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Multi-ethnic Recruitment in an Emerging West African Church

Barbara Jean Moore

Multi-Ethnic Recruitment in an Emerging West African Church: The Relationship of Religion to Ethnic Identity

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the relationship of religion to ethnic identity as manifested in the progress and development of an emerging independent church in rural West Africa. Testing a model developed by the anthropologist, James W. Fernandez, it investigates the factors which affect the success or failure of new religious movements to recruit across ethnic lines. The application of this model to the growing Lobi and Tembo congregation in northeastern Côte d'Ivoire has made it possible to reconsider, not only the factors affecting multi-ethnic church growth but how studies of new religious movements in general can be made more profitable. I am suggesting that this can be done in two ways:

1. For a better understanding of the dynamics affecting any religious movement, religious identity must be separated from ethnic identity. To subordinate religion to ethnicity as simply one of many objective criteria used by ethnic groups to define their distinctive character is no longer satisfactory.

2. Any attempt to comprehend why religious movements succeed or fail in their pan-ethnic aims requires that more attention be paid to a number of inter-related aspects usually neglected in such studies.

These include: a) a closer examination of inter-ethnic relationships found within the movement, b) a recognition that factors affecting multi-ethnic church growth may operate differently in the local congregation and in the wider movement, c) a need to separate the message propounded by the movement from the structure which expresses that message, and d) a better understanding of the motivations that first attract new adherents to the movement and then bring the conviction necessary to cause them to remain as members.

Contents

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The quotations which begin each chapter are from the New International Version of the Holy Bible. International Bible Society: 1973

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The Research

> *"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9–10.*

Modern history has recorded the curious proliferation of two apparently related but distinct social phenomena. Since the beginning of the colonial era, the world has witnessed the emergence of innumerable new religious movements, as well as the expansion of ethnic consciousness. Both have been said to be the result of social injustices and economic inequality (Lanternari 1963, Jules-Rosette 1979, Cohen 1969, 1981). Both have been said to provide hope and cohesion for small disadvantaged groups, where previously there had been chaos and despair (Peel 1968, Mitchell 1974, Fernandez 1982). But where ethnic consciousness has been said to divide nations and place groups in competition for scarce resources, religious movements, which often proclaim a universalist message, have been said to transcend ethnic barriers and provide for the unification of otherwise diverse groupings of people even across national boundaries. A closer examination of individual movements, however, shows that though many claim to be open to 'every nation, tribe, people and language', in actual fact, they have not only tended to exhibit a single ethnic foundation but seem to make little headway when it comes to crossing ethnic lines (Fernandez 1975). The research described here has several purposes. It analyzes this apparent discrepancy and considers why some religious movements are more successful than others in achieving their pan-ethnic aims. On the basis of this analysis, it asks if the defining characteristics of multi-ethnic religious movements do not need to be reexamined. Finally, it attempts to suggest how the overall findings contribute to a better understanding of the relationship of religion to ethnic identity.

The Problem

The appearance of myriads of new religious movements in all parts of the world during the last 130 years has been well documented, but possibly nowhere so thoroughly as in Africa.[1] David Barrett indicates that by 1967:

> "…some five thousand distinct ecclesiastical and religious bodies in thirty-four African nations, with a total of almost seven million nominal adherents drawn predominantly from two hundred and ninety different tribes in all parts of the continent…figuratively speaking only the top of the iceberg—hundreds more of such indigenous movements of renewal or protest remain in embryo inside the historical churches at varying depths without the disaffection they represent having as yet broken surface in schism." (Barrett 1968:3–4)

Since 1967, thousands more of those 'embryo' movements have reached gestation and poured forth on the African scene. Harold Turner distinguishes them from what he calls "primal" or pre-contact religions in three ways. First, unlike traditional religions which are tied to one ethnic group, these new movements are "…missionary in nature and spread across tribal boundaries." Secondly, there is "…the presence of a new kind of eschatology…beyond anything enshrined in the traditional mythology or expectations". Finally, they "…serve as a form of adjustment…due to the interaction of two societies…disparate in power and sophistication" (H. Turner 1979:5). Much of the attention given to investigating these movements has been focused on the latter two points, while their pan-ethnic influence has often been assumed. This omission should be remedied.

Whatever the reasons for the emergence of so many diverse and varied religious movements in Africa in the last 130 years, there remains the question of why, regardless of frequent pan-ethnic claims, the majority continue to be dominated by one ethnic group and limited to relatively narrow geographical areas? Why are so few successful in

[1] See Sundkler 1961, Lanternari 1963, Barrett 1968, Wilson 1973, Jules-Rosette 1979, Turner 1979.

attracting members from other regions and cultures? What factors make multi-ethnic growth possible in those that do succeed? What factors inhibit that growth? These are some of the questions that are being asked in this study.[2]

Of considerable help in beginning to shape an answer to these questions was a 1975 article written by the anthropologist, James W. Fernandez, then of Princeton University and presently of the University of Chicago. The article is entitled, "The Ethnic Communion: Inter-ethnic Recruitment in African Religious Movements," and was published in the Journal of African Studies (Vol. 2:2). In it he noted that, rather than transcending local particularisms, as had often been claimed, African independent churches and religious movements, "…develop along ethnic lines and make little or no progress when they come to an ethnic frontier" (Fernandez 1975:131). Since the colonial period, both mission related and independent churches have avoided a strict tribal orientation and proclaim a universalist message that is pan-ethnic in its aims. They find, however, that it is a, "…much more difficult matter to pass beyond the ethnic frontier to a fully national membership" (Fernandez 1975:132). His efforts to explain why this was so offered a framework which helped to shape my research and became a springboard for a reconsideration of the elements that constitute a multi-ethnic religious movement. They also made possible a re-examination of the relationship of religion to ethnic identity. For these reasons, his work needs to be examined closely.

Fernandez had done intensive field research among a number of independent religious movements in Gabon, South Africa, Ghana, Togo and Dahomey (Benin), over a period of years in the 1960's, and the paper mentioned above was a partial result of a comparison of those studies. In the article, before delving into the factors that might enhance or inhibit the success of a multi-ethnic church, he gives an overview of the five religious movements he considered. As at least a minimal acquaintance with these movements will make a later interpretation of Fernandez' model easier to follow, I will outline them briefly before I move on.

The first is Bwiti,[3] which had 5,000 to 8,000 adherents in the l960's, and had risen among the Fang of northern Gabon after World War II as an effort to revive the Fang ancestor cult, Bieri. This was done, however, by borrowing heavily from another ancestor cult, that of Bwiti, of the (primarily) Baloumbo-Mitsogo of southern Gabon. In its early stages, Bwiti appealed to many ethnic groups of both northern and southern Gabon but as the years passed, membership became tribalized with Fang participants providing at least 90% of the membership in all congregations around Libreville (Fernandez 1975:132–133).

The second movement considered is found in South Africa. At the time of Fernandez' research, the Amakhehleni, or Old Man's Cult, had over 400 adherents, several miles south of Durban in Natal. It was founded by John Mfene shortly after the Second World War, with a focus on healing physical and mental ills through methods drawn from the Zulu Cult of the Dead. Since his death, the power of his spirit has particularly been called on for advice in diagnosing and treating ailments. The permanent membership is 70% Zulu, with the rest predominantly Xhosa, but with some Sotho also. A constant transient population of from 25 to 75 ailing individuals live on the grounds and are usually 50% non-Zulu. Anyone who is sick or suffering, regardless of ethnic origin, is invited to attend group rituals (Fernandez 1975:133–134).

Another South African movement is the Church of God in Christ, numbering over 500 members, which began in the outskirts of Durban but later moved to the Umlazi township. Its pastor, at the time of Fernandez' research, was William Richmond, whose mother was Zulu and father Indian. Services, which had a very Christian orientation, were held entirely in Zulu. The two most distinctive features of the meetings were long sermons and a dramatic laying on of hands for the purpose of restoring a spiritually wholesome state through the power of the Holy Spirit. The membership was 90% Zulu, a few Xhosa and Sotho, and an occasional Indian. (Fernandez 1975:134,138)

The fourth group Fernandez studied is the Christianisme Celeste, which had more than 2000 adherents in Dahomey and Togo at the time of his research. Its leaders pointed with pride to their strong multi-ethnic membership. This

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[2] There is another closely related question that will not be dealt with in this paper, both because it is beyond its scope and because, as an ethical or philosophical question, it is best left to be answered by the religious movements themselves. The question asks whether a universalist doctrine demands a multi-ethnic church at the local level. The assumption is that if the message is for everyone, then everyone ought to be able to worship together. While this may be possible at a denominational or even multi-denominational level, it could very well be that local congregations will always feel more comfortable where language and cultural differences are minimal. This would not preclude joint projects and mutual support but would suggest that local problems and decision making are best left to those who operate within one cultural system. For more information on this matter see McGavran 1980, chapter 12.

[3] See Bwiti: An ethnography of the religious imagination in Africa, James W. Fernandez, Princeton University, 1982.

movement began under the influence of the Aladura churches of western Nigeria in the l940's. It's founder, Samuel Oshoffa, was of Goun and Nago parentage. His teachings spread to several areas and drew in members from a number of different ethnic groups including the Fon and the Mina, as well as the Nago and Goun. On closer inspection, however, it was seen that in local congregations, a single ethnic group tended to dominate. In Porto Novo, the congregation was 90% Goun and only 5% Fon and 5% Nago. In Cotonou, however, 80% of the membership was Fon, 15% Mina, and 2% Nago and Goun. Taken worship center by worship center, the movement was found to follow the pattern of single ethnic group dominance (Fernandez 1975:134).

The last and largest group which Fernandez studied was the Apostles' Revelation Society, numbering more than 20,000 members in Ghana and Togo. It was founded by the Prophet Mawu Fe Ame Wovenu in 1940 with a predominantly Ewe membership in the Volta region, but spread to Accra and other parts of Ghana and into Togo, as well as to the Akan in Koforidua. Like the Christianisme Celeste, Fernandez says that the Society is a highly Christian movement, which operates in the midst of strong traditional beliefs with little syncretism. Services are held in the major languages of Ghana, but the Ewe affiliation remains very dominant. In the mother church at Tadzewu in the Trans-Volta, the Ewe population constitutes about 90% of the membership. The situation is slightly better in Accra where the congregation is only about 80% Ewe (Fernandez 1975:134–135).

Although these five movements were quite different in their orientations, doctrine, and practices, they each claimed to have a message or power available to all people regardless of ethnic affiliation. Why, then, was their appeal so limited? Some began with a more universal appeal, but gradually came to recruit from only one ethnic group. Why did they lose their initial gains? In spite of the general trend away from multi-ethnic involvement, why were some of these movements more successful than others in drawing members from across ethnic lines? Fernandez considered the similarities and differences in content, orientation, ritual practices, etc. of these various groups and the result was a statement of the necessary conditions and the limiting factors which he suggests might explain their differential success.

