

Introduction

Beyond the confinement of affliction: a discursive field of experience

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Ever since the 1960s the study of ritual phenomena in which spirits announce their presence has been of central concern to the anthropology of religion in the Southern African region. The academic practice of anthropology led to the production of analytical distinctions between phenomena which in fact belonged to a varied and multifaceted spirit domain. In some cases such distinctions closely followed indigenous theory and perception of the various forms by which spirits manifest themselves, while in other cases academia invented them. Manifestations of spirits in varied forms prompted their classification and categorization in anthropology under such headings as 'trance', 'possession', 'divination', 'healing', 'masks' and so on.

These diverse types of spirit manifestation were further explored, from the 1970s onwards, on the basis of a cultural understanding of subjective involvement. That is, it was acknowledged that subjects were involved in distinguishable 'routes' of spirit manifestations not as if they were victims of natural forces from which no escape is possible or feasible, but as active participants in the creation of meaning. The acknowledgement of historicity, flexibility and mutability in forms of spirit possession, however, did not lead to a concomitant change in analytical instruments – within anthropology the myriad of spirit forms was analytically explored in two almost exclusive categories.

Spirit possession was studied mainly *within* two academic discourses, one on 'cults of affliction', the other on 'divination'. In both discourses the significance of personal healing, its symbolic and ritual repertoire and the central position of mediums, healers and leaders became emphasized.

In the development of the anthropological study of cults of affliction and mediomistic activity, several episodes can be distinguished on the basis of how diverse and localized possession phenomena were placed in overarching theoretical models. In the school of psychological anthropology that arose particularly through the work of Tart (1969), Bourguignon (1973), du Toit (1977) and Ward (1989) from the mid-1960s, phenomena of affliction and its responses in terms of therapies, trances, mediumship, etc., were regrouped and ordered under the different banners of altered states of consciousness (ASC). In this school the leading question was how a cross-cultural understanding of such psychological states could lead to the discovery of pan-humane universals of which disorders cause which type of altered state. On a comparative social level it also explored what sort of psychological states in terms of possession and trance are invoked and induced in individuals by specialists. As a

result of this school of thought the knowledge of the relationship between shamanistic techniques and certain psychological states of the mind and their expression in various trance forms was greatly enhanced since the inception of this line of enquiry through the work of M. Eliade.

In Southern Africa, however, where possession and trance states are predominantly linked to spirit possession, this model that sought to explain states of consciousness in terms of the psychological received only modest attention (neither Zaretsky (1966) nor Beattie and Middleton (1969) refer to this field of knowledge). Rather, the search for universals received profound critique from a relativist position emphasizing the cultural understanding of the 'grammar' of behavioural models that are implied in forms of spirit manifestations (Crapanzano 1977, Lambek 1989, 1993). Writing about the perceived relationship between trance and possession as the school of ASC proposed, Lambek, for one, stated about possession in Mayotte among Malagassy-speakers:

While trance, like sex, eating or vocalization, is 'natural' in the sense that, under the right stimuli, it is a condition or activity . . . of which the human species at large is capable, the form of manifestation of trance in any specific context is no more 'natural' (necessary, unmediated, given) than the model that guides it

Possession is secondary, an indigenous hypothesis or theory put forward to account for the facts of trance . . . subtle enough to situate the behaviour appropriately in its social context.

(Lambek 1989, 38-9)

Hence the ASC studies constituted a groundlayer upon which in the early 1970s a form of theorizing developed that placed affliction and healing, as well as their social representation in cults and mediumistic leadership, in the perspective of broader socio-cultural dimensions. Possession and trance states were empirically correlated to the functioning of social groups in society. The salience of certain political and economic power relations became a further interpretative framework. Particularly in the early work of Lewis on the *sar* cults of the Horn (Lewis 1971) the characteristics of the possession states' local embeddedness were foregrounded in a singular theorem that highlighted the 'war of the sexes'; the region's characteristic inequality in power balances between the sexes and their genderized expression in women's spirit-affliction cults. The ground-breaking study on the marginality versus the centrality of possession cults *vis-à-vis* strongholds of power in society later reached greater sophistication (Lewis 1986), at which point also the Weberian notion of charisma was included in the explanation of the cultural significance of these phenomena.

