kimbangu made everyone eager to discuss the advent of the Salvation Army. At this time a smallpox epidemic caused many deaths among the Kongo and suspicions of witchcraft were rampant. Yet the customary witchcraft ordeals had been strictly forbidden, and people felt terribly insecure. In some way or another the belief arose now, that anyone suspected of witchcraft could show his bona fides by going to the Salvation Army premises, and by taking part in their meetings. Witches would certainly die if they went. Many annexes had to be opened in the villages and the need for new officers became so pressing, that a proper investigation of the candidates was neglected. Many who had been dismissed by other churches were able to join the Army as officers. The French authorities caused the Salvation Army leaders to adopt a more critical attitude. The severance of all connections with those who preached purification of witchcraft through taking part in its services, led to the formation of a Native Independent Salvation Army, which spread over large areas, even where there had never been Ngunzism before.

One of the Africans who became a Salvation Army officer was Simon Mpadi. He was stationed at Kasungulu in the Belgian Congo, where he decided to form an independent "Mission des Noirs": a deliberate attempt to reorganize the Ngunzists.

This was not allowed by the administration and Mpadi was deported. During his first period of imprisonment he enjoyed relative freedom. With the help of supporters he escaped several times and took refuge in Angola and the French Congo. Here he was captured and handed over to the Belgians in 1944. Then he was imprisoned in Elisabethville.

Mpadi introduced the hierarchical organization of the Salvation Army among the Ngunzists and the new institution became known as the "Khaki Church", because khaki uniforms distinguished different ranks within the movement. It developed in the big towns and was also very popular in the Boko district of the French Congo. Conscious efforts were made to win over the more educated people, but the majority of the adherents were to be found among the more traditionally minded villagers, and the new immigrants in the towns.

It is not possible to give a coherent picture of the doctrine of the movement, partly because of the great regional differences. The expectations concerning the future circled round the second coming of Simon Kimbangu, the messiah who would establish a new kingdom. Services were conducted in the way of the movement of 1934-35 at Kinyogi. There was the same extreme emphasis on signs of possession by the Holy Spirit. But now even ancestors were worshipped to acquire these experiences. Earth from their graves was mixed with water, which was used during the services to induce body shaking. The missionaries were rejected because they lacked the Spirit. They were also accused of not telling the full truth of the bible. There was a definite esoteric aspect to the Khaki Church. People who had joined recently were still allowed to go to the services at the mission stations. They were not yet to know that for the really initiated promiscuity was in fact no sin at all.

In 1940 the Tonsi movement spread from northern Angola.

It wanted a complete reversal to the pre-colonial way of life without schools and hospitals. It wanted to restore the ancestor cult and to re-inforce the traditional authority. There was also a strong expectation of a new kingdom, which would be established by Tata Allamani, invoked together with Tata Spirit and Tata Kimbangu. The German threat to the Belgian colonial rule was made into a spiritual force.

After his death in 1942, Matswa, the leader of the political resistance to the French rule among the Ladi, was transformed into a kind of Saviour. He was adopted as such by an independent church founded by a former Roman Catholic evangelist. Already in 1933 considerable opposition had been shown against the Roman Catholic missions. Chiefs who had attended the celebration of the founding of the first mission were molested and the assembled Ladi had refused to kneel to receive the blessing of the bishop. The V-sign and the portrait of De Gaulle were displayed as symbols of independence and freedom in the new church. The name of Kimbangu was also adopted and one of the formulas used in the ritual was: "In the name of the Father and of Matswa André and of Simon Kimbangu". Its members wanted to be recognized officially and to be treated on an equal footing with the missionary churches: an independence from the whites in the religious field as well. There was also the wish to become allied with other independent churches from Protestant origin.

The religious service consisted of hymn singing, prayers, and preaching; there was no element of Spirit possession or ecstatic manifestations. The ethical teaching was largely Christian in content. Yet there were a few food taboos: the vampire, which looks like the European images of the devil; the ape, which is like man; the snake, which misguided the

first woman. One expected a golden age, when recompensation would be given for all humiliation and suffering. Adherents had a candle before their door, which should be lit three times a day, when prayers had to be said. This is why the church is sometimes referred to as Nzambi Bougie. Each had also received a stick, which had been consecrated on the graves of the ancestors, and which was thought to give protection against misfortune. Prayers were said to the ancestors as a collectivity on All Souls' Day. There was no lineage worship. The church was organized in a hierarchical way; women had their separate organization. Children were organized in small groups, who received from time to time special religious education at the centre of the movement. This seems to reflect the Roman Catholic background. Chiefs who became members were given special positions of honour.

The praying in front of a candle was also characteristic of an independent church founded in Pointe Noire in 1948. Its leader was a prophet, who had received a vision of a strong man, who urged him to preach against witchcraft and fetishes. Members were purified with sacred water, which was also used in the communion service. Little is known about the social background of the movement, which was prohibited when it started to teach that the consolations of religion were of greater value in the case of sickness, than the help of western medicines and doctors (SORET 1959 p.98).

In the early fifties another anti-witchcraft movement swept the country. All people had to smear earth from the graves on their mouths, and then swear that they would never use witchcraft again. Punishment of transgression would be death. All people who died after the performance of the rite were evidently witches, who had caused the deaths which had occurred before. A few years later Roman Catholic churches were

suddenly filled with people who brought their fetishes to have them burned and to receive holy water. Soon it developed into a full-fledged witch finding movement, which used holy water as a means to detect witches, who would not be able to survive this treatment. The attempts of Roman Catholic priests to keep the movement in hand were only successful in the very early beginning.

In 1954 the local Ngunzist leaders in the original stronghold of the followers of Kimbangu, to the north of Thysville, decided to shift the centre of their activities to Leopoldville, where it became known as the "Eglise de J̄esus Christ sur la terre par le prophète Simon Kimbangu", abbreviated as EJCSK. The church became a rallying point for many dispersed groups, and at the same time a conscious effort was made for a unification of doctrine and liturgy. There was no longer place for ecstatic spiritualism and pagan elements like ancestor worship. The earliest catechisms centred upon Kimbangu, but later reference was made to biblical texts alone. The church did not only refer to Simon Kimbangu, but was actually being led by his own sons, and also a few of his very early followers, who had been released from exile at last.

The government adopted a not unfavourable attitude towards the new church. In 1958 there were about 60,000 members. The strength of the movement seemed to be its adaptive value in the urban setting. It was a supra-tribal organization, which made it possible for Lingala speakers, from other parts of the country, to have friendly contacts with Kongo, which was not normally the case. Nkamba became a place of pilgrimage, where a tomb was erected for Simon Kimbangu. The sacred water of the pond there was still sold for healing purposes, but as a justification for this practice reference was made to what happens at Lourdes. Choirs and hymn singing were very important



in this church, in many ways very much like the Baptist missionary church. In both churches adult baptism was practised.

### Summary

Kimbangu was a revivalist preacher and a faith healer. He proved to many Kongo that Christianity was not essentially something confined to Europeans, who had absorbed it into their culture, but that God could reveal Himself directly in a black prophet. After his trial Kimbangu became a symbol of independence. There were strong expectations that he would become king of the Kongo at the end of times, when the Europeans would leave. These apocalyptic beliefs were very strong about 1930 in the French Congo, and also in 1940, when the Tonsi movement spread from Angola. The movement of 1934-35 and the Khaki Church devoted most of their attention to manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Kimbangu found a place in the beliefs of such diverse movements as the Tonsi, which was clearly a revival of the ancient religion; and in the Nzambi Bougie, the independent Roman Catholic church, which tried to achieve in the religious field among the Ladi, what the Mikale did with regard to the administration: independence from the whites on an equal footing. Finally Simon Kimbangu was more or less monopolized by his own sons for their independent Baptist church.

### 6. The interpretation of some processes of religious change.

DOUTRELOUX (1965) sees Ngunzism as the attempt of the Kongo society to surpass itself and to solve its traditional problems. The society is seen as characterized by a state of continual tension at the socio-political level, where no stability of lineage or leadership can be found. This tension

is made tangible at the magico-religious level, where the power of fetishism is used to counteract witchcraft, which is the real destroyer of cohesion and stability. Yet this power is self-defeating, because it does only cause more disruption, as it has the same effects as witchcraft. A compensation for this lack of stability at both levels is found in speech, which creates myths and dispenses thereby prestige. The oral traditions of lineages and clans about their place in the ancient kingdom, about the migrations and the occupation of the land by the ancestors, recreate the society as an ideal type, as a dream which can never be translated into the facts of everyday life.

The Kongo are said to interpret the great material wealth of the whites as a sign of their magico-religious power. Yet the whites do nothing to suppress witchcraft, and their new religious teachings attack ancestor worship, the ritual expression of a belief in an ideal order, directly. Ngunzism promises a direct access to the religious powers of the whites. Therefore it is able to oppose them successfully. It also deals with the wicked people, who want to destroy society, as it creates a new dichotomy between believers, who receive the Spirit and who are healed by faith, and the outsiders, who will be destroyed in the coming establishment of the new kingdom. The new church promises a new kind of protection and a new way to dispose of the enemies of society. Yet the rules promulgated by the prophets, their official declarations, their apostolic letters, and the miracles attributed to them, are nothing more than a recompensation for the lack of stability and the actual inferior status, on the level of speech. The attempt to achieve a regeneration of society has to remain a dream. This is proved by the instability of the various sects and their organization and by the fluidity of their doctrines.

In no way is this different from the lack of equilibrium inherent in the traditional lineage organization, or from the plasticity of the oral traditions.

Doutreloux's point of view is an example of a not uncommon French approach to the analysis of African religious systems, which gives priority to the total body of knowledge, belief, and doctrine, expressed in a people's mythology and in the symbolism of their ritual, reflected in their conceptions of man and of the universe, and embodied in their categories of thought, their forms of social organization and their technology, and constituting a coherent, logical system. It does not start from the social and political relations in the context of which ritual, myth, and belief are found to be operative (FORTES and DIETERLEN 1965 p.3-4).

Doutreloux's interpretation is an attempt to find out what Ngunzism essentially is. To find this essence, he defines the essential properties of the situation to which it is a reaction. But he cannot prove that his selection is right. One can equally well maintain that Ngunzism is a Christian revival. "That what are essentially Christian thoughts have come to set their stamp upon these vital popular movements has had the greatest significance" (ANDERSSON 1958 p.269). This interpretation has the advantage that it shows that Ngunzism is an example of the wider class of Christian revivals, which are caused by situations, the typical aspects of which we also find in the case of Ngunzism.

It appears that at the time of the call of Kimbangu the situation in the mission church was far from ideal: many had joined because it was old-fashioned not to, or to obtain material benefits. Sinful behaviour was regarded light-heartedly by many. This is typically a situation in which

religious revival takes place, especially if the whole society is also in a situation of change (WILSON 1966). It insists on the public confession of sins and the pressure brought upon the convert may reach into the unconscious, producing an emotional release, which cannot be brought under rational control. There may be dissociation, accompanied by psycho-somatic phenomena such as uncontrollable shaking, falling into trance, speaking with tongues. This is interpreted as possession by the Holy Spirit. Dissociation can also be brought about by the repetitive character of preaching, the rhythmic quality of hymn singing and the powerful expectation that it should occur. Once a member of a crowd is possessed, others follow easily, until it is not unknown for all the participants to be dancing wildly, sometimes, apparently unhurt, in the fire. Then, sexual love appears very near to religious love, and they always get mixed up in the intimacies and social excitements of revivals. Belief in spiritual healing without the use of doctors or medicines is also a regular feature of revivalism. It may be that the visible reception of the Spirit becomes a condition of being fully saved. In such a case services are deliberately directed towards its achievement by new converts and to its repetition in the old (WELBOURN 1966 p.10-17).

Africans are unanimous in declaring that Ngunzism was a religious revival, which degenerated and assumed a hostile attitude to the mission, on account of the lack of understanding shown by the missionaries. Dismayed at the ecstatic character of the movement and suspicious of faith healing, they did not dare, either, to take a firm stand against government interference (ANDERSSON 1958 p.264).

(BALANDIER 1963 p.515) sees Ngunzism as a change in orientation from particularism to universalism. For him the

phenomenon has as little to do with the old religious system - whatever adaptations may be tolerated otherwise - as have the Christian missions. If the Kongo want to become independent equals of the Europeans, they need a religion which is marked by monotheism and a belief in the efficacy of faith and prayer, rather than ritual manipulations (ibid. p.477). This shows the nature of the passage from a state of the society in which conformity to the tradition dominates, to one where the processes of change and historical impulses become operative (ibid. p.616). The Kongo, seen as an undifferentiated whole (ibid. p.478), are subject to a very special constellation of forces: missionaries, administrators, big business, etc., which are opposed to each other in some cases, or even divided within themselves, co-operative in other cases, but always inextricably bound together with one another and with the society, which is being colonized. Ngunzism "reveals" this colonial situation: the badly adjusted teaching of the missionaries, their internal dissent, the suppression of the African political "minority", the lack of economic protection - and also the interrelations between economic crises, religious reactions to the sense of insecurity, and political action against any kind of African initiative with social implications (ibid. p.34-5). The fact that the society has become more vulnerable to change is most clearly revealed at the economic level: the periods of the economic world crises in 1921 and 1929-31, and the war-economy during the second world war. At these times of economic distress people turn to Ngunzism, which also becomes a rallying point for all who want to oppose the whites, who themselves made Kimbangu into a symbol of independence (ibid. p.477). This is a direct transference of

political reactions to the religious plane. Or rather politics and religion are not separated, but Ngunzism is the reaction against a total situation, by a movement which overcomes all internal lines of dissent. This line of thought has been further elaborated by Doutreloux as we have seen.

Balandier does not take into account that Ngunzism is not the reaction of all Kongo - in fact only some of them became Ngunzist, after they themselves had been differentiated from the rest of society through becoming Christians. He also forgets that economic booms are at least as socially disruptive as economic depressions, and he does not recognize the adaptive value of syncretist cults for a new social category, consisting of migrants in the new social setting of the town. Economic distress need not necessarily lead to a search for consolation in the promises of religion; it may lead to a direct use of force against those who are held responsible for the situation. The January riots of 1959 in Leopoldville are an example of this. And it is astonishing that Ngunzism did not lead to violence against the whites. ANDERSSON (1958 p.269) assumes that this is due to the fact that it is essentially a Christian revival. It is also puzzling, if we follow Balandier's argument, that some sort of religious oppositional movement did not arise earlier, when the interference of the whites was most pressing and sleeping sickness decimated the population. The explanation could be that only Christianity made it possible that Nzambi could interfere directly with the situation on earth through prophets.

Balandier also says that for the Kongo the real problem was to give a meaning to the changes to which the society was subjected. This can only be done if use is made of certain

traditional elements, and of the dynamic quality of certain typical categories of behaviour (BALANDIER 1963 p.480). In this way the relative importance of different elements of the traditional culture and society can be determined in a far less arbitrary way, than would have been possible without this process of change (ibid. p. 37). This means that he tries to find parallels between modern conditions and the old culture. He is not interested in real historical connections but is satisfied with superficial resemblances.

Balandier argues that the rise of syncretism goes back to a tradition which started in the Portuguese missionary church (ibid. p.52). This is not plausible: the few odd Christian elements had become part and parcel of the culture two hundred years earlier and the tradition of syncretism must have died out during these two hundred years. Similarly to believe that the territorial division of the independent churches re-establishes the division of the ancestral clan lands, because both sanctify a relation between a group and a territory, seems to be rather far fetched (ibid. p.516). These are only a few examples to show what his method amounts to.

#### Summary.

There are three sets of factors which must be taken into account if we are to understand Ngunzism. The traditional background can explain why a prophet movement of some kind, as among the Lugbara (MIDDLETON 1963), did not take place during the early years of the Belgian occupation. It was impossible that Nzambi could reveal himself in a prophet, according to the traditional system of thought. Even disasters common to all Kongo were still attributed to witches and fetishes and not to Nzambi directly. Therefore there was no need to deal

with him through some mediator. One could combat evil by doing away with all fetishes and a rigorous witch hunting campaign. Time and again religious movements acquired these aspects. Simon Kimbangu, the Salvation Army, and even the Roman Catholic church were considered to offer facilities to achieve these traditional ends. But was Ngunzism itself trying to translate the traditional dichotomy between witches and decent people into a Christian idiom, in terms of the Day of Wrath, which would separate the true believers from the unbelievers? I would not go further than to say that there is a parallel. I certainly disagree with suggestions implying that the movement tried to recreate the traditional mythical unity of all Kongo. The fact that Lingala speaking people were welcome in the church, although there existed great political and social tensions between them and the Kongo, shows that Ngunzism was essentially a universal religion.

The general economic, social and political changes also account for certain aspects of Ngunzism. It was certainly popular during times of acute economic depressions, which may be due to the particular emphasis given to beliefs about a sudden return of Kimbangu, which would solve all problems. But it was also very important during the economic boom of the nineteenfifties, because it helped new migrants to adopt themselves to the new conditions of town life. It provided a type of church better adapted to their needs than the western churches, because it was genuinely African, and yet providing an association with clear rules, which could replace or complement the moral bonds of lineage and clan membership. The general resistance of the Ladi against French domination was expressed in a political movement as well as in an independent Roman



Catholic church, which adopted Simon Kimbangu as a symbol of independence. Elsewhere Ngunzism seemed not so much the transference of political aims to a religious level, as a projection of religious expectations on to the political level, which prevented effectively any direct political action.

The third factor is the influence of the internal dynamics of processes of religious change. Ngunzism came into being in a situation where Christianity seemed to be based more on social convention than on inner conviction. This resulted in an emphasis on spiritual power, which was no longer apparent in conversions of adults against considerable social pressures. Where this was still the case, where the church was still in its earliest stages of expansion, these outward signs of the Holy Spirit were of less importance than a renewed zeal to achieve the conversion of the whole community, as there existed no need to make a distinction within the church between true believers, who showed the gift of the Spirit, and the great mass of adherents, for whom the orthodox teachings and established rituals were not the reflections of an inner experience. In the beginning there had been little awareness of the need for ecclesiastical organization, because of the doctrinal emphasis on the freedom of the Spirit, and the essential spontaneity of the religious experiences. But when Simon Mpadi wanted to resuscitate these characteristics among large sections of the population, after the original fervour had almost ceased to exist, with the exception of a few scattered local groups, he needed a firm organizational framework, which was provided by the model of the Salvation Army. When government recognition became feasible, Ngunzism tried to get rid of those features which distinguished it from western churches, to become more respectable in the eyes of the administration. For the second generation

they were anyway no longer a reaction to the conditions of the church of origin. The apocalyptic aspects of the Nguzist doctrines were also superfluous, now it looked as if the Kongo were going to have political independence soon.

All three sets of factors are important to understand Nguzism. For certain aspects certain factors are more important, but to ascertain the relative importance of each set with regard to the movement as a whole, a subjective judgment of what Nguzism essentially is, seems necessary.

## CHAPTER III.

RELIGIOUS CHANGE AMONG THE GANDA1. Introduction

In this chapter I shall treat the expansion and the decline of the Anglican Church among the Ganda and the emergence of some new religious movements, which were due mainly to African initiative. I shall have to set these processes of religious change against the background of other changes in the society. To understand both types of change, it is necessary to know something about the traditional social system and religion, but even more important is a consideration of the introduction of the new religions among the Ganda, which was in many respects a unique process, with many far reaching consequences for the further social and religious developments. This means that I have to change the scheme of description, which I proposed in the introductory chapter, slightly.

There are many studies which deal with the Ganda. Yet the sophistication of the specialists of different disciplines, and the time span of at least one hundred years, during which many drastic changes took place, while a clear sense of continuity with the past was also retained, make it difficult to produce a coherent and comprehensive picture. This is not made easier by the fact that we know certain institutions and problem areas much better than others. We know much about the political organization and its development, but little of the importance of kinship and the development cycle of families before the introduction of the cash crops. The development

of the Anglican Church is well known, but no comparable information is available about the numerically more important Roman Catholic church.

I mainly made use of the study of SOUTHWOLD (1965) and the collection of essays edited by FALLERS (1964) for general information on Ganda society. WELBOURN (1962) and TAYLOR (1958) have provided most of my material on the traditional religion. These two have also described the process of religious change with special reference to the Protestants (WELBOURN 1961, TAYLOR 1958). OLIVER (1965) has set this process, so far as the missions are concerned, in a wider historical context. The influence of the British administration has been studied in detail by LOW and PRATT (1960). APTER (1961) covers very much the same ground as these two writers, and the chapters on modern political developments in FALLERS (1962). The relation between politics and religion during two crucial periods in the history of Buganda, 1875-1900 and 1952-62 have been traced by LOW (1958) and by WELBOURN (1965). FAUPEL (1962) gives much detailed information on the introduction of the Christian religion; KATUMBA and WELBOURN (1964) discuss the early developments of the Islam and the attitude of the king towards the Muslim converts.

Nowadays Buganda is a part of Uganda. It lies along the northern and western shores of Lake Victoria and stretches for about 200 miles along the lake shore. The eastern boundary is formed by the Nile, on the other side of which live the Soga, a people culturally very similar to the Ganda. Ganda rulers were frequently called upon by different factions competing for power in the small kingdoms, into which the Soga were

divided (FALLERS 1965 p.134). To the west are two other kingdoms of the interlacustrine type: Toro and Ankole. Toro was formerly a part of the kingdom of the Nyoro to the north, at the expense of which the boundaries of Buganda were constantly being expanded.

Most of the country is about 4,000 feet high. The rainfall is well distributed throughout the year, and reliable from year to year. The typical landscape consists of a multitude of small hills, separated by valleys commonly filled with papyrus swamp, or sometimes with forest. Soil types lie in bands along hill sides: in most places the best soil is a wide band of clay along the middle of the hillside. The land is excellent for bananas, robusta coffee, cotton, and a variety of other crops. A century ago there were perhaps about one million Ganda. This number has not changed much since, but many immigrants have poured into the country. In certain districts they constitute over 50 % of the population and among males Ganda form a minority in their own country now (Uganda Census 1959).

## 2. An outline of the traditional social system (1)

Traditional Buganda was rich enough to support a substantial group of persons not engaged in primary production - persons who were specialist in political and religious activities. The staple food was and still is the banana, cultivated by women in gardens which continue to bear for many generations. The Ganda say that one woman's work can provide food for ten men. Local groups could be permanent as there

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( 1 ) This section and the next are historical reconstructions and therefore described in the past tense.

was no shifting cultivation. Minimal demands were made on male labour for subsistence activities. Men hunted, fished, and made banana beer. They also built the houses and produced bark cloth. Smithing, pottery, and canoe building was the work of specialists. Markets were held regularly. There were levies of food and craft products by the political functionaries, for whom the men also had to build residences. Their labour was required for the maintenance of an extensive network of roads as well, but most important was the military service which was compulsory for all able bodied men. The object of war was to plunder the enemy's land of cattle, wives, and children and to induce him to pay regular tribute. The booty was widely shared and individual bravery was greatly honoured.

In the old society occupational differentiation was very simple and there were only two categories. There were commoners, engaged in some kind of productive work, who were inferior and who obeyed; and there were the lords, king's officials and chiefs, men of honour who ruled. Yet although lords behaved in an aristocratic and authoritarian manner, there was no class of lords with a distinct culture which required a long training to acquire.

For purposes of government the kingdom was divided into counties - originally three but by the time the British arrived ten. Each county chief had under him about half a dozen sub county chiefs, each of whom governed a section of the county. Below these there were one or two further levels of chiefs, the lowest level consisting of kyalo chiefs. Kyalo can be translated as village - seen as a unit of settlement and cultivation on a hillside - or as manor - the domain and estate of the chief. The jural status of the people living on this estate depended entirely on their relation with the chief. They were his clients and subject to his authority, which

included power over life and death. The client was obliged to give various kinds of service to the chief, as well as periodic gifts of produce. In return he received protection, a plot of land and a share in the chief's wealth when being entertained in his compound. One had to live under a village chief; yet this relationship was voluntarily entered into and the commoner could shift his allegiance if he was dissatisfied. A decrease in followers would eventually lead to dismissal of the chief because he would be unable to carry out his obligations toward his superiors. Only those survived who ingratiated themselves by their efficiency, justice, generosity, and humanity.

Chiefs of all levels had to maintain law and order and to carry out public works and to provide the capital with food, firewood, etc. from time to time. Each chief was also responsible for getting his men together and leading them to war. Chiefs who had proved themselves to be weak and cowards were dismissed and the heroes of the campaign often took their places. Tax collection was not the direct responsibility of the chiefs, but of collectors appointed directly by the king (or kabaka). But the chiefs helped them and were entitled to a proportion of the tax collected. Most of the chiefs were chosen and appointed by the king himself. He had the power to transfer them and to promote or dismiss them as he wished. Apart from chiefs whose first responsibility it was to administer a territory, there were the batongole, who were originally people who supplied the kabaka with special goods and services and who were rewarded with an estate. This made them automatically into political functionaries, because estate and office were inseparable. They were fitted into the hierarchy of territorial chiefs; mostly as minor chiefs but also sometimes as sub county chiefs. They

were especially the "king's men" and appointed from among his favourites. The kabaka used them therefore to check and spy on other chiefs. The bataka, heads of clans and lineages also held estates - in most cases of the size of a village. But they were not especially loyal to the kabaka, who had only restricted control over their appointment.