> "My experience suggests that in a situation where strongly preserved intertribal antagonisms are absent and where there are no sharp cultural or linguistic differences between ethnic groups pan-ethnic recruitment is facilitated by:
>
> 1. collaterality as opposed to lineality in worship
> 2. spectator rather than participant ritual
> 3. focus upon ceremonial acts rather than upon the 'word'
> 4. therapeutic rather than redemptive orientation
> 5. matter of fact rather than ecstatic initiation
> 6. decentralization and liberality of authority structure
> 7 peri-urban rather than rural location" (Fernandez, l975, p.143–145).

He then states that several propositions emerge from this discussion, three of which are quite transparent:

1. The greater the affinity of cultures available for recruitment to religious movements, the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership
2. The greater the "equality" of cultures (defined in terms of their freedom from historical and contemporary experience of domination and subordination) available for recruitment, the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership
3. more peri-urban in orientation the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership (Fernandez 1975:145)

Other propositions, he says, are not so clear:

1. The greater the dependence upon kinesthetic expression (ritual) in a religious movement, the greater the possibilities for multi-ethnic membership
    a. Conversely the greater the dependence upon the "word" the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership
    b. But the greater the complexity of ritual and the greater the emphasis upon full membership participation, in its intricacies, the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership
2. The greater the therapeutic orientation of a religious movement the greater the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership
    a. Conversely the greater the redemptive orientation of a religious movement the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership

b. But the more highly ecstatic and dissociated the initiation experience the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership

4. The greater the emphasis upon lineal and genealogical ties to deity the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership
    c. Conversely the greater the emphasis upon a generalized filial principle (collaterality) the greater the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership (Fernandez 1975:145).

Fernandez offers these propositions for further inquiry, but many questions are left unanswered. From the brief outline of the five religious movements considered, it is not always clear how he derived some of these hypotheses, and therefore how they should be applied. Some seem to be given a great deal of weight and others are brushed over as if needing little consideration. Although he groups certain related proposals, the question of interdependence is not really addressed. He considers three features as necessary conditions for successful multi-ethnic church growth. These include a lack of sharp cultural differences, little linguistic disparity and the absence of deep-seated animosities. He does not, however, seem to allow that some of the other factors he cites may not merely limit pan-ethnic aims, but preclude them. It is not really clear, from the information provided, just why the first three features should be separated as necessary conditions from the other facilitating factors.

Regardless of the problems with interpretation and application, and the many questions left unanswered, I set out with this model as my framework, both to test its premises and to see if that very testing could clarify, not only the questions being asked, but potential sources for their answers. To do so, I looked for a setting where the independent religious movement involved was not only clearly successful in its multi-ethnic recruitment, but where at least some of the necessary conditions and facilitating factors did not appear to be in operation. I found such a situation in the northeastern segment of Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast).

The Research Site

The research described here focuses on a small independent church, which began in 1979 among the Lobi ('Lo-bi) and Tembo ('Tem-bo) peoples of northeastern Côte D'Ivoire (see Figure 1), in a village which shall be referred to as "Banabe" (Ba-na-'be). Initial interest in this site developed from conversations with one of the Bible translators[4] working in Banabe, studying the language of the Tembo people. Although Christians from various ethnic groups had been meeting together on the porch of the translators home for some time, the church as it is constituted today began when a Tense man ('Ten-se, singular of Tembo), whom I will call "Jean" (Fr.), came to believe that what he was helping to translate[5] was true. Never having been to school, he yet learned to read and began to share portions of the translation with his family and his neighbors. From the start, when he read sections in the Sunday services, all that was said was translated into both Lobi (the language of the Lobi) and French for those who did not understand Teen (the language of the Tembo). The church grew, as both Lobi and Tembo believers were added, until they far outnumbered the few other ethnics involved. Jean came to be accepted as the pastor of the church, but was helped in leadership by other Lobi and Tembo believers, both men and women. At the end of my research period, in November 1987, the church numbered nearly 70 adults, as well as numerous children. The Lobi outnumber the Tembo about 3 to 2, which is not surprising as Banabe is essentially a Lobi village, though located in what is otherwise primarily Tembo territory.

My attention was drawn to the Banabe church by what appeared to be a situation of successful multi-ethnic recruitment, but with the absence of at least two of the positive factors that Fernandez felt were either necessary or important for enhancing multi-ethnic church growth. First, they were operating with two mutually unintelligible languages, a situation which Fernandez had felt would preclude the possibility of a religious movement being able to recruit extensively across ethnic lines. Second, Banabe, a Lobi village occupying Tembo territory, would have to be considered a rural, and not an urban, environment. Successful multi-ethnic recruitment, along with the absence of these two positive factors described in Fernandez' model, suggested that the Banabe situation could be a good site for testing his hypotheses.

To show, however, that Banabe was, in actual fact, a valid location for studying multi-ethnic church growth and for applying Fernandez' model, three questions needed to be answered. Can the church at Banabe be considered an independent church or religious movement? Although two language groups are clearly involved, can it be

[4] Working with the Summer Institute of Linguistics or Wycliffe Bible Translators, with which I am also affiliated.

[5] The Gospel of Mark in the New Testament

established that the church is multi-ethnic? If the congregation is made up of more than one ethnic unit, is it successfully recruiting from each of the primary ethnic groups involved? None of these questions can be answered quite as easily as it would first appear. The second question, regarding multi-ethnicity, will be dealt with at length in Chapter Three, following a careful definition of the ethnic concept. The success the church has had in drawing from both language groups will be demonstrated in Chapter Four after a history and description of the church has been laid out. Only the first question will be discussed here. Can the church at Banabe be considered an independent church or religious movement? The answer depends on what is meant; both by 'independent', and by 'church'.

Nowhere in Fernandez' article does he make it clear just what he means by an "independent church" other than to indicate that he is referring to religious movements which are not directly associated with, nor governed by, expatriate mission organizations. He would seem to differentiate independent churches from "cults" but does not clarify the distinction (Fernandez 1975:131). It is necessary to look to other sources to establish what constitutes an independent church.

David Barrett, in his book Schism and Renewal in Africa (1968), sees independency as a strictly Christian phenomenon. He first defines it quite narrowly,

> (A) "Independency is defined as the formation and existence within a tribe or tribal unit, temporarily or permanently, of any organized religious movement with a distinct name and membership, even as small as a single organized congregation, which claims the title Christian in that it acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord, and which has either separated by secession from a mission church or an existing African independent church, or has been founded outside the mission churches as a new kind of religious entity under African initiative and leadership" (Barrett 1968:50).

He then indicates that this definition still left it somewhat ambiguous as to whether a given "tribal unit" did in fact have any independent church movements. His final definition sought to answer that question,

> (B) "Independency is present in a tribe if members of the tribe or tribal unit concerned, or of sub-tribes classified under it, have either (a) initiated or otherwise produced at any time the phenomenon of an independent church movement, however small, from within its own tribal ranks on its own tribal territory, rural or urban, and in the main under its own tribal leadership, or (b) contributed significantly within its own territory to a similar movement originating in another tribe" (Barrett 1968:50).

By either of these definitions, the Banabe congregation could be considered 'independent' or an 'independent church'. It is a single congregation, located in the territory of the groups involved, professing to be Christian and claiming Jesus Christ as Lord. Furthermore, it is modeled after, but independent from, mission churches in the area.

Like Barrett, Harold Turner considers independent churches to be distinct from other forms of religious movements, such as those he calls "Neo-primal", "Syncretist" and "Hebraist", in that such churches again have a fundamental Christian character.

> "…there are what may properly be called independent churches, bodies which intend to be Christian, which use the Scriptures, and which often regard themselves as having effected a local reformation of European Christianity and so have become more Christian than the missions and their connected older churches…In Africa, where this form predominates, they may be described as having been founded in Africa, by Africans, for Africans to worship in African ways and to meet African needs as Africans themselves feel them…" (Turner 1979:10–11).

Once more, the Banabe church fits the description, although possibly not so precisely. Certainly it is modeled after European derived mission churches, but not with an aim at reformation. Banabe church leaders are very open in their desire for guidance from mission affiliated churches, but have indicated they want to be left to make final decisions themselves. Though they do not yet have all of the Bible in a language they can understand, the majority of the members of the congregation appear to view the Scriptures as providing the basis for their beliefs and practices.

Returning now to Fernandez, it does not seem that he would make such a sharp distinction between those independent churches which propound an essentially fundamental Christian message and others that have considerably modified those doctrines in light of other religious or political influences. In his 1964 article on African religious movements, he makes it clear that,

> "…only those movements will be discussed which may be defined against a background of Christian evangelisation. Religious movements formed under the impetus of Islamic evangelisation…will be ignored, though they are of importance, particularly in Sudanic Africa" (Fernandez 1964:534–535).

He then distinguishes four types of religious movements based on whether they are more acculturated than traditional, and more instrumental than expressive (Fernandez 1964:537). The term independent church is not used at all, though it would seem that the majority of those meeting Barrett's and Turner's definitions would fit into his category of "separatist" movements. By 1975, Fernandez is using the term "independent church", but not in a very precise way. He prefaces his comparison of the five religious movements with a general discussion of what he refers to first as "…African independent churches and religious movements…" and later as "…independent churches and cults in Africa…" (Fernandez 1975:131). Whether independent churches differ from religious movements or cults is unclear. He does, however, refer to Bwiti and the Amakhehleni (Old Man's Cult) as "cults", while he calls the other three "churches". Paired with the description he gives of the various movements, this suggests that he would attribute to the latter three a status at least loosely related to that given for independent churches by Turner and Barrett.

One point all three writers are making, is that independent religious movements must be independent from something, in this case mission-directed Christian churches. For Barrett, that is the only case to which independence applies. But there is no particular reason that independent religious movements cannot spring from the other world religions. Though there have been fewer of them, independent movements have been shown to have developed from Islam (Alexandre 1969 and Fisher 1970) and most likely can be shown to have developed from all of the world religions. For the purpose of the discussion here, independent churches will refer to those which have either separated from, or been modeled after, essentially fundamental Christian churches, which make Jesus Christ the center of their worship, and the Bible as the basis for their teachings, but have no formal affiliation with any mission organization. This accords, both with the more precise definitions given by Turner and Barrett, as well as with the direction Fernandez seems to have been going in his 1975 article. As such, the Banabe church can clearly be designated an independent church.

Methodology

From the time of my arrival in Banabe in mid-September of 1986 until I left in early November of 1987, the focus of my research was consciously qualitative. From the outset I took a basically traditional ethnographic approach which involved primarily participant observation and open-ended interviews. I felt that even to come to a partial understanding of the church in Banabe, I had to be part of that church, to worship with the congregation, to participate in their ceremonies, even as I was alert to all that they said and did. I also felt that I needed to be able to view the church in the context of the larger community, both in Banabe which is primarily Lobi, and in the surrounding countryside, which is largely Tembo. To comprehend what I was seeing, I further needed to be able to ask questions, of Lobi and Tembo, of men and women, of followers of the "new" path, and of those of the old. Therefore, in an avowedly subjective manner, I sought to study the emergence of a new multi-ethnic church and to discover some of the reasons for its success in recruiting from both language groups. In this context, I also hoped to apply Fernandez' model and to reinterpret it in light of what I learned.