Similarly, Parkin (1972), also within a functionalist framework, identified power imbalances in age relations in the Kenyan context that were reflected in particular expressions and manifestations of possession and trance states. In order to stand a chance of opposing the oppressive claims of their elders, young men engaged in Islamic possession cults that prevented and even prohibited them from fulfilling their many (ritual) obligations to the elderly.

Again, in the early 1980s Van Binsbergen moved ahead by showing that local cults of affliction in the Zambian rural and partially urban context did not only arise out of intrinsically imbalanced power relations, but also resulted from the encroachment of new modes of production in African societies (Van Binsbergen 1981). He emphasized that the penetration of capitalist modes of production and consumption would usually lead to a reordering of the superstructural representations which materialize

'on the ground' in cults of affliction, anti-witchcraft movements, specific forms of mediumistic activity and the like. Possession and trance states, as they become manifest in cultic forms, are the reflection of the problematic nature of the articulation of the old within the new, of the domestic mode of production within the Western capitalist mode. Thus, as these processes of articulation and the concomitant occurrence of possession cults could be recorded in a wide variety of locations in Africa (see Van Binsbergen and Geschiere 1985) an overarching and interpretative model was created that placed the social above the psychological.

The study of the myriad of spirit manifestations and their ritualized presence in terms of divination and mediumistic activity formed a second aggregate domain. Following the distinctions made by Devisch (1985) and Peek (1991) in their reviews of scholarly approaches to the study of African divination systems, in addition to the (structural) functionalist analyses as have been discussed above, the symbolical and 'internal, semiotic and semantic' interpretations of possession forms provided overarching models as well. Starting with the ground-breaking studies of Turner on Ndembu cosmologies (1975) the symbolist interpretations of divination and revelation provided profound insights into processes of signification, attachment of meaning to human agency and ideation. The symbolic meaning of the mediating positions that divination, revelation and healing take between 'structure' (social ordering) and 'communitas' (social experience) were explored in great analytical depth. As, however, the shortcomings of Turner's approach became clear over time particularly in terms of power and the cultural 'invention' of ritual and symbolic practice, Devisch (1985, 1991) proposed a model for the interpretation of divination in which the praxis of creating meaning in the interaction that evolves between patient and healer is put at the heart of the analysis. Although the semiotics and semantics of the interaction are deeply rooted in local systems of meaning, symbolism and the overall process of signification (the way in which meaning is created) they lend themselves to wider, thus regional comparison. This line of enquiry has been strongly developed from the earlier work on symbolic meaning by Turner (1967) in studies by Werbner (1985) on healing churches, by Jacobson-Widding (1979) on colour, body and space symbolism, and recently by Taylor (1992) in his seminal study of Rwandan healing systems.

These studies seem to be strong where the structural-functionalist analyses appear to be weak – in the interpretation of idiosyncrasy, signification and the personal process. On the other hand, the symbolist studies remained unavoidably empty of reflection on political processes, more specifically on the politics of bodily experience which later interpretations that developed out of the critiques of Lewis-type arguments seemed to underscore. In the work of Lambek (1989, 1993), Boddy (1989) and Giles (1987) a more critical as well as hermeneutical interpretation of spirit manifestations followed, aiming to take into account the shortcomings of both analytical 'traditions'. The discursive practice – the 'grammar' of the spirit manifestation models in African societies – became a central concern. Adapting Foucault's archival method, the coming into existence of cultural models of bodily experience was questioned and examined. Exploring how societies turn certain models into 'natural' and taken-for-granted realities of bodily experience, and foreground them in language and emotion, is seen by these authors as a royal route for moving the study of spirit manifestation forward.

However, none of these interpretative maps has presented a perspective that enables the integration of the social and the personal in the delineation and explanation of

systems – or, better, ‘sets’ of rituals – that foreground well-being, healing, crisis management *and* political transformation in one single framework. The structural-functional as well as the symbolic and semantic approaches, created confined fields of interpretation which would each highlight certain phenomena, to the exclusion of an analysis of the relationship between ritualism and political crisis.