There were about forty exogamous patrilineal clans divided into major lineages, which were subdivided into minor lineages, and these consisted of minimal lineages. The head of a clan or segment presided over a council, consisting of the heads of segments, which are subordinate or, in case of the minimal lineage, of its leading members. It was responsible for internal affairs and the representation of the clan at the court of the kabaka, through pages, and girls for the harem, as well as the fulfilment of traditional ceremonial duties allocated to the clan. Some state offices were hereditary within a clan and formed a notable exception to the rule that the kabaka had a free choice in the appointment of functionaries. In many cults priests of one clan alone officiated. Each clan and lineage had an estate where its head was village chief and where members of the group were buried. It was considered to be normal, however, that most people who lived on clan estates belonged to other clans than that of the chief. Clans were responsible for arranging succession and inheritance. There was no order of births to be observed in case of "hereditary" offices. The lineage elders decided which candidate was suitable. The kabaka forbade the burial of several generations of a lineage in one place, because this would constitute a new bataka estate. From this it was inferred by the Ganda that all estates had originally been



granted by the kabaka. He was in fact the head of all clans and all new bataka had to be presented to him to gain his approval of their appointment. Each clan had the opportunity of providing the kabaka's mother (although there were a few exceptions) and to form a special link with the kabaka himself in this way. Each clan also provided boys to serve the kabaka, and girls to become wives in the royal harem. The more favourite of the pages became chiefs, bringing glory and no few advantages to their clans.

The kabaka was elected from among the princes whose father or grandfather had been kabaka, by the prime minister of the former kabaka and the most important territorial chiefs, on the basis of the prince's personal character and the relative strength of support from the different chiefs. A prince belonged to the clan of his mother, although for practical purposes all descendants of all kings together were a kind of clan. They could not be appointed to an office. The kabaka was the supreme authority in the nation and all other authority was held to derive from him. The existence of other candidates to the throne could lead to civil war, especially during the early years of the new kabaka's reign. Quite often rival princes, who might become dangerous, were executed, when their brother came to power; but sons could not be exterminated and they might become impatient and stage a rebellion if they could find enough followers.

The kabaka was administrating the whole of Buganda actively and continuously from the royal capital. Within the palace enclosure lived the kabaka with his wives, pages, servants and slaves; outside it were the town houses of chiefs and officials and the huts of their servants and retainers. The

real home of all these people remained in the countryside. The capital moved frequently around the country and no urban-rural dichotomy ever developed. The more important chiefs had to be constantly at the capital in order to indicate their loyalty. If a chief remained at home he was immediately suspected of plotting against the kabaka. But chiefs wanted to be available themselves for command of raiding expeditions, which would bring favour and promotion. The wives, servants, and pages, served the personal needs of the kabaka but they were also instruments of royal control. The king was linked to royal favourites through marriage. Affinal links with the kabaka were eagerly sought after, as they might bring rich rewards in the next generation. The lineage of the queen mother was certain of a great number of royal appointments of its members to various offices. The corps of pages, consisting of sons and other dependants sent by chiefs, lineage and clan heads, and other officials, to seek "their fortunes", formed a pool of eager talent and was in a very real sense a school for chiefs. The servants were on their estates the "king's men" par excellence. The kabaka ruled with much arbitrary cruelty. Not only did the king condemn without trial wives and courtiers who displeased him, but evidently people were killed simply as an expression of the power of the kabaka. A clan was held corporately responsible for the misdeeds of its members and when a chief gave offence to the kabaka, the extinction of the whole clan might be ordered. Its members pretended then to belong to other clans, where they were protected by their blood brothers.

### Summary

On the one hand the administration of the country was a smooth running machine, in which men were arranged in dyadic

relations of subordination and superordination, ready to put orders emanating from the centre into effect with great efficiency and a show of unfailing loyalty, on the other hand the struggle for political power and positions of leadership was ruthless and extremely risky. Warfare eliminated many chiefs, because cowardice would be punished severely - yet it could bring the highest rewards. The personal favour of the king was terribly important, but people who came most into contact with him ran the greatest risk of displeasing him. A favourite means of advancement was for one chief to accuse another to the kabaka of treachery or incompetence in the hope that the latter might give him (the accuser) carte blanche to seize the office and property of the accused. Royal jealousy curbed the power of the subordinate groups in the nation and set the individual relatively free. This freedom was used to seek one's own advantage by changing one's alliance from chief to chief, This mobility was another check on the development of autonomous local groups under chiefs or clan leaders.

### 3. An outline of the traditional religion.

The traditional Ganda conception of man saw him as an essentially this-worldly creature, consisting of a material body in which was a semi-material muzimu. The muzimu had no very important function as long as life remained in the body, but it could be removed by means of witchcraft and then the body would pine away and die. After death it is the muzimu which continues to exist. The mizimu are small and weak and they need a physical agent through whom to do their will. But considered as active, psychic entities, they are immensely powerful.

For some time after the burial of the corpse the muzimu remains in the vicinity of the grave. Next the heir would consult

a spirit medium to find out how best to please this muzimu. He might be given precise instructions as to how he should build a miniature hut or shrine as a dwelling place for the muzimu where small offerings should be placed from time to time. The most usual way in which the mizimu were thought to manifest their power, was by possessing a living person. One could only be saved from such a malevolent attack by the use of supernatural means of exorcism, generally by drinking medicine, although it was often necessary to let the muzimu speak out its grievances through the mouth of the victim, before it would depart. Women appeared to be more liable to suffer from such attacks than men.

Like and yet unlike the common people the kings had their own cult associated with the mizimu of their predecessors. When a king died his jawbone and umbilical cord were preserved in a special temple where they were guarded by the sister who had gone with him through the installation ceremonies, by the Kimbugwe, his main ritual specialist, and by a number of widows and other officials. Although the relics of a particular kabaka became less important with each succeeding generation, certain officials after their death had to be replaced by the clan to which they had belonged. The kabaka visited these temples with relics only rarely, and these visits would be marked by a considerable number of human sacrifices. But shrines were maintained at the capital itself, where the officially recognized medium, through whom the dead kabaka announced his will, frequently came to pass on advice about affairs of state. The kabaka often followed the councils of his ancestors regarding

the appointment and dismissal of chiefs. Sometimes people became suddenly possessed by the muzimu of a dead kabaka and were called in this way to devote themselves to service at his tomb. The mizimu of the dead kings would only help the ruling kabaka, but this was not so with the comparable hero gods, many of whom belonged to a mythical dynasty, believed to have been ruling the country before the present one came to power. They were served in temples scattered throughout the country, each with a medium, who might belong to any clan, and a priest, who looked after the temple and acted as an interpreter between medium and people, and whose office was hereditary in a particular clan. To the temples belonged extensive estates on which slaves were employed.

These "balubaale", as they were called, were also connected with particular sicknesses like plague, smallpox, and trembling, or with natural phenomena like Lake Victoria and the rainbow. The relation with the kabaka was ambiguous. He might bring large offerings to propitiate them, if they had indicated that they had caused a certain sickness, or if they had imposed certain taboos which could only be lifted through such offerings. Yet the kabaka did not want to become possessed by them, because this would put him under their control, and they might plunder estates, destroy temples and kill officials, if the balubaale did not come up to his expectations. A diviner might advise a sick person, with his parents, his father's sister and his brothers and sisters, to visit a lubaale shrine, in order to "settle" the lubaale of this particular family unit. Initiated assistants would sing songs and make music, until the lubaale would possess somebody of the visiting party, who would start to dance wildly, sometimes even in the fire, without being harmed by it. Then

the lubaale would tell through his mouth what shrine should be built, and what animals be sacrificed. At home a shrine was built in accordance with this command, and the thing ended with much drinking and feasting as at a wedding party. Regular offerings should be made from now onwards to prevent the lubaale from interference with family life.

The word lubaale has also been used for the mystical power which was believed to dwell in rivers, lakes, rocks, caves and animals, snakes and swarms of bees. Others have made a distinction between these misambwa, which required a material object through which they could reveal themselves, and which were of local importance only, and the tribal balubaale, which were known in spirit only (WELBOURN 1962 p.174). Many misambwa were believed to have been generated in a supernatural way. For example, there were stories that they had been born by women. Many were associated with particular clans, on whose estates their dwelling place was found.

Certain actions were believed to bring about an automatic retribution. Food taboos were widespread and there was also the belief that certain contacts between in-laws could cause palsy. Many charms were used against sickness, to ensure fertility, and to prevent theft. A certain number of these was generally known, and could be procured without consulting a doctor. Actually there were three kinds of specialist: sorcerers who dealt in destructive medicines or poisons, doctors who could give antidotes and protection against spells, and herbalists who were concerned with body healing. Protective medicines would injure a person's enemies. Some malignant medicine would be planted in the house or garden of the enemy and one would take care that he learned

that he was being bewitched. One might discover such medicines through divination and learn who had placed them there, so that counter measures could be taken. The actual power of the medicines seemed to reside in what might be called an attached spirit. Such a belief was overt in the case of fetishes: receptacles, normally horns, filled with a concoction of magical substances mixed with clay. Through the ritual application of the blood of sacrifices this then became the habitation of a "familiar", personal but in no way human. The most powerful belonged to the kabaka. These fetish spirits had the same power to possess people as had the dead kings and the tribal balubaale. The fetishes might be used in the same way as charms, but normally they remained in the possession of the practitioner who would send the "familiar" away to do mischief: to burn a house, cause death by drowning, etc.

Ganda also believed in witches whose malevolence was directed indiscriminately against anyone who might cross their path. They were associated particularly with leopards and thought to eat the flesh of their victims. They were not humanly responsible, however, for their behaviour, because they were possessed by a familiar and might be unaware by day of what they did at night.

For the Ganda any occurrence might be significant for their personal well-being and individuals normally had their own code of omens. Yet unexpected marvels or monstrosities and especially sickness could mean any kind of supernatural influence, and a diviner should be consulted for any measures that might have to be taken. Divination was done by the inter-

pretation of the pattern of certain small objects, which had been thrown on the ground; on the basis of thorough questioning; through consulting a fetish, who would seem to speak from under the eaves where it was hanging (by means of hollow castor oil stems with a calabash trumpet on the end). The most common method, however, was divination through spirit possession by a musimbwa or muzimu or lubaale who would speak through the diviner. Sessions would normally take place in a special shrine house, an entrance fee would be required, and further payments were expected if the consultation had led to success.

Summary.

The major emphasis in Ganda religion was not upon the ritual reaffirmation of existing institutions, but rather upon instrumental magic. There was no regular, public ritual associated with the structure of unilineal descent groups. The relations between particular offices in the state were not supernaturally sanctioned. The one national ceremony was the coronation, on which occasion ritual association took place between the king and officials and descent groups. But gods were not called upon to sanction these relations. They were prominent in a different context; they gave supernatural aid for particular purposes, national or individual. Attachment to supernatural powers was based upon a mystical call of individuals to become possessed by them and it was not a necessary concomitant of certain positions in the society. These supernatural powers were not subject to the kabaka; certain hills where the balubaale had lived were taboo to him and his messengers. The kabaka might try to assert his authority by raiding the temples and killing the functionaries,



but this was rather like fighting an equal. The status of the kabaka was "prospectively supernatural".

4. The introduction of the new religions.

The first foreigners to enter into Buganda in 1844 were the Arabs from Zanzibar. After 1850 traders arrived more frequently and one of them had the courage to remonstrate with Suna over his intention to put a score of people to death in one of the ritual executions. Suna admired this audacity and wanted to be instructed in the first four chapters of the Koran. After Mutesa, who succeeded Suna in 1856, had put himself firmly into power, he encouraged trade with Zanzibar again. The situation had been so insecure during the succession war that the Arabs had stopped coming. He also put himself under the tuition of several teachers of Islam, together with other notables and pages of the palace. They began to learn to read the Koran and to observe some fasts. Several mosques were erected and people were asked to greet in the Muslim way. Those who refused suffered insult and ridicule and later Mutesa ordered the killing of hundred of them. Although Mutesa himself never seems to have thought of circumcision, many others were circumcised in the long run, which must have been quite a step for the Ganda who abhorred any bodily mutilation.

It is plausible that Mutesa wanted to be on friendly terms with the traders from Zanzibar because he feared an invasion from the north where slave traders had started their disastrous work. In 1870 Mutesa acquired guns and gunpowder from the Sultan of Zanzibar just after a party of Egyptians had tried to establish themselves in Buganda; they had been treated in such a way that they had thought it better to leave.

Early in 1874, however, Mutesa decided to send a large present to Gordon, the official representative of the Egyptian government, who had been commissioned to expand the Egyptian authority over the Southern Sudan and Uganda. Gordon sent his American lieutenant to return the compliments. It may well be that he was accompanied by those "Turks" who informed Mutesa and the other readers of the Koran that their mosques were built facing the wrong direction, that they should not eat meat of an animal killed by an uncircumcised person, and that they should never be led in prayer by such a pagan. This meant a refusal to worship under the Kabaka in his palace mosque and to eat meat slaughtered by the palace butcher. Several Muslims found the courage to stand up against Mutesa on these issues. Mutesa was encouraged to take severe measures against them by the pagans, who became worried about the influence Muslims might soon acquire, now they appeared to have extremely powerful allies on all sides. Shortly before or after the visit of Stanley Mutesa ordered the holocaust of seventy Ganda Muslims.

In 1875 Stanley made two visits to Buganda. In April he stayed for two weeks only, but after the circumnavigation of Lake Victoria he joined the kabaka in August and spent much time with him in religious discussions. When he finally moved on early in 1876, he had several parts of the Bible translated into Swahili, which the king could read, with the help of Dallington, a young man who had been educated by Anglican missionaries in Nyassaland. This boy was left behind at Mutesa's own request. Stanley also gave valuable technical assistance with the invention of a floating fort, which brought victory in the war against the Buvuma Islands. It is clear that Mutesa thought that the whites would also be able to teach him to make rifles and gunpowder. He expressed the wish to

receive Christian missionaries.

It is not known when exactly the holocaust of the Muslims took place. If the persecution took place before Stanley it made an alliance with a Christian power all the more necessary. If it took place after his visit it was - at least indirectly - a result of the alliance. In any case the letter of Stanley published in England in November 1875 aroused the greatest interest and enough money had soon been collected to enable the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to undertake the Uganda mission. However, eighteen months were to pass before missionaries arrived. In the meanwhile Mutesa tried to remain friends with everybody, as long as his authority was not challenged. At his court he encouraged religious debates between the old Muslim tutor of his father and Stanley's Christian servant. In May 1876 the Khedive announced the annexation of Buganda and Gordon sent 160 soldiers to put the decision into effect. Mutesa sent immediately a letter to Zanzibar asking for arms and ammunition, and hoisted a flag as a sign of Christian faith and Ganda independence, defying the angry orders of the Egyptians to haul it down. In fact they were kept in virtual captivity. The agitation in England on Mutesa's behalf, the failure of Egypt to acquire a port on the East African coast, and later the arrival of the missionaries, prevented any further attempt by Egypt to conquer Buganda.

The CMS missionaries had hardly reached the southern shores of the Nyanza, when they received letters from Mutesa, begging them to come quickly. The first interview with Mutesa

had as subject significantly the relative strength of Britain and Egypt. He seemed disappointed when the missionaries told him that they had not come to teach him how to make guns, but nevertheless he said that he wished that he and his people would be taught to read and write. The missionaries were kept under tight control. Classes were only permitted in the palace and in Mutesa's presence. Every Sunday there was a service at which chapters from the bible were read and explained. In December 1877, after half a year, people came to Wilson, the only missionary left after his companion had gone south to bring up the rest of the party, to be taught on their own accord, even against the tide of popular disfavour, stimulated by the Arabs. Wilson himself had to leave twice the next year for long periods. Yet when he returned with Mackay, they were able to pick up the threads where they had been dropped. The missionaries were allowed to build their own house outside the palace enclosure, and their household became more like that of a chief. Some people already abandoned Islam and others began to discard charms and fetishes because of the preaching of the missionaries.

In February 1879 the French White Fathers arrived to establish a mission in Buganda. Mackay had tried to persuade the kabaka not to allow them to settle in the country, but this hostility only intrigued Mutesa, and after having received them, he decided to become a regular member of Lourdel's catechism class and sounded the French Fathers about a treaty with France. When they hesitated he turned towards the protestants and asked them to baptise him. This was refused until he could demonstrate a change of heart by giving up witchcraft, polygamy, and other pagan practices. When he made the same request of Lourdel the next month he received the same reply.

The rivalry between the two groups of missionaries was bitter and blatant. Mackay raged against the "worship of Maria"; Lourdel was shocked by the use the protestants made of the bible, reading passages dealing with Salomon and his thousand wives to the kabaka. To Mutesa a choice for Christianity was a choice for a political power; either British or French. Yet he soon discovered that it was also something more. The Ganda seemed to have attached very little importance to the doctrinal differences. Quite often the same men were among catechumens of both missions and this in perfectly good faith. Moreover the political aspects became less important, when Gordon evacuated the southern most Egyptian forts in 1879.

In December 1879 the king fell sick and the national gods were called on as of old. The oracle recommended human sacrifice and hundreds of innocent people were seized and butchered. The royal Sunday school ceased and only after several months candidates started to come back. The great chiefs remained loyal to the kabaka, but the lesser batongole and pages showed new interest. In 1880 the White Fathers baptized four new adherents and in 1882 another eight; in the same year the protestants also baptized their first five candidates. For the Catholic community the first serious crisis came when the missionaries decided to retreat for the time being. Yet under the eminent leadership of such men as Kaggwa, the royal drummer, and Mukasa, the personal attendant to the king, the community continued to grow in numbers and spiritual understanding. One example was their behaviour during a serious outbreak of bubonic plague. Instead of abandoning the sick or driving them away, as was usual among the Ganda, Kaggwa gathered abandoned patients in his own enclosure, cared for them, instructed them, baptized them, and gave them a decent burial.

The Anglican community was still exempt from any major

crisis, but a not very important affair of two officials, who thought that they had been insulted, and who attacked the mission with the approval of the kabaka, led to a total collapse. It took months before the Anglican adherents appeared again. The result seemed that they had achieved a deeper level of commitment, which the new catechumens immediately shared. One of the most astonishing features of the converted Ganda aristocrats was the call to humility, which was probably not given any particular emphasis in the teaching of the missionaries. But the practice entered into the smallest details of their daily life. Chiefs were seen to be working side by side with their wives in the gardens, and princesses started to do manual work.

Mutesa died in 1884 and the eighteen years old Mwanga was elected to be his successor. It seems that the pagan prime minister and the Arabs made a common cause, and launched an extensive campaign to make the English missionaries suspect. Three young Anglicans were executed, but at the same time Mwanga made no secret of his intention to recall the French missionaries. This brought the prime minister to decisive action. He plotted with the other pagan chiefs to kill Mwanga and to make his brother kabaka in his stead. The plot was discovered by the Christians and the prime minister was sent for and told by Mwanga that he knew everything. His tears of regret made Mwanga pardon him, and even entrust him with the task of deposing of his fellow conspirators. Several Roman Catholics and a number of Protestants took their places. It was therefore not only the blood of martyrs which was the seed of the church, as TAYLOR (1958 p.56) suggests, but the increase in adherents during this time can well be explained as a calculated gamble in the succession war between the different religious

factions. The White Fathers were recalled and received graciously by Mwanga.

The Protestants organized themselves for emergency, appointing twelve leaders, who were heads of households with a large number of Christian adherents. Mwanga once more became extremely suspicious of the Anglicans as their new bishop approached from the east, while the Germans had made annexations in Usagara: it seemed an attempt of the whites to force themselves into Buganda through the backdoor. Hannington was killed by emissaries of the kabaka in Busoga and Mukasa, the prime minister designatus and acknowledged leader of the Roman Catholics, was beheaded when he protested.

All "readers" were forbidden to go to the missions now, but they continued to do so at night. The Christians were fearless in their attempts to convince their pagan friends. This led to another outbreak of persecutions in May 1886. Mwanga became very furious when he discovered that they had tried to convert the very pretty page Mwafu, with whom he used to have sexual relations. A thirty Christians were martyred; most of them died on one great pyre. Probably much greater numbers were killed in the country districts. Apart from these martyrs many Christians were punished cruelly. The persecution was by no means systematic or comprehensive; some were victims of Mwanga's outburst of anger, some were deliberately sought out by the pagan prime minister, and others were just caught up in the flood of anti-Christian feeling. Yet catechumens kept coming to the missions by night for instruction and baptism; while those who were under suspicion to be readers fled to the country districts, and spread the faith among their relatives. So the church became a well organized underground movement under the leading of sub chiefs or palace servants, i.e. the natural candidates for the senior chiefships.

Meanwhile the Arabs throughout East Africa were organizing themselves for a last desperate attempt to win domination over and expel the Europeans. On his part Mwanga plotted to get rid of all Christian and Muslim leaders. The latter combined their forces and disposed Mwanga and placed Kiwewa on the throne. Less than a month after this event, the Arab party accused the Christians of an attempt to kill Kiwewa and drove the surprised allies from the capital. The missionaries hardly escaped to the southern end of the lake. When Kiwewa refused to be circumcised he was killed and his little brother Kalema was made kabaka in his stead.

Christians of both denominations took refuge in Ankole and on the southern coast of the lake, where a penitent Mwanga had already been accepted by the White Fathers. A two pronged attack was launched on the capital from Ankole and from the islands in the lake. In October 1889 Mwanga returned in triumph but soon the Muslims came back after having secured the help of Kabarega, the king of the Nyoro. The Christians reorganized themselves, and having acquired a large store of arms and ammunition by way of ransom after a naval victory, they gained a decisive victory in February 1890. Earlier Mwanga had asked for help from the Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC), but as this had not yet materialized, the French missionaries advised Mwanga to conclude a treaty with the representative of the competing German Company, who happened to reach Buganda before Jackson, the British representative. The Catholic chiefs signed the treaty immediately, the Protestant chiefs only with the greatest reluctance. A treaty with the English might have given them some advantages over the Roman Catholics, who had no connections with the British whatsoever. When Jackson arrived later Mwanga refused his conditions, backed by Father Lourdel. In the event an Anglo-German agreement gave



the British Buganda, and the IBEAC sent Lugard to maintain order, while showing the strictest impartiality between the religious factions.

Throughout 1891 the tension between Protestants and Roman Catholics grew steadily. The offices had been divided equally between them, but the Roman Catholics increased their numbers more rapidly. After all, the Kabaka belonged to this church and other things being equal Ganda would follow the example of the Kabaka. The situation came to a climax when Lugard, having only a very small number of soldiers at his disposal, armed the leaders of the Protestant party in secret, as he had gained the definite impression that the Roman Catholics wanted to fight the IBEAC: Mwanga had refused to give Lugard the right to judge a case which had already been settled according to customary law. The Ganda behaved according to Lugard's expectations: the Roman Catholics fought against the Protestants and Lugard helped the latter to gain the battle. The Roman Catholics concentrated in Buddu but the king was spirited away from his followers and Mwanga, now entirely in the hands of the Protestant leaders, changed his religious affiliation quickly. A new treaty was signed, which made the IBEAC's supremacy quite clear and which assigned only Buddu to the Roman Catholics. Lugard had perforce to agree to this partition, but was afraid that it might lead to more fighting. Shortly afterwards Lugard arranged a return of the Muslims who were sandwiched in between the two Christian factions. A vast migration of peasants, who had hitherto been little concerned with the religious upheavals of the capital, occurred into the territories allotted to their chiefs under the new settlement. Big changes took place and even the minor chiefships became occupied by upstarts of the religious wars. But this

would have happened after every succession war presumably.

Summary.

Mutesa saw the different religions as exponents of political powers: Egyptians, Zanzibari, English, and French and he tried to retain his own sovereignty by adopting the same kind of policy towards its representatives, as he used in dealing with the traditional Ganda authorities. There was a considerable number of Ganda who joined one or the other of the new religio-political groupings as a result of Mutesa's tolerance; they were especially the young people who could well expect to outlive Mutesa and to have to fight the traditional succession war after his death. It was to be expected that foreign intervention would become as important in Buganda as Ganda intervention had been among the Soga in similar situations. Apparently religious affiliation replaced clan loyalty in the struggle which broke out. Moreover, it was also a generation conflict between the old pagan chiefs and the young adherents of the new religions. Formerly there would not have been any such division along religious lines, and political process seems to have been based on ad hoc factions which made a bid for power, exterminated the opponents and shared the spoils. This could not happen now because of foreign intervention, and religious factions became proto-political parties which remained stable over a long time. Yet the religious involvement had also its own peculiar consequences. There was a clear commitment to the values preached by the new religions, and presumably the hope existed that the whole of Ganda society could be brought under their beneficial influence, through control of the political hierarchy.