The ethnographic paradigm does not, of course, consist of one approach, but several. Different interpretive emphases focus on different data collection procedures but the commitment to extended participant observation as the primary tool is consistent throughout. The final result, regardless of the approach taken, is ethnography, a description, or better, an interpretation, of the situation studied. How to view that final product is not always agreed upon.

> "Since the ethnographer filters the data, the question arises as to whether we treat the product as science, art, journalism, or even fiction. Does ethnographic problem solving constitute "normal science" so that we can speak of an ethnographic paradigm, or is "doing ethnography" largely an effort to hold, as it were, a mirror up to nature in whatever way the individual deems fit?
>
> The answer to these queries is, in the end, a matter of individual taste" (Sanday 1979:22).

It has been suggested that there are, in general, three styles of paradigmatic ethnography found in the literature. The holistic approach, represented by the opposing cultural theories of the configurationalists (Benedict 1934, Mead 1949) and the functionalists (Malinowski 1961, Radcliffe-Brown 1952), is the oldest. Each school of thought made

culture, as an integrated whole, their primary focus of study. The core of the semiotic approach, on the other hand, is the emic perspective, or a search for the "native's point of view". It is a search for meaning. Though quite different in their applications of this approach, the "thick description" of Geertz (1973) and the "ethnoscience" of Goodenough (1970) are representations of this style of doing ethnography. The final approach, the behavioristic, is demonstrated most clearly in the work of Beatrice Whiting (1963). Ethnography is still important, but not as a search for meaning or to understand culture as an integrated whole. It provides the observational data to which a series of deductive propositions may be applied. Its main goal is to discover behavioral patterns during ethnographic observation (Sanday 1979:23–34).

> "Obviously the ethnographic paradigm in anthropology is internally differentiated. The main differences are whether the primary focus is on the whole, the meaning, or the behavior and the degree to which the analytic goal is diagnosis or explanation. Which mode one adopts in one's own work is a matter of taste and not of dogma. Most anthropologists who go into the field…probably…employ some combination of these ethnographic styles…
>
> What counts in the long run is not how the facts are dressed but whether they make sense" (Sanday 1979:34).

I certainly found that my own approach was a combination, not just of two of the styles, but of all three. Arriving in the field with a series of hypotheses to be tested in the context of an emerging church is most closely aligned with the behavioral approach, but my goals were not really the same. Although testing the hypotheses laid out by Fernandez in his 1975 article was certainly implicit in my application of his model to the Banabe situation, a more compelling concern was to discover the questions that needed to be asked before such research can be done at all. This meant interpreting not only the ethnographic context to which the model was to be applied, but the model itself. At this juncture, my approach was essentially semiotic. Finally, by seeking to place the Banabe case within the environment of the traditional Lobi and Tembo cultures, I was taking a holistic approach, which, even if seldom fully achieved, offers further validity to the more narrow perspectives of the first two ethnographic styles.

At the same time, while my primary focus throughout remained qualitative, I did not discount the need for some quantitative support in this essentially interpretive endeavor. The church was, after all, made up of individuals who could be counted and about whom much could be learned through demographic studies. This was made easier by the fact that the church was small and my sample consisted of 100% for many features and 87% (60 of 69) for the rest. I also had access to information regarding the populations of Banabe and the surrounding villages from local government offices.

I was, of course, aware before my arrival that the task I had set myself involved a situation which was not amenable to the classic ethnographic method of participant observation. Typically, the fieldworker is expected to immerse herself in the language and culture of the people in such a way that she is able to conduct much of the research in the language of the people. My own linguistic background and work in South America[6] had long since made me suspicious of the language ability claimed by first-time researchers who spent only a year or so in doing fieldwork, but the herculean effort of learning two languages and (even though similar) two cultures was, I knew, beyond my capabilities. Since I was aware that there were written materials available in Teen, but not Lobi,[7] and as the primary pastor of the church was a Tense, it seemed logical to choose Teen as the language on which to focus.

Having made this decision, my first four months in the field had three goals. I would make a start on learning the Teen language. I would move into one of the surrounding Tembo villages for a period of time where I could both practice the language and begin to become acquainted with their way of life. I would attend and observe all services or gatherings of believers where practicable and begin to develop interview questions. Since the church is in Banabe, it may be noted that the final goal was somewhat in conflict with the other two. I dealt with this by remaining in the outlying village during the week and returning to Banabe for market on Saturday and remaining until Monday morning. Although I attained all three goals in the time allotted, the results were not really all that I had hoped. It

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[6] I have been a member of the Summer Institute of Linguistics since 1967 and was originally trained as a linguist-translator. I began work in 1970 with the monolingual Hupda Macu people, who are situated between the Papuri and Tiquie Rivers in Brazil. Due to changing political policies, contact was sparse and sporadic for seven years but during that time, I and two colleagues did a complete phonological and partial grammatical analysis of the language. I wrote or co-authored three articles for publication on grammatical aspects of Hupda-Macu.

[7] A translation of the New Testament has been done in a related dialect of Lobi but it is largely incomprehensible to the Lobi people in and around Banabe.

soon became obvious that I would need to learn enough Lobi to at least be able to perform the somewhat lengthy greetings required for any real acceptance. From then on, although my focus remained on Teen, I made sporadic efforts to learn some Lobi. Also, as the work progressed, my time had to be divided between both Lobi and Tembo members of the congregation, such that I was not able to progress in either language to the level I would have liked.

Knowing that I would have to deal with two languages in my research situation I had always intended to rely heavily on French, in which I am fluent and reasonably proficient. Aware as well that there would be relatively few fluent tri-lingual speakers in the church, I was on the lookout, from the outset, for someone who could help me in my research. There were actually a number of possibilities, but one stood out as having all of the qualities I needed in a research assistant. This was a 37 year old Lobi man, whom I will call "Jerome". He was a native of Banabe, and so had grown up around many Tembo, and was essentially bilingual in the two languages. He had also attended the local school for 9 years and was fluent in French. As a young man, he had had aspirations to use his education to get good work in the south, but at 19 he had begun to go blind. Jerome returned to Banabe, and had resided in or around the area ever since. He became a Christian in 1982, while in Bouna, and now attended Sunday services at the church in Banabe, where he is a leader. He directs much of the singing and does the translation into French. Prior to becoming a believer, Jerome had never married, but about a year before my arrival, he took a Lobi wife, a widow who attended the church and who is considerably older than he is. During the time of my research they shared a compound with another Lobi couple, who are also believers, and their nine children.

Jerome proved to be an excellent assistant, not only because of his availability and his capacity to speak three languages, but because he soon adopted my work as his own. I began to meet with him on a daily basis not long after I returned from the outlying village where I had resided off and on for eight weeks. At first we would spend 2–3 hours a day going over any questions I had, and discussing any topic I raised. There were no forbidden areas. He knew everyone in the region, how they were related, what they had done all their lives and generally any gossip that was going around about them. If there was something he didn't know, he knew someone who did and would find out for me. When I began the more formal interviews of each of the members of the church, he showed an amazing capacity to understand what I was looking for and made some very useful suggestions as I developed my interview schedule. He soon took over arranging the interviews and convincing those that were initially reluctant that they should indeed make themselves available to do it. I would have been lost without him.

Jerome was the mainstay of my research endeavor but I had several other key informants who complemented his contributions. Jean, the pastor of the Banabe Church, met with me regularly to answer any questions I had about either church matters or the culture of the Tembo people. A good many of the others who helped me were members of the congregation of the Banabe church but several people from the community played their part as well. Those interviewed, both formally and informally, included individuals from each of the language groups, both men and women, of varying ages. Although all of my efforts were at least partially aimed at getting as complete a picture as possible of the Lobi and Tembo lifestyles, and of the way the Banabe church fit into the larger community, I paid particular attention to ceremonial events and to conflict situations. These episodes provided a particularly rich source of cultural data that aided in understanding, not only how members of the church and the community viewed the world and their place in it, but gave insights into the questions that needed to be asked if Fernandez' model was to be applied adequately.

During this entire time I was also becoming acquainted with the community of Banabe and its surroundings. I regularly attended the Saturday market, or went to the fields to work when there was an "invitation". I helped at various times to plant, weed, harvest and store the millet which is their primary staple. I picked cotton and pounded sorghum. I carried firewood and tended children. Probably most important of all, I attended funerals, which occurred far more often than I would have liked to have seen. Funerals proved to be, not only an extremely important concentration of cultural material, but the doorway to acceptance by many in the village who would have otherwise relegated me to a purely "church" status. For example, following the first funeral that I was able to attend from beginning to end (27 hours, with Jerome at my side), the son of the elderly Lobi woman who had died, came to visit me. He wanted to thank me for honoring his mother by remaining for the entire ceremony, and to offer me any assistance I might need. A prominent man in his sixties, he proved to be an invaluable informant on the history of Banabe and the beliefs and practices of the Lobi people.

Right up to my departure in November of 1987, I continued to work, attend, visit, observe and interview, as each was appropriate, for a fuller understanding of the congregation at Banabe and their place in the community. Through it all I sought to discover whether the factors important for successful multi-ethnic recruitment, as suggested by Fernandez, were present or absent in the Banabe church. When my efforts seemed unfruitful, I often found that the

difficulty was in the ambiguity of the hypothesis, or in the definition of terms used in it. As will be seen in Chapter Five, when this occurred, the material I collected at Banabe often provided what was needed to redefine or clarify the proposals so that they might be applied, if not in this setting, at a future research site.

Before closing this section, I feel it is important to mention that I am well aware of the problems inherent in the approaches I took and the decisions I made regarding how to pursue my data collection. I would like to focus briefly on three that I feel might be considered the most glaring. The first regards the matter of language choice. Putting aside the impossibility of learning both Lobi and Teen in the time allotted, it would certainly have been ideal to have conducted the research in the language of the people I was studying. Even if only one language had been involved, however, I do not believe I would have attempted to conduct my formal interviews in that language, or have put much validity in my own understanding of overheard conversations without corroboration from someone like Jerome. Regardless of my language learning abilities, a few months study of the local vernacular could hardly match up with the twenty-five or more years that Jerome had been exposed to, and used, French.

A second area for discussion regards any possible influence my presence and work may have had on the Banabe church and, therefore, on the results of my research. There may well have been effects of which I am not aware. I can be fairly certain, however, that my presence played no significant part in the amount or direction of growth in the Banabe church. The material recorded in Chapter Four on conversions since the inception of the church should make that clear. I took essentially the same position as the translators[8] who had been with the congregation since it began. I attended the church regularly, but took no part in the services except to pray aloud when asked. I did the latter in English as it was assumed that all present would pray in their own language. There were several crises among the congregation and church leadership while I was there but I offered no advice and was asked for none. I did lend money on several occasions but generally only after the church leaders agreed that the occasion warranted it. If I did not seek their advice, I often was not repaid. No one outside the church ever asked me for money. One service which the translators often provided, but which I could not, was transportation of the sick from outlying villages to the clinic in Banabe, or even to Bouna. I had no car. People in the congregation and in the community accepted my presence, not only in church services, but at market, during funerals, and in various situations about the town. I was essentially ignored.