In the work of Janzen (1992), however, to which the present volume intends to pay tribute, a new trajectory for the integration of a seemingly unbounded variety of such ritual practices has been presented. In his book, *Ngoma*, Janzen sheds new light on how a discourse of personal and social wellbeing can be delineated that extends beyond the realm of affliction and healing into other areas of human activity. Although focusing on therapeutic ritualism in particular, Janzen has been able to show, drawing from sources ranging from Cameroon to the Cape and from there to Nairobi, how a variety of healing practices, affliction cults and political rituals can be grouped, compared and analysed within one regional discourse: *ngoma*. Janzen propounds the view that these phenomena can comprise what he calls a calculus (Janzen 1992: 79; 1995: 159): a comprehensive body of healing practices, discursive forms, music, rhythm and rhyme which form an integrated whole. Here the dissection into analytical distinctions, as proposed by an anthropology that led to the bracketing of certain phenomena under specific headings, does not apply. Although ‘it is difficult to formulate a strict calculus of the myriad range of transformations *ngoma* may undergo across the region where it has been reported’ (Janzen 1992: 79), *ngoma* refers to a distinctive indigenous theory (Janzen 1992: 9). This theory or hypothesis primarily places the communicative relationship between the subject and the spirit (or spirits) within a specific discursive form which can be described by referring to: 1) its regional expansion and 2) its historic manifestation. In dealing with personal suffering and what he calls ‘difficult experiences’, as *ngoma* does, song and dance are of singular importance and here the communicative and the performative essential element of this indigenous theory are made profoundly clear:

Ngoma brings together the disparate elements of an individual’s life threads and weaves them into a meaningful fabric. It does this, particularly, through devices of mutual ‘call and response’ sharing of experiences, of self-presentation, of articulation of common affliction, and of consensus over the nature of the problem and the course of action to take. (110)

Within the complex symbol ‘*ngoma*’ there are at least two levels of narrative and performative understanding. The first is the importance of song-dance in defining and coming to terms with the suffering; the second is the importance of moving the sufferer toward a formulation of his or her personal articulation of that condition. (118)

This specific formula of a song-dance manifestation in communicating and articulating difficult experiences, personal suffering and healing to the spirit world Janzen recognizes in a range of different religious forms, cults of affliction, churches and music groups throughout the various cultures of the Southern African region.

Irrespective of the fortunes or the constraints of socio-economic systems within these societies, the positions of specific groups therein such as women or the young, or their idiosyncratic production of meaning, *ngoma* – that is, healing through the use of drums and by working upon spirit relationships – has existed by accommodating itself to changing circumstances. The work of Janzen allows us now, for the first time, to draw together concepts, representations and practices revolving around the use of drums in an area covering an extensive part of the continent. Janzen has focused our attention on the possibility of (re-)constructing and exploring a regional

discursive practice which as a groundform, a calculus in his terms, has been pervasive in the linking of personal, idiosyncratic experiences with culturally specific religious forms.

This new departure by Janzen whereby different healing cults are grouped together under one particular regional umbrella resembles and runs parallel to interpretations of political cults which in the Southern African region also embraced larger areas. In the 1970s these political cults have been analysed in numerous ethnographic studies for their regional significance. Fardon has noted in *Localizing Strategies* that ethnographies tend to emphasize and elaborate upon specific cultural issues that lend a specific ‘regional’ character to their production (Fardon 1990: 5). For quite a number of years, the issue of regional political cults dominated the Manchester School ethnography of the Southern African region. Within the religious anthropological ethnography of the Southern African region a growing number of studies show an increasing interest in the issue of the production of regionality in religious forms. In Schoffeleers’s *Guardians of the Land* (1978) and Werbner’s *Regional Cults* (1977) specific cultic forms for this area were investigated that cater to the fertility of the soil, the management of natural resources, droughts, rainmaking and the like. Ranger (1993) has emphasized again how important these types of traditional but regional cults were and still are in the engagement of local communities with wider networks and relations of exchange.

For healing and divination practices, however, ‘regional’ approaches such as these are relatively rare. One could point at Van Binsbergen (1995), who investigates the development and spread of a four-tablet divination system across local and national boundaries, while others have been tracing the spread throughout the region of independent churches that likewise include elements of healing and purification (see, among many others, Daneel 1971). Janzen’s position, however, is rather unique as rituals are brought together on a regional basis that does not belong to any of the constructs of ‘healing’, ‘divination’ or ‘fertility’, but includes a set of features and ritual practices that refer to all of these sorts of categories under *ngoma*.