## 5. The changing society

The IBEAC and the missionaries had become so involved in Buganda that the British government had to take over, when the IBEAC could no longer finance its operations, out of fear for the consequences for which it would have been held responsible, if it would have refused. Portal arrived early in 1893 and managed to reconcile the Christian parties by giving extra land, which had formerly belonged to the Nyoro, to the Catholics. Shortly after his departure the Muslims made another bid for power and were again defeated. The few Muslims who did not partake were left in control of one county, the rest was divided between the Christians. But the country remained in unrest: there was war with Nyoro and in Eastern Uganda; there was a revolt by three important chiefs and then by Mwanga himself; next the Sudanese who had been employed as mercenaries mutinied. On each occasion the Christian chiefs supported the British, but it was perhaps the British power which made that their Ganda followers remained behind them. The missionary Pilkington estimated that 90% of the people in the country and 50% of the people in the capital detested and disliked the Europeans, when Mwanga fled to Bunyoro and was replaced by a small boy under the regency of the three leading chiefs supported and elected by the British.

The high costs of the military operations and the lack of stability caused by nine different commissioners in seven years, together with the prospect of the completion of the railway which would link Buganda with the coast, led to the decision to send a highly experienced administrator, Johnston, to put things on a sound footing for the future. The final agreement was produced to meet the immediate needs of the

British and to placate the fears and suspicions of the Baganda. Taxes would be collected by the chiefs, public roads were to be maintained by the Buganda government; the Protectorate secured control over forests and mineral rights. The borders of Buganda were defined and the number of counties almost doubled. The counties were to be divided into gombololas and these into miruka, with hierarchically ranked territorial chiefs. The kabaka was recognized as native ruler; most of his business would be transacted by his three ministers. The Lukiiko, formerly the group of chiefs and servants in attendance at court, was to become a legislative council, entirely appointed by the kabaka. It would consist of the ministers, the county chiefs, three notables from each county and six other persons of importance. Although the British had de jure overriding powers in all matters of importance, de facto they accepted the binding nature of the Agreement for political and practical reasons.

The increase in offices through territorial changes made it possible to integrate most important palace servants into the new system. But it seems that the bataka were neglected to a large extent. They did not belong to the new group of Christian leaders on the whole. They were of an older generation and also perhaps too much involved in pagan ritual (WELBOURN 1962). This became even more clear in the division of land. There were to be official and private estates for the king, members of the royal family, ministers and county chiefs. The most important concession of the British was that the Lukiiko was to divide another 8,000 square miles among the chiefs and other traditional landowners. This amounted to a parcelling out of between 3,000 and 4,000 plots, which could be taken up wherever unappropriated land was available. Such land was called mailo after the basic unit of division:

the square mile. The rest was to become crownland. As it turned out practically all the fertile hillsides became individual property.

The first list of full members of the Lukiiko was made up of 41 Protestants, 35 Roman Catholics, and 5 Muslims. This reveals the balance of power around 1900, as created by the peculiarities of foreign influence during the previous generation. A similar division characterized the county chiefships. Only a few of the county chiefs had not been among the Christian exiles who had fled in 1888. But when it came to land allocation the Christian leaders decided to accommodate also important pagans. They were given a vested interest in the new settlement and this added to the stability of the new crystallizing Christian regime. County chiefs divided most of the land they had to allocate under the agreement, as executive of the Lukiiko, among people of their own religious affiliation. For the peasants it meant quite often a removal to another part of the country, where their masters could provide them with new tenancies, having been evicted from the old ones which were to be occupied by the followers of another chief. The division of offices between adherents of the different religions was to remain stable for the next sixty years. This was not however representative of the strength of these groups. The Roman Catholics constitute between 40 and 50% of the population, the Protestants about 25% and the Muslims between 7 and 11% (WELBOURN 1965 p.iii, sources: Uganda Census 1959, church statistics).

The new class of landowners did not start to make money through large-scale estate farming, but through attracting tenants. Cash crops were produced by these tenants to provide enough money for taxes, chiefs' tribute, and expenditure on cloth and a few other consumer goods. The landowners also started to

sell bits and pieces of their estates to the most successful cotton growers, who often supplemented their income through trading or wage labour, or to a few who followed already a regular career as clerks or skilled workers. Most of these small landowners bought their land for social advantages, rather than economic: landownership was a necessary qualification for muluka chiefship. This tendency to sell land was increased through the Rent Act of 1927, when rents were fixed which have not been altered since, and which are now a negligible sum. It also protected tenants against eviction and made their rights inheritable.

After the second world war increase in population and expansion of cultivation made good land scarce. If a landowner did not want to sell his land, he could now ask a heavy premium from new tenants. But there was no way of gaining a substantial income of land, except by farming it. Some landowners did make farming into an economic enterprise, employing wage labourers, quite often migrants from outside Buganda. It was only in the nineteenfifties that personal incomes increased markedly, because of the great improvement in the terms of trade. Commercial activity intensified and local industry developed. Towns expanded rapidly. Yet the main economic achievement of the Ganda remained agricultural. Asiatics held most positions in commerce and they controlled to a large extent the sale and the processing of cash crops.

The interwar period was characterized by a growing division between landownership and a position in the civil service. There were many new small landowners who had no office, and only those big landowners who were properly qualified through education and experience became acceptable as county and sub-county chiefs. Promotion of parish (miruka) chiefs depended on the new education, which for a time was only available to chiefs'

children, because of the high costs involved. If they could not hope to acquire a job as a high-grade chief they could work in the ministries of the Buganda or Protectorate government, or in the professions, which gave greater advantages than a parish chiefship. The task of a parish chief is arduous: he has to collect taxes, organize communal labour, arrest criminals and judge minor offences, and he is a general factotum for any task the government thinks up. If he would devote his time to cash crops, he would certainly earn more money. Gradually parish chiefships became the monopoly of the small landowners, who apparently thought that they would become real aristocrats, lords or "men of honour", in this way. Most of them also had the rather illusory expectation of promotion to higher ranks.

Meanwhile the higher grade chiefs have become quite alien to the common people. They are well educated, westernized, and unsympathetic to the backwardness and apathy of many of the peasants. They are members of a new upper class, which also consists of ordained clergy, teachers, doctors, lawyers, politicians, newspaper editors, large-scale farmers and a few successful business executives. The occupational differentiation and the increasing possibilities for education through scholarships, and the help from distant kinsmen for their poorer relatives, have left much opportunity for social mobility, despite the fact that the administration itself has become very much a self perpetuating oligarchy.

It is impossible to know how stable marriages were in the past, but it is clear that for many Ganda the present situation is unsatisfactory. Most people have had several spouses and they have little confidence that the present union will endure. It seems that one reason is the fact that the government recognizes only civil marriage (rarely used by Ganda) and religious marriage, that does not allow divorce (except for Muslims). Customary

marriages, which are most common, receive no official recognition and the courts will not enforce return of the bride price. Yet men are prepared to pay repeatedly for temporary wives! In the past a woman was wholly dependant on her father (or brother) and on her husband. If she ran away from the latter she could only go back to the former, who would try to bring about reconciliation to avoid return of the bridewealth. But nowadays public transport and relaxed social conventions have opened many doors of escape to the disgruntled wife. The school education makes girls to expect more from marriage than was their mothers' lot. Most men, however, have not adjusted themselves to a changed relationship. They were traditionally patriarchs, claiming authority even to prevent their wives from leaving the homestead without permission. Not many men take the initiative in divorcing their wives; it is simpler to bring another woman into the household. On the other hand desertion by the wife is very common.

The relation between adolescent children and their parents seems always to have been difficult. But school education has greatly increased the problem, by prolonging the pre-adult period. And many boys and girls prefer to prolong their irresponsible independence, rather than take up a definite job or found a home. Many drift into a series of casual relationships and postpone any idea of a serious marriage indefinitely. Sexual indulgence is already very common in early puberty. This is nothing new: but whereas formerly it was a definite, although not unexpected, breach of the norms, nowadays the norms themselves are breaking down.

The first twenty years of the protectorate were characterized by a minimum of British interference. In fact Ganda were used throughout the protectorate as agents and chiefs. Sometimes they acted more or less on their own behalf, like Kakungulu, the



rival of Apolo Kagwa, the prime minister. Between 1900 and 1902 he pacified and ruled the whole of what is now Teso, Bukedi and Bugisu. From 1906 to 1913 he was effective creator and first president of the Busoga district. By 1914 he had been reduced to the rank of county chief of Mbale, in Eastern Uganda. He became later the leader of an independent sect, a branch of the so called Malakites.

After the First world war the new principle of trusteeship entered into the British policy towards Buganda. The local administration of the new agricultural, veterinary, health and education services led to a closer supervision and control of the chiefs. The retirement of several old and inefficient chiefs was demanded and the dealings of the British with the chiefs directly, without reference to the kabaka and his ministers, led to a clash with Apolo Kagwa who was also forced to retire. The new generation of chiefs who now came into power had not known an independent Buganda and were appointed with approval of the British with whom they had good relations; but this also meant a greater alienation from the common peasants.

Apolo Kagwa was also opposed from within the Ganda society. In 1921 the National Federation of Bataka was formed with the overt intention of returning all mailo to the Kabaka for redistribution. Three of the seven members of the committee of the Federation were also leading members of the sect of the Malakites, which broke away from the Anglican Church in 1914. Joswa Kate, the Mugema was one of them. The Mugema is the ritual father of the kabaka and hereditary chief of Busiro county, where all the royal tombs are. He had a quarrel with Apolo Kagwa over the coronation ceremonies and felt indignation over the fact that the regents were in fact running the country, even after the king had come of age.

But there were others like the Anglican James Miti, head of the Kasimba clan who had lost a considerable clan

estate to the Chief Justice, although he was compensated elsewhere. Basudde was a Roman Catholic who edited a paper criticising the policy of Kagwa against whom he had personal grievances. Kulubya was one of the younger generation who pressed for the removal of the old leaders. In 1929 he became treasurer in the government of Nsibirwa who succeeded Kagwa in 1926. A public enquiry was made, but the Secretary of State decided in 1926 that practical considerations made it impossible to reopen the matter of land allocation; yet the bad feeling continued to exist.

In 1941 the queen-mother wanted to remarry with a commoner. Although this was forbidden by ancient custom, the Anglican Church and the ministers, who were regents during the minority of the new kabaka, supported her. This issue proved a good opportunity for the opposition against Nsibirwa. It was constituted of peasant chiefs, disappointed with their chances of promotion, important bataka, and higher grade chiefs, who wanted to become ministers themselves. Nsibirwa had to leave and there was also much pressure on chiefs who upheld the Anglican point of view, to resign from the Lukiiko. But when a Land Requisition Act, after having caused riots in 1945, was to be turned down by the new prime minister, he and his followers were exiled by the British. Afterwards a son of Apolo Kagwa, exponent of the old Anglican pro-British elite, became prime minister, instead of Wamala, a peasant chief and hardly literate in English.

After the second world war there was much discontent, as large numbers of soldiers returned with greater scepticism towards Europeans, and many young Baganda made their first unsuccessful attempts to establish themselves in trade. This was now focussed on the new Bataka Party. Two members of the old Federation were chairmen and secretary. Reuben Spartas, the founder of the independent African Orthodox Church, became

the principal organizer. In 1949 there was an outbreak of arson and violence, directed against those ministers and chiefs who had become closely associated with the British. A trial followed and twelve leaders were charged with rebellion against the kabaka.

The kabaka became more and more isolated from the popular movement and risked to be identified with the British. In 1953 he therefore dissociated himself vigorously from the British policy over the issue of the East African Federation, a threat to the special position of Buganda and of white domination. This was considered unloyal behaviour and Mutesa II was deported in 1953. He became a national hero and a true symbol of Buganda. A new constitutional committee was elected by the Lukiiko, under approval of the kabaka, to find a way out of the impasse. Its proposals were accepted and Mutesa returned. Buganda became a constitutional monarchy with responsible ministers. Chiefs and other administrative officers were to be appointed by a board, the members of which were chosen by the kabaka.

The ministeries were allocated between Catholics, Protestants and Muslims in the proportion of 1:4:1. This had some influence on the participation in the Uganda elections of 1961 for the Legislative Council. The government of Buganda itself was very much against these elections and had declared the country independent. This was only a dramatic gesture, as part of the bargaining for a special position after independence. Although registration of voters was discouraged, 3.5% of the Baganda did register and elect all candidates for Buganda. The candidates all belonged, with one exception, to the Roman Catholic Democratic Party and this enabled Kiwanuka, a Buganda muḱopi (a commoner), to form the first national government in Uganda. For the Ganda this was just impossible: a peasant above the kabaka. Soon the idea

cropped up of an all-Buganda party which would join hands with the opposition, the Uganda People Congress, to defeat DP at the next election and to gain a special position for Buganda after independence, including the right to elect the members of the Uganda parliament for Buganda indirectly. The only problem was the accommodation of the Roman Catholics in Buganda. Retaining a special position for Buganda had to become more important than the maintenance of the protestant domination within Buganda. The new government consisted of three Catholic, three protestant and one Muslim minister and a start was made to undo the traditional allocation of county chiefships on religious grounds. The new party, the Kabaka Yekka, got 90% of the votes in Buganda and appointed without election its members for the Uganda parliament. It seems that religious affiliation has definitely disappeared as a determining factor for political behaviour. When a few years after independence the alliance between KY and UPC broke up, the division between Bantu and Nilotic elements came to dominate Uganda politics.

#### Summary.

The European influence led to the transformation of the existing social structures. The absolute power of the kabaka which was maintained by a skilful manipulation of different categories of appointed and hereditary officials, was replaced by a new oligarchy divided along religious lines, the members of which were mainly interested in retaining the status quo with regard to the offices open to them. Their position was based on a special relationship with the British. Yet it was one between unequal partners and as such a source of potential tensions.

The first period of British rule was marked by a minimum of interference by the Protectorate government and a virtual absence of the kabaka from the political scene. Next

the British imposed direct control upon the chiefs and the kabaka became de facto a mere figure head. During and after the second world war dissatisfaction with the ministers and high chiefs, controlled and kept in power by the British, grew. The kabaka placed himself at the head of the discontent popular movement and was able to reassert his traditional position temporarily. The threat of independence led to an accommodation of Roman Catholic grievances, so that the Ganda were able to form a united front to ensure a most favourable position under the new constitution. In 1966 the military power of the central government abolished this privileged status and the kabaka went into exile.

The new economic possibilities led to a greater differentiation in wealth and occupational status, which also pervaded the administrative system. The increase of western education in general and the new opportunities for economic independence, led to a confusion of norms especially with regard to family life. New ideas were ill absorbed and old sanctions broke down.

#### 6. Some processes of religious change

The political triumph of Christianity brought its train of nominal adherents. Many discovered that a prolonged struggle with the temptations of drink, sexual laxity, and magic, was necessary and many did not persevere. The naive innocence of the first generation of converts seemed irrevocably lost, and the thoughts of the missionaries were turning towards the hope of some spiritual revival. When Pilkington returned from a holiday on Kome Island with the testimony of his own spiritual renewal through the reading of a revival tract, he stirred the small group of missionaries at the capital to launch a ten days' "mission". Hundreds confessed the failure of their sinful life and accepted the gift of spiritual power. Full emphasis was placed on the reading of the Word of God, which was the only means to come to a full understanding of the

way of salvation. A most remarkable and spontaneous movement for literacy and new knowledge broke out. Missionaries were constantly being stopped as they walked about the streets by people racing out of their houses to ask the meaning of obscure passages. The movement spread soon to the out stations as well.

The immediate result, and the most lasting, of this revival was the impulse it gave to ordinary Christians to offer themselves as teachers and evangelists. The chiefs also asked the missionaries that they might live with them in the country and help them to build up local churches. Within one year 260 new catechists were at work. Ganda evangelists were also very active outside their own country. They lived in poverty in order to demonstrate the ways of Christ and were housed like the lowliest peasants, although they were members of the dominant tribe, which provided the British with their chiefs and agents in the outlying areas of Uganda. In the country missionaries started to work through the chiefs, the natural leaders of the church. But gradually leadership in church and state affairs became separated. For the Africans this was a purely pragmatic adjustment, but for the new generation of missionaries separation of ecclesiastical and secular leadership was the only theologically sound solution. During the first fourteen years there had never been more than a handful of missionaries, with virtually no power to impose their will. But in 1904 there were about 80 missionaries of the CMS, who were definitely supported by the authority of the colonial government. They required to be consulted, and they considered that it was quite wrong that the African church councils should take decisions independently. The old type of African church leadership could not for long be maintained in partnership with this new missionary assertiveness, and it was steadily replaced by new leadership that was both more clerical and more filial.

The change was made more gradual by the quality of the first generation of African clergy. Some of them were in fact

chiefs and all of them belonged to the élite who had been in exile in 1888. They appear as equal colleagues and brothers to the missionaries. This was quite different from the paternalistic attitude towards the pupil-servants of the missionaries, who later became the evangelists who manned the outstations, from which they returned regularly to their superiors to communicate and to present new baptism candidates. In order that these catechists might be prepared for taking greater responsibility, a professional ladder of three steps was constituted, and this became soon the almost exclusive recruiting ground for the supply of ordained clergy. In this way the standing of the African clergy changed considerably. They were proteges of the chiefs, not their equals and the relationship to the missionaries was still fundamentally the same as when they had been their boys and pupils. To match this ordered hierarchy of ministry, there was a corresponding organization of the body of the church itself into a pyramid pattern, with councils which had to provide the democratic link up. These were mainly directed towards the top and pastoral or paternal care over the Christians they represented became incidental. The key position of the missionaries was vital to this kind of organization. Their removal threatened the whole structure, if no adequately trained people could take over. Bishop Tucker maintained that the training of native Christians in the art of self government could only succeed if the missionaries would throw in their lot absolutely with the Africans, even submitting themselves to the laws and canons of their church. The vigorous opposition of the other missionaries led to a compromise, which permitted the mission to be of the Uganda church, but never under it; to be included in its constitution, but always in an extraordinary position.

As early as 1904 the missionaries thought that on the whole the Africans were not fit for bearing responsibility. Of those sent out and scattered over the country a considerable number had become listless and inactive. In short it was concluded

that the spirit of the Ganda had entirely changed and their qualities gone down. There was some reason for this point of view. Some of the chiefs began to lose interest in the church; and some had to be expelled for polygamy or drunkenness. This was to be expected in men who were only nominally committed to Christianity. But perhaps in some cases chiefs fell away because they no longer had to carry the old responsibility. Life was hard for the catechists. Their tiny salary compared unfavourably with what was offered elsewhere. The 1900 settlement provided some land for every teacher and church official, but evidently this could not be repeated perpetually. Soon after there was a serious lack of catechists and a falling away of quality in men who offered themselves. Lapses in the chiefs and the falling off of catechists inevitably led to a serious decline among the ordinary adherents. The situation was aggravated by the social disruption caused by the movements of people in connection with the new land settlement, and the ravaging sleeping sickness, which depopulated the areas along the coast and on the islands. From 1905 onwards, the missionaries started to hand over responsibility into African hands, but they always did so by withdrawing into a higher category in the administrative hierarchy. In this way they accommodated the wishes of Bishop Tucker, and at the same time they avoided to be placed under the authority of Africans, about whose ability they held such pessimistic views.

Development of the church did not take the form of partition, in which the African clergy gained a position equal to that of the missionaries, but of amalgamation round a higher centre, from where the missionary supervised an increased number of African pastors. There was no problem of room at the top, because the number of missionary clergy began to drop, and the majority of



those who came were drafted into specialists', non-parochial jobs. Soon the Africans were to join the movement of withdrawal upwards. The best African clergy men were withdrawn from a pastoral charge into a higher category, in which his time would be absorbed in administration and committee work. The keen young catechists were quickly promoted from the care of a village church to the supervision of a wider area. The congregations were left with the poorest quality of leaders, while the men at the top were more and more out of touch with its needs. The ill-qualified catechists were no longer called for a monthly renewal, as in the early days of the church's expansion. He had to carry on, year after year, almost unsupervised. No missionary would ever visit a village church and even the African vicar rarely went below the miruka church. The catechists' training became decentralized in poorly equipped centres, compared with the central institutions where the clergy was prepared. Yet 80% of the congregations had to receive their spiritual sustenance and instruction in the faith from these catechists. The system of church councils should provide a democratic link up. At the lower levels they ceased to function from sheer futility and lack of interest; at the higher levels these committees devour the time of the best leaders of the church.

In the beginning the mission stations served a dual function: it was the centre of administration of the church in the district and also the premises of the specialist activities of the missionaries in the medical and educational field. Gradually the latter function took precedence, while the pastoral oversight of the district was maintained by a diminishing number of men. In the beginning village schools had been completely integrated with the life of the local congregations. Catechist and teacher were trained in the same centre, and worked as a team. The school was meant as a preparation for the initiation into the

local Christian community, and the "inspectorate" was concerned mainly with the preparation for baptism and confirmation. The curriculum might have been entirely academic, yet the schools belonged to the people in a way that has never been equalled since.

In the twenties the administration embarked on its policy of trusteeship and became interested in education and its standards. The missionaries were eager to co-operate with the state because they were afraid that, if the children were to get education in an entirely secular system, the demand for Christianity, until now unextricably interwoven with that for education, might vanish away. The education system became heavily subsidized, but continued to be run by the missionaries. But new standards were laid down, which made a difference between village schools which qualified for getting grants, and those which were educationally of such a value, that no money was to be spent on them. A large number of little village schools were made to feel immediately discredited and disowned. Parents lost confidence in them and tried to send their children to recognized schools.

The new system absorbed a tremendous number of missionaries, because the administration made grants to the CMS and not to the Native Anglican Church. The CMS could not transfer responsibility to Africans. In fact CMS became an employer of African workers in competition with the church, and drew men, who would have been capable of real leadership, into the service of the missions as schoolmasters through economic inducements. Young teachers began to be resentful, when the local vicar continued to assume that he had the right to expect them to preach or to lead Sunday services; and they protested loudly that they were civil servants, not church workers.

There are two problems which cause much anxiety in the church today: the drop in church attendance on Sundays, which is regarded as indicative of a general lapse from faith, and the attitude of the church towards marriage. It is quite clear that the lack of thorough pastoral ministry, such as frequent visiting and thoughtful preparation of church services, more than anything else has been the cause of the steady decline, which has been going on since the middle thirties. During times of national tension as in 1945, 1949, and 1953 the process was only slightly accelerated. Whenever any special effort is made on the part of the catechist, and it is discovered that someone really cares about the welfare of the ordinary peasant, the congregational attendance improves immediately and considerably. But the supply of catechists has virtually come to an end, as a result of the poverty in which they have to live. They depend solely on the contributions made by the community they serve, and lack of responsibility on its part, partly due to the lack of pastoral care and alienation from the top levels of the church, have caused a circulus vitiosus.

Before 1904 unions of those married by African custom before their baptism, were recognized and registered, provided that both parties stated that they had married by their own free will and promised to adhere to it always. In 1904, however, Tucker demanded that people should be remarried according to Anglican rites after baptism. This implied that African customary marriage was invalid, and although changes were made in the church law in 1907 and 1957, the de facto position was not changed. This means that today the 75% of the Anglican married church members who were married by customary marriage alone, are regarded as living in sin and are automatically excommunicated and cannot even have their children baptized. Reasons for the popularity of customary marriage are the additional expense, the fact that marriages between Roman Catholics and Anglicans are

not allowed in the Anglican Church and have to be customary by per force; many eligible partners belong to opposite denominations; church marriage is impossible when any parent has objections, whereas customary marriage is quite possible in such a situation; and it is also true that many fear the total commitment implied in church marriage, as Ganda thought does not make any sharp distinction between hope and intention and circumstances are felt to be more important than individual volition. ~~volition.~~ Yoswa Kate, the Mugema, had for a long time considered that the spiritual weakness of the church was due to its admission of doctors and medicines, which he believed to be forbidden by the bible, owing to the unfortunate translation of certain texts in the old testament which dealt with magic. After the retirement of Bishop Tucker, he began to send letters to the new bishop relating to this fact. In 1914 he was joined by Malaki, who argued that one should follow the example of John the Baptist, who had baptized freely without instruction. So he did and the attraction of a "gospel" which claimed to explain and put right evident weaknesses of the established church, and above all the appeal to the existing prejudice against governmental inoculation orders, drew many followers. The readiness with which baptism was obtainable, also, provided all the usual advantages of no longer being an old-fashioned pagan, with no period of preparation and with a welcome tolerance of polygamy and alcohol, although further readings of the old testament had suggested to keep Saturday as a day of rest and a taboo on pork. There is sufficient evidence that many who were thus baptized made no further pretence of refraining from medicine. In 1921 the Malakites counted 91,000 adherents in Buganda alone.