Finally, I recognize that some of the biases that I, myself, brought to the field situation were bound to have an affect both on the collection of my data and my interpretation of the results. As I have said, this is true for any ethnographic researcher. I differed greatly from the subjects of my research in that I was a white, single, western female working in an essentially patriarchal, black African society where few females stay unmarried past the age of 20. I was an anomaly. Even as I tried to make allowances for our entirely disparate world views I was aware that I tended to judge many practices from thoroughly western viewpoints. In contrast to all these differences, I was similar to the majority of the congregation in the Banabe church in that I shared their essentially fundamental Christian beliefs. When I participated with them in worship services I was not simply going through the motions. This was a help in that I could enter into the circumstances in ways a non-believer really could not do. It was also a hindrance because there was the very real danger of assuming that practices, and even beliefs I found familiar, held the same meanings for the participants in Banabe as they did for me. I do not believe, however, that my own

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[8] Only one of the translators was present in Banabe during a significant part of my stay in the village. This was for a period of about 6 months and included the time I was living in a neighboring Tembo village. The other translator had married and was leaving the project. She paid a five day visit with her husband in May of 1987 after her former partner had departed.

I am sure that the presence of the translators in Banabe during intermittent periods throughout the history of the church had some influence on its formation. I was not able, however, to observe any concrete examples of this. Only two individuals (Jean and Isaie, see Chapter Four) attributed their conversions directly to the actions of the translators. All other members of the congregation indicated some other primary influence, generally a Lobi or Tembo believer. When a group of responsables (Fr.) was formed to help make church decisions, the translators were asked to serve in this capacity but they refused. They felt they were there to do Bible translation and must focus on that task.

During my interviews, I asked each individual if they knew what work the translators were there to do. Out of 60 people (87% of the congregation), 13 (23%) said they had no idea at all. Another 21 (34%) said they were there to do the work of God but could give me no indication of what that entailed. A few (6, or 10%) said they had come to learn Teen and teach them to read. Only 20 (33%) said they were there to translate the Word of God into Teen. It did not seem that they constituted an intrusive element into the life of the church.

Christian background was any more detrimental to my objectivity than would have been that of a non-religious researcher. Both positions are biased. The problem is not in having biases but in not recognizing and allowing for them. I believe I did both.

Overview

The primary purpose of this study is to examine an emerging West African church using Fernandez' model for successful multi-ethnic growth in hopes of learning more, not only about the primary components of such movements, but to ascertain more precisely the relationship of religion to ethnic identity. There are several issues, however, that must be dealt with before this can be done. The history and organization of the Protestant Church of Banabe can only be understood within the framework of the traditional cultures (Lobi and Tembo) from which it has sprung. Furthermore, a foundation must be laid to validate the application of the model to this particular case.

Chapter Two is primarily descriptive, offering an abbreviated ethnography of the Lobi people, their background, language, economic system, social and political structure and world view. Rather than attempt a parallel description of the Tembo system, which shares many similarities with that of the Lobi, such differences as I was able to discover between the two groups are incorporated into the narrative. These very similarities make it necessary to ask whether it is indeed valid to consider the Lobi and the Tembo as separate and distinct ethnic groups. Chapter Three is divided into two sections. Part One deals with the problem of defining the concepts of ethnicity and ethnic group as a basis for the second section which shows that the Lobi and the Tembo must, in fact, be viewed as two distinct ethnic categories.

Chapter Four introduces the history and organization of the Protestant church of Banabe, as well as offering a demographic profile of the congregation. This lays the groundwork for examining whether the Banabe church can be said to have been successful in recruiting their membership consistently from both ethnic units. That question is dealt with in the final portion of the chapter. Fernandez' model is then explored in depth in Chapter Five. In examining each of the ten hypotheses, there are several goals. First, I sought to interpret and clarify Fernandez' specific proposals in order to more precisely apply them. Second, I looked at evidence from the Banabe congregation which supports or disclaims that hypothesis and indicated any new questions the material made it necessary to raise. Finally, I suggested, where appropriate, how each hypothesis might be modified and tried to delineate what contributions its study made to a better understanding of the concept of multi-ethnic religious movements. Chapter Six draws together what I have learned during the research project, focusing on several issues which previous studies of African religious movements have neglected. It also clearly expresses the need to consider religion as a separate identity independent of ethnic identity if any real understanding of multi-ethnic religious movements and their operation is to be gained.

2

Traditional Culture

> *"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth…From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live." Acts 17:27.*

Over long years of contact, the Lobi and Tembo peoples have shared and assimilated cultural practices to such an extent that, to a casual observer, there is little difference between the two groups. Being the minority population, it seems likely that the Tembo may have done more assimilating than the Lobi, but this can only be conjecture. Records show that, during the colonial period, the Tembo were considered a sub-group of the Lobi and even today, outsiders who have not visited the region are unlikely to be aware of the existence of the Tembo as a separate ethnic category. Numerous studies of the Lobi have been done (Labouret 1931; Fieloux 1980; de Rouville 1987), all of which refer to the Tembo (Téguessié) as a distinct population, but no independent examination of them has yet been undertaken, although the need for it has been indicated (Fieloux 1980:35).

In what follows I will attempt to give a broad, but not exhaustive, overview of the traditional cultures of the Lobi and Tembo peoples. This will lay a foundation for establishing in Chapter Three that the two populations each demonstrate a distinct ethnic consciousness. Because of the similarities in the two social systems, it would be extremely repetitious to lay out parallel accounts. Consequently, what I offer is essentially a description of the Lobi system with such differences as were ascertained for the Tembo emphasized where appropriate. I do not claim to have discovered all such differences. An independent cultural study of the Tembo people yet waits to be done.

History

Lobi oral tradition has little to say about their historical past before they crossed the Black Volta River into modern day Burkina Faso more than 200 years ago. Using genealogical data, Labouret places this event in about 1770, at Batié Nord, west of Gaoua (Labouret 1931:28). Since that time they have continued to migrate slowly both south and west until, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, they came into what is present day Côte d'Ivoire (Fieloux 1980:18). Much of this region was unoccupied except by scattered villages of people who referred to themselves as the Tembo.[1]

The Tembo themselves do not seem to know much about the time before they came to reside in their present territory, except to say that they traveled from the north and that the land was empty on their arrival. They did encounter the ruins of innumerable large stone houses and walls,[2] long since abandoned, but no other sign of their previous inhabitants existed. Some of the Christians in Banabé now say that these must have been the houses of people who lived in the area before the flood described in the Old Testament (Genesis 7–8).

When the Lobi arrived, the entire region was claimed by the Koulango Kingdom centered in Bouna to the southwest. Both Lobi and Tembo had to seek permission from the Koulango land chief at Sai to found new villages in the unoccupied territory. Gradually, however, through migration and passive assimilation, the Lobi have displaced the Koulango population and become the dominant ethnic group in the region, including the area around Bouna. In 1969, Fieloux indicated Lobi villages located 80 km. south of Bouna. Today they can be found as far south as Bondoukou.

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[1] Studies done on the Lobi by French colonial officers and anthropologists refer to the Tembo as the Téguessié (Labouret 1931, Fieloux 1980, de Rouville 1987), but do not indicate the source of this designation. In Côte d'Ivoire today, non-Tembo, including any Lobi who speak French, call them the Loron, a name derived from Dioula, a trade language used throughout much of the country.

[2] Labouret discusses these ruins briefly in his 1931 description of the Lobi and their neighbors. Scattered throughout many areas of southern Burkina Faso and northeastern Côte d'Ivoire, the origin of these ruins has apparently never been discovered. Some are located not far from Banabé.

Lobi and Teen (languages of the Lobi and Tembo peoples) are both considered Voltaic languages, or members of the Gur sub-family of the major Niger-Congo linguistic stock in West Africa (Murdock 1958). The two languages are not, however, mutually intelligible, Teen having more affinity with Koulango than with Lobi (Leenhouts and Petermann 1979). The speech of the Dian is lexically most similar to Lobi, while that of the Gan and the Dorossie are close but more distantly related (Bendor-Samuel 1971).

The Environment

Terrain. The Lobi occupy a territory that extends from roughly central Burkina Faso in the north, south into Côte d'Ivoire, skirting the Comoé National Park, encompassing Bouna, intruding into Koulango country and moving toward Bondoukou (see Chapter One:Figure. 1). Although the Tembo can now be found scattered in much of the southern portion of this region and beyond, they are concentrated much more heavily in the canton of Tehini in northeastern Côte d'Ivoire, and around Galgouli in southern Burkina Faso (see Figure 2).

The land is characterized by vast flat areas of high grass with scattered, gnarled trees of numerous species. Chains of low hills, rocky outcroppings and stream beds divide the area in various places although the latter are often dry except at the height of the rainy season. Permanent water holes are few.

Climate, rainfall. This area, often referred to as the wooded savanna, is a transition zone between the dense forest to the south and the grassy savanna in the north (Roberts et al. 1973:32). The heaviest rainfall is generally concentrated in six months of the year from May to October with the dry season then extending from November to April. The average annual rainfall ranges from 1200mm per year near Gaoua to 1300mm around Bouna, however the variation from year to year can be extreme. At Gaoua, for example, charts show that between 1920 and 1960 the range was from as little as 823mm per year to as much as 2,359mm per year (Barlet 1962:49). Maximum temperatures are reached in March or April (30–35 C) and the minimum in December or January (10–12 C). The temperature variation is slightly greater in Burkina Faso than in Côte d'Ivoire (de Rouville 1987:23–24).

These two essentially distinct seasons of the year are set apart by their particular activities. The beginning of the rains also marks the beginning of planting, while harvest coordinates with the beginning of the dry season. The most elaborate rituals, second funerals and initiation rites, are reserved for early in the dry season when the need for hard labor is at a minimum and the granaries are full. This is also the time for repairing and building numerous structures, opening new fields, or moving to a new village. Markets are crowded as more commodities are available and there is an increase in social interaction between individuals from different regions.

As the dry season draws to a close and granary stocks are declining, the heavy work of preparing for the next harvest begins. People tend to remain in their villages as each family concentrates on planting what is necessary to make survival possible. Little is available in the market and those attending generally come from the immediate vicinity.

Social Structure

Kinship/Descent. Both the Lobi and the Tembo utilize a double unilineal descent system of kinship organization. Each individual belongs to both a matriclan and a patriclan. Cecile de Rouville suggests that the formation of the patriclans is a fairly recent innovation, co-occurring with the adoption of the initiation (Lobi: *dyoro*; Teen: *dyorbiye*) tied to the Black Volta cult which is believed to be of Birifor origin (de Rouville 1987:135). This is supported by the existence of a Crow-type kinship terminology (Schusky 1972:33) for both the Lobi and the Tembo, and by the fact that the matriclan seems to mark their primary identification. It does this by forming a part of each person's name and thereby establishing the 'family' to which he or she belongs. The matriclan concerns itself primarily with economic matters and the fertility of women. What the Lobi and Tembo consider real or movable wealth belonging to men is generally passed from a man (e.g. animals, money, cowrie shells) to his sister's son. A woman's wealth (e.g. clay pots, cloths, cowrie shells) goes to her daughter. The patriclan, on the other hand, can be said to have more ritual significance and initiation is within its domain. Inheritance of fixed property (houses, rights to land, certain protector spirits), is from father to son.