By comparing diverse healing practices that include drumming and thus are referred to as *ngoma* in local settings, Janzen distils a list of characteristics that to a large extent are shared by all of them. These core features are predominantly of an experiential nature and thus lead to a high level of shared recognition within the region. *Ngoma*, in other words, indicates a ‘grammar’ for personal experiences which in a Foucauldian sense operates as a discursive for the way they are embraced in local ritual practices, and hence may lend these practices an ‘institutional’ quality. Note here that similar to the development of the discipline of psychology in Western societies, the development of *ngoma* and its variety in diverse ritual forms is culturally specific and mediates specific models of bodily experience *vis-à-vis* the socially acceptable and the politically viable. In Janzen’s view, there is a communicative link between personal ‘difficult experience’ and spirits in the sense that spirits are an a priori hypothesis in which the individual’s coming to terms with such conditions is cast. The ritual practice is produced through language, rhythm and rhyme within *ngoma*. This discourse – its operation as well as the experiences which it includes and excludes – can and should be studied in its own right as an indigenous institution, produced within a regional cultural and historical setting.

The point of departure for this volume, however, is that the exact limits of the discourse Janzen intends to investigate are not defined by affliction and healing

alone. Our quest to the 'edges' of the discourse which is indicated by the term *ngoma* starts with the question: what is its subject and its object?

The subject and object of *ngoma* and the production of its perimeters

Although Janzen criticizes classical approaches to *ngoma* for their concentration on divination, possession and trance, he too chooses the same analytical unit: *ngoma* as a therapeutic institution which transforms sufferers into healers. The seven formal properties or core features by which he defines *ngoma* all pertain to this process of transformation. This is particularly clear from what Janzen calls 'the core ritual', in which all other features come together and without which we cannot speak of *ngoma*: the therapeutic and initiatory *ngoma* song-dance in which the meaning of the individual lives and suffering of the *ngoma* practitioners is articulated and recreated (Janzen 1992: 86, 128, 174). In other words, Janzen's prime subject continues to be *cults of affliction*. In fact he limits the scope even further by focusing almost exclusively on the healers, and ignoring lay participants in the cults.

We differ from this approach by a wider delimitation of *ngoma*, which we believe does more justice to the use in many Bantu languages of the proto-Bantu construction *-goma (Meeussen 1980: L9), 'drum', as well as to the fact that as a discourse *ngoma* informs diverse activities, not only in the field of healing, but also in life-cycle rituals, seasonal rituals and royal rituals, to name only the most conspicuous ones.

In this reader, *ngoma* denominates a Southern African discourse whose subject is the coming to fruition of life and whose object is to ensure this fruition and to remove obstacles to it. We differ from Janzen's approach in that we do not attempt to define the doing of *ngoma* in one specific realm of action, nor in one specific discourse of healing. From our different research projects in culturally divergent localities in Southern Africa it has become clear that as a discourse *ngoma* may pertain to all spheres of life – the personal, the social, the political, the economic or the ecological.

All *ngoma*, such as healing, initiation rituals and kingship rites, share a common concern with the person in transition and the society in transition. The contours of *ngoma* discourse are made clear and tangible to the developing person and the social body through ritual, music, rhythm, rhyme and masks. The transforming or transitory qualities of *ngoma* that may change an individual patient into a healer equally apply to processes in larger groups in society. In this capacity *ngoma* articulates and accompanies the transition which initiation rituals prescribe for the younger generation, as well as the rituals of kingship creating the leadership of a society. All of these processes imply a notion of the liminal, the anti-structural, the wild and un-civilized in order to make the mode of transition and transformation really work.

In *ngoma*, healing power (the power to counteract illness and misfortune) and political power (the power to order and reorder social relations) are closely interwoven. Both powers draw on claims to specific relations with the spirit world. Furthermore, the boundary between healing and the (re-)ordering of social relations is often difficult to draw. Communal problems can be reduced to personal afflictions, or personal afflictions can be explained by referring to communal issues. Healing through *ngoma* can constitute a manifest political act and a political mode of tran-

sition. In healing, personal motives, experiences and fantasies can be 'channelled' into social ones, thus turning healing into politics.