Kakungulu, the great general, also joined the sect, but

later he and his immediate followers added circumcision to the other tenets and started to wear Jewish robes under the influence of an Abyssinian Jew. Shortly after his death in 1929 an attempt to enforce medical regulations in Bulemezi led to a fracas in which government officials were seriously wounded. Yoswa and Malaki were exiled. At that time the movement was already in decline. It counted 57,000 adherents in Buganda. It became a society of ageing men on the defense which lost all influence over the younger generation. No doubt political and economic factors were involved, but they were never explicit. The sect was rarely more than a source of irritation for administrative officers. But on the other hand the Mugema, and his secretary Musoke, and Malaki were prominent members of the Federation of Bataka.

Reuben Spartas, who was one of the most important leaders of the Bataka Party, came in contact with the African Orthodox Church in 1925. This Church is represented in the U.S.A. and in South Africa and combines a delight in the worship forms of the eastern churches with Garvey's mystique of worldwide black nationalism. He founded his own branch in 1929 and was ordained in 1932, when Bishop Alexander from South Africa paid a visit to East Africa. Its activities focused mainly on a large independent school, and it attracted a considerable following of dissatisfied members of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches. Spartas' resentment of the "mission boy" approach of the Anglican missionaries played an important role in his breaking with the church. However, he did not let this attitude degenerate into bad personal relations as many others did, but was sufficiently dynamic to put himself at the head of a new movement. Advised by a Greek he established contact with the Greek Archimandrite in Tanganyika and tried to obtain official recognition from the Orthodox Patriarch in Alexandria. There were first difficulties about the relations with the Anglican Church, but after the war in 1946 Spartas

received the official blessings. Now there are about 10,000 adherents and the link with the Greek Orthodox Church has been emphasized by the training of clergy in Greece.

In earlier years missionaries had tried from time to time to meet the recurring doldrums of moral and religious decline with an organized mission for renewing afresh the "Wind of the Spirit". In 1935 another mission was planned, but this time it was preceded by an African witness to the power of the Spirit, who had retired for a week to meditate and pray, as Pilkington had done before the revival of 1896. He evoked a large scale response. This revival showed some signs of European initiative in the influence of the Oxford Group and the Keswick Conventions. There was an emphasis on the mutual confession of sins and failure, as the basis for more sincere fellowship, and huge conventions, numbering up to 15,000 people have been a regular feature. But the movement also developed certain strongly African characteristics. In the first decades of the revival dreams played an important part, and were regarded as the direct impact of the Holy Spirit. Ecstatic phenomena like trembling and frenzy dancing were not uncommon. At present these things are discouraged, as the movement moves towards respectable normality. This is also true of the extreme emphasis placed on the confession of sins, which even developed into a test of sincerity in face of a group of balokole, "saved people", and served as an initiation ceremony.

The balokole form strongly integrated clusters around some natural head of the household - a landowner, a civil servant or a senior teacher. For many people revival offers a possibility of finding and maintaining a new personal morality, about which many Ganda appear to be confused nowadays. It also helps to integrate strangers, as different clan and even tribal affiliations are no longer of importance in the new communities.

This is of obvious importance in Buganda, where many migrants try to find a new home. But people who attach themselves for this reason alone, repeating the spiritual jargon with partial sincerity, discover soon that they cannot keep it up.

The responsibility of the laity is stressed again, often in opposition to the established hierarchy which is held responsible for the hypocrisy and deadness in the church. Yet this has not led to an open break with the church. The attitude of Bishop Stuart, which was one of unshakeable patience, contributed a great deal to the avoidance of schism. On the other hand, revival has become rather introverted. They are seldom members of the church council and the Sunday afternoons are increasingly devoted to mutual edification instead of open air preaching, which was so important in the early days.

The traditional religion still has a strong hold on the people, below the surface of the superimposed new religions, and the diviners and their fetishes, connected with the beliefs in the old gods and spirits, may even gain prominence during times of crisis, as was the case during the kabaka's deportation. After his return the shrines of his ancestors were carefully restored on state costs, although the diviners connected with them had never ceased sending advice to the kings. The temples of the old tribal gods have disappeared for good, however.

People still believe in charms and fetishes and in sorcery, and they still practice divination. The old distinction between different types of specialist has broken down and made place for the "general practitioner". Ancestors still possess their living relatives at times and have to be dealt with in the traditional manner, and the family lubaale is still being "settled" through initiation of one of its members. But divination is the means par excellence through which the old ways continue to

operate. Being a diviner is quite often combined with church membership. In fact there are not many Christians who have not at one time or another made use of it. And it is not only the uneducated or rural people to whom divination appeals. Diviners are very popular in the towns. Christians try to conceal their consultations, but the village community almost always knows and it is tolerant in its judgment.

### Summary

The organization of the Anglican Church was changed from an association under the control of the most powerful native lay members, who felt themselves directly responsible for its development, into a body which was governed by an entirely independent hierarchy of clergy, ultimately under the control of foreign missionaries. The church has been characterized by a steady decline, due to a withdrawal of the most able church ministers from the village congregations, and a neglect of the responsibility of the laity. The catechists were left uncared for by the top level of the church, and later lack of financial support stopped the supply altogether. The two movements that broke away from the Anglican Church were led by people who had enough initiative to found associations aimed at social reforms as well. But the revival is rather characterized by an other-worldly pietism. Pagan beliefs are still relevant to the needs of the people.

### 7. The interpretation of some processes of religious change.

In this section I shall deal with two processes: first, the introduction of the new religions; second, the further religious developments, mainly with reference to the Anglican Church. If we use the analytic framework I proposed, we see that in the first case the different factors: political, economic and social



changes; the internal development of the new religious groups; the traditional social system and religion; are almost unextricably intermingled. The further developments can also be understood only, if we take into account that the combination of political leadership with direct responsibility for church matters must be held accountable for much of the early success of the new religions.

In my opinion, the introduction of the new religions was successful because the young generation was preparing itself for the struggle for power after Mutesa's death, in which foreign powers inevitably would play an important part. According to LOW (1958.p.7), whatever mundane motives had been entertained at the outset, they must have been dispelled when to be a Christian meant, not promotion up the political ladder, but the constant possibility of mutilation and death. As I have shown, this was a risk run by all people who aspired a political career. According to TAYLOR (1958 p.44), it was nothing less than a revolution in thought that the Ganda made up their minds for themselves, without waiting to cast in their lot with the royal decision. We know, however, that attachment to the balubaale through initiation was a common feature in Ganda society. This had nothing to do with royal decisions. And in case one was called to be a medium in one of the temples it might well lead to one's death if the kabaka decided to plunder a temple and to kill its functionaries.

This brings us to a second line of thought in Low's interpretation, taken up by WELBOURN (1965 p.55) as well. LOW (1958 p.3) suggests that the tribal sentiments for solidarity and continuity had become focused upon the unique and exclusive office of the kabaka; the migration of Christians from tribal authority into the shelter of the new Christian authority, caused an ultimately complete personal devotion - a devotion, that is, which they took with them from tribal tradition (ibid.p.7). I think that insofar as the adherents of the new religions, including the

Islam, were encouraged to take up a stand against the kabaka on account of personal devotion, this devotion can be understood far better as a parallel of the commitment to the powers of the traditional Ganda religion. Once one was initiated into their service, a mystical link was forged, which could not be severed.

I said earlier that during the introduction of the new religions different aspects were unextricably intermixed. I should like to substantiate this now, by looking more closely at the different groups and persons which were involved in the process. The Zanzibari and Egyptians were aiming at the establishment of commercial relations, safeguarded by political influence. In both cases this was to be the influence of an Islamic state, where politics and religion were not at all separated. For the German and the English it was mainly the imperialistic aim, political and economic, which brought them to East Africa. Yet the Imperial British East Africa Company was founded with definite philanthropical aims in mind. Legitimate trade would relieve poverty, integrate tribes, and make slave trade superfluous. And the final decision of the British government to take over this enterprise, was partly due to considerable pressures from the CMS. The missionaries themselves were prompted by religious motives; but after they had recognized the necessity of intervention by European states, to save Central Africa from Islam and all its works, they used all their influence to ensure that the intervention should be carried out by their own countrymen, or, failing that, by the power which seemed to offer the best prospects for the work of their own denomination.

The kabaka himself saw the different religions, or religious denominations - even Islam was divided - , as exponents of political powers, to be kept in balance without danger for his own régime,

by letting them compete as much as possible against each other, and by extracting from them help for his own political aims as much as he could. But even in case of the kabaka religious motivation cannot be excluded. His toleration of the new religions and of Ganda joining them, may be explained with reference to traditional beliefs. The Ganda thought that certain experiences of social forces and natural phenomena were in fact spiritual powers, with which one had to deal through human beings, who could establish direct contacts with them. Different balubaale were responsible for certain specific departments, but the new external powers were not represented by them. Perhaps the kabaka thought that the new religions could fulfil this role. Then, the religious converts themselves may have been prompted by the dissatisfaction with their own ancient religion, as well as by the wish to take up a good position before the struggle for the throne would start. Mutesa's serious sickness of 1879 may have stirred them into decisive activity. Yet this religious affiliation had its own peculiar consequences in that basic traditional values lost their influence, although circumcision, charity to people struck by plague, and humility, were serving no political ends. It is difficult to know what must have been more important: the religious or the political motivation. For the Ganda themselves this was certainly not a distinction they would have made.

The decline of the Anglican Church is, according to TAYLOR (1958 p.90), partly caused by the alienation between the African clergy and the missionaries on the one hand, and the neglected peasants' congregations on the other. This is due to the growth of class differences which have effected the values and outlook of the well educated upper class, making a separation unknown in traditional society, which effected

the political administration as well. But whereas peasants, who have become small landowners, are still willing to engage in the hard and badly paid work of a muluka chief, because of the honour traditionally attached to such a job, the supply of village catechists has virtually come to an end.

This is one factor causing the decline of the Anglican church, the other is the separation of church and state. It has often been pointed out, that one reason for the phenomenal growth of the Uganda Church has been the exact parallelism of the ministerial hierarchy of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches to the political structure, which had developed in the country. (APTER 1961 p.131). But the point that has generally been missed is that the very idea of separate hierarchies of church and state was a foreign conception that was only accepted with the greatest reluctance. (TAYLOR 1958 p.72). Paradoxically this idea, although neglected by the missionaries, was still so much alive that it also contributed to the decline of the Anglican Church. The well educated Anglican chiefs, who were alienated from the commoners, still identified themselves very much with the Anglican Church. Opposition against them led to a rejection of the church as well, which was very apparent during the controversy about the remarriage of the queen-mother in 1941. But hostility towards things European is certainly not the main cause of the decline of the church as has been suggested by LOW and PRATT (1960 p.273).

It appears that much of the crisis in the relations between chiefs and commoners under modern conditions is due to the fact that democratic leadership, and the concept of the chief as a servant of the people, has not yet been accepted by many chiefs; and least of all by the peasant chiefs, who easily mistake pride and harshness for the dignity and authority, which were the attributes of the traditional chiefs (FALLERS 1964 p.252). This

is a far cry from the humility which entered into the smallest details of the life of the early Christian converts. The separation of church and state might well be one of the causes for its disappearance among many contemporary chiefs.

But there is another important external factor which has contributed to the decline of the church after the first world war. The concept of trusteeship of the Protectorate brought about a closer supervision and control of the chiefs, who had to be efficient administrators. It was also responsible for the Rent Act of 1927; and, last but not least, it led to an educational policy of the CMS, which can only be called disastrous from the point of view of the church.

The decline of the church was attended with some interesting religious phenomena. On the one hand there are the balokole, the revivalist movement, which must also be understood as a reaction to social disruption and confusion about moral values in the society in general. On the other hand there is the persistence of certain pagan beliefs. In the traditional world view everything is so closely interrelated in a single, this-worldly plane of existence that there was no place for a transcendent God. This concept cleaves the perfect unity of existence and the fact that this gulf was bridged permanently by Christ, man and god in one person, simply did not come across, although it has been a most important part of the CMS preaching from the very beginning (TAYLOR 1958 p.214). The average Christian knows about the cross and the salvation of his soul almost to the point of glibness, but the whole of the theological content of the faith seems to him too remote from his daily life, which is scarcely surprising considering the fewness and incompetence of his teachers. And if one's wife bears no children, if one's son is insolent at home, if one is in debt and the tax collector's enemy, words like repentance, the blood of Jesus, the Holy

Spirit do not seem to mean very much. That is when the spirit-medium, and the powers it represents, seem much more down to earth and concerned with him as a man than the Christian God (ibid. p.215).

The two independent religious movements which broke away from the Anglican Church can be understood as a reaction against the principle of tutelage in case of Spartas, and as a search for renewal of the church through application of neglected rules, discovered by Africans, in case of Yoswa Kate - yet it is remarkable that both leaders renewed the old pattern of church leadership, combined with a responsibility for social reforms through political action. The Revival also renewed an old pattern viz. that of the local cluster of Christians round a natural head. But here responsible political action is completely absent. The features mentioned here are traditional in a way, in that they go back to the era of the introduction of the new religions. Another traditional aspect which Taylor (ibid.p.98) identifies as a "strong Kiganda instinct for coherence and order", which made Spartas join the Greek Orthodox Church in Taylor's opinion, is contradicted by Spartas' behaviour as leader of the Bataka Party. I think that we should rather hold his wish for equality with Anglican clergy responsible for this union.

#### Summary

The introduction of the new religions can be explained by reference to the traditional political process, especially to the faction formation before and during the succession of a king. The internal dynamics of the new religions can explain their growing hold over other aspects of life, which had nothing to do with political expediency, although the parallel with traditional religious affiliation may also be of great importance here. Foreign powers, the influence of which constituted the

change of the society in general, represented themselves as combining economic, political, and religious features, in case of the Zanzibari and Egyptians; in case of the missions, which did not have any direct political or economic motives, there was a firm alignment with institutions which had explicit economic and political aims. These religious aspects made that the Ganda could also deal with the new powers in accordance with their traditional religious beliefs.

The further developments of the Anglican Church can be understood as a result of factors which influenced both the society as a whole and the church. The growing class differences and the introduction of a policy of trusteeship are notable examples. Even more important is the separation of church and state. The survival of pagan religious elements, the revivalist movement, and also the independent movements led by Yoswa Kate and Reuben Spartas, can only be understood as a result of this decline of the church, as a reaction to its internal developments. But the traditional religion, and the social patterns of the era of the introduction of the new religions, help us to understand the particular forms this reaction took. Again, the revivalist movement can also be explained partly as a reaction to social disruption and confusion about moral values; the Bataka Federation and the Bataka Party are examples of a refusal to conform to the established situation, as much as are the Malakites and the African Orthodox Church.

Although all three sets of factors: the traditional background, the general changes in the society, and the internal development of the new religious associations, must be taken into account to understand the processes of religious change,

which I described, it is impossible to say which set is more important, or even which particular factors are of special importance for certain aspects of these processes of religious change.



## CHAPTER IV.

RELIGIOUS CHANGE AMONG THE ZULU1. Introduction.

In this chapter I hope to examine the independent churches and sects among the Zulu. I shall pay special attention to political changes, as they have been held responsible for their conspicuous growth and multiplication. The churches and sects from which they originated will receive a more extensive treatment than is usual, because I believe that this will contribute to a much better understanding of the conditions which favoured these African initiatives.

The Zulu are the original inhabitants of the Natal Province of South Africa, who became united politically about 1825 under Shaka. They are now one of the officially recognized tribal nations of the Republic. There are local variations of traditional customs but these do not seem to be of great importance compared with what the tribes, which constitute the nation, have in common (READER 1966, p.22). More important are differences caused by the impact of western civilization among different groups of the Zulu. Nowadays there are about two million Zulus, about one-fifth of whom live outside Natal, mainly in the industrial area of Transvaal. How many there were 140 years ago is difficult to estimate, but as there were about 1,130,000 Zulus in 1911 it seems probable that they numbered between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  million in 1825.

Natal has a subtropical climate with a generally heavy rainfall, especially in the south eastern half of the country which has two maxima in January and in March, the north western

half having one maximum in January. The degree of reliability is high but hail and thunder storms are frequent. The western border of Natal is formed by the Drakensberg mountains and a great escarpment which rises to 10,000 feet above sea level and is often 4,000 feet sheer above its base. Smooth or gently undulating land is limited to a gradually widening coastal belt below 1,000 feet to the north of Durban and to the above 4,000 feet surface of the upper Tugela and Buffalo basins in the north western half of the country. Between these two areas there runs a central zone of hilly and mountainous country which reaches its maximum degree of dissection and ruggedness in the middle Pongola, Tugela, and Umkomaas valleys. Drainage is provided by short, steep rivers which have cut deep trenches in the sandstone which is typical of the central zone. A stepped topography with deeply incised river valleys and seaward pointing upland spurs makes Natal as diverse in climatic and vegetational detail as it is in the distribution of its agricultural activities. In the south east the coastal belt has a natural vegetation of evergreen, subtropical forest; the middle zone is characterized by patches of temperate forest; the rest of the country is covered with various types of grassveld. Vast coal fields exist in north western Natal.

The numerous records of the traditional social organization and religion have been summarized by KRIGE (1936) and GLUCKMAN (1940, 51, 58). The modern social conditions have been investigated by GLUCKMAN (1940, 58), READER (1966) and VILAKAZI (1962). They worked mainly in the native reserves and their reports show some significant variations which may be due to the fact that the impact of western civilization and overpopulation has been different. Gluckman, however, still has to publish a complete account of his field work; Reader has not yet published his material on religious beliefs and organizations and gives almost

no information on the rural-urban continuum; Vilakazi, a Zulu himself, gives a lot of information only a Zulu himself could give, but he is weak in systematic representation. The Natal Regional Survey which consists of several volumes published since 1951 gives much quantified material. Most useful were the volumes on the population No.2, on the native reserves No.7, and on Baumannville No.6, a report on an urban community in Durban. KUPER (1965) devoted a study to the new middle class in this town and newer information on the Africans in Durban is available in a report by YOUNG (1965). BENSON (1966) is a source of information on the modern political developments. The early development of Christianity can be found in the monumental work of DU PUIS (1911). SMITH (1949) gives the early history of the American Board mission and the biography of its most distinguished missionary: Lindley. LEE (1930) describes the work of the Anglican Bishop Johnson in the northern reserves. The pioneer study of SUNDKLER (1964 2nd. ed). is the most important study of independent native churches, which are such a conspicuous phenomenon in South Africa.

## 2. An outline of the traditional social System.<sup>(1)</sup>

The basic unit of the society was the extended family, consisting of the head, normally the eldest of a group of brothers, his younger brothers with their wives and families, and often married sons as well. They lived together, perhaps with some clients or adopted people, in huts around the cattle kraal and the whole compound was surrounded by a strong fence. The arrangement of huts reflected the status of different wives and also the way in which this small patrilineage would split up

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(1) This section and the next are historical reconstructions and therefore written in the past tense. I have tried to describe things as they were about 1830.

after the death of its head. Normally the first wife married became the Great Wife, and her eldest son would be the successor of the head of the lineage; the second wife became the Left-hand wife, and her eldest son would be the head of another new compound, but never the successor of his father as lineage head. Other wives would be attached to one or the other of these two sections, and one of them, attached to the Great Wife and called Right-hand Wife, might become the mother of the head of a third section. Her son might even become successor to his father, as head of the lineage, if the Great Wife would fail to give birth to male offspring. The segmentation of the original localized descent group was institutionalized through the ranking of wives. This ranking normally depended on the order in which wives were married, but sometimes the head might raise junior wives to quite important positions, or even refuse to declare the rank order during his life time. Succession also depended on the marriage rank of the wives, and in addition on the birth rank of her sons, and on the principle of primogeniture, which simply means that descendants always take precedence over collaterals. Each woman had her own hut, her own fields, which she cultivated to supply the needs of her own household, and also cattle appointed to her hut for her own special use. A woman was in law always subject to the control of some man, either her father or brother, or after marriage her husband. This subordination gave these men control over the woman's capacities as a wife and as a child bearer, which were transferred at marriage in exchange for cattle. Marriage itself was a difficult relation, requiring readjustment to a strange family where the new wife was hedged with many taboos. She was to be dutiful, hard-working, faithful and decorous, bearing children for her husband and caring for

those children. Boys herded the cattle and young men were away from home for long times at the military barracks, to serve the king. Older men spent most of their time attending cases and drinking beer.

A lineage of a few generations deep occupied a number of compounds within the same area and its members recognized the authority of the first born of the senior line. There might be people from other descent lines who had settled down in the area, but they were subject to the authority of the head of the dominant descent group. But after some more generations such strangers might have developed into dominant descent groups themselves. A number of these dominant descent groups formed a tribe which therefore consisted of the members of several clans, the largest exogamous patrilineal descent groups. Yet as a rule the majority would belong to one clan, which had always formed the core of the tribe to which strangers had attached themselves. The chief of the tribe was either the first born of the senior descent line of the original descent group, or somebody who himself, or one of his immediate predecessors, had been appointed by the king. In theory every chief was "raised up" by the king, but it was expedient to recognize descent group heads as chiefs, since kinship affiliation was a uniting force. If the king appointed somebody else, such a head would become his most important minister.

The close relatives of the chief formed an aristocracy within the tribe. In the large tribes, which were subdivided into sub-tribes, they were sometimes appointed as rulers over these sub-tribes in the same way as the king would appoint members of the royal national aristocracy over the tribes. Rulers who were commoners would marry with a sister, a daughter or even just some girl belonging to the chief of the tribe, or, on the national level, to the king. This would make their sons into members of

the tribal or national aristocracy. It was the rule that sons should succeed their fathers according to the rules of succession, once they had been appointed to a newly created post. The king ruled with the support of his brothers and uncles, but the latter were also always a potential threat to the king, especially if he abused his power. People were always ready to bring down a tyrant in rallying behind one of his immediate relatives.

The regiments of the national army were formed on the basis of age. Whenever the king gave the sign all young men past puberty, who had not yet been called up, had to assemble at the royal homesteads, which were mainly concentrated around the capital. Here they were enrolled. Each royal homestead had a number of tribes, from which it drew new soldiers. But the regimental division based on age cross cut this regional division. Each regiment had its own commanders: princes, chiefs, brothers of important chiefs, or sometimes brave commoners. Life in the barracks was easy. There was plenty of meat and grain supplied by the king in addition to the food brought from home, and much singing and dancing was going on. But it was up to the king to decide when a particular regiment would be allowed to marry. In fighting the Zulus were very fierce and ruthless in exterminating the enemy. This was something new, before Shaka's time warfare had merely the aim of asserting the superiority over the enemy.

The king was the supreme commander of the army. He was also the supreme judge, supposed to maintain customary law even against his personal predilection. The king's council consisting of royal aristocrats, tribal chiefs, and wise commoners, had considerable influence over his actions. The most important duties of the chiefs were judicial and administrative. They had

also to listen to a council composed of the most important men of the tribe. Chiefs were allowed to use force against disobedient or rebellious subjects, although they had to ask the king's assent. People belonged to him and he had the right to the fine in cases of assault and manslaughter. But chiefs had also influence over their subjects through economic ties. They were the big cattle owners and people became dependent on the milk and meat of the animals, which were lent to them by the chiefs. At the bottom of the political hierarchy ties of community and kinship replaced those based mainly on force and economic clientage.

#### Summary.

Zulu political organization can be seen as delegated authority over smaller and smaller groups with lessening executive power. These groups were quite often opposed to each other at the same level, over appointments of their members at higher levels, and also over border disputes; but nevertheless they were united by the common service of their leaders on the council of the larger group of which they were a part. Although creation of new officials permitted a high degree of social mobility, once they were appointed, their sons should succeed them according to the strict rules of succession. The division of the compounds inhabited by the smallest descent groups was institutionalized according to the same rules.

### 3. An outline of the traditional religion

The Zulus had some vague notion of a Creator Spirit who instituted everything and who was "beneath". Even vaguer was the belief in a power called "The lord of the heaven". One only knew that this power caused thunder and lightning. There was also a goddess called Nomkubulwana who was supplicated to give a good harvest. This was done in ceremonies in which unmarried girls

behaved like young men, putting on their garments for a day and herding and milking cattle, though cattle were normally taboo for females. At various stages women and girls went naked and sang lewd songs. Men and boys hid inside the huts, and were not allowed to go near the women. If they dared, they would be assaulted by them.