Both matriclans and patriclans have titular spirits who are said to protect the members of their respective clans. Matriclan spirits (*watil/gbala*) reside in founding villages or their extensions and conflict between matriclan members must be taken to those villages if the matter is a very serious one; or a ceremony can be performed on the road that leads to the appropriate village if the offense is minor. Patriclan spirits (*tilkha/punsan*) reside in every village and every household. A Lobi child eats the 'medicine' (*nuokhati*) of his or her patriclan spirit a few days after birth (3 days for a boy and 4 days for a girl). The 'medicine' is prepared by mixing water with a bit of earth

taken from the base of the *tilka* altar 'planted' before the father's house. The Tembo do not have this practice, which may explain why the Tembo say that if a father is not satisfied with the way he was initiated, he may send his children to be initiated by a different patriclan. For the Lobi, the taking of the medicine (*nuokhati*) fixes his or her patriclan membership for life, but neither Tembo nor Lobi becomes a participating member until after initiation which can take place at anywhere from 7–17 years of age. Even then, a man does not have his own *tilkha* or *punsan* until he receives his hoe from his father, often after the age of 30. This marks his full adult stature, the right to form his own household, and to plant his own patriclan spirit altar before his door. A woman may have other personal protector spirits but she never has a *tilkha* or *punsan*.

Matriclan. There are 4 basic matriclans divided into an unknown number of exogamous sub-matriclans,[3] each with its unique origin myth.[4] The primary matriclans are traditionally in alliance with one other matriclan and in opposition to the other two. Until pacification in the 1930s, the Lobi wars between opposing matriclan families kept most villages situated as armed camps continually on the look out for ambushes. Older men and women tell how in those days they remember their fathers were never without their bows and arrows, even when they ate, and their mothers were accompanied to the fields or the stream by armed guards.

Today, to all appearances, the hostility between opposing matriclans (Lobi: *sodara*) has been forgotten, but the alliance (Lobi: *maldara*) still has important functions to play in conflict resolution, in child-rearing, and in hosting the funerals of the elderly, i.e. those who have shown their worth by growing old.

As already stated, there are four primary matriclans[5] which are paired in alliance (*maldara*) and in opposition (*sodara*) to the other two as follows:

	← **Maldara** → (in alliance)	
↑ **Sodara**	Kambou, Kambiré, Noufé (Kambou, Kambiri, Wusé)[6]	Hien (Webé)
(in opposition) ↓	Palé, Sib, Somé (Folma, Sia, Som)	Da (Da)

Table 1. Alliance of Lobi and Tembo Matriclans

[3] Cecille de Rouville lists 61 sub-matriclans for her research area around Iridiaka in Burkina Faso and states that the list is non-exhaustive.

[4] Two sisters of the same mother (same matriclan) went one day to search for firewood. After they collected their wood, they could not agree on the way back to their village and each headed off in a different direction. One of them became lost and became the ancestress of the Kambou. The other found her way home and became the ancestress of the Kambiré.

Fieloux (1978:79) says that, in sub-matriclan origin myths, women generally play the dominant roles in a story dealing with how one woman is distinguished from another in some household task. The actual stories vary somewhat from region to region and depending on who is telling the tale.

[5] Besides the Tembo and the Lobi there are five neighboring double unilineal descent groups who exhibit the same four-part organization of uterine segments. The Birifor and Dagara share the same cultural base with the Lobi and have the same names for the four matriclans. The Gan, Dorossie and Dian, who have borrowed many Lobi cultural traits use different names (de Rouville 1987:136).

[6] It seems that historically the Kambou was the original matriclan and the Kambiré and Noufe were early sub-clans. Today, however, the Kambire and Noufe have their own titular spirits (*watil*/*gbala*) in founding villages in Burkina Faso and members take Kambire or Noufe as their family name. At the same time they see themselves as one group in *sodar* or *maldar* relation with the other groups as indicated. The same situation holds true for the Pale antedating the Sib and Some.

Prior to pacification, a latent hostility existed between *sodara* but a reciprocal joking relationship was, and is, the norm for allied matriclans, or *maldara*. The *sodar* relationship gradually ended following pacification by the colonial regime in the 1930s. Feuds with ritual killings[7] no longer occur. I was told, however, that it was not good to refer to someone as being in a '*sodar*' relationship to them, as the comment carried the implication that they are not on good terms. One simply says that the person is '*chakbal*', from a different family.

The alliance: *maldara*. In contrast to the *sodar* connection, the alliance is still strong. Each matriclan is seen to have some hereditary fault that is picked up by the alliance to joke about, i.e. the Da are 'liars' and accept kidding from those who are *maldar* about this but not from anyone *sodar*.

When a very old person dies, it is the alliance who 'gives' the funeral. The women come to 'wail without tears' and to deride the family for the poor showing they would have made without the alliance. They are paid for their work by family members throwing handfuls of cowrie shells at their feet for which they scramble. The men of the alliance interrogate the body to discover why the person died and to learn if things will now go well with the family. Portions of a bull sacrificed after the burial are given to alliance members for their participation.

Another primary function of the alliance is to help resolve conflict. If the anger between two individuals in the same matriclan has gotten out of hand and the family can not calm the situation, the alliance is called in. A shea tree branch is burned and the ashes put in front of the angry person to cool the situation. That individual can no longer 'make words' with his/her opponent.

Occasionally more formal rituals are necessary 'to cool what is hot'. These should be performed on the altar of the '*watil/gbala*', the titular spirit of the matriclan, or if this is too far away, on the main road that leads from the village to the altar. These rituals generally symbolize the cooling down of the heated situation. Cold water may be spit on the ground, a hot coal may be put in a gourd of cold water, or cold ashes may be thrown on the ground or over those involved.

Prior to pacification, the performance of these rituals could be a very serious matter indeed. Blood feuds among those in a *sodar* relationship sometimes stretched into years and many individuals died. But there was always a limit. If the matriclan itself was in jeopardy, allies of the two groups involved would symbolically 'break the bow' on the main road and then spit three mouthfuls of cold water drunk from a long necked gourd into which a hot coal had been placed. This signaled to all that the feud had ended.

Though the killing of a member of one's alliance was strictly forbidden, this sometimes occurred by accident during a raid. The resolution was immediate. One return death was permitted within a day of the original killing and no return vengeance was allowed (Fieloux 1980:70). This was called a 'hot arrow'. The bow was then broken to indicate the matter was ended and the ritual cooperation and association between the alliance restored.

Similarly, it was forbidden for members of the same matriclan to kill one another, or for them to avenge such a death. If a quarrel occurred, however, a member of the alliance came immediately to break the bow, and if a killing had resulted, to sacrifice a young chicken on the site. At the same time the culprit's MB sent ritual gifts, such as a

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[7] Labouret relates the details of a blood feud, portions of which he witnessed, that began in the area around Iridiaka in what was then Upper Volta in 1918 and going strong well into 1921. He does not make clear the matriclan relationships of the opponents and allies, but the events as he recounts them are as follows.

> It seems that the husband of a woman named Bokoné, in the village of Sanhouara, died. By custom, Bokoné should then have married a matriclan relative of her dead husband, but this she refused to do. Instead she went to live with another man, by the name of Dihina, in the village of Gourbirira. Dihina refused to pay any of the bridewealth due to the first husband's family.
>
> Before very long, Bokoné left Dihina to live with a man named Binndyor back in Sanhouara. Dihina became very angry about this, not (Labouret says) because he cared so much for Bokoné but because her leaving reflected on his reputation as a vigorous man and avenger of blood. For this reason, he killed Binndyor in July of 1919. Two days later, several residents of Gourbirira came to visit Sanhouara and the inhabitants of the latter killed one of them in reprisal for the murder of Binndyor.
>
> For the time being, hostilities ceased as this killing made the losses on each side equal. Then in January of 1921, a woman of Kosso, on her way to see her relatives in Sanhouara, was killed by Dihina, along with the child she was carrying. This reopened the conflict and set off a chain of five armed engagements involving more and more people each time. Every one of these events resulted in a number of casualties and as of the time of Labouret's leaving, the matter was still not resolved (Labouret 1932 retold in Fieloux 1980:67–68).

cow, a hen, etc., to the altar of the clan's watil/ gbala. Only then could the guilty party be reintegrated into his matriclan. Not to make these sacrifices would have meant that the women of the matriclan would be barren.

Although pacification has greatly altered things as regards the *sodar* relationship, the alliance and its role in conflict resolution is still very important. A killing will likely mean arrest and prison for the guilty party today but the need to 'cool what is hot' and restore relationships continues.

One other situation in which the alliance is summoned involves young children. An infant who is restless and cries a lot is suspected of being a 'returning one', a previously born child who died. Its crying suggests it again does not wish to stay. Cuts are made in one or both cheeks to encourage the child to remain. This cutting is made by women of the alliance. Many adults are seen to have the scars from these ritual markings on their cheeks.

Patriclan. The total number of patriclans is unknown. Sixty or more are named and many of these also have sub-patriclans. As residence tends to be patrilocal, only a few patriclans will be represented in any given area. Although an individual's primary identity seems to be through his or her matriclan, the tie between men of the same patriclan is apparently stronger than their ties within the matriclan. Adultery with the wife of a matriclan brother is wrong, but forgivable, when the proper rituals are performed. Adultery with the wife of a patriclan brother means certain, and nearly immediate, death brought about by the patron spirits of the patriclan.

It can be said that an individual is born into his or her matriclan (those of the same skin—family), but is ritually inducted into his or her patriclan (those of the same house). For the Lobi, as already indicated, the ritual that establishes a child's patriclan membership is performed 3–4 days after birth. This membership is then confirmed at the initiation when the child is 7–17 years of age. For the Tembo, it appears that patriclan membership is not established until the initiation. In either case, though the 'rule' is that the child enters the same patriclan as his or her father, this may not always be true, as has already been indicated. For the Lobi, if the biological father is for some reason unavailable when the child is born, another male relative may be asked to administer the 'medicine' (nuokhati) that establishes patriclan membership. He will not necessarily be from the same patriclan. For the Tembo, although the child will commonly go to the initiation of his or her father's patriclan, this also is not necessary. The father or male guardian may decide, for whatever reason, to send them to another initiation site, which then establishes the child's patriclan membership.