There are, however, limitations to the 'width' and 'depth' of what we propose to capture under the umbrella, *ngoma*. With regard to debates on histories in Indian temples, Appadurai (1981) points to the fact that these debates do not take place in unbounded variety, but in reality have their limitations, their perimeters that mark off what is acceptable within the discourse from what is no longer acceptable. Following his suggestion we propose that *ngoma* is defined by three perimeters, that is by three interconnected themes which each manifestation of *ngoma* has to address, if this discourse is to be recognized by its participants:

- 1 *ngoma* is a way of articulating and commenting on processes of transition or transformation;
- 2 it produces a certain type of power and authority which is based on claims to a specific association and communication with the spirit world;
- 3 this power is embodied, expressed and effected in rhythm (drumming, singing, dancing).

As Appadurai shows it cannot be taken for granted that members of society almost as if 'by nature' understand which manifestation – which 'version' – can be accepted and which cannot. Even more importantly, in society debates are continuously going on concerning the issue of where exactly the 'outskirts' of the possible, acceptable and negotiable are located. In a Foucauldian sense the (re-)production of the perimeters provokes a process of discipline and, as shown by some of the contributions in this volume, the conflicts over the acceptable and the unacceptable may run parallel to other sources of conflict, such as gender relations or age relations. The social production of perimeters that demarcate the modes of transformation or transition to which different manifestations of *ngoma* refer, is highlighted and referred to in all of the contributions to this volume.

In his description of various *ngoma* institutions, Janzen briefly refers to political processes and reaction to social problems. Yet, by focusing mainly on the 'doing' of *ngoma*, the aspects of (re-)ordering social relations and the ideological core of many *ngoma* institutions remain largely out of sight. With this volume we hope to contribute to a better understanding of *ngoma* by including articles that deal specifically with the issue of political power and the ordering and reordering of social relationships. All articles, some emanating from the field of religious anthropology and others deriving from the field of medical anthropology, investigate the character of the relationship between healing power and political power.

About the contributions

In Chapter 2, Henny Blokland concentrates on what is shared in rituals of transition in which drums are used. Janzen's proposal to establish *ngoma* as a term for a widespread African institution centres around one specific use of the drums – that connected with healing. Though advocating a definition of health as social reproduction, throughout his book he implicitly applies a much more restricted definition of health and healing, as therapeutics in the sense of 'fighting disease' and 'saving lives'. This form of healing serves in his book as a model for metaphorical types of

healing as practised in political ngoma. Secular or performative ngoma seems to fall outside the category of ngoma altogether.

Blokland proposes to regard the way in which drums are used in weddings as the key to their use in healing cults and performance, as well as in politics. The wedding shows a movement from competitive drumming between the groups of bride and groom to the sacred drumming which is the intercourse between bride and groom, which resolves the distinction between the groups in the offspring uniting both groups.

This distinction between competitive and secular drumming on the one hand and unifying or sacred drumming on the other serves as a tool to analyze Nyamwezi society's ability to handle competition and violence, be it in the form of disease, war, famine or social tensions.

While Chapter 2 describes connections and interdependencies within the fabric of ngoma, Annette Drews contemplates the way in which its inherent contradictions are manipulated in gender relations. She maintains that the antagonism between political and therapeutic ngoma reflects, expresses and constitutes other contradictions found in many African societies like those between women and men, family matters versus regional and national politics and individual needs versus common interests. She argues that we should therefore expect to find a certain degree of reflection and representation of the power relations constituting society within the discourse of ngoma. In Chapter 3 Drews discusses how gender relations are expressed and constituted within ngoma among the Kunda of Eastern Zambia, and how gender identities are contested and defended through the ritual use of drums.

In Chapter 4, Ria Reis takes a closer look at therapeutic ngoma by analyzing healing as it is practised by Swazi healers. She distinguishes between the doing of ngoma – the transformation process by which wounded healers are created – and the work of ngoma aimed at identifying and expelling evil from lay patients. Contrary to Janzen, who concentrates on the first, she claims that the core function of therapeutic ngoma lies in the discourse on suffering and healing which is produced in the interaction with lay patients. With an example of a healing ritual she shows that Swazi healers employ powers constructed through and within the wounded healer complex to create new illness concepts which sustain and comment upon social changes. In this fashion Swazi healers are active on the interface of political and therapeutic ngoma.

