

Name : Ray Khumalo
Course : HC102
Lecturer : Phillippe Denny
Date : 15.10.1995
Topic : The perception of people on popular religion versus Official religion. (Interviews)

Just a
Sacrific



Table of contents

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Discription	1
2 Material structure	1
3 Assessment of social structure	1
4 Non-Verbal signs	1
5 Critique	2
6 Historical Content	2
7 Quality of Interview	4
8 Impact of interview to interviewee	6
9 Interview	7
10 Evaluation	11
11 Conclusion	12
12 Bibliography	13

Description

The biography of the interviewee

Hezekiel Mavuso

He was born in Msinga in 1940. This means that he is now 55 years old. He does not have good education because there was shortage of money at home so he ended at the lower primary school. He was a member of the Methodist church in his youth. He says that he was sick and could not be healed. He was prayed for by a Zionist priest and then he joined his church through healing. So he is currently a member of the Zion Apostolic Church of Jerusalem where he is a deacon and acting priest. He also holds a position of a Deacon in that church and the church is in his premises. He is married with three children. He moved to Amaoti in the early 80' for accomodation when he got a job in Durban. He is now working for the ISB as a field worker.

Material Structure of the interview.

When conducting this interview I did not have a tape recorder. We started informally but as I saw him getting excited by it I asked him if he would allow me to make it formal. He gave me a paper and pen and I wrote down my question so that I do not forget and I started to ask him. I was taking notes because I had no tape to record him.

Assessment of Social Structure

We did the interview at his home. It is a simple two roomed house which is a very informal structure and poorly built. He uses the first room as a lounge, kitchen and store-room. The other room is used as a bedroom for him and his wife. There is a one-roomed house outside which is used as a bedroom for the children and also as a chapel. Whilst we were still busy with the interview his wife was cooking their lunch and we were also interrupted by people who kept on coming in and out. He involved his wife in the interview by asking her to help him with some of the questions that I asked.

Non-Verbal Signs.

I thought that he will be affected by the fact that I am an outsider a student and a pastor of a mainline church. In the beginning he thought I just wanted to criticise his church or faith but as we went on he saw that I was interested in learning not criticising. Then he was very free and relaxed than before.

I also think that another thing is that he knew me before the interview. He was now relaxed using his hands to express some of his points and kept on pointing to all directions as we were talking. He would also laugh to the top of his voice now and again which shows that he was relaxed.

Critique

I do not think that there was any restructuring of data. What he said to me is what they are doing in his church and he is proud of it. His wife kept on reminding him about other things so there was no restructuring of data. He was happy to talk about his faith as it is to me. Another thing is that I had read Sinclair's book [Bantu prophets] so I was actually aware of most of the things he was talking about.

Any significant omission.

I do not think that he omitted any thing. Most of the time I developed my questions building on his answers to him so as to get more information and he also did his best to answer all my questions. So I do not think that he omitted any thing purposefully. His interest was so great so that he covered most of the questions before I could even ask them.

Historical content

I think I must give brief history of Amaoti where this interview was done and where the interviewees stay.

1.1 Amaoti

This community came to be as a result of forced removal from the nearest towns. So it was a result of the Group areas act. Now there is a lot of people who came to Durban to work and stayed at Amaoti. This is a peri-urban community that is ravaged by poverty. The majority of the people there are Zulus though there

is a tiny minority of Xhosas". In the early eighties the community was hit by floods that left the majority of people homeless and poor. This community was an IFP stronghold as the infiltration of people grew in the community the UDF began. The IFP was demanding financial contributions to support it and the comrades [those who belonged to the UDF] resisted this and that was the beginning of the violence that led to the defeated of the IFP and it was chased out of the community. This violence wiped out a lot of people who were members of the community and made the community more poor than before. As result they have got no jobs no homes. The only thing they hold on to now is their culture and religious heritage.

1.2 Interview

Cross reference. Before doing this interview with Mr Mavuso I had done one with Rev. A. Majola of the ST. John Apostolic Church. So when I did this one I compared it with Majolas'. Both these people practice popular religion and they all think it is vital in our lives but they understand it differently as far as the church is concerned. They all agree that they practice it because it forms part of who they are and that they see God as the same in both of them although they practice it differently. Mr Mavuso "church they believe that it needs to be incorporated or integrated in their way of worship. They do it in church in a christian way.

They use their liturgy, church, uniform, crosses, incense and church symbols. For them the service is not for family members only as it was traditionally but it involves all the christians and they take part fully as members of the family.