Each patriclan has its own *tilka*/*punsan*, or protector spirit, whose altar is planted before the entrance to the house of each independent male. The kind of wood used to make the altar is specific for each clan. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of this protector spirit, at least for males. When a man receives the hoe from his father or male guardian and thereby becomes independent, he has the right to plant his own tilka/punsan altar before the door of his house. From that point on, no matter how many times he migrates or moves the location of his dwelling, he never really leaves his 'house' or patriclan. The altar of the tilka/punsan goes with him, including some of the mud it was originally planted in. Together they represent not just his own home, but that of his entire 'house'. It is the tie that unites him with all other members of his patriclan.

Villages

Traditional Lobi and Tembo villages are composed of polygynous family compounds spread over a large area. Small multi-purpose gardens may be scattered near each family unit or near the larger fields for staple crops found beyond village structures. Though this arrangement is still the most common, especially for villages away from the main roads, external pressure has caused many more prominent villages to group all buildings together in a more western pattern. Even in remote areas, however, the traditional, many-roomed, single family dwelling in Côte d'Ivoire (but not in Burkina Faso) has given way to a more typical West African pattern of each compound being composed of several clustered, single function units.

Structure and Layout. Prior to and during most of the colonial period, the Lobi and Tembo resided in large many-roomed habitations designed to house a man, his wives, his still dependent married sons, their wives and children, and his other unmarried offspring. The head of the house had no room of his own as he would spend several days with each wife, usually changing each market day. There were, however, many other rooms partitioned off for various purposes. As these included granaries, at least one room for poultry, possibly a place set aside for spirit altars, and a central area for cattle, sheep, and goats, a compound generally consisted of only one structure (see Figure 3). Likely due to the Lobi wars and the constant fear of ambush, these traditional houses had only one door but many openings to the flat roof where foodstuffs could be dried and from where anyone approaching the

compound could be observed. These are still the most common type of dwelling among the Lobi and Tembo of Burkina Faso.

The dwelling pattern in Côte d'Ivoire has changed. Today, compounds are composed of many single room, single function, thatch-roofed structures arranged in a roughly circular pattern. A man has his own house as does each of his wives with her children. Married dependent sons have a separate dwelling as do older, unmarried sons. Chickens have their own enclosure and, if a man is a diviner or has many personal spirits, he may construct a separate habitation for them. Cattle are kept in a corral just outside the compound. Sheep and goats are left to roam at will.

Population. Village population typically varies from about 40 to 200 or more. However, settlements on the road or with markets are often larger. Except where outsiders (non-Lobi, non-Tembo) have come to reside, villages tend not to have any communal structures except tombs. The Lobi and Tembo primarily continue to each reside in their own settlement but it is becoming more common to find mixed village especially in the canton of Tehini.

Though several matriclans may be represented in a single village, one often dominates and those from the same matriclan tend to reside near one another. There is also a tradition of at least initial patrilocal residence which can complicate this picture. Some men reside in the same village all their lives but this is unusual. As women go to live in the village of their husbands they also are likely to occupy several villages during their lifetime.

Leadership. There is no village head who has authority over male heads-of-household who reside there. The founder of the village, who built the first compound and established the altar of the village protector spirit, is responsible for making the necessary sacrifices on the spirit altar, but can place no constraints on the inhabitants who follow him to the new location.

Each man becomes the head of his own household when he receives the hoe from his father or an appropriate patriclan relative, if his father is deceased. Until that time he remains in his father's compound and is under his authority, even if he is married and has begun a family. Until he receives his independence, all work that he does is for his father. Only when he receives the hoe does the food he produces belong to him. There is no traditional authority above the father or head of the household.

There are male heads of sub-matriclans, matriclans and patriclans, but these all appear to be religious positions and their functions seldom extend beyond dealing with the supernatural in situations of crisis or conflict. It is the protector spirits in such instances that demand compliance, not the spiritual leaders who act primarily as mediators. In any case, a man who is unhappy with how things are being handled has the option, frequently taken, of migrating out of the area and settling in a new location, usually further south.

Migration. The Lobi are known for their migrations. A man may decide to pick up and move his entire family for any number of reasons. He may be in conflict with his father or his mother's brother; there may not be enough land for his fields, or what there is may be exhausted; he may have just stolen someone's wife, etc. Most men will move at least once in their lives, some several times.

Though it was common in the past for a man to migrate to a village where he had matriclan relatives, the more recent pattern in Côte d'Ivoire has been for him to take his family south, completely out of Lobi country, to work for wages for a year or more and then possibly to return to his home area. By that time the conflict situation may well have been resolved or he is prepared to deal with it.

The Life Cycle

Some of the most important ritual activities celebrated by the Lobi and Tembo peoples are associated with events which occur in the life of every individual. These are the *rites de passage* described by Arnold van Gennep (1960). It is in these situations, more than anywhere else, that I found Lobi and Tembo cultural practices to differ.

Birth and Naming. There is very little ritual surrounding the birth of a child, the main concern being to keep the child's spirit (*tuh*/*tooré*) in its body. Accordingly, the protector spirits of the father are consulted to find out which one will take responsibility for the child. It may be that the spirit will place certain restrictions that are to be upheld

for the first year or two of a child's life. He or she may not be allowed to visit other compounds or to attend funerals or market. If the mother does not uphold these constraints, the child's protector spirit will allow it to die.[8]

The child remains in its mother's hut or room following birth until the third day, if it is a boy, and until the fourth, if it is a girl. For the Lobi, this is the day the child receives the 'medicine' (*nuokhati*) to mark its patriclan membership. The Tembo do not have this practice, but mark the day as the first that the child can be taken out of the room in which it was born. The baby is washed, the room is swept clean and the ashes thrown out. If the protector spirit allows it, the infant may now go anywhere the mother does.

The system of naming among the Lobi and Tembo can be quite complex. Almost every person has at least two names, a birth order or childhood name and an initiation name. Men also chose or have given to them a 'man's name' as they approach adulthood. Women do so much less frequently. Those who become Muslim or Christian are likely to change their names but their families are likely to continue to use the old ones. Nicknames are also common but often used only by those very close to the individual. Even with all the possible names one individual can have, those related to him or her will most likely use the appropriate kinship term.

There are six names for boys and six for girls which differ slightly for the two language groups. A Lobi woman's first boy is called *Sié*, the second, *Sansan*, then *Ollo*, *Gbébé*, *Toh* and *Kohkoh*. Her girls are called, *Eri, O'o, Ini, Gbéni, Séséri* and *Tohtoh*. A Tensé woman's boys are *Sebi, Sambi, Ollo, Gbé, Toh* and *Kohkoh*. Her girls are *Eri, Obi, Ini, Gbéni, Séséri* and *Tohtoh*. Children born after the names are used up are given some name that fits the situation or describes something about them.

At initiation, when a child is seven to seventeen, a new name is given that marks their change in status. This name is given by some member of their family and very often reflects a negative relationship or situation in the life of the one giving the name. The child becomes the innocent vehicle for their statement of discontent. A boy might be named: '*Kopuné'*, meaning 'I am cut to pieces with misfortune', indicating that the individual has suffered nothing but bad luck; or '*Bomanté'*, 'You mock me because I am poor'. A girl might be called '*Konakiana'*, 'I cry because all the children I gave birth to have died'; or '*Pemahana'*, 'I had to borrow everything to get married', meaning their family did not help them as they should.

All initiation names are in Lobi. The Tembo do not have separate names. If they do not speak Lobi themselves, they decide what they want to call a child and then find a Lobi who can tell them how to say it. Since almost any relative can offer a name to a child, it is likely that a child will be given several possibilities. As near as I could tell, the final choice is up to the child, but he or she never makes up his or her own name.

After the child re-enters the village from initiation, people are made aware of his or her new name and begin to use it. There is some indication that it is bad or dangerous to continue to use old names, but in actual fact I heard such names used often. One patriclan, the *Bréfor* (those who were originally of Birifor descent), have a tradition of continuing to use the childhood names, though they do take on new names at initiation. At funerals, I heard the deceased addressed by several of their names, including the childhood name.

'Men's names' are taken on by the man himself to indicate some special characteristic. When blood feuds were still prevalent, a man would often take a name to indicate prowess in battle. '*Bielfasi'* is a name indicating he came out of a fight as the only survivor. Other names are more mundane such as '*Dambisi'*, the 'black'. A women does not chose a name but may be given one by her husband: '*Diné'*, 'a woman who always has something ready to eat', or '*Mazoli'*, from French, '*ma jolie femme'*.

Many of the Christians have taken on biblical names to replace their initiation name. Thus, men may be known among members of the church as Pierre, Jean, Samuel or Moïse. Women may be Salomé, Naomi, Deborah or Marie. It is up to the individual member to ask for such a name and many continue to be known by their initiation name.

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[8] The youngest wife of a powerful diviner in a village near Banabé was pregnant for the fifth time. She had only one living child, a girl about three years old. She delivered a healthy son whose protector spirit put the prohibition on him that he could not visit any compound other than his own until this constraint was removed by his protector spirit. When he was several weeks old, his mother took him to Banabé to get a measles vaccination. On returning to her own village, a companion asked her to wait while she stopped at the compound of a relative to get a cloth that was owed to her. Apparently without thinking, the mother of the infant entered the compound as well. That night, when her husband learned of her indiscretion, he accused her to all around of killing his son. The next day he went to the market in Banabé and told everyone around that his wife had killed their child. That day the infant became ill and two days later he died.

Nor are all those who have chosen Bible names actually called by them. Some simply do not seem to be generally accepted.

Initiation. In about February of every seventh year, all children who have reached 7–8 years and older since the last ceremony, are taken on a long trek into Burkina Faso to the parent villages of their patriclans, by the Black Volta River, to be initiated. These are very secret rituals, such that to mention the name (*dyoro/dyorbiye*) in the presence of the uninitiated, even an infant on a woman's back, could bring death.

Both boys and girls are initiated in the same manner without any apparent distinction. Some months prior to the trip, those who were initiated 7 years before begin to harass initiates from their patriclan. They chase them, hit them with switches, insult them and generally make their lives miserable. If the children were too young to remember how their older relatives were harassed years before, they are likely to be totally perplexed about why it is happening, and no one really enlightens them, although they generally have some awareness from older peers.

On the day the trip is to start, all the appropriate children from each patriclan are gathered together with several adults to begin the march. The children are required to travel the entire way in the nude. Bundles of food have been prepared ahead of time and are carried by the adults. Each group has its own road to the initiation and each has its own drumbeat that one of the adults beats out as they march. Though they seldom see the other groups, they can frequently hear them in the distance. Within a day or two they arrive in a village where one of their patriclan chiefs resides. Groups from many different villages assemble there. A sacrifice of a chicken (brought along for the purpose) is made for each child. The initiated make the children sit with their eyes down. They cannot talk or play and are continually mocked.

After several days march, they arrive at the place of initiation which differs for each patriclan. More groups are arriving from many different villages. When all have come, the initiation begins. The actual ceremony is the imbibing of some of the mud taken from this spot in the river. For the Vinvindara this means each child being taken out into the river where one of the chiefs is standing. He holds the child by the neck and pushes him or her under water. He reaches to the bottom and gets a bit of mud and puts it in the child's mouth. For the Tchola patriclan, a pit is dug and filled with water and earth. Each child lays down at the edge and puts his or her face in the water and drinks. After the ceremony, the children are fed in their groups and their upper front teeth are filed to a point. They are allowed to refuse this procedure, but not many do.