Most important was the ancestor cult. Ancestors were believed to guard their progeny from danger and to attend to their needs, but one had to sacrifice to them in return. The dead were made into ancestors in a special ceremony which had to bring the spirit of the deceased back to the kraal. This was never done for a female and it might be omitted in case of ordinary men, but never when it was the spirit of the head of the kraal, who was supposed to continue to look after his dependants as he had done when he was alive. The spirit of a chief was even more important, because he had the welfare of the whole tribe at heart and most important were of course the royal ancestors. The ancestors could reveal themselves in dreams or send omens as a warning of coming disaster. They could also send sickness and very often a diviner would find that they wished a sacrifice to be made.

There were two types of sacrifice at which the procedure was the same but the invocations differed. If something good had happened it would be a prayer of thanksgiving, but one of reproach if things had gone wrong and people had died. The officiator was always the head of the family, the direct representative on earth of the line of the ancestors. There were also national sacrifices, where the king would act on behalf of all his subjects and approach his own ancestors for help and blessing. Such sacrifices were made for rain, on the occasion of the first-fruit festival, when the king would ask for prosperity and good crops, and before the army set out for war. During these ceremonies



the army paraded at full strength and other nations were symbolically attacked. A remarkable feature of the parade during the first-fruit festival was the considerable freedom of speech: even the king could be insulted without impunity.

There were two types of religious specialists. The diviner was the real link between the living and the dead. He derived the power to understand the will of the ancestors and to interpret their messages from spirit possession. This enabled him or her (diviners were quite often married women) also to smell out the evil witches who caused disaster to the community. A diviner had also a fairly extensive knowledge of herbs and roots used for medical purposes. When the spirits wished somebody to become a diviner, they would cause him to dream constantly and to fall ill. He would grow delicate and eccentric and abstain from certain kinds of food. Frequent sneezing and yawning were a certain sign that he was about to become a diviner. After a creeping feeling in his body had told him that an ancestral spirit had entered into his body, he would go to an old diviner and be instructed in the art. Purification through vomiting, early each morning near the river, would bring the spirit under control. Diviners banded together in fairly distinct groups around their initiators.

"Heaven herds" could control the heavens, preventing hail from destroying the crops and warding off lightning from villages. This was done through the application of certain magical techniques and everybody could become heaven herd, although the profession was mainly taken up by people who thought that they had been specially favoured by the heavens, in narrow escapes from being struck by lightning for example. Raindoctors had also power over the heavens, but their profession was hereditary. The king thought himself to be the only rainmaker, and other

rainmakers were subject to persecution after the establishment of the national Zulu state.

Witches used the powers of the universe, which they had learnt to control by means of magical techniques, against the welfare of the society. They worked in secret and used medicines to attain their evil ends. Medicines could be mixed with the food of the victims, placed near roads where they would cause disaster for bypassers, or they could be chewed and spit out into the direction of the victim, while suitable incantations were uttered. Every witch had his animal familiars, brought under control through the use of medicines, which could be sent out to carry out evil missions.

The machinations of witches required counter magic, and, because witches often caused sickness, use of medicine and magic went hand in hand. Nor was the use of magic confined to dealings with witches. It was an integral part of every kind of medical treatment. Diviners had some knowledge of medicines; but herbalists might be highly specialized and in difficult cases diviners would send their patients to such specialists. They could also treat hysterical symptoms. They introduced into the patient another spirit or group of spirits to replace the ancestral spirit which caused the trouble. The new spirits would, when called upon, speak in various tongues. This did not make people into diviners, however.

There were many conditions which made purification necessary. Unclean people included menstruating women, pregnant women, women with young children, people who had sexual intercourse, people who had been to a recent burial, handled a dead body or had anything to do with a corpse. In most cases it was enough to use emetics and wash one's body in a stream before sunrise, but in serious cases one had to smoke or steam oneself first, or smear the fat of certain animals on one's body, which was

supposed to concentrate the "blackness", so that purifying medicines would be more effective.

In many ways the king was also the most important religious functionary. Apart from being the high-priest of the nation he wanted to be the only rainmaker and required that all skilled herbalists had to teach him the cures they knew. The king possessed important therapeutic medicines with which he would treat all his ailing followers of importance. The king's diviners had to confirm witchcraft accusations of other diviners, before an execution was allowed.

### Summary

Most important were the ritual dealings with the ancestors, the national first-fruit ceremonies, the women fertility festival in spring and the divination and witchcraft complex. The sociological significance of ancestor worship is the bringing together of lineage members who are ritually dependent upon the lineage head, which strengthens his position in everyday life as well as the unity of his dependents. Meat was distributed according to the hierarchy of rank and age at these sacrifices and this emphasizes the inner structure of the descent group as it is ideally. In the same way is ~~secular authority~~ strengthened by ~~the~~ ritual position.

Witchcraft accusations occurred between co-wives, because eliminating a co-wife can mean a rise of one's own position and of the position of one's sons. Yet wives were also accused by in-laws especially if the husband became too devoted to them. This enabled - if not compelled - him to move off and establish his independence; relations with kin could be resumed later in a more attenuated form. But these were certainly not the only relations characterized by the possibility of witchcraft accusations.

#### 4. The changing society

In 1824 the first white traders tried to establish a post at the place of the present town of Durban. They found favour with Shaka and became habitués at his court near the modern Eshowe. He established them as chiefs at Durban and began to use them in his dealings with those tribes in Natal, which still had not surrendered themselves to his supreme rule.

Shaka's mother died in 1827 and the brutal cruelty during and after the wailing ceremonies led to his assassination in 1828 by his two brothers Dingane and Mhlanga, who found the Zulu only too willing to join them. Soon Dingane had Mhlanga assassinated, fearing that his younger brother was conspiring against him.

In 1835 Captain Gardiner, who had resigned from the navy on the death of his wife and had become a missionary, arrived at Durban. He went straight to Dingane and asked him to be allowed to establish a mission station among the Zulus. This was refused, but the settlers at Durban asked him to stay there. This town had become a sanctuary for people who had incurred the king's displeasure and fled to the Europeans for protection. This strained their relations with Dingane so much, that the whites decided to conclude a treaty, in which the king pardoned all people who had fled to Durban and the whites undertook to return all future refugees. Gardiner himself signed as representative of the whites and he brought the first Zulus who had fled after the treaty had been concluded back to Dingane. But he also went to his court to plead for their lives: although they were killed, Gardiner had convinced the king that he was sincere and he allowed him now to establish missions in his territory.

In 1837 he returned from England with Owen, who was finally granted to stay at the king's court itself. Dingane used him as his secretary for the correspondence with the Boers who

had started negotiations for a part of Natal to the south of the Tugela, which had been almost completely depopulated through the wars of Shaka. Most people had sought a refuge in Mpondo land, further south. These Boers had left the Cape Colony to found an independent state in which they would not be harassed by English administrators who suppressed their language, did not protect them properly on the frontiers against the Africans, and who had established equality for the law, which had undermined the traditional labour relations. The king received the men in a friendly fashion and seemed willing to allow them to settle in and around Durban. He required only, as a proof of their good intentions, that they would recapture some cattle. This they did and the king signed the treaty, granting a large portion of his territory. But the next morning, when the Boers took leave from the king, all were massacred and immediately regiments were sent out to destroy other parties of Boers. Owen fled to Durban and left with most settlers by ship.

In the end the Boers were able to take revenge in the battle at Blood river where about 3,000 Zulu were killed. Dingane set fire to his court near Pietermaritzburg and withdrew northwards. Mpande, his brother, had gathered a considerable following in the meantime and sought an alliance with the Boers. He stayed with them as a hostage while his general defeated Dingane who fled to Swaziland where he was killed.

Mpande became the new king of Zululand and the Boers occupied Natal proper, i.e. to the south of the Tugela. The most important problem which faced them here was the position of the Zulu, who now started to come back from the south, where they had taken refuge, or from the north, where they had lived in captivity. They decided resolutely to settle them - by force if necessary - in Mpondo land, which had been granted to them by Dingane originally,

although he did not have any right at all to dispose of it. The governor of the Cape decided to invade the country in 1842, to prevent this aggression which would cause much trouble in Kaffraria and especially to the Mpondo with whom he was in friendly alliance. He convinced the government in London on purely humanitarian grounds that it had to occupy Natal permanently. It was formally annexed in 1845 and many of the Boers decided to go back to the western side of the Drakensberg mountains.

Yet the land question still had to be solved. The outcome of the continual wrangle between the white settlers' opinion on the one hand, and the protagonists of the interests of the Zulus, most important among them Shepstone, president of the Land Commission and later Secretary for Native Affairs, on the other hand, was the establishment of 6 reserves of two million acres in all. Nevertheless it was only 10% of all the land available in Natal and most of it was located in the central mountainous zone. It provided land for only 65,000 out of about 100,000 Zulu.

Shepstone implemented a policy of indirect rule. Where the tribes still acknowledged their own hereditary chiefs, these continued to exercise modified powers, and where indigenous institutions were moribund, Shepstone resuscitated them. Against considerable opposition he decided not to adopt Roman-Dutch law but to recognise Native Law and Custom, where it was not against natural law and general humanitarian principles.

The people of Zululand were independent under Mpande but maintained relations with whites. Missionaries were allowed to settle in certain areas, and traders and hunters moved around the country. The government of Natal sent medical help during an outbreak of smallpox and watched not without a degree of anxiety the developments in Zululand. The leadership of Mpande was so

weak that his sons began already the struggle for succession to the throne in 1856. Cetshwayo defeated in that year his most important rival and Shepstone advised Mpande to appoint him as the official heir. He succeeded his father in 1872. He was a more domineering figure and involved himself in a series of difficulties with the British which culminated in the Zulu war of 1879-80.

After the collapse of the army which had been carefully built up again by Cetshwayo, he himself was exiled and the nation divided into 13 independent chiefdoms. This led to chaos. The nation split into two factions, one supporting the royal lineage and Dinizulu, the eldest son of Cetshwayo who had died in 1884, the other rallying behind Zibebu of the Mandlkaazi section, which traces descent from Mpande's grandfather. The British were reluctant to commit themselves; but a number of Boers from Transvaal were willing to help Dinizulu against Zibebu, in exchange for a large tract of north eastern Zululand, which had been occupied by the latter. Finally in 1887 the British government, under pressure from humanitarian groups at home, and afraid colonists in Natal, decided to take over the responsibility for the administration and the establishment of peace and order. Dinizulu defied the British through an armed attack on Zibebu and was exiled in 1889. In 1897 he was allowed to return and made into a local chief. In that year Zululand was incorporated into Natal, which had been granted "responsible" government in 1893. The country was divided into 21 reserves occupying about half its surface, but for the greater part not viable because it was stony, arid, or infested with malaria and sleeping sickness.

The development of the modern political system started in the whole of Natal at approximately the same time. In the south Shepstone had tried to avoid interference with the traditional system as much as possible. For example it was only in 1878 that the judicial system was changed in such a way that the chiefs

lost their criminal jurisdiction. Increasingly important became the control of the labour flow to the new mining area on the Rand after the discovery of gold. The grip of the white administration had to be tightened. This led to the development of the modern political system.

There are about 300 Zulu chiefs, whose position is hereditary according to native custom but subject to the approval of the white administration. An exception are the "mission reserves", which were created in 1856 to ensure the mission stations of a more or less permanent population in their neighbourhood. In 1864 there were 19 such reserves. In 1902 they were brought under direct administration of the government of Natal.

The chief cannot any longer compel, though he levies, labour service; he still owns the land in the reserves but it is subject to government control; about one third of the chiefs have not even got land of their own as their subjects live on European owned farms like he himself; he has lost his relatively enormous wealth and often uses what he has in his own, and not in his subjects' interests. His judicial powers have been limited to civil cases between Africans who want a judgment according to Customary Law. The magistrate has become gradually the focus of a fairly elaborate government machine. He has to deal with traders and missionaries coming to the reserves. He has to implement measures against soil erosion and enforce cattle dipping. He has to control the labour flow and to him people have to go to acquire labour permits. He is responsible for tax collection and the allocation of money for public services. Many of these duties are now handled by separate departments, but they still have to consult the magistrate.

The chief is not left free to appoint his own deputies in the sub-tribal wards, or even to acknowledge the authority of



the hereditary dominant descent group heads in these areas. The appointment of officials at the intermediate level has to be approved by the magistrate and they or their helpers are called iphoyisa (policemen.) They act as marriage registrars in European fashion. The cleaning of the dipping tanks and the filling of these tanks with water is also under their control.

The magistrate has come to stand for many of the new values and beliefs which today affect Zulu behaviour. The better educated and more progressive Christians differ in their reactions towards the chief from the more conservative pagans. Among the latter the ultimate religio-magical and kinship sanctions supporting the chief prevailed until recently. Their expectations were so strong, that even a Christian chief would probably sacrifice a clandestine beast from time to time. As long as the chiefs opposed the magistrate and his decisions the schooled people nevertheless also rallied behind him.

But opposition of the chiefs against these measures has become increasingly difficult now the government has introduced the system of Bantu authorities, accepted by King Cyprian in 1957 after much hesitation and delay, which confers the tasks formerly fulfilled by the magistrates, on to the traditional chiefs. Now they have become the "boys" of the government, leading their people into perpetual subordination, and now they are probably even rejected by the pagan traditionalists.

In the towns the Africans have to live separated from whites in so called locations. They are administered by an official of the municipality who issues passes and permits aimed at controlling the movement of Africans into towns. He is also responsible for poor relief, housing, and health regulations and the collection of taxes. In many towns funds for Africans are provided by the sale of beer in municipal halls at a considerable

profit. To make this work, home brewing is forbidden or severely limited, which is much resented as the sale of beer was one of the few possibilities open to independent women to earn an own income; wives feel that their husbands are forced to spend money, while they themselves could have made beer easily.

After independence from London a rapid and self interested legislation was imposed by the whites in Natal. A steady acquisition of crown land for European use was accompanied by a stiffening of the labour laws (1894), the punishment of stock theft law (1899) and a 100% increase in the taxation of squatters on crownland (1903). Then in 1905 a poll tax was added to the already existing hut tax. This led to the Bambatha rebellion. Bambatha was the chief of a small tribe in South Natal. It had been rumoured that he was not going to pay taxes and that he was prepared to kill any collector who would visit him. The Secretary for Native Affairs summoned him to come to his office, but he went into hiding and fled to Dinizulu, who hid his family and encouraged him at least passively to spread an insurrection. Within a few days Bambatha was back in the south where he started a guerilla warfare. It took 10,000 soldiers and police and 6,000 native troops to defeat him. When Bambatha was killed after a few months the rebellion collapsed; 4,000 Zulus and 25 whites had been killed in the fighting. Independent African churches played an important part in this rebellion. Many of its leaders belonged to such churches, and African nationalism was much encouraged by the preaching in these churches. Dinizulu was brought to trial and exiled. Perhaps he had hoped that the rebellion would have caused the imperial government to revoke responsible government in Natal, and to establish a Zulu paramountcy, directly under imperial control.

Instead the British government had become so intent on the reconciliation between British and Boer inhabitants of South Africa,

that they were even prepared to accept the colour bar in the constitution of the proposed Union of the four provinces. After the Act of Union one of the first bills introduced by the new government gave it power to regulate the issue of certificates of competence in skilled occupations in mining and engineering, which was used later to discriminate against Africans. The consequences of the Land Act of 1913 were felt more directly. It prohibited Africans from acquiring land except in the reserves, and in areas held by Europeans contiguous with the reserves, or from other natives. There had been considerable buying of land from Europeans before 1913.

These oppressive measures led a few young lawyers to call a conference of all chiefs and leaders of Africans in the Union in 1911. Most important among them was Seme, a Zulu educated at Columbia University and Oxford. The delegates decided to form an African National Congress. There had already been regional forerunners like the Natal Native Congress, founded by Martin Lutuli, chief of the mission reserve of Groutville for: "Christian and Civilized Africans". Its president was Rev. Dube who went to the U.S.A., worked his way through college, founded the Ohlange Highschool for which he collected money in the U.S.A., and founded the first Zulu newspaper. He was now elected as the first president of the National Congress. For the next thirty years it would pass resolutions and send deputations without any effect. It remained a respectable middle class organization. The real opportunity for action rather than words was to be found in the industrialized areas. In 1920 a spontaneous strike of 40,000 miners on the Rand was crushed within a matter of days. Greater opportunities existed among Africans in other industries. The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union organized a number of strikes and became soon very popular. Its membership rose from 50,000 in 1925 to 200,000 in 1928 but after that it petered out through internal disputes and

the great economic depression. The union had its headquarters in Johannesburg and was led by Kadalie, a clerk from Nyassaland, and his chief lieutenant George Champion, a Zulu, who had organized the native clerks on the Rand mines. Later he made the Natal branch of the ICU independent and joined the Natal Native Congress, where he opposed the leadership of Dube. He was banned from Durban in 1930.

Another organization opposed to the racial politics was the Communist Party. The Zulu Nkosi joined it in Johannesburg in 1926, and started to organize a big pass burning demonstration in Durban after Champion had been banned. He himself and a few other demonstrators were shot by the police who interfered. Purges caused the best white leaders to leave the Communist Party, and by 1933 communist activity among Africans had almost vanished.

After the Colour Bar Act of 1926, which prevented Africans from performing a large number of skilled mining jobs, and the Native Administration Act of 1927, which suspended freedom of meeting in the reserves and gave the administration the power to appoint and dismiss chiefs at will, Hertzog wanted to change the constitution, which still allowed 11,000 Africans in the Cape Province to be registered as voters. This made the Africans forget their internal disputes, and they came together in an All African Congress in 1935. Yet when it came to action, the outcome was to override a minority call from militants, wanting immediate demonstrations and strikes, and to decide to send a deputation to see the P.M. It was of no avail.

Large scale militant action only came about after the National Congress Youth League had taken over from the old generation and after the victory of the Nationalist Party at the elections of 1948. The great man of the Youth League was Lembede who died in 1948. He was a son of Zulu farm labourers who had taken his matriculation and his B.A. by correspondence. He was

a man of vision who aroused a new self conscious nationalism among young Africans.

The National Party started to enforce its views on apartheid through legislation. In 1949 mixed marriages were forbidden; in 1950 residential segregation of whites, Asiatics, Coloureds and the different Bantu "nations" was introduced in principle; pass laws became comprehensive and were going to apply to women as well as to men; sex relations between whites and others were forbidden; in 1952 the Bantu Authorities Acts were passed; in 1953 mixed trade unions were forbidden, African trade unions remained unacknowledged; the Bantu Education Act transferred the control of subsidized mission schools to the government.

On June 26, 1952 the great defiance campaign started: 8,500 volunteers trespassed apartheid laws and were sent to prison. Membership of Congress increased dramatically to 100,000. The leaders were tried under the Suppression of Communism Act. Of course, they had nothing to do with communism as it is commonly understood, which was acknowledged in the final judgment. Therefore legislation was passed in March 1953 to provide penalties for defiance campaign offences and its financial support. Criticism of the attitude of the Congress President during the trial forced him to retire and Albert Lutuli was elected instead. He had been chief of the Groutville mission reserve since 1937 and had defeated Champion in Natal in 1950 during the Youth League takeover of Congress. He served as Chairman of the Congregationalist Churches of the American Board, and as President of the Natal Mission Conference.

During the fifties the tension mounted when government started to implement the new laws. For the first time people in the reserves, especially in Natal came into action. In 1959 after riots in Durban, where a meeting of 2,000 women had been broken up with a baton charge, riots started and spread over the

whole province. In the countryside women destroyed dipping tanks and Bantu education schools. Hundreds of them were arrested and jailed. Congress volunteers organizing the discontent into a disciplined movement found people in remote areas singing Congress songs and even wearing Congress uniforms.

The mood became more militant and in 1959 the Pan African Congress claiming "Africa for the Africans" split off from the National Congress. But the next year both organizations were forbidden. Soon the government would announce the anti-sabotage act and a law amendment to make it possible to keep people in solitary confinement without trial. Political organization among Africans has become virtually impossible now.

In the early days the African population failed to meet the demands of the European economy. To develop the sugar industry big numbers of Indians were employed as indentured labourers. They became a distinct part of Natal's population, especially in the coastal area.

A number of factors contributed to the emergence of natives from the reserves as wage labour migrants. There was the increased demand for taxes which had to be paid in money and no longer in cattle; the regulation that the lobola (bride-price) had to be paid at once and should consist of eleven head of cattle, instead of the token payment at the wedding and further payments whenever it was possible; the growing demands for western goods and luxuries, created partly through the teaching and example of missionaries, who were for example against nakedness; the increase of the population in the reserves and the exhaustion of the soil.

Most of the early migration was directed towards the Rand,

where startling developments took place, after the discovery of diamonds in 1879 and of gold in 1886. In 1891 the railway from Durban to the Rand had been completed. Johannesburg developed very quickly into the biggest town of South Africa.

The urban population of Natal increased at a much slower rate, reflecting the tempo of industrialization. Only during and after the second world war many factory places became available for African workers. In 1904 the only urban African population groups of any size were those of Durban (19,000) and of Pietermaritzburg (10,000). In 1921 there were 55,000 urban Africans (4.8%), in 1936 151,000 (9%), and in 1960 388,000 (17%). By urban Africans is meant the number of Africans found in urban areas at the time a census was taken. It does not mean that urban Africans are urbanized in the sense that they have their families and property in town. Most of them still seem to be firmly rooted in the rural areas. The length of absence varies from a few months to many years; there are also many weekend commuters who live in peri-urban areas. Most male migrants return home during the ploughing season in November and December. About half of the migrants are between the ages of 23 to 27 and the older a migrant is the longer he tends to stay at home before returning.

There are other difficulties with regard to the statistics of urbanization. They tend to be unreliable because many Africans are in town without permit and methods of data collecting are improved each time a census is taken. Moreover the situation is not at all static. There is a clear tendency toward a more permanent and stable African urban population. The urbanization of Zulu was not restricted to Natal. In 1951 there were 5000,000 Zulu outside Natal, 400,000 of whom lived in Transvaal. Assuming that they were all living in urban areas they constitute about 30% of all African urban dwellers in Transvaal. Life in the

reserves is poor. There are very serious food shortages which money incomes do not adequately supplement. But in towns it does not seem to be much better. About 70% of the African households in Durban in 1953 did not reach the minimum level of earnings necessary to maintain the bare health and decency under short term conditions. Illegal brewing of beer is quite often necessary to supplement the household income. It seems, however, that the last few years conditions have improved.

The position of the African farm labourers is not too bad. They are largely labour tenants who are allowed to cultivate a piece of land and to graze a number of cattle in exchange for six months labour a year. After the stipulated period money may be earned elsewhere. The number of people living on European farms dropped from 407,000 (26%) in 1936 to 336,000 (20%) in 1951. As a general rule farmers treat their African workers in a patriarchal and kindly fashion. Labour is scarce and farmers who get a bad name are avoided. Social life would not seem to be very different from that in the reserves, but little is known about it.

The information we have about social life in the reserves themselves, gives the impression that there are at least three distinct patterns. Reader, who worked in an area near enough to Durban to allow wage labourers to come home regularly over the weekends, and which was definitely overpopulated, found in 1950 that the large extended families had disappeared with the prevalence of polygamy, which is quite unusual nowadays in this area. The family group had closed in to the resilient elementary family with a minimum number of extra dependants, economically active where possible. Economic independence of this unit had developed together with autonomy of action and retraction of large-scale descent-group obligations. Persons tended to be concerned only with their immediate consanguineals and affines. Grandmothers were no longer entrusted with the early education of their children. Husbands had to consult with or at least to refer to



their wives on many decisions of importance. This was due to the increased independence and education of women, and to the absence of husbands for most of the time. (READER 1966, p.334). According to READER (ibid.p.243) Christians and pagans are intermixed in the same total community, and their modes of life are not encapsulated, but polarities joined by a continuum. VILAKAZI (1962) who worked a few years later also in a reserve near Durban, stresses, on the other hand, on almost every page the fundamental differences between these two groups, perhaps overrating the importance of ideas about what should happen ideally. On the whole he agrees with what has been said earlier about the changing roles of kinsfolk and affines with regard to educated Christians, but he gives the impression that pagans cling still very much to traditional values, far more than Reader suggests.

Again a different picture is given by GLUCKMAN (1958 p.74-5) who says that in the far less densely populated Zululand reserves in 1938, the extended family was still largely united through joint production. The absence of men at labour centres for long times made it necessary to co-operate in the care of their families, lands and herds; timing of absences and the allocation of farming tasks had to be made within a group. People could not come home frequently for the weekend. The large homesteads had been divided, but the constituent families of the small lineage tended to build close together and speak of themselves as "we are of one homestead". In the south such settlement patterns have become increasingly more difficult to achieve. In order to keep the Christian members of the family under his authority, the lineage heads gave up sacrifices to the ancestors. In the area where Vilakazi worked this had not been the case. (VILAKAZI 1958 p.90).