This is where the Zionists differ from the Apostolic church who believe that popular religion is not a church issue but a family one. For them it is not to be practiced in church and it should not include any church element but it should be purely traditional. Even Pastors and church members who happen to attend do that as members of the community not as fellow christians.

So it is now clear that although the Apostolics see no sin in practicing popular religion they think it should not be mixed

with christianity because the two do not accommodate one another. The argument of the Apostolics is that in church we have different cultures so how can we celebrate them together. This makes the Apostolics to have a christianity that is different from their cultures but that does not contradict it because the two are practiced seperately. The way they put it is that it is the process or way of practicing it that makes it difficult to bring the two together not their meaning.

The Zionists see no contradiction between the christian faith and their culture as a result they practice it in church. They have their christian faith built on their cultural identity. Their argument is that although we have different cultures in church but in Christ we are one family so we need to share our cultures.

Inculturation attempts to know God

I think it is important to note that the main concern of the Zionists is to worship God fully and better even if that means adopting elements that may be are not in their liturgy. I witnessed this in a service that he conducted there was chunk of the Methodist liturgy that I heard him reciting in the beginning of the service the way we do it in the Methodist church. When i asked him afetr the service he told me that he got from the Methodist church and he took it to the Zion church because it had a meaning for him and his church. I asked about how do other members of the church feel about that he said no problem . Their principle is that they use anything that will help them to understand God better. He said that what is important for them is to know God better not mainlanance of tradition. So I think even their inculturation of christianity should be understood in that light. As means to know God and understand Him better not as a quest to maintain popular religion.

Assessment of the Overall quality of the interview in terms of historical research.

Before conducting this interview I have always believed that the AIC"are not wrong by intergrating christianity with popular religion because this made it easier for them to inteprate their

faith in God better. I have also been concerned that christianity does not meet all the quest of belief for our people because there was nothing materialistic that it offered to them but it has always remained abstract. This interview has actually strengthened my perceptions of inculturation of christianity. The Zionists and Apostolics have developed a religion that accommodates their African heritage, situation and appeal to them in their contexts. It also fulfills their quest for belonging and meets their material, emotional and spiritual needs thus making them to have a religion that is contextually relevant.

For them God is not an imported one that came with the missionaries but he is the same God that was worshipped by their ancestors whom they called Mkhuluukhulu [The Supreme one] Mvelikucala [the one who came first].

They are no longer worshipping a foreign God in their land as some of us seem to be doing in our mainline churches. We worship a God who wants to be Europeanised first before we can accept him as ours. He does not accept us as we are. I think this interview has taught me a lot about popular religion. It has taught me that our fathers worshipped God before the advent of missionaries. Members of the Zionists church disagree with us who believe that African Traditional Religion does not regard God as the one in control. They believe that our fathers worshipped God in their own way but it was still the same God that we are worshipping today in our continent.

For Mr Mavuso popular religion is important as christianity. They both inform one another. What is important for him is that God in them is the same and that is why they are not practiced seperately. This helps them not to practice it at night or secretly but they do it openly and with a clear conscience. For them they do not do it because they are Africans but because it is part of them it is part of their lives and service. I have also seen clearly that they do not worship ancestors as they are always accused but God in their African way.

Struggle to know him better is no sin.

I was moved when I asked Mr Mavuso if he does not think that God gets angry over them when they venerate their ancestors. He said "My friend God is great and intelligent, He gave us a little intelligence to think, do you think that He can be annoyed my little intelligences' attempts to relate to him I do not think so". For me this meant that the people know what their are doing. Their aim is to relate to God so how can we judge them. Together with them we must look critically at their attempts. The fact that when they slaughter for start is enough for us to seek to understand it as good attempts to understand God. For me I was convinced by the interview that there is a lot to be done on this subject this was just a beginning. We do not have to criticise the Zionists because it is their way of worship, we also have our own ways that has also not approved by God to be the right one. No they are just poor attempts to relate to God and know him better.

Assessment of the impact of the interview an the interviewee and his community.

I think the interviewee was dying to talk about his way of worshipping God in their church. They have been looked upon as people who worshipped ancestors not God and they have never been given a platform to talk and be listened to. When I first approached him about the interview he thought I wanted to criticise his church so he was not free. When I told him that I wanted to learn he was happy that there is something that even Universities recognise things that they can learn from them. In short I am saying that the interview affirmed his church and religion. He was also happy to be listened to. Materially the interview did no impact to the him and his community.