At some point, before, during, or even after the initiation trip, a close relative gives the child a new name. The name is a statement of a general misfortune the name giver finds himself/herself in or it may even be a malediction against the person he or she holds responsible for the misfortune. The child thus becomes a lifelong vehicle of a statement that does not directly involve him or her. The names given, whether to a Lobi or a Tensé child, are always Lobi.

As apparently dozens of children are involved at each location, the actual initiation goes on for an entire night. After another day on the site they start back toward their home villages. Though still devoid of clothing, the initiates now carry leaves to hide themselves from view. Whereas they came on the main road, they return on paths off the beaten track. No one must see them. The groups get smaller and smaller as various ones head off toward their settlements, until finally only the small group from each patriclan arrives back in their own village.

They do not as yet, however, return to their own houses. A secret place is chosen in the bush where all the newly initiated from all the patriclans in the village gather. Parents and close relatives arrive to greet them and bring along their dance costumes, elaborate concoctions made from strings of cowrie shells. At this point a difference is made between boys and girls as the style differs depending on sex. For the only time in their lives the boys wear earrings and their ears are pierced for the occasion. This is the only part of the costume that is sacred and therefore dangerous. The earrings must not touch the food they eat or they will die.

For about two weeks, the new initiates remain in the bush and learn to dance the '*dyoro'*, the sacred dances allowed only to the initiated and primarily danced at funerals. The final day is always a market day when for the first time the children appear in the village and dance around the market place for all to see. At last, each child goes to his or her home and their costumes are put away for another 7 years. Their re-incorporation, however, is not yet complete. For two to three days they are put under the tutelage of their younger brothers and sisters. These new adults have become amazingly ignorant of all the normal details of daily living. They go in and out of every doorway backwards and must be shown the proper way. The girls try to pound the grain with the wrong end of the pestle and the boys try to hoe a patch with the handle rather than the blade. The little ones have a hilarious time teaching them the right way to do things. But finally they do learn the proper ways and take their new place, with a new name, manifesting a new confidence and receiving a new respect from their elders.

The initiation trip is long and arduous. Some children become ill. There are accidents and not all return. If the adults who left with the children from a particular village return without one or more of them, nothing is said. Grieving relatives may not ask what happened to them and they are never told. It is as if the child never existed. Possibly for this reason, some parents are reluctant to send very young or very small children on the trip. If a child of 9 or even 10 is small, he or she might be held back and so be 16 or 17 before finally going to the initiation. If a child is crippled, ill or in some way indisposed when he or she should have gone to be initiated, it is possible for a relative who goes to bring some of the mud back and do a short version of the initiation in the village. The child is given a new name and may dance the '*dyoro'* but is never fully accepted as initiated, i.e. no one will discuss the initiation and its secrets with him or her. Today, there are several reasons why parents might not have their children initiated at all. Those who have gone to school sometimes decide that this is no longer necessary, or they make use of the local version. Many who have moved way south toward Bondoukou find it too difficult to sent their children back to the villages from which the trek begins. Those who have become Christian no longer send their children because they refuse their former relationship with the protector spirits.

Marriage. The sub-matriclan is exogamous but marriage is preferred within the same major matriclan. Marriage within the same patriclan or sub-patriclan is also not considered incestuous.

In the past, efforts were made to reinforce the fighting strength of the household by arranging marriages between individuals of the same sub-matriclan. At the time, slavery was practiced and non-Lobi captives of Koulango conquests were sold in auction in the market at Bouna. A slave (*De/Doya*) became the 'son' or 'daughter' of the man or woman who purchased him/her and took on the same clan memberships. A man could then marry his slave son to his non-slave (*Wo/Tosé*) daughter (or slave daughter to his non-slave son) and though both were of the same sub-matriclan this was considered acceptable. Children of this union became *Wo* or *Dé* depending on the classification of the mother. The *Wo/Dé* distinction is still recognized though slavery is no longer practiced and two people of the same sub-matriclan can marry as long as one is *Wo/Tosé* and the other is *De/Doya*.

A man's first marriage is arranged by his father when both individuals are still children. It may even occur that a man will ask for the unborn child of an appropriate alliance for his son if it is a girl. When the girl is 11 or 12, the boy goes with his father to visit his promised wife and her family taking a rooster as a present. At this time the girl can refuse the alliance by refusing the rooster, but if she accepts it, the marriage is considered sealed. When the girl is 14 or so the boy begins to do brideservice for his father-in-law. He goes for a few weeks at a time to help clear a field, build a granary, or help with the harvest. From the very beginning, a Lobi man may bring his mat and sleep with his prospective wife, but a Tensé man does not do so until after the marriage is final. After two to three years of working for his father-in-law, the man can claim his wife. For the Lobi, this involves short visits, at first, by the wife to her husband's village. Her stay becomes permanent after the third visit. Only when it looks like the marriage is going to succeed (3–4 years) are negotiations begun for the bridewealth of cattle which are paid to the girl's family by the boy's mother's brother(s).

The Tembo do not pay a bridewealth of cattle, nor do they have a transitional period for the girl to move to her husband's village. When the bride service is complete, the wedding is announced and relatives come from far and wide to attend. Briefly, the girl and her female companions are escorted to her new home by her husband-to-be and his friends. At sundown, she leaves the house where she has been staying, with her closest companion walking ahead balancing a large empty basket on her head. The bride walks behind and stops frequently. The groom throws handfuls of cowrie shells into the basket, and when the girl thinks these are sufficient, she takes a few more steps. Her arrival at her new home is timed to coincide with the rising of the sun. She and her companions enter the house and spend the day pouring beer for the relatives who are attending the wedding. The guests enter the dwelling, a few at a time, where they find the girls standing before several empty bowls. Cowrie shells are dropped into the bowls until the girls are satisfied. These are removed and a swallow of beer is poured in and the guests drink. Then the next group takes their place. This goes on all day until the beer is exhausted. That evening the bride and groom share their new house for the first time together.

For the Lobi, if the marriage does not succeed, that is, if the woman goes off with another man, the husband can demand repayment of the cattle his relatives have paid with interest. If the man cannot pay, the woman must eventually be returned, though the final outcome can take years. As the Tembo do no pay bridewealth, such a recourse is not open to them. If the woman leaves her husband (or refuses to marry the man her father has chosen), the offended party will often 'put a spirit' (curse) on her such that if her lover sleeps with her, or anyone takes her in, the guilty party will die. If the Tensé girl is stubborn, she can continue to refuse but she is forced to live in the fields, sleeping in the corn huts and begging for handouts, since no one will take her into their home. As it is considered

very dangerous for anyone to help her cut her hair (the fashion is very short), she may give in when her hair becomes unbearably bushy.

Only the first wife is arranged by the father. Subsequent wives are the responsibility of the man himself, even if the bride his father has chosen for him does not work out. He has three avenues he can follow. First, he himself can arrange with the father of the girl. Gifts may be given but neither bride service nor bridewealth are generally paid. This avenue is apparently seldom followed. Second, he can inherit the wife of a matriclan brother who has died. As the marriage of all but very elderly widows is arranged by the deceased's family to occur shortly after the second funeral, many wives are acquired this way. The third possibility is to steal a wife and this is probably today the most common of all. These marriages are seldom secure for the reasons given above and because a woman who will leave her first husband may be inclined to do so again. But a man who can seduce a woman away from her husband is considered 'strong' even if he only keeps her a few weeks or months.

Death. The funeral is an extremely important and very frequent ritual in the life of the Lobi and Tembo peoples. Typically, there are two ceremonies involved for each individual who has died. The first funeral takes place immediately after death and can last from a few hours up to a day and a half. The second funeral is held from one month to two years later when the family has gathered together an appropriate feast. The length of the first funeral and the size of the second are directly related to the age of the deceased.

An infant or small child is buried quite soon after death, often within a few hours. The funeral of an older child or teen-ager is longer but likely to be considerably less than 24 hours. The longest and most elaborate funerals are reserved for the really elderly who, by living long, have demonstrated that they led lives pleasing to their protector spirits who allowed no real harm to come to them until they were old.

Although the components of a funeral vary according to the age of the deceased and the circumstances of his or her death, each funeral begins with a series of shotgun blasts which announce to the surrounding countryside that someone has died. These will continue at intervals for some time as the word is passed and people make preparations to leave their daily tasks and attend the funeral. Even relatives who live several hours away will try and get to the funeral site before burial takes place.

As no death is considered normal, all funerals also require the interrogation of the body, or actually of the matriclan protector spirits (*watil*/*gbala*) which now cling close to the corpse. The life spirit (*tuh*/*tooré*) of the deceased is believed to have left the body and moved to the edge of the courtyard where the funeral is being conducted. He or she is joined there by the spirits of relatives who have come from the land of the ancestors to watch the proceedings.

During the interrogation, the body of the deceased is wrapped in a mat, placed on a stretcher and supported on the heads of two individuals, men or women, who steady their burden with their hands. After the first few questions, the body may be removed from the mat and placed in a chair under a tree or against a house wall while the stretcher and mat are again lifted up for interrogation. The diviner generally uses his staff and asks questions of the 'body' regarding the circumstances surrounding the death of the individual. If the mat tilts toward the diviner, the answer is yes. If it tilts away, the answer is no. He may ask why the person died, what protector spirit killed him or her, whether witchcraft was involved, etc.? As all such questions must be able to be answered by 'yes' or 'no', it can take some time before the matter is clarified.

It is only after the interrogation is completed that the body is washed and dressed in good clothes and placed in a prominent, shady spot for the funeral. Women, especially close relatives, tend to cluster around the chair or bed and cry or wail over the deceased. This is done somewhat differently by the Lobi and the Tembo (see Chapter Four), but is continued with varying degrees of intensity throughout the funeral. Men pay their respects individually by beginning to cry and circling the corpse once or twice and then returning to the group of spectators. A few of the younger men also are responsible for letting off a series of shotgun blasts throughout the funeral, the louder the better. The extra measures of gunpowder used to accomplish this have resulted in numerous accidents when old shotguns explode.

Whether dancing occurs depends a great deal on the age of the deceased and the circumstances of the death. There will always be dancing for older individuals who die, as such occasions are considered to be matters for rejoicing. If the person is young and the death sudden, there may be no dancing, especially if it is believed that witchcraft is involved. At the same time, to dance at a funeral is to honor the dead, and regardless of the circumstances, it may be decided to dance to show the individual respect. Each case seems to be decided separately. The death of a child, always considered tragic, does not involve dancing.