Yet one would expect social divisions at least in some

areas because until 1953 education in the reserves has been firmly linked with Christianity and has been very selective. In 1953 500 out of 600 schools were controlled by missions and churches. And in 1946 only one third of the children between 7 and 14 years of age were at school. But percentages differ regionally. In some mission reserves they are as high as 90%, in some tribal reserves in the north they are as low as 10%.

Reader does not give any information on permanent migration or on behaviour in town of pagans and Christians. This may be one reason why he does not make much of the difference between these two groups, because it is in towns that these are most significant, according to Vilakazi. Pagan traditionalist intensify the bonds of kinship and affiliation in town. After work they band together and sing traditional songs and discuss their girls at home. They will never try to make friends with the sophisticated town girls. Christian young men go to cinemas, concerts and western dances, date girls and may end up living with them as "town-wives". This causes obvious difficulties if there is also a wife at home in the reserve. Christian girls go out to work as teachers, nurses, or as house servants, which hardly ever happens among pagans. Permanent migration of whole families also seems to be restricted to Christians (VILAKAZI 1962 p.145, p.122).

Vilakazi also mentions a third category of people who have no respect for old traditions but who have not adopted Christian values. Ngubo (KUPER 1965 app.B) tells us that these amagxagxa or abaxhaka are, crude, violent and culturally rootless. Tsotsis are educated smart young people trying to make a living through crimes which require operational skill. They scorn the behaviour of the "scuse-me" people, who imitate the white middle class and are particularly concerned with the rules of etiquette. The tsotsis are typical of the urban setting, amagxagxa can also be found in rural areas.

MAYER (1961) confirms for East London the findings of Vilakazi: pagans stick to their small circle of people from their home area, Christians engage in all kinds of activities and can become members of different associations and each time be together with a different set of people. In one Durban location, Baumannville (Natal Regional Survey, Report No.6, 1959), three quarters of the population of 775 people were affiliated to some church; three quarters of them belonged to the ten mission churches and the rest to fifteen African Independent Churches. About one fifth of all church members join church organizations or hold offices of some kind. Apart from this, one third of all adults belong to some club or organization. There are cultural, social and sport clubs and some people may combine a number of functions.

Baumannville had a very high percentage of professional and clerical workers: teachers, clergymen, nurses, a journalist and a draughtsman formed 20% of the population of 15 years and over. These people constitute what one might call an African bourgeoisie. In 1960 about 2.5% of the economically active belonged to this category in Durban. This new élite has turned away completely from the tribal way of life toward western civilization. Its members do not recognize the validity of white dominance and were the leaders of the African political movements.

### Summary

The occupation of Natal was the outcome of the desire of the Boers to establish an independent state and the wish of the British to prevent them to do so at the cost of the Africans. British intervention in Zululand out of fear for a potential powerful enemy led to chaos and gave the Boers the opportunity to capture a significant part of the country. Yet the British were eventually forced to found a permanent administration. The granting of responsible government to the whites in Natal led

to oppressive legislation which caused the rebellion of 1906. After that the Act of Union united people from all tribes in the African National Congress against the whites. They were the new élite which aspired to be a part of the white society and ascribed to European values, and the traditional chiefs, who were representative of the tribes through the very nature of their position. The urban masses were at first organized separately but after the second world war, the new generation of Congress leaders also got their support for a more active policy. Zulus played an important part in all these new political organizations and movements. As long as the tribal people in the reserves could rally behind their chiefs in their opposition against the whites they supported them; but when they became identified with the oppressors, the commoners took the initiative of their own and joined Congress.

The great majority of the people still live in the rural areas where the subsistence economy is supplemented by the earnings of wage labour, especially of the young men, to gain a precarious living. Among them there is a difference between the educated Christians and pagan traditionalists, but the effects of this division seem to differ from region to region. It is perhaps most clear in the urban context, where educated Christians make use of all the new cultural elements which are offered, whereas pagans stick to a circle of friends not different from the one at home, and do not engage in new forms of entertainment. For them life in town is far less colourful than in the reserves where their girls and women are. A new élite has come into existence but its activities are limited seriously by segregational and discriminatory measures. Most people in town are unskilled labourers or service workers and many of their families cannot make both ends meet in a legal way.

5. Some processes of social change.

a. The early missionary enterprise.

Thanks to the enterprising Captain Gardiner Owen was able to settle down at the court of Dingane in 1837. The king used him as a secretary and he also pestered him continually for instruction in the use of muskets and the making of bullets. After a few months Owen had to witness the massacre of the Boers and he decided to leave Natal as soon as possible. He does not seem to have made a lasting impact on the Zulu.

More successful was the attempt of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which had sprung up in a New England Congregational milieu but which was organized on an interdenominational basis in close co-operation with the Presbyterians. In 1835 they decided to send six missionaries and their wives to South Africa. They acquired the consent of Dingane to settle in his country but for the time being only at Durban. Later they were allowed to establish four more stations. Hardly having occupied these places, the Boer massacre took place, and these American missionaries also had to leave the country for a time. Three of them came back in 1839 but one of them, Lindley, decided to become a minister to the Boers for the time being, which he considered to be more in the interest of the Zulus than direct missionary work. His work gained the missionaries a tremendous amount of good will and removed much prejudice. For a time Lindley was the only pastor of the Boers outside the Cape Colony from where the established church refused to send any help to these schismatics.

In 1846 the first Zulu convert was baptized and soon the number of missionaries increased to 14 in 1850, occupying 12 mission stations. A nucleus of 9 churches had been formed, containing 123 members. The further development was steady but not rapid. In 1870 there were about 500 church members. Particularly interest-

ing was the intellectual revival which took place at Inanda in 1864. The Zulus had in general stood aloof from the mission but then suddenly large crowds, among them the chief, came to be taught. It was very much an acceptance of western civilization, which was judged to be essential by the Americans, if the Zulus were ever to loose their heathen way of life. This consisted of the improved mode of cultivating the soil; of foreign tools; of upright houses with proper furniture; in short of the assumption of the appearance of civilized men and women. The need for more teachers led to the establishment of a high school for boys and soon after, in 1869, a girls' seminary was opened. This was considered to be of even greater importance because the education of a whole family in the new way of life, which Christianity implied in the opinion of the missionaries. Teaching was in English in order to qualify for government grants. Lindley considered this also necessary because Zulu Christians might soon be able to qualify for franchise. In fact only three of them did qualify between 1865 and 1904, when this possibility ceased to exist.

In 1864 the first annual gathering of Zulus belonging to American Board churches took place, at which 400 men and women were present to discuss their common problems. One of these was the position of women and especially the lobola (brideprice). They agreed that polygamy could not be tolerated but strongly opposed disciplinary measures against people who still adhered to the lobola custom. At first the Board did not want to tolerate this, but soon it was recognized that missionaries did not in fact have any authority over the new churches, and that it was impossible to enforce legitimate discipline against customs they themselves wanted to retain. The missionaries did not accept this in practice. In 1879 they drew up a set of regulations which were pressed upon the churches. The rule against lobola was opposed by some prominent Zulu from the beginning, and never could the passive resistance of the Christians in general be overcome.

A Home Missionary Society was also founded in 1864 which

paid for two native preachers. The Board decided that the next step would be the ordination of African pastors in seven churches so that the missionaries would be free for evangelistic tours and specialist work. These men were ordained in 1870 even though some missionaries thought that this was against the cautious slowness, which they thought to be ideal in such circumstances. In 1885 the Home Missionary Movement was reorganized and after 1894 no further financial support was required for native congregations. Although there were only 21 native congregations with 4500 members in 1905, the influence of the Board Missions was extensive through their publications in the vernacular. In 1883 they published a complete translation of the bible. In 1900 the Bantu Congregational Church in Natal had been accorded autonomy and the missionaries held now only an advisory function in theory. Many of the new intellectuals belonged to this church, Among them were Rev. John Dube and Albert Lutuli, respectively the first and last president of the African National Congress.

In 1844 the Norwegian Missionary Society sent Schreuder to Natal. He tried to secure permission from Mpande to settle in his territory. This was refused and he founded his station just at the border of Zululand. He was allowed to settle at Empangeni, however, after he had been called in when Mpande had fallen ill and recovered, which the king ascribed to the medicine Schreuder had given him. In 1873 there were 8 stations and 245 converts. Mpande allowed his people to attend the services, but that was all; no one was allowed to profess Christianity openly. Cetshwayo even subjected Christians to persecutions. After the Zulu war the mission entered a period of prosperity. There were ten white missionaries and 500 converts and as many catechumens in 1888. Schreuder was strongly attached to the Lutheran Church and appointed bishop in 1866. This led to some friction with the Missionary Society, which was essentially a low church organization. In 1872 he announced his independence but his example was not followed by the other Norwegian missionaries. Schreuder continued his

work with the help of native assistants and was backed by a new high church committee at home. After his death his Church Mission was continued and expanded. Swedish missionaries of his persuasion started work in the mining district of north western Natal in 1876, and later in Johannesburg.

As early as 1842, Wesleyan churches existed at Durban and Pietermaritzburg, but it was not until 1847, that an independent mission started among the Africans. The Methodists refused to make any difference between their missionary work and work among white settlers, and it seems that they were especially active at and around the new centres established by the whites. Edendale, established six miles from Pietermaritzburg, became a flourishing community along the lines of the mission reserves of the American board. The inhabitants became thoroughly Europeanized, lived in square houses with proper furniture, and adopted western clothing and eating habits. Many of them became artisans who earned good wages, and afforded a good education for their children, who became members of the rising bourgeoisie. Actually its establishment was the result of a quarrel between a pioneer missionary, Allison, with the Church authorities in London. He had worked at several places and gathered around him a group of personal followers, mainly refugees from Zululand, Basutoland and also some Coloureds and Hottentots. He bought an extensive farm with help of the government, where he founded his independent Edendale. Later Allison became missionary for the Scottish Free Church and a new Methodist missionary was found to take care of Edendale. In 1866 a great revival took place among the Methodists who saw their membership increased from 1,000 to 1,500. Africans were fired with a new zeal to convert their own people and formed the Uzondelelo (=zeal) movement. At first viewed with suspicion, it became better understood after some years, and it was regularized by the synod of 1878 as the "Wesleyan Native Home Mission".

The Anglican Church did not make any difference between work among Africans and among whites either. Both churches were



easily first among the missionary agencies in South Africa in the number of their native ministers and helpers. Africans even ministered to European congregations. In 1853 Colenso was made bishop of Natal. He showed a deep interest in and sympathy with the Zulus and was of the opinion that they were already religious: their religion only had to be improved. He did not want to debar polygamists of old standing from baptism and church membership, although he did not allow them to become office bearers. This was contrary to the opinion of all other missionaries. His views on the authorship of the first books of the Old Testament were considered to be heretical and dangerous by many in the Anglican Church itself. Bishop Gray of Cape Town opposed him vigorously and the ecclesiastical courts condemned him. But the civil courts, on appeal, upheld him. When Gray appointed a bishop of his own persuasion, the Anglican community in Natal split into two parties. It was only in 1901, 18 years after Colenso's death that a reunion took place.

After the Zulu war a new bishopric of Zululand was created. Bishop Johnson followed another method than the early missionaries, especially those of the American Board, who gathered thoroughly westernized communities around their stations, although he also believed that the Zulus were savages, who had to come under the beneficial influence of the western civilization. Much of the expansion of the church was due to Christian families who moved away from the mission stations. In their new surroundings they would begin family worship, attract a few neighbours, and begin to teach them. Then they would apply to the missionary for help. A native catechist would be appointed and a new church would be built; everything being paid for by the local people themselves. Among the Africans living on farms in the north west of Natal the Anglican Church was able to incorporate thousands of people, who had been converted by one of the Wesleyan African evangelists, and who were looking desperately for ordained pastors. The

Dutch Reformed Church had refused to look after them.

The German missionary enterprise started with the Berlin Society founded in 1824, which sent several missionaries to South Africa. Three of them were invited by Shepstone to come to Natal, which they accepted, weary of the continual Kaffir wars in the Cape Colony. One of them joined the American Board. One station was started near the Drakensberg mountains and the other near Durban, which became very successful. In 1910 5 more stations had been occupied.

In 1848 there was a revival in the Lutheran Church of Hanover. This led to a missionary enterprise in Natal which aimed at the establishment of a church which would be the exact counterpart of the church at home. It was thought that this could be done most efficiently by establishing agricultural colonies of missionaries, among whom the principle of communal property was to be introduced. The experiment started in 1854 and within 10 years 8 stations were established, but the original plans proved to be unpractical. Most successful was the school where young Africans were qualified for work as teachers and evangelists. In 1878 the director of the mission came into conflict with the State Church of Hanover about certain marriage laws. This led to the establishment of the Free Church of Hanover, which kept control over all the mission work. In 1890 part of the Free Church decided to seek reunion and this led to a split in the mission work. The nonconformists were very successful and had 8 stations, 10 missionaries and 5,000 converts by 1910.

The Roman Catholic Church was more successful in its combination of agricultural colonization and mission work. The Trappist Order established a kind of monastic colony. The work started with 85 persons in 1885 and by the end of the century there were no less than 285 monks, novices and postulants, most of them from Germany and Austria, at Mariannahill near Pinetown. The

large farms became models of careful agricultural work. Tenants were only allowed to stay, if they were willing to follow the example of the monastic farmers. New centres, hundred or two hundred miles away, followed their example. The education which they provided in 80 schools by 1910 was directed to the learning of a trade, and was largely residential. There was, however, a high school and teachers' training college for the most gifted pupils.

The Free Church of Scotland, very influential in the Cape and responsible for the famous Lovedale Institute, had also a few stations in Natal. The Salvation Army started its work in 1890 and had about 20 centres in this province by 1910.

#### Summary.

The missionary agencies have been numerous and diverse in dogma, church organization, and nationality. But on the whole one can say that Christianity went hand in hand with some form of radical westernization and that in many cases Christians were expected to live together away from pagans. Remarkable is the frequent occurrence of schism among the missionaries themselves: Norwegian and German Lutherans were split for ever; Anglicans and Wesleyans also experienced longer or shorter periods of schism due to the independence of missionaries, who were convinced of their own right against their superiors. By 1910 the Natal Missionary Conference united 18 different societies (excluding the Roman Catholics and some undenominational societies) with 260 European missionaries, 46 African ministers, 60,000 full members and a probable total of 200,000 adherents.

#### b. Independent churches and pagan religion in the changing society.

The first so called Ethiopian Church was founded on the Witwaters rand in 1892. Among the thousands of labourers who were attracted to the work in and around the mines there were also small groups of Christian workers, mostly Wesleyan local preachers.

In 1895 there were 65 of them in Johannesburg. In rural districts there had not been any question of racial segregation, but here there was one conference for European leaders and another one for African leaders. Mokone, an ordained minister, opposed this segregation and resigned to form with other malcontents the Ethiopian Church. The name referred to a text which was very popular among missionaries who worked in Africa: Ps. 68 vs.31 "Ethiopia shall soon stretch her hands out unto God". Their outstanding leader was Dwane, who had left the church because of a quarrel about the disposal of money, which he himself had collected in England for the work of the church.

Both of them knew of the existence of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, A.M.E., founded in 1816 in the U.S.A. as an independent negro church because of the colour bar practised by the whites in their church. In 1896 the Ethiopian Church decided to seek affiliation with this church. In 1898 they were visited by a bishop from the U.S.A., who ordained 65 ministers. Many malcontent groups from mission churches now joined the Ethiopian Church, which doubled its membership to 10,000. They had been officially recognized by the Transvaal government in 1896.

Dwane had become assistant bishop but he was not content with this status and joined the Anglican Church in 1900. The bishops of this church instituted a special "Order of Ethiopia" and Dwane became its head. He did not succeed, however, in carrying the majority of the Ethiopians with him. In 1904 another group split off from the A.M.E., because it thought that American negroes retained too much authority over the church. Yet the church grew rapidly and numbered already 75,000 adherents by 1940. It opened an institute for the training of teachers and ministers near Johannesburg and also engaged in missionary activities in Zambia, Malawi and Rhodesia.

In 1896 the Zulu Congregational Church was founded when

the American Board, in an attempt to establish close co-operation with English Congregationalists in South Africa, handed a mission station and a congregation over to the latter. The African leader opposed this to him incomprehensible transfer, and seceded. The upheaval of the Bambatha rebellion added new recruits to the Church. After some time the founder lost its grip over his followers and after an early succession in 1907 two more secessions followed in 1916 and 1918. The leader's death in 1924 led to three new secessions, one of which split into two in 1929. The original independent church had 8,000 members and 27 ministers by 1940.

Another church broke off from the American Board mission in 1917, when the missionary in charge of the mission in Johannesburg criticised certain acts of the Zulu minister, which he regarded as irreconcilable with Christian standards. The Zulu minister then founded his own African Congregational Church. After his death he was succeeded by another able and efficient leader and the church continued to flourish. Yet there was an attempt by a young intellectual, who had studied for four years in the U.S.A., to enforce a schism in 1934. The people who followed him, soon attempted to establish their own churches: in 1936, 37, 38, and 1940. By 1945 the original church had 45,000 members and 50 ministers. It has been able to buy a considerable number of freehold plots and farms, and has built hundreds of church buildings. It was recognized by the government in 1937.

There are many other churches that have seceded from missionary bodies and even more churches that have split off from these in turn. It is impossible to give an exhaustive account of all of them, but the given examples are fairly typical. Remarkable is that after 1940 there do not seem to have been any more separations from missionary churches. One of the last big secessions took place at the Rand in 1932-33. Ramushu, one of the leading

African Methodist ministers had been working for a long time behind the scenes to prepare the formation of an independent church. The economic crisis and the consequent unemployment had made people discontented, and the raising of the church fees by the mission church became the immediate cause for an organized attempt to secede. Yet at first Ramushu was unwilling to accept the leadership of the movement, which then turned to the Zulu Rev. Hlangwane. He led the masses with a great flair for stage management, until Ramushu gave a hint that he was available. Although he was elected to become president of the new church, Hlangwane did not want to resign and two new churches came into being. The breach was caused partly by a matter of tribal prestige: Hlangwane was a Zulu and Ramushu a Sotho. The latter is reported to have said, that he did not want the honour of leading the church in his own country fall upon a Zulu boy.

In general one can say that differences with white missionaries, who were thought to play a too important part in the church, were the cause of secessions from missionary churches. Things came to a head over clear cut issues like the disposal of money, or disciplinary action against a well known African leader. Recruitment of followers tended to be along tribal lines. In general the organization and ritual of the white churches were followed, but in some cases a more colourful type of service was developed, based on the Roman Catholic model. The new churches were normally ruled in an autocratic way by the founder who selected intermediate leaders personally and who gave them little autonomy. Succession has been a great difficulty in many cases, but could be overcome by succession of the leader by his son.

In the early days mission churches quite often made use of uneducated, almost untrained men, who, however, were able to

interpret the new message in a way, that could easily be understood by their hearers. In the second generation the educational standards required were far higher. Many independent churches did not follow this example and are now often led by superintendents and bishops who received in the missionary church nothing more than a catechists' training. Many churches of this type also increased the number of office bearers considerably, so that a full fledged rank hierarchy could be established.

In other parts of South Africa the initial attitude of the government towards the separatists was favourable, but in Natal Ethiopianism was regarded as extremely dangerous. There was also mention of "Cushites", American Negro Baptist groups. One blind Cushite evangelist toured the country preaching "Africa for the Black Man" and gave the police much trouble. He was imprisoned three times and eventually deported. Ethiopian church members played an important role in the Bambatha rebellion, and the commission of enquiry advised drastic repressive methods. The Union of 1910 led to a more liberal attitude. A Natives Churches Commission was installed to judge applications for official recognition by the government, which made it possible to acquire sites for schools and churches in the reserves, and gave ministers the right to act as marriage officers and to get concessions on the railways. By 1960 only 10 applications out of 2,000 had been successful, however.

Most of these applicants do not fall in the category of churches ultimately having been connected with the established pre-1890 missionary societies. The new missionary societies which came after this date were quite often connected with radical sects, which sprung out of the more exciting aspects of revivalism in the U.S.A. at the turn of the century. Spirit-possession, speaking with tongues, and the belief in spiritual healing without doctors or medicines became the expected norm in these sects.

Orthodox revivalists expect a moment of conversion, often

deeply coloured with emotion, but not necessarily accompanied by any striking psychosomatic phenomena; the new sects expect a second moment at which precisely such phenomena are apparent in the individual, and draw attention to the biblical contrast between baptism with water and receiving the Spirit. This experience may not occur for some years after the original conversion, which must be followed by baptism through complete immersion, but no Christian is believed to be fully saved until he has received it. Church services are deliberately directed towards its achievement by new converts and to its repetition in the old. Because of the spontaneity of the experience and the freedom of the Spirit, there is little awareness of a need for ecclesiastical organization, or even close co-operation between neighbouring congregations of the same type (WELBOURN, 1966 p.16-17). It is often believed that the differences with the other churches mean a return to the essential characteristics of the early Christian church, which is expressed in such designations as Pentecostal or Apostolic, which form a part of the name of the church.

From one of their earliest communities in Johannesburg a whole series of independent churches has emerged among the Zulus. In fact SUNDKLER (1961 p.48) says that all these independent Pentecostal or Faith sects originated from this small group of 27 Africans, who had been baptized in 1904 by an American missionary of the Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion from Chicago, which emphasized baptism by immersion, faith healing and the second coming of Christ in the immediate future. It split up into six different groups in 1906. In 1908 four other missionaries arrived from the U.S.A. and it was now discovered that Zion had not taught baptism with the Holy Spirit. All received their "pentecost", but as they had great liking for the name Zion they decided to call the Church in this stage Zion Apostolic Church. The main secessions took place between 1917 and 1920, after the European leader had started to concentrate on work among the



whites, and had left the care of the African congregation in the hands of his African helpers. The members of the seceded sects acknowledge a common background and call themselves Zionists. There are numerous variations and every leader is anxious to point out some speciality through which his church stands out from the rest.

Another group of churches which must have been fairly successful in South Africa among the Africans are the Seventh Day Adventists, who recognize only adult baptism by immersion, and perform a rite of footwashing before Holy Communion. Their most important differences with other churches is that they keep Saturday as a day of rest. There are also independent churches which keep the sabbath. Among them are the very successful churches of Shembe in Natal and of Limpa in the Cape. Shembe founded his church in 1911 and established himself on a farm near Durban where he invited his followers to stay with him. He died in 1935 and was succeeded by his son, a university graduate. His father has become a black messiah instead of Christ in the doctrine of the Church. He married his daughters off into the royal family and a number of chiefs have become adherents. In 1950 the church had about 50,000 members. He emphasizes not only rest on the seventh day of the week but also work during the other six days (VILAKAZI 1962 p.119). The leader of the church himself is a very successful business man. In many aspects Shembe's church is like those of the Zionists in its particular adaptation to the traditional Zulu religion.

The wild variations of the national census returns with regard to the religious affiliation of the Africans can perhaps be explained by the confusion about the status of these new

sects. (1)

The Zionists are led by prophets who receive their call in visions or sometimes it is conveyed by lightning. It is always thought of as being extended by the Holy Spirit. Through his healing activities he comes into close contact with many of his followers, 80% of whom are women, who stay for a considerable time at his kraal so that they may be prayed for and may go through purification rites. The men quite often complain that prophets take their wives and daughters away for emotional religious services. The Zionist prophet is very much like the pagan diviner in these respects and the Zulu themselves see this parallel clearly. Zionists stand out as a separate community, anxious to keep at a distance from the "world", Christians and pagans alike. They have adopted special uniforms, the details of which have been revealed in dreams, and they adhere to many petty laws and taboos, which are distinct from the tribal taboos. Educated people do not normally belong to the Zionists, except if they want to find healing for a particular sickness.

Zionists believe strongly in the powers of witchcraft and spirits. Yet there has been a change in ideas about sickness. There is an absolute refusal of the use of medicines, although after the second world war the attitude has been relaxed in many cases. This refusal was also preached by some of the new American sects and ties up with the belief that the medicines used by a pagan herbalist to cure hysterical symptoms, through the introduction of a new spirit or group of spirits, in fact induce the devil or his demons to take possession of the patient. Legitimate, however, is possession by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes the Spirit makes his will known through angels which appear in dreams. They may tell

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 (1) Cf. the following figures for Bantu Church Membership:-

	<u>1936</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1960</u>
Seventh Day Adventists	3,700	105,200	28,900
Apost. Faith Mission	13,000	177,300	149,800
Diverse Christian Sects	1,100	48,100	41,100
Bantu Separatist Churches	1,089,500	758,800	1,594,000

that a sacrifice for a particular ancestor is needed or they themselves may be identified as ancestors. But here is also a difference with traditional attitudes. There is no longer a sacrifice at which ancestors are reproached, but only one of thanksgiving. Zionists' belief is full of joy and never afraid that ancestral spirits will become jealous.