Focusing on the relation between politics and healing in the *Mhondoro* territorial cult in Zimbabwe, Marja Spierenburg discusses the influence of the healers' clientele in this cult in Chapter 5. The healers mainly deal with collective problems of the wider community of adherents. However, contrary to Janzen who described this cult as *defining* primary values and social patterns, she maintains that the cult mainly functions as an arena where socio-economic and political developments are *discussed* by the clientele. The power of a medium to issue social or political commentaries and the range of problems which is presented to him (respected mediums also function as healers of individual problems), depends on his reputation. The influence of the clientele is reflected in the continuing process in which this reputation is alternately questioned and preserved.

In Chapter 6, Matthew Schoffeleers defines regional cults as a series of therapeutic ngomas which function in respect of the population as a whole. Rain cults are seen as a kind of collective and inclusivist therapeutic ngoma, in contrast to more limited types of ngoma. There is much literature on these cults, and they therefore form a

well-studied and easily identifiable group, one which should have a place in the ngoma discussion.

Janzen distinguishes between therapeutic and political ngomas, but with regional cults such as the *Mbona* cult it is often impossible to make a sharp distinction between the two. In the context of regional cults rituals are performed which are therapeutic in themselves (rain and fertility), but these rituals are often performed in a highly charged political context, and they often have serious political consequences.

Janzen does not have much to say about political ngoma, but the principal observation he makes in that context is that in centralized state systems the therapeutic ngoma tends to become marginalized as the state itself takes responsibility for public health. In other words, he notes the existence of a negative correlation. The article in turn argues that it is more likely that there will be a kind of *dialectical relation*, the two ngomas opposing and 'needing' each other at one and the same time, as it were. The *Mbona* medium criticizes the chiefs and the chiefs criticize the medium, but one cannot do without the other.

Finally, Chapter 6 may add something to the discussion about the concept of the wounded healer by exploring its relationship to the concept of the scapegoat king. The scapegoat emerges as a wounded healer of a different type: not one who sustained some serious illness which predestined him to become a healer, but one whose supposed failure to function adequately in the social and political field transformed him into a provider of rain and fertility.

In Chapter 7 Cor Jonker stresses that political activities and political ideology are often the nucleus of therapeutic ngoma organizations. The case study of the Zionist churches in urban Zambia shows that ritual healing and political activities are indeed each other's prerequisite and may act as synergetic forces. In the case presented, the two ngoma modalities – political activities and therapeutics – are combined in one ngoma movement and therefore cannot be treated as separate entities. Even though gender differences provide the basis of a number of organizational differences in political activities per se, the healing activities have a political ideological context as well as a political intention. Therapeutic ngoma is an alternative for candid political activities for some, because individual healing cannot be separated from social healing according to the political ideal of the movement. It is the specific combination of healing and political modalities that places these churches in the ngoma tradition.

Contemporary developments in the movement show that the somewhat concealed political potency is surfacing. As a consequence it is now possible to get a much clearer view of the intra-dynamics of religious organization. These dynamics show that the various segments of a single organization may very well have different ritualistic and organizational characteristics but still may have economic motivational or ideological similarities. The case study will illustrate that if one studies the various organizational groupings and ritual aspects within a healing church separately, as well as their practical consequences, a more sophisticated perspective emerges on the relationship between politics and healing.

In Chapter 8, by Rijk van Dijk, the reflection by ngoma on a society's capacity of social reproduction is approached as a discourse with rather distinct and socially perceived perimeters. Other groups in the 'healing business' such as Born-Again fundamentalists in Malawian society debate or contest the discursive claims of ngoma *vis-à-vis* the social reproduction, stability and wellbeing of society. The Born-Again's contestation of the discursive claims of ngoma practices rests primarily on

the formulation of a different spatio-temporal perception and model of how their society develops in a modern, present-day context. As the ngoma discourse on individual and social healing therefore loses its sheer hegemonic qualities, the article explores the ways in which this alternative, contesting perception represents and indicates further social conflict in Malawian society.

In the Afterword, John Janzen takes up critically the challenges to his own work presented by the contributions in this book. By interpreting these studies as a 'doing of ngoma' in its own right, he specifically proposes to dissolve the distinctions the contributions put forth of the political and the therapeutic in ngoma. While acknowledging the 'revisionist shift' the book aims to establish in metaphors of power in African societies by introducing the term 'fruition', he simultaneously points to the wider implications this may have for understanding present day changes in healing rituals, exposed as they are to processes of globalization. This certainly provides an entirely new context for the exploration of ngoma: a transcultural milieu extending beyond the confines of the continent, whose contours have yet to emerge.

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