The prophet - leader is also a real diviner who diagnoses illness, points out witches, reveals hidden sins, and prophesies about general calamities that are about to happen. In the services the sermon has been replaced by a series of confessions, which are absolutely necessary if the purification rites are to be effective. These rites have to change the state of ritual impurity caused by sins. The use of ashes, vomiting, and purgatives is extensive, but most important is the baptism, which may be repeated. Prayers are free and said by the whole congregation at the same time. There are many new hymns and there is much singing, drumming and dancing during the services. Many go into trance and show signs of being possessed. Shembe organized two big festivals where thousands of followers come together. One is a first-fruit festival and the other a pilgrimage to a holy mountain. Many people are attracted to the Zionists to find healing, which is effected in purification rites, baptism and also through prayer, and the laying on of hands.

On the whole it seems that Zionist leaders have not been politically active and especially after 1950, when apartheid was advocated as the official government policy, they felt that they were in fact implementing this policy. Leaders from other Separatist churches have been politically very active. They were leaders in the Bambatha rebellion and an Ethiopian minister opened the first meeting of the African National Congress with prayers. Congress took an active interest in the unification of the independent churches and launched an appeal for a United

National Church of Africa in 1931. Certain non-Zionist independent churches gained much prestige during the Defiance Campaign in 1952, when many of their leaders were among the first to go to jail as passive resisters (VILAKAZI 1962 p.101).

GLUCKMAN (1958 p.75) tells us that in the reserves in the north the ancestral cult has largely died out. At first the priest-heads of kinship groups opposed Christianity as an attack on the cult, which sustained their status and authority. Yet when a number of Christians were found in such a group, they gave up the ancestral cult because otherwise the group would have split. This process may well have been restricted to Zululand alone, where missionaries never seem to have established strongholds of thoroughly westernized and educated separate African communities, which had to be joined at conversion. But magic and witchcraft beliefs were still widespread. The tribal ancestral cult was still maintained in many places and this was confirmed by READER (1966 p.256). He also reported the dwindling of the ancestral cult (ibid. p.338), but in his area the extended family seems to have lost all importance regardless of religious affiliation. But according to VILAKAZI (1962 p.90), in traditional society today ancestral spirits are still strongly believed in and all (!) the ritual and magico-medical belief connected with them are practised. It seems that in his area social segregation of Christians and pagans was practised to a very large extent.

In the urban setting of Baumannville (Natal Regional Survey Report No.6, 1959) nobody practised the traditional ancestor cult, but three families admitted that they propitiated the ancestors at such times of crisis as sickness or bankruptcy. Many people still believed in the power of the diviner-herbalist, where conditions seemed to transcend the limits of scientific knowledge and to originate in witchcraft. But even those who still looked to him for help watched his performance with scepticism,

tempered with hope. Those who really believed were his successful clients (ibid.p.61).

Summary.

After 1900 a great number of churches split off from the churches established by the Europeans before 1890 and there was also a multiplication of prophetic sects. The former were modelled after the missionary churches, the latter sprung from the new pentecostal and apostolic American sects but were adapted to the Zulu ideas about sickness, healing, divination, exorcism and witchcraft and appealed especially to women. This adaptation brought them into direct competition with the pagan religion, because so they could cope with all situations conceived in the traditional idiom of the old religion and gave their own answer to them. Westernized Christianity simply neglected them and gave scope to the old answers to such situations. It allowed for situational selection in contrast to the Zionists. On the whole, the influence of pagan religion depends upon the social context and this context appears to be very variable.

According to the population census of 1946 49% of the Africans in Natal were Christians, 53% of the males and 51% of the females were heathen; 46% of the urban and 42% of the rural population had been converted to Christianity. The biggest religious groupings were the Methodists (7.9%) the Roman Catholics (7.8%), the Anglicans (5.5%). It was estimated that 10% were Bantu Separatist. According to the population census of 1951 10% of the Africans in Durban were pagan, 16% Catholic, 12% Methodist, 9% Anglican, 5% Lutheran, 1% Presbyterian. The American Board complex (the Bantu Congregationalist Church, and the two main separatist churches split off from this church) counted, together with minor sects and separatist churches for 43%, half of which was estimated to belong to the former group. One should not attach too much importance to this statistic material but it gives at least an impression of the relative strength of the

different groupings.

6. The interpretation of some processes of religious change.

It is difficult to say how much the progress of the early missions depended upon other than religious factors. Very little attention has been paid to this problem in the literature.

The missionaries themselves were in many cases not at all connected with the foreign powers, which influenced the course of events among the Zulu. And even those missionaries who were British, were very much identified with the struggle for civil rights for Africans in the Cape Colony. In fact, it was the behaviour of the Boers which brought the British into Natal, when the policies of the former threatened to cause an invasion of Zulu into Mpondo land. Missionary efforts from the part of the Boers, who interfered twice in succession wars, which brought large areas of land as a reward, was conspicuously absent.

There were of course social and economic advantages for people who became Christian, but only for those who thought western values to be better than traditional ones. The introduction of Christianity brought about two cultures; it did not transform the existing culture. The people conforming to either the one or the other, were also socially and spatially separated, through the system of mission reserves. Only later did this change, especially in the north, where important religious concessions were made by pagan families to accommodate their Christian relatives. But even here Christians are distinguished as the most progressive and westernized section of the population. The absence of central political control in the south, after the retreat of Mpande, made a policy of territorial segregation easy. Yet it is astonishing that missions were not more prominent as an integrating force among socially disrupted tribal remnants, which returned to their former areas, only to find them occupied by whites in many cases.

Far more attention has been paid to the rise of the

independent churches and their connections with the traditional background, the changing society, and the situation in the churches from which they originated. I shall now review these existing interpretations, criticize them, and try to elucidate some unexplained facts.

Gluckman interpreted the changing situation which he found in Zululand as an interdependence of culture and sociological relations, which is two-sided. Yet he decided to look at it mainly in one direction, which he formulated in the rule that changing sociological relations find expression in changes of culture (GLUCKMAN 1958 p.68). In Zululand there is produced a group of Christian Zulu in close relation with some whites. Yet they get no equality with whites inside or outside the churches, in accordance with the fundamental cleavage in the society.

Some Zulu react against this cleavage in the church. They embrace some Christian beliefs, because if they simply revert to Zulu paganism they are not structurally opposed to the Zulu-White Christian group, yet they have also to be different and therefore they adopt some pagan beliefs as well. This enables them to associate with pagan Zulu in ways in which White Church Zulu cannot, while they can associate with White Church Zulu as pagan Zulu cannot (ibid. p.61-2). Gluckman seems to refer to the Zionists here. Yet I hope that I have shown that they are, at least in the religious sphere, as much opposed to paganism as to western Christianity. Their preoccupation with their own interpretation of Christianity makes them accommodating towards the basic cleavage between white and black. They just want to be left alone in peace (SUNDKLER 1961 p.305). In case of the other Separatist Churches, Gluckman's analysis is not adequate either: they have maintained the beliefs and organizational structure of the original churches, and White Church Zulu were in the fore-

front of the battle against apartheid.

Sundkler's main thesis seems to be that the Bantu independent church afforded the only legitimate outlet for the leadership urge of the Zulu, in a society characterized by racial discrimination. It must be considered as one of the few psychological safety valves. (ibid. p.297). This is certainly not true. Apart from the activities of political movements like the National Congress, the Communist Party and the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union, there were other voluntary associations like the Football Association, which had already in 1916 formed a formally constituted association of clubs in Durban and its districts (KUPER 1965, p.347).

Sundkler gives as other reasons the dynamic character of the South African society with increasing discrimination, which also influences the relations within the missionary churches. This introduced a state of mind burdened with the expectation of ever changing conditions. This general expectation is then specified by the protestant outlook on the inevitability of secessions and the acceptance of numerous denominations, often without great differences in dogma or organization. The early missionary churches were characterized by many schisms and the number of missionary organizations in Natal increased from 20 or so in 1910 to 40 in 1938. The attitude of the new pentecostal or apostolic sects had even less regard for the concept of a church, uniting local communities into a corporate body. The African leaders themselves quite often referred to the time honoured tradition of kraal splitting, as a stimulus towards secession, and a rationalization of the split, when it had come about. The actual causes were mostly quarrels over money or disciplinarian measures against African leaders which led to a schism which was more or less an accepted possibility. (SUNDKLER 1961 p.169-70). I think this explanation



clarifies much, except for the fact that the burden of ever changing conditions in general might well have contributed to a diminishing willingness to change specific institutions, which could have given some stability to this situation.

Sundkler also considered the land question to be of major importance. All successful independent church leaders try to establish church colonies of their own, through which their followers could then find compensation for the frustrations caused by the Land Act of 1913 (ibid. p.297, p.93). But perhaps this is just an imitation of the pattern established by the missionary churches themselves. And in the case of the Zionists there is a definite belief that only in the rural areas the pools and streams with healing power can be found. The great prophets stay in the reserves or on native-owned farms.

In the second edition of his book which appeared after 13 years in 1961, Sundkler emphasizes that the great majority of the Separatist churches functioned as adaptive structures in the rapidly industrialized society, into which many new Africans were drawn. They appeared as Christian organizations adapted to their real needs (ibid. p.302). I would like to add that these churches are generally attracting only the lowest classes of the Africans, and also that they offer quite useful social networks which can be used in other spheres. Shopkeepers are often local church leaders or even superintendents of independent churches (ibid. p.124). In this respect the remark of Sundkler that the negligence of educational standards has proved to be the Achilles heel of the independent churches, is rather surprising (ibid. p.122). Even more so, when he mentions that the contempt, with which educated church leaders often tend to treat their uneducated subleaders, causes in the end their failure. (ibid. p.126). It is also doubtful whether one of the main weaknesses of the independent churches is serious overstaffing

and small salaries which have to be increased by non-pastoral work, (ibid. p.127). One would imagine that this only makes for greater social cohesion and less social distance between church members and leaders. It increased perhaps the risk of secession and of competition for followers with other established churches, but then their members would not leave and join churches which are less highly regarded, if they did not feel more at home in them.

One of the most intriguing questions is, why only in the period 1913-39 the tensions between Western missionary and African pastor led to separation from the missions in a number of dramatic cases (ibid. p.303). The answer is perhaps that the most successful churches like the Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Anglican Churches were forced to take up a more radical position after 1948, when apartheid became official policy. The Methodist Church now conducts an educational campaign against racial discrimination, and it is seeking to reform its own church community and its own discriminatory practices. In 1963 an African became president elect of the church (KUPER 1965 p.213). In 1957 the Roman Catholic Church condemned apartheid as something intrinsically evil, an insult to human dignity, a slur upon God's noble work of creation and redemption. It refused to hand over its schools to the Bantu education authorities and kept a number of them open at its own costs. And with regard to the practice of segregation in many Roman Catholic institutions it was said that the time had come to pursue more vigorously the change of heart and practice, that the law of Christ demands (BROWN 1960 p.343). Anglican clergymen like Huddleston and Scott also made clear and inspiring calls. Desegregation was enforced in several cases (KUPER 1965 p.213, p.214).

## Summary

There is little information available about sociologically relevant factors, which caused people to join the early missions. One would think that it was a combination of dissatisfaction with one's own traditional religion, and the attraction of a westernized way of life, education, and the economic opportunities offered to educated people. In some cases it must have provided a solution to internal tensions in the traditional society, by providing another community in which one would be welcome.

Some separatist churches came into existence to solve tensions between white missionaries and African church leaders. They were successful because the low level of education of many leaders attracted many people who would not have felt at home in the bourgeois dominated mission church. Separation was expected to take place whenever tensions became too great. Other separatist churches were led by prophets who were called in visions to found their own church. They resemble those western sects which stress outward signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit and faith healing. They were successful because they adapted themselves radically to the traditional religious idiom. The internal structure of the mission churches, the doctrine of the new western sects, the growing class differences, and the traditional religion, are the main factors we must take into account, if we are to understand the phenomenon of the separatist churches. The three sets of factors I thought necessary for the explanation of processes of religious change among the Ganda and Kongo, are also present here.

Yet the traditional background is not very conspicuous among non-Zionist independent churches, or it must be the divisive tendency, which finds its parallel in the custom of kraal

splitting. But in a way, schism as a solution to internal problems in the church, is also traditional in Natal. The Zulu traditional background is all the more important, however, in the Zionist sects.

The internal dynamics of the new religious associations, introduced by western missionaries, are important in both cases. It led to tensions over authority in church matters between whites and Africans on the one hand, and to a possibility of adaptation to traditional practices, sanctioned by direct revelation of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand.

The political and social changes of the society in general are also important. The growing class differences can explain the appeal of definitely low class churches. The urbanization can explain the increased awareness of social inequality in the churches, and the need for new principles of social organization among people, who could not or did not want to make use of traditional bonds of kinship and community, or who wanted to supplement them. Yet it appears that most people who became really urbanized were already Christian. The apartheid policy led to a much firmer stand of the missions with regard to the equality between whites and Africans.

## CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION

In this final chapter I shall first compare the different crucial factors, which emerged from our description and interpretation of processes of religious change among Kongo, Ganda, and Zulu. This first section will bring out more clearly the uniqueness of the historical developments in each society. I shall also compare a few interpretations, which I criticized in the foregoing chapters. In the second section I shall try to develop two typologies, which will show how much these different developments also have in common. The third section will be devoted to a consideration of the category "religious change". Here I shall try to take some distance from the comparison of empirical facts. I shall attempt to make some generalizations instead. These should give an indication of the logic one can discern behind these facts.

1. A comparison of historical developments and some of their interpretations.

There appear to be three factors, which are of crucial importance for our understanding of processes of religious change. I shall compare these factors to see more clearly the differences between the three examples I selected, and I shall retain the logical order, which I used in the descriptive chapters. First, the traditional social system and religion; second, the political, economic, and social changes; third, the introduction and internal development of the new religious associations and movements.

An obvious difference between the Ganda and Zulu on

the one hand, and the Kongo on the other hand, is that the former two are patrilineal societies, whereas the latter is a matrilineal society. Yet this difference does not seem to be of great sociological importance, because in many respects the Zulu and Kongo are more similar to one another, than to the Ganda. One example is the importance of unilineal kinship groups and the genealogical status of their heads, which was backed by religious sanctions connected with ancestor worship, among the Kongo and Zulu. Among the Ganda there was no ancestor worship to unite lineages, and the heads of kinship groups were selected on the basis of capability alone. The diminished importance of kinship groups and their heads among the Ganda is related to the lack of connection between membership of a local community and membership of a kinship group. Among the Kongo and Zulu these overlapped to a very great extent, but among the Ganda it was the bond of clientage with a common chief, which was based on contract, which brought people together in a local community.

The political system of the Ganda and Zulu seems to contrast sharply with that of the Kongo. On the one hand strongly centralized kingdoms, on the other hand a society characterized by a progressive segmentation, without any real political authority above the village level. But we know that there had been a situation among the Zulu, before the rise of Shaka, which must have been very similar to certain stages in the development of the Kongo society, when the office of crowned chief was still functioning. In Southern Natal this situation was established again after the occupation by the British and the retreat of Mpande. And the first reports about the Kongo kingdom make it seem rather similar to the centralized kingdom of the Zulu. The crowned chiefs of the Kongo can

be compared with the tribal chiefs of the Zulu: both depended on genealogical positions (at least before Shaka started to appoint members of the royal aristocracy as tribal heads), and both had religious duties which were vital to the welfare of their followers. Perhaps the Zulu and Kongo were both in different phases of a similar long-term cycle of political development, characterized by a shift in emphasis on the division of political authority between the heads of different, more or less inclusive units. The Ganda differed principally, because the constituent units of their political system were not based on kinship, and the political obligations of officials at various levels were not a consequence of their kinship status, but they were based on contract. The source of all political authority among the Ganda was the king, who could appoint or remove political officers at will; the Zulu king could only create new posts, but for the rest rules of succession were of overriding importance.

The integration of the Kongo society depended very much on economic activities. This was less true of the Zulu, although the bonds formed by cattle lending were certainly strengthening the interdependence between leaders and followers. The economic activities of the Ganda contributed little to a greater cohesion of the society, except of course if one wants to consider warfare as a form of economic rather than political activity.

Ancestor worship was the core of the religion of the Zulu, while a very important place was given to beliefs in sorcery and witchcraft and the means to combat them. Ancestor worship was also important among the Kongo, but here the manipulation of fetishes seems to have been at least as important as beliefs in witchcraft. The Ganda did not have any formal lineage cult

for the ancestors, but spirits of the dead might have to be dealt with on an individual basis. In this respect they were similar to the Zulu, especially with regard to the role of spirit possession. The Ganda also attached much importance to fetishes, but their temple worship of tribal gods, who were connected with specific natural phenomena and powers, which could influence the normal course of events, like epidemic diseases, was unique, as was the initiation into the service of these gods and lesser powers on a purely individual basis.

The political changes in the three societies were very different. The Kongo were divided among three colonial powers, each of which had different policies with regard to indirect rule, the education of an African élite, and, later on, the progress towards independence. After independence the situation of the Kongo in Congo Kinshasa, where they formed a small minority, was very different from the position of the Kongo in Congo Brazzaville, where they held the absolute majority. The French seemed to have been more inclined to educate an African élite than the Belgians. There seems to have been little direct connection between political developments and religious innovations, which took place at the same time. The colonial powers were mainly interested in the commercial exploitation of the area, and in the domination of the strategically important link between the Congo Basin and the Atlantic Ocean. Leopold tried to make the best of the inevitable necessity to accommodate missionaries. As a Roman Catholic he could not leave the mission work to foreign Protestants. But rather than allowing the French White Fathers to establish mission stations in his colony, he invited Belgian Jesuits. A career in the church could sometimes lead to political leadership, as was the case with Youlou. Perhaps Ngunzism was used by its leaders to further their own political ends at times.



But in no case led it to a situation as in Buganda, where different religions determined political affiliation.

The combination of foreign missions and African political initiative in Buganda, possible through the customary succession war, gave rise to a rather unique situation. The new Christian leaders, whose revolution succeeded, had to be treated as equals by the representatives of the British government, who depended as much on their co-operation, as they themselves on the power of the British. Yet the latter had come, not for commercial or political reasons, but to prevent a collapse of the missionary enterprise. The Agreement of 1900 gave the Ganda the opportunity to retain much of their political institutions, in contrast to the other tribes of Uganda. They could pursue the tussle for political appointments between the religious factions without much outside interference, until the arrival of independence made a more representative division of offices necessary, in order to present a solid front against threats to the unique position of Buganda. The internal opposition, which did not belong to the establishment, expressed itself in religious schism, as well as straightforward political activity.

The Zulu were also engaged in succession wars and rebellions, which gave an opportunity for foreign intervention. But here this intervention was based on political motives alone: the Boers wanted to have new land for their independent republics, and the factions among the Zulu were not based on connections with foreign religions. The intervention of the British, on the other hand, was based on humanitarian grounds, or at least brought about by pressure of people, moved by non-commercial and apolitical interests, as was the case in Buganda. The granting of self-government to the white colonists led to the Bambatha rebellion, for which independent churches were held responsible to a large extent. But after the Act of Union in 1909, the well-educated Christian élite of the whole of South Africa

started the African National Congress, to gain equal rights for all Africans, regardless of tribal affiliation. This is very much in contrast to Buganda, where the new élite had its special position safeguarded by the Agreement of 1900, and where the policy was directed to the maintenance of this favourable position of the tribe and its leaders. As long as the Zulu chiefs could express their opposition against white rule, they remained the real leaders of their people for large sections of the population, especially for the pagan traditionalists. In Buganda the traditional chiefs themselves had become committed to Christianity and westernization as the first converts of the missionaries.

The economic changes made the Kongo very vulnerable to the global economic situation. Many of them became directly or indirectly dependent upon the volume of trade in basic commodities. Individuals could not become very wealthy through agricultural enterprise, although cash crops, especially manioc and palm oil, turned land into a factor of production. There was no large scale alienation of land for white settlers, nor was there a change in the concept of landed property, which remained to belong to the lineage. People employed by the whites had many kinship obligations, which prevented them from accumulating capital. The salaried élite had to adopt a western style of living, which was relatively expensive.

In Buganda a landed aristocracy came into being. The new landlords were very wealthy, but on the whole the general standard of living was high, especially if we look at the actual amount of work done by the farmers. Most of them employed migrant wage labourers from poorer or overpopulated areas around Buganda. There was enough opportunity to treat farming as an economic enterprise, because of plenty of good land and cheap labour.

Buganda and the Lower Congo are in sharp contrast with the situation in Natal, where the African population was concen-

trated in a few, not very fertile, and overpopulated reserves. Proceeds from cash crops or cattle breeding were negligible. Migrant labour was a dire economic necessity. Job discrimination and racial discrimination, combined with African poverty, severely limited the growth of an African bourgeoisie in the towns.

Urbanization has been a characteristic development in the Lower Congo and in Natal, but the Ganda were hardly influenced by it. Nevertheless, among the Ganda class differences became prominent, as well as confusion about moral values. This must also have happened to some extent among the Kongo, although little information is available. Among the Zulu there was not so much a difference between economic classes, as a cultural difference between pagan traditionalists, who would never become urbanized, and progressive, educated and westernized Christians, who were well adapted to a real urban way of life. Those sections of the population, which were not committed to either value system, were identified by typical patterns of behaviour, and a way of life, which had its own attractions. But among the Ganda everybody was expected to act according to Christian or Muslim norms; the pagan, traditional values had no longer prestige. People who were not able, or did not want to uphold these new values, had no acknowledged and valid alternative left.

The circumstances of the introduction of the new religions have been well described in case of the Ganda, but comparatively little is known about the Kongo. We know more about the Zulu, but here the process has been so fragmentary and differed so much according to denomination and/or area, that no account can be given, comparable to the analysis of the concentrated effort of a few denominations at the court of the kabaka. In any case, the identification of affiliation to a new religion with membership of a political faction, which tried successfully to gain control over the political

administration, did not take place among the Kongo and Zulu. The situation among the Kongo was, however, more similar to the one in Buganda, in that only a few denominations were at work.

If we compare the different processes of religious change, we see that in all three societies independent churches or sects came into being. Moreover, there was numerically little difference between the Ganda and Zulu, where they embraced at one time or another about 10% of the population, while this percentage was certainly not higher among the Kongo. Among the Kongo and Ganda there were only one or two at any given time, but among the Zulu we find hundreds of independent churches. This can be explained by the dozens of missions of different denominations, which were often characterized by schism themselves.

The growing class differences among the Zulu led to the growth of typical low class churches; among the Ganda it led to an alienation of the peasants from the leaders of the church, who belonged to the new upper class, and to the persistence of many elements of the traditional religion. The desire for religious revival seems to have been stronger among certain sections of the Kongo and the Ganda, where the wholesale conversion of communities eventually led to a lack of inner conviction, than among the Zulu, where the existence of an alternative traditional way of life made people take Christianity far less for granted. And those among the Zulu, who were especially attracted by the outward signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit, could find enough satisfaction in the Pentecostal or Apostolic sects and African prophetic movements.

There are some other observations to make with regard to the kind of explanations put forward. Both Sundkler and Balandier go in for psychological explanations with regard to the connection between politics and religion. Such explanations

appear to be very satisfactory because they reduce empirical generalizations to psychological laws about unconscious processes which seem to represent ultimate casual explanations of an irreducible variety, but in fact they are nothing more than convenient stopgaps, because they can be used to explain everything in accordance with the prejudice of the interpreter.

Balandier sees a direct transference of political reactions to the religious plane. The hoped for state of equality of the Africans, would only be reached at the end of time, when the Black Messiah would gain control over the Kongo and occupy the ancient mythological throne. Apart from the fact that this is not a sufficient explanation, because only a minority of the Kongo, who were all suffering from the same oppression by the whites, came to belong to the Ngunzists, one could equally well argue that the Ngunzists projected their religious expectations on to the political level, and that this prevented effectively any direct political action.

Sundkler sees the connection in a slightly different way. His church leaders are compelled by the search for power, which can find no other legitimate outlet elsewhere. Even if this were true, the explanation would be a similar stopgap, because one could equally well maintain that such a suppression would lead to a general situation of apathy, servility and acquiescence. This was in fact a consistent complaint of the leaders of the African National Congress.

Another interesting issue is the opposition between the approach of Doutreloux and Gluckman. The former explains Ngunzism in what one might call cultural terms alone, the latter restricts his explanation of Zionism to sociological relations. Both give a kind of deductive theory, a set of interrelated concepts, which derive their meaning from a self-consistent system of which they are a part. In both cases what actually happens on the ground seems to be very different from what their reasoning logically implies, if not exactly the opposite. I believe that this is

partly because of their one-sidedness. If Doutreloux had only asked himself who the Ngunzist actually were, and to what social category they belonged, he might have come to quite different conclusions, having discovered that they were mostly Christians. And if Gluckman had only taken into account the beliefs of the Zionists he would have seen that the resemblance to pagan beliefs made them even more strongly opposed to the pagans.

## 2. The typological approach to religious changes.

The first difficulty we encounter in establishing a typology is the determination of the unit of comparison. In social anthropology this is normally the tribe or society defined with the help of political criteria, i.e. the regulation of the use of force, or, if this is impossible, in terms of a common language and common customs and more particularly a sense of identity derived from a common culture. The traditional societies of the Ganda and the Zulus were defined fairly easily, but we have seen how difficult this was in the case of the Kongo, where the process of colonization made this even more difficult. Balandier for example made a completely arbitrary decision to limit the Kongo, about whom he nevertheless keeps on talking as an ethnic unit, to the Sundi-Lari-Kongo of Congo Brazzaville.

In each of the traditional societies, however defined, all people had the same religion. The characteristic of religious change was, that it was a voluntary act of individuals, which did not affect the whole population in the same way. In other words religious change caused the emergence of new voluntary associations. Considering the difficulty of defining a society, and the fact that it is not the unit of religious change anyway, I think that it is more useful to compare the new associations instead of whole societies.

The most usual typology is the one devised by

SUNDKLER (1961 p.53 ff.). He makes a division between A. missionary churches: controlled by white missionaries or having been granted autonomy by them or churches without a recognized colour bar; B. independent or separatist churches: for African s only under African leadership without approval of the white missionaries or church officials. Group B. is subdivided into 1. Ethiopian churches, which retained the forms of worship and organization of the missionary churches from which they separated; 2. Zionists, who developed a syncretic form of religion, a mixture of Christianity and paganism, centered around a prophet.

BALANDIER (1963 p.427) also discerns these two forms of independent churches among the Kongo: the Nzambi Bougie of the Lari which is Ethiopian in character and Ngunzism, particularly the Khaki Church of Simon Mpadi, which is Zionist.

PAUW (1960 p.41 ff.) made a refinement in the typology by including missionary churches. He distinguished the categories A and B but crosscut this division by another, according to certain elements of ritual and dogma. One cluster consists of observing the Saturday as Sabbath, recognizing adult baptism by immersion alone and avoiding certain types of food and drink. The second cluster is identified by characteristics like emphasis on direct revelation of the Holy Spirit in certain outward signs, like faith healing and speaking in tongues, and also baptism of adults by immersion, and avoidance of certain types of food and drink. The third category is not characterized by such phenomena. This division is not very satisfactory because the third group consists of various denominations having more differences in organization and dogma, than exist between the two former groups.

I think that we can derive a more satisfactory typology, if we take the origin and the possibilities for further development

also into account. This is not normally done, perhaps because Radcliffe Brown reacted so strongly against what he called conjectural history, and because he thought that the historical method was opposed directly to the typological classification (RADCLIFFE BROWN 1952, p.7). But recently there has been a greater interest in historical developments in connection with typology. MAIR (1964 p.107-8) for example says that among all Nilotic peoples we can see one or both of the elements essential for the development of kingship viz. the belief that ritual powers are hereditary and the ability to attract and keep retainers. Although she does not assert that those peoples which now have hereditary monarchs must once have had a political organization like the Nuer, she finds it reasonable to suppose that they have not had a state form ever since the dawn of their existence as human beings. It is clear that a typology is at least implicitly present in her point of view. Mair's aim is not to understand the process of historical change as such, she just describes and classifies various forms of government, although the criteria used include the logical possibilities of further development of certain forms, which are known to have been realized in certain cases. Yet there is no iron law of evolution which determines that such a development must take place at one time or another. The typology of religious associations and movements based on these principles will be called typology A.

#### TYPOLGY A.

##### 1. religious associations under white domination.

1.1. churches with a codified creed; whites and Africans are together in one fellowship and full equality between them in the church is the ideal, or missionaries supervise the church with the ultimate aim in mind of a self-governing and self-propagating church.

1.2. sects with an emphasis on the direct revelation of the Holy



Spirit as the ultimate authority, rather than the bible and its traditional interpretation; speaking in tongues, prophecies and faith healing are regular features.

## 2. reformation movements

2.1. expansionist revivals, which lead to a sudden increase of African members, teachers, and catechists - examples: Unzondelelo among the Zulu Methodists in 1865 and the Anglican revival in Buganda in 1896.

2.2. reformist revivals, which aim at the conversion of church members who show a lack of inner conviction; emphasis is laid on direct revelation of the Holy Spirit - examples: the balokole movement which started in East Africa in 1935 and, at least in certain places, the initial teaching of the Ngunzists.

2.3. reformation aiming at a change in the accepted teaching of the church or sect, which is thought to be wrong in certain aspects.

## 3. African churches under African leaders

3.1.1. sects with emphasis on direct revelation of the Holy Spirit, founded by prophets who received his call; a rigorous adaptation to traditional religion is possible; they originate from similar sects under white supervision or from a white denunciation of a reformist revival - examples: Zionists, Ngunzists.

3.1.2. in later stages prophets may become Black Messiahs after they have disappeared or died - examples: Khaki Church, Shembeites.

3.2. full autonomy granted by missionaries - example: Bantu Congregational Church.

3.3.1. Africans, dissatisfied with their subordinate position found separate autonomous churches, or join more congenial churches, where a greater equality can be reached - examples: independent Congregational and Methodist churches in South Africa; the AME in South Africa and the African Orthodox Church in Uganda.

3.3.2. Africans, dissatisfied with their position in African led churches, found separate churches.

3.4.1. Africans dissatisfied with the attitude of the church or sect with regard to their reformation attempts of some aspects of its teaching form a separate church - example: Malakites.

3.4.2. Africans succeed in the reformation of the teaching of the church or sect - example: the independent Baptist Church emerging from the Ngunzists after 1954.

I believe that the typology given here does cover the phenomena of religious change described earlier, but I do not claim that it is applicable to all types of religious change in Africa or elsewhere. It is little more than a convenient way of comparing historical material; it shows that despite the fact that circumstances differed a great deal among the three peoples which I have chosen as examples, nevertheless the same types of religious associations and movements could develop, although the historical stages of development may be different. Typical in this respect is Ngunzism which was a reformist revival like the Balokole to start with, then developed into an autonomous sect with great emphasis on the outward signs of the Spirit and on the founding prophet like the Shembe sect, and finished with becoming an autonomous church like the one of the Malakites in Buganda.

There is also another kind of typology, which has as its aim a greater understanding of the historical process itself. An example is the classification of voluntary associations in West Africa by Little, according to their function with regard to the general problem of transition, including the results of industrial and technological change. His aim is not to describe voluntary associations as such, still less to write a history, but to provide a model, which may be useful to the students of social change (LITTLE 1965, p.3).

This approach has also been used by LEACH (1964 2nd.ed.),

who tried to give us a greater understanding of the historical processes in the highlands of Burma. His method would bring all phenomena I described within the reach of one single explanatory framework, and thus elucidate the material even further, although on a more abstract level. It will be rather a model of religious change than a classification of new religious associations and movements.

In matters political, the Kachins have before them two quite contradictory ideal modes of life. One of these is the Shan system of government, which resembles a feudal hierarchy. The other is the gumlao type of organization; this is essentially anarchistic and egalitarian. The majority of actual Kachin communities are organized according to a system which is called Gumaa, a kind of compromise between the two (ibid. p.9). Considered as category structures the gumsa political order and the gumlao political order are alike ideal types, used by the Kachin to describe their own and their opponents' political systems (or rather ideologies). The persistent discrepancy with the facts on the ground can be explained by a long-phase political oscillation, though the facts at the end of the cycle are quite different from the facts at the beginning of the cycle (ibid. p. xiii).

The explanation given by Leach is based on two ideal types between which there is an oscillation. Now we must be clear what we mean by ideal types. The ideal types of Leach are ideologies, which will never be found in reality, except as figments of thought used by the people themselves to order their social relations. My ideal types consist of the extremes of characteristics, which are the end points of a series, that is ordered by certain criteria, i.e. a set of properties, that admits of degree and may or may not have actual instances. This ideal typology of religious change will be called typology B.

## TYPOLGY B

The first type of religious association is characterized by personal face to face relations between members and leaders; it is the primary responsibility of every adherent; there is a high degree of personal engagement in purely religious matters but the aim is also the reformation of the whole society; divisions of class or nationality are considered to be irrelevant; a clear opposition against values and beliefs of outsiders is maintained; it leads to close-knit personal networks i.e. co-operation in different contexts is with the same set of people.

The second type is characterized by a hierarchical administration on an impersonal basis; laity and low ranking officials are not trusted with responsibility; a high level of personal engagement in purely religious matters is only expected from a few fulltime specialists; there is an accommodation to differences of class and nationality which may even override the ideal of a corporate unity of all believers; many values and beliefs propagated by fulltime specialists are felt to be too difficult to maintain or to be irrelevant and may lead to syncretism or situational selection<sup>of</sup> elements of competitive world views; it facilitates loose-knit personal networks, at least in this respect that church membership is irrelevant in many activities.

Religious change is an oscillation between these two types, but which aspects will be involved and how far they will move into the direction of the extremes depends on historical accidents.

The Anglican Church in Buganda is a good example of an oscillation between almost all aspects of the first type, in its early days, and the latter type, in its later developments. The Revival movement reacted against this second type and reverted to the first type, but not with regard to the reformation of the whole society, which aspect is absent among the

### balokole.

The accommodation to differences of class and nationality was most conspicuous in South Africa. In case of the mission churches the racial discrimination, partly to protect economic class differences, led to independent African churches, which accommodated themselves to tribal differences and also to class differences in turn. After the second world war, the missionary churches reacted against apartheid in their own churches and the society at large. The denominational diversity was overcome to a large extent by such institutions as the African Ministers' Conference and the Christian Council of South Africa (of which the Dutch Reformed Church is not a member, however), especially with regard to apartheid policy.

Among the Kongo Ngunzism is also a good example of oscillation of certain aspects between extremes. It was a syncretistic movement, which expressed itself in terms of black racialism and Kongo tribalism, as a reaction to the lack of personal engagement in religious matters, and the accommodation of white missionaries to the existing social order. Later it changed into a church which bridged tribal differences, while presumably retaining face to face relations between members and leaders, as well as close-knit personal networks.

### 3. A matter of belief.

In this final section I shall try to see religion in the mirror of the structure of the Human Mind. This makes an understanding of the actual historical processes of change irrelevant because the Human Mind is supposed to be the same for the whole species homo sapiens, not bound by place and time. I shall only succeed in illuminating its structure, if the model, originating from my own mind, shows the same structure as all products from the Human Mind everywhere. If I do not succeed in grasping this structure, it will be just a reflection

of my own individual peculiarities and prejudices. But I do not think that this is a disadvantage. It gives the anthropologist the opportunity to elucidate his personal views, which are bound to influence any representation of the facts he describes.

The thing I have to discuss here is a matter which I have carefully avoided until now: the question whether religious change is a useful heading for the matters I have discussed here, and whether religion can be considered to be more than a label of convenience. The problem is to find a definition of religion and to show that phenomena classed together by this definition, possess a common structure and are not just a ragbag of odd customs and superstitions. If I can do this I shall have explained religious change at the same time, because various religions are then shown to be merely variations on a common theme.

One would almost say that the definition of religion has been an obsession of anthropologists, and I only intend to refer to a few trends, before stating my own position. SPIRO (1966 p.96) defines religion as: an institution consisting of culturally patterned interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings. These superhuman beings refer to any beings believed to possess power greater than man and they are the core variable which ought to be included into any definition of religion. This is a narrow definition, limiting religion virtually to anthropomorphic entities and raising such questions as whether witches and sorcerers, thought to have access to powers with which interaction does not take place, but which make them more powerful than other men, are religious phenomena.

NADEL (1954 p.3) defines religion as all beliefs and practices implying communications with and control of the supernatural i.e. existences or influences, the assumption of which conflicts with the principles of empirical enquiry and verification.

This separation of the supernatural from the natural can only have a precise meaning in our own system of thought. The problem of this definition is that it opposes beliefs in the supernatural to the principles of empirical knowledge and the methods of scientific enquiry. Yet there are many scientists who are religious without any logical inconsistency in their beliefs about the nature of the universe and of man.

EVANS PRITCHARD (1965 p.121) takes his own religious experience as a criterium for the definition of religion, for, inadequate though the conceptions of soul and God may be among primitive peoples, they are not just an illusion for him. Yet he has not ventured to give such a definition and merely states that religion is a subject of study *sui generis*, just as are language or law (1956 p.viii). With regard to the Nuer he is more specific and says that it is a relationship between man and God, which transcends all forms. And God is an intuitive apprehension, something experienced in response to certain situations, but known directly only to the imagination and not to the senses. Religious behaviour is a dramatic representation of a spiritual experience, but what this experience is, the anthropologist cannot for certain say. It is the point where the theologian takes over (*ibid.* p.321-2).

LIENHARDT (1961 p.291) again, is only concerned with one particular religion. The religious experience of the Dinka, which he analyses, consists of symbolic statements and actions which recreate, and even dramatize, situations which they aim to control, and the experience of which they effectively modulate. He goes further than Evans Pritchard in interpreting spiritual experience of Powers, including Divinity, as representatives or images evoked by certain configurations of experience contingent upon the Dinkas' reaction to their particular physical and

social environment, i.e. of realities more accessible to a universal rational knowledge than they need be in the Dinka view of them (ibid. p.147). Although Europeans may perhaps concede an objective reality of this order to the Dinka Divinity, where it most resembles the "God" of universal religions, no Europeans actually encounter the other Powers, living agents influencing Dinka lives for good or evil, as the Dinka claim to do.

GEERTZ (1966 p.4) defines religion as a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and obligations in men, by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence, and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality, that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. A system of symbols is at the same time a model for and a model of reality, ordering experience and controlling it. A motivation is a persisting tendency to do certain things in certain situations: moods spring from circumstances but they are responsive to no ends. Conceptions of a general order of existence must be symbolic of some transcendent truths in such a way, that they cope with the chaos which appears for man at the limits of his analytic capacities, of his powers of endurance, and of his moral insight. Religion must affirm, or at least recognize, the inescapability of ignorance, pain and injustice on the human plane, while simultaneously denying that these irrationalities are characteristic of the world as whole. To be effective religious belief requires a prior acceptance of authority which transforms everyday experience. This belief is generated in ritual, where the world as lived and the world as imagined are fused under the agency of a single set of symbols. In the midst of everyday life religious belief is the pale, remembered reflection of that experience, yet it succeeds in the placing of proximate acts in ultimate contexts in such a way, that the moods and motivations induced by religious practice seem themselves supremely practical, the only sensible ones to adopt, given the way things "really" are.



I believe that this definition of Geertz is useful for my purposes and avoids many difficulties raised by other definitions. In any case it does justice to the most sophisticated modern analyses of primitive religions like those made by EVANS PRITCHARD (1956), FORTES (1959), MIDDLETON (1960), LIENHARDT (1962). It also indicates how much more religion is than a people's view about man's destiny and place in the universe, although it is true, that it is certainly the most important aspect of religion, that it formulates such a view and that this aspect can most easily be compared (DOUGLAS 1966 p.28; EVANS PRITCHARD 1956 p.315). It is here that we can discover a definite structure. My suggestion is that this definite structure is an endless variation on the theme of the relation between subject and object, between man and the world he lives in, of which he is a part and to which he is opposed at the same time. This is a restatement of that part of Geertz' definition which is concerned with the authority of conceptions of a general order of existence, which make man accept the limitations to govern his own fate, which give a meaning to the suffering he has to endure, and which reconcile him to the fact that moral behaviour is often of no significance with regard to one's personal fate in this life.

It is possible to show the emphasis placed upon either subject or object aspects of man's being in each religion, and to classify them accordingly. It is even possible to formulate it in a mathematical expression.

Man as pure subject = q

man as pure object = p

the ratio  $p/q$  is a mathematical function which varies along with variations of p and q. If we call this function z it is

clear that  $z$  has an infinite number of values between 0 and infinity:  $q = 0$   $p = 1$   $z = \text{infinite}$ .

$$p = 0 \quad q = 1 \quad z = 0$$

The example of the one extreme case is Buddhism, which proposes that the idea of the identity of the self is an illusion and as soon as one becomes aware of it one is merged with the infinite in the nirvana. The other extreme case is not a religion in any ordinary sense of the word, which is symbolized by the sign for zero. It is the existentialist philosophy of Sartre, who sees an absolute opposition between subject and object which can never be transcended, because consciousness is in fact only a relation, in that it is directed towards its object in complete freedom of determination by anything else.

Now this pivotal relationship between subject and object as it "really is", gives always rise to a distinct way of life: it leads to action coloured by a special doctrine. In the case of Buddhism a universal impersonal principle judges the merit of behaviour and when enough merit has been acquired in successive lives the nirvana will be reached. Thus all the steps leading to this state receive a value from this perspective. Existentialism denies any values which have an existence of their own: they are only real insofar as man chooses them to govern his life. He is doomed to be free. Yet this freedom makes these self-chosen values of the utmost importance. In no case is the ideal relation between subject and object realised; in Buddhism people do not acquire as much merit as they could, and according to existentialism people only seldom really "exist" and emerge from being per se which continually drags them down. Therefore people must be reminded constantly of the reality of the ideal relationship.

One of the difficulties in which we find ourselves, when we try to classify the traditional African religions described earlier according to this scheme is the fact, that they are often

not as logically consistent systems as are our two extreme examples. This is partly due to our lack of information, which makes it difficult to assess the relative importance of the different aspects of the religions under consideration and their dominant features. EVANS PRITCHARD (1956 p.315) seemed confident that one or other belief, or set of beliefs, would be found, dominating the others and giving form, pattern, and colour to the whole. Yet among the Zulu, ancestor worship seems as important as beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, and among the Kongo fetishism and ancestor worship seem even to be in competition.

There may be different solutions to this problem, which is not characteristic of our material alone. One reason may be that the beliefs operate through situational selection. Situations which are defined sociologically in different ways may require different sets of beliefs. This is the case among the Lugbara: God, ancestors, and the witches are supposed to support or oppose men in their attempts to acquire, exercise, or throw off authority. They are said to have certain characteristics and to behave in certain ways on account of certain motives. But beliefs about them cannot be placed within a single logically consistent frame work. Yet there is a sociological consistency in the ways in which these beliefs are used in social interaction between persons (MIDDLETON 1960 p.24).

Another solution is to use psychological explanations. BEATTIE (1960 p.59-60) says for example that it appears that political and social inferiority may sometimes be compensated for by the attribution of ritual power to the occupant of the inferior status. In Bunyoro the ritual power which a man has over his mother's brother may be regarded as a compensation for the inferiority of status thrust upon his father by his wife's

people. And in former times ghosts of war captives and domestic slaves were particularly feared (ibid. p.76). But there is also a special kind of spiritual power, strange and awe inspiring, which is especially associated with the king, who is first and foremost a ruler and the source of all political activity in the state. Nyoro royal ritual is best understood as the symbolic expression of royal authority, and one of its effects is to sustain and validate this authority (ibid. p.29). I agree with LEVI STRAUSS (1958 p.229) that such a dialectical approach will always succeed in making religious beliefs meaningful.

Again, it has been suggested by Douglas that man tries to order his experiences, and needs to make distinctions and separations. Occasionally the odd species or individual gets out of line and humans react by avoidance of one kind or another. The very reaction to ambiguous behaviour expresses the expectations that all things shall normally conform to the principles which govern the world. But in their own experience, as men, people know that their personal conformity is not so certain. Punishments, moral pressures, rules about not touching and not eating, a firm ritual frame work, all these can do something to bring man into harmony with the rest of being. But so long as free consent is withheld, so long is the fulfilment imperfect. This is done in acts of atonement, in which the distinctions and separations are overcome, and shown to be arbitrary, so that they become in fact a matter of free choice (DOUGLAS 1966 p.169, p.178). The attraction of alternative orders or of chaos itself is an immense power, and this power is released in rituals which affirm their existence. It is creative power for good, which cannot be found in the logical categories of non-contradiction, into which man attempts to force his experience to feel safe from the uncertainty of change (ibid. p.162).

This goes some way to explain the occurrence of the spring festival among the Zulu in which women behaved like men and which was to ensure a good harvest. It is even a more apt explanation of the Kimpasi ritual among the Kongo, where the participants behaved like the dead and defied the existing regulations with regard to sexual intercourse. It makes it also understandable how one initiation leader could claim to be Nzambi himself, under normal conditions an extreme blasphemy. Perhaps it would be possible to class the sacking of the temples by the Ganda king in the same category. But it is difficult to see what mysterious good powers were released on this occasion. It fostered only scepticism and may have been one of the reasons why there appears to have been so much dissatisfaction with the existing religion.

With these reservations in mind we still can try to make an attempt to analyse the religions described in this thesis, on the subject-object relation.

Ganda religion sees the whole universe as made up of a complex of forces, which are all interrelated and which determine what happens in the phenomenal world, which man experiences directly. Some of these forces can be controlled but others have to be cajoled. Communication with these powers is of extreme importance in order to know what one has to do. Divination is perhaps the key feature of the whole religion. There is no discerning principle in the universe, which judges meritorious behaviour and makes sure that it is rewarded. People deal with powers in a fragmentary fashion for their own benefits. Man is subjected to forces beyond his control which, in the end, determine his fate. Although he can take action and assert himself as subject to a certain extent, the ambiguity of his existence is not transcended: no deeper meaning is revealed;

he just has to cope. There seems to be some correlation with political life, which was as much a gamble as life in general. The determination to take heavy risks time and again is understandable, if we keep in mind that in the end man could not hope to be successful anyway. He had to take advantage of the temporary benefits a favourable constellation of powers offered him, and this could be done ruthlessly without any concern for moral qualms.

In Zulu religion we find the reciprocal principle of overriding importance. The ancestors are treated as people with whom one can strike a bargain, and an equilibrium of services must be maintained. Man is as much object for the ancestors, as the ancestors are object for him. <sup>44</sup> Even in case of diviners this equilibrium is maintained. They are chosen by the ancestral spirits and have to obey to their wishes. They are made into objects, but this enables them to defend their fellows against people, who deal with them through dark machinations of witchcraft and sorcery, who try to make other people into objects over which they have absolute control to their own advantage. I think we can also find this idea of mutual power to control and check each other in the political and social order.

Most difficult to analyse is the Kongo religion. Their universe is as much controlled by powers as is that of the Ganda. Yet it is a moral order in which they are placed by Nzambi. But it is moral only up to a point. The abuse of fetishes and the prevalence of bad witches was condoned by Nzambi; and although he had given the means to combat them, other fetishes and divination were by no means always successful. Ancestral worship seems to have been much more an acceptance of the authority of genealogically older people, as something inherent in the nature of human relations, than that it was based on mutual

advantages. This equality on a give-and-take basis existed only between collaterals and was safeguarded by mystical powers. Within the clan and lineage man is subjected to an absolute moral order, but in other relations, mainly of a strictly economic kind, competition with equal means safeguarded by certain rules is prevalent, although this did not prevent some people from being far more successful in commerce than others. Here again we find some correlation between the social order and the ideas of the relationship between object and subject as expressed in the religion.

But where does Christianity stand with regard to this relation between being subject and object? I believe that its central doctrine is, that man has to choose to become an object to realize completely his being a subject. He has to place himself voluntarily at the disposal of God and his neighbour without any regard for his own wishes. God Himself has proved that this is the way things really are, by setting an example in Jesus Christ, who became a dead object for the sake of mankind and in accordance with the will of God. There are two ways in which Christianity fails to maintain this identification of object and subject: either people become absorbed in the realization of their own values, chosen by themselves, which may be of a purely religious kind or have more the character of a political and welfare programme, or people give way to the forces they believe to determine their behaviour: the circumstances, upbringing, character and history which make them to fail in realizing unselfish love.

### Summary

In explaining particular examples of religious change one has to take into account at least three factors, however different their influence and interrelation may be: the traditional religion and social system: the economic, political and social changes in general; the internal development of the new religious associations. Sociological as well as cultural

dimensions of the problem must be treated simultaneously. A typology of new religious associations and movements has to take into account the inherent possibilities for future development to be fully satisfactory. Religious change as a process can be best understood, as an alternating of different elements between extremes, which can be represented in two ideal types which are opposites. Religious change as a category sui generis can only be a useful one, if a definition is found which allows for the understanding of all religions as variations on a basic structural model. I believe that the relation between subject and object provides this.

The three different theoretical approaches which I applied to one problem area have been proved to be complementary, rather than mutually exclusive.



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