Another component found at all funerals except those of the youngest children, is that of making speeches over the *balafon* (Fr.). This marimba-like instrument is placed near the deceased and is played off and on throughout the course of the funeral, whether or not there is dancing. Those who come to speak are generally relatives of the deceased who may talk to either the person who has died or to the family gathered around. The message they bring may vary from simple thanks to all present for honoring their relative, to a tirade directed at the protector spirits or the family for wrongs they feel that have been committed against them. Subsequent speeches by other speakers may be in answer to earlier accusations. The actual message is given in a series of short comments said with a rising intonation. The *balafon*, which is believed to be inhabited by a spirit, matches (by way of the *balafon* player) the intonation pattern of the speaker, so that the speech can be said to actually be given through the balafon. Everyone is quiet when the *balafon* is 'speaking'.

When the funeral has run its course, the body is again wrapped in a mat and lifted onto the stretcher. A procession of family members accompanies the deceased to the grave site where he or she is to be buried. One of several community tombs will have been opened by the village 'mortuary team' to receive the body. This team is a group of men who occupy themselves with the less pleasant tasks associated with a funeral. They open the tomb or dig a new one if necessary and one of them will actually enter the grave to receive the body and position it properly. Not many men wish to take on these responsibilities but those who do are highly respected.

The tomb itself consists of a hole in the ground which has a very narrow round opening (10"–12") but which widens into a fair sized chamber about a foot below the surface. It may be three to four feet deep overall, while the diameter of the underground chamber may be up to six feet across. A low earthen ledge encircles this large area and it is here that the body is placed. When the most courageous member of the mortuary team enters the tomb, the others lower the body of the deceased down feet first. The bones of previous occupants are moved to one side and the new resident is placed with limbs flexed and with the head lying on one arm. Once all the team has seen that the body is properly arranged the tomb is closed and a final shotgun blast is fired to notify everyone that the funeral has ended.

The first funeral involves no food or drink provided by the family although sellers of millet beer, homemade 'whiskey' (from sugar), and various foodstuffs will generally show up if the funeral is more than just a few hours. It is at the second funeral that the family is expected to provide food and drink for the guests and the older the deceased the more elaborate this is likely to be and the more people are expected to come. Consequently, the second funeral of a very elderly person may be delayed for up to two years while the family is preparing for the feast. As the second funeral is to mark the departure of the spirit of the deceased to the land of the ancestors, the occasion is considered a happy one and dancing is generally involved. I was told, however, that if witchcraft was involved, that is, if the protector spirits reveal that they killed the individual because he or she had been practicing witchcraft, then no second funeral would be held. A witch could not go to the land of the ancestors.

The Economic System

The Lobi and Tembo are horticulturalists who subsist primarily on the grains they grow in their fields and the animals they raise in their compounds. However, there is still some reliance on wild food and game. Imported foods play almost no part in their diet.

Hunting, poaching. Traditionally, the men were known for their hunting ability with the bow and arrow. Wild game, including many varieties of antelope and gazelle, wild pig and warthog, monkey and baboon, lion and leopard, hippopotamus and elephant all abounded in the area. Today, however, most of the larger game animals are found isolated on the protected reserve of the Comoé National Park to the south of Lobi country and only the ubiquitous rabbit and the occasional monkey or deer wander into the inhabited regions. At one time lions would still venture into the villages in search of cattle but the last such depredations in Banabé, which sits on the edge of the reserve, were in 1964.[9]

[9] According to the residents of Banabé, the last lions to invade the village from the reserve came in the early sixties, not long after independence. At this time they still lived in the fortress style, flat-roofed houses where the cattle and other livestock were corralled at night within the large central room of the structure. In one instance, a lioness managed to get into this room and kill a year old calf. A blind Lobi woman was sleeping near enough to here the kill and realize that the lioness had settled down to eat her prey. The woman managed to move quietly to one of the internal ladders and climb to the roof where she cried out a warning. Her son was sleeping there with his family but he had been drinking too much to be of any help. His wife and children joined in the cry, however, and a man from another house heard and came to help. He made a hole in the roof and dropped some burning straw into the room to see. While the lioness was trying to stomp out the fire he shot her. The following day everyone shared the meat.

During the dry season, when the high grass has been burned back, many men still venture out to hunt, or more literally, poach, on the reserve. Though guns may be used, the quieter bow and arrow are still the preferred weapons. The laws against poaching exact large fines (up to 200,000 cfa—$667) or heavy jail sentences, and only the man who has been assured by his protector spirits that he will not be caught will take the risk.[10] Though meat is a coveted prize, a frequent goal of poaching is still the elephant for the value of its ivory. Their numbers have been greatly depleted by this practice but the fact that the sale of ivory brings a very high price on the black market encourages the effort to continue.

Gathering, fishing. Gathering is a woman's occupation but does not today supply a large part of the Lobi or Tembo diet. Shea nuts (*Butyrospermum parkii*) are of special interest because they can be sold to outside traders for their 'butter'. Various wild, spinach-like greens, or leaves from the baobab (*Parkia biblobosa*) and shea nut trees, are used for preparing a 'sauce' eaten with the staple millet cakes.

Though now illegal, like poaching, the poisoning of streams for fish, on and off the reserve, is still occasionally practiced. This is also a woman's activity, but supplies more of a treat or outing than a major contribution to the diet. Women, who accompany husbands or brothers onto the reserve to carry back any meat procured, may poison some of the larger streams for a more abundant catch but again the fines are so large and the risk so great supernatural protection is deemed necessary.

One type of foraging has nothing to do with nutrition and is exclusively in the women's domain. Gold can be found in Lobi country in both alluvial deposits and in quartz rocks and has been sought and sold in the region for centuries. Though the output is minimal, women still wash for gold in the stream beds and sell what they find to outside traders.

Agriculture. Both hoe and plow agriculture are now practiced in Lobi country, but the latter is a quite recent innovation with as yet a very limited range. Staple crops continue to be planted in subsistence gardens using primarily the axe for clearing, the hoe for cultivation and weeding, and the knife for harvesting. Plow agriculture has been introduced into Côte d'Ivoire almost exclusively for the cultivation of cotton to be sold for use in the growing Côte d'Ivoirien textile industry. While subsistence gardens are cultivated by family groupings, the expense of plow and oxen generally necessitate that cotton fields of any real size be owned and cleared by a cooperative.

Subsistence gardens. The principle food sources for both the Lobi and Tembo peoples are cultivated sorghum (*Andropogon sorghum*) followed closely by millet (*Pennisetum spicatum*) and then maize (*Zea mays*). Sorghum, referred to as 'little millet', is the primary source for making the staple millet cakes, whereas the larger grain, especially the red millet, is used more commonly for making beer served at funerals, invitations to cultivate, or in the local drinking huts. Both types are harvested in late December and early January and must be of sufficient quantity to feed the family until the maize harvest in June or July. Maize, which has a short growing period, is first planted when the rains begin in April and then again in May and its harvest must bridge the gap between the emptying and refilling of the millet granaries each year.

Other fairly major crops include various kinds of beans, peanuts, yams, tobacco, sweet potatoes, manioc, and peas. Rice is a relatively recent addition that is as yet grown only by a few people. Of somewhat lesser importance are such vegetables as peppers, okra, eggplant, gourds and tomatoes. All of these are available in the market for only a short period each year.

The arrangement of fields, gardens and habitations varies somewhat between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire. In the north, the Lobi tend to have two primary types of growing plots. Village gardens, where a woman will plant her condiments, including peanuts and peppers, generally surround or are placed near each woman's hut. Due to droppings of domesticated animals and household refuse these gardens can be more or less permanent. Bush fields for sorghum, millet and maize are located some distance from the compound and produce for only 3–4 years before an extended fallow period is necessary (Fieloux 1980:158). In the south, where yams are more successfully grown and are often sold in the market place, their cultivation may replace the village garden and a woman plants her condiments in or near her husband's bush field.

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[10] A Lobi man from Burkina Faso was assured by his protector spirits that his efforts to hunt on the reserve during dry season would be successful and that he would not encounter the gendarmes. Consequently, he entered the game park with his pregnant wife and several other relatives looking for elephants. It appeared that his protector spirits were right in that he did get an animal and did not encounter any opposition. He sent his wife back first with a large load of the elephant meat but she never arrived. She went into early labor on the journey and died.

Division of labor for both the Lobi and Tembo requires that for a bush field a man must burn and clear the field, as well as prepare the soil. The planting of maize, sorghum and millet is done by the women though both men and women will do the weeding. Harvesting is primarily women's work. Yam fields and tobacco gardens are almost entirely the responsibility of the men at all stages though women will help with staking the yam hills and weeding. A woman's condiment garden is exclusively her own.

Cash crops. Any garden produce may be sold in the local market place but only cotton, shea nuts and more recently yams, are sold with any regularity to outside traders. As already indicated, yams tend to be grown almost exclusively by men, and in Côte d'Ivoire the majority will make some effort to supplement their income in this way. Shea nuts are gathered by women both for their own use and for sale, but a drop in price to protect the palm oil trade has reduced their importance as a cash crop in Côte d'Ivoire. Cotton, on the other hand, is increasing in value as the market for cotton cloth, both domestically and internationally, has been growing steadily. Individually, both men and some women are presently seeking to take advantage of this market but only those who band together to form cooperatives can hope to make a real profit.

In Côte d'Ivoire the *'Companie Ivorienne pour le Developpement de Textiles'* (CIDT) has been encouraging the formation of cooperatives to increase cotton production by offering those registered numerous incentives. A plow and pair of oxen along with the training of one member of the cooperative in their use was offered in l987 for 300,000 cfa ($1000) to be paid back in two years from the proceeds of their first two crops. Seed and insecticides were also provided.

Cooperatives around Banabé have been mixed, including both Tembo and Lobi. Those involved tend to work together to clear and plant the field, at which point the area is divided and each person is responsible for weeding, spraying and harvesting his (or occasionally her) own portion. The division is not necessarily equal as some are less ambitious or may give over part of their allotment to another when they see how much time and effort is required. Yields vary but one man who cultivated 2 hectares in l986–87 had a yield of close to 450 kilos for which he received 115 cfa ($.38) per kilo.

Livestock. Livestock play a very important part in the lives of both the Tembo and the Lobi. Animals are an indication of a man's wealth and power in his matrilineage. They are needed for second funerals and sacrifices, to procure wives (for the Lobi), pay fines, and to become diviners and for sacrifices. Their use as food is secondary, though the smaller animals may be used to buy millet or sorghum if a man's crop is not sufficient to make it to the corn harvest, or if his corn crop fails.

Cattle. Fieloux estimates that in Côte d'Ivoire there are, on average, 1.1 head of cattle per person, or 9.7 per household (8.8 persons) (1980:159–160). The number is somewhat less for Burkina Faso where research suggests that 6.1 head is the average number per household, or 0.7 per person. This is a considerable increase over estimates given in l961 of 2 per household (de Rouville 1987:29).

Cattle contribute little to the subsistence of the domestic unit. The cows are not milked and they are rarely killed for food. However, if an old man or woman dies, a bull is needed in order that a portion be given to the 'alliance' that stages the funeral. Negotiations to decide who is actually responsible for providing the beast may be quite complicated.[11] At the second funeral, several head of cattle will be needed to feed those who come to speed the spirit of the deceased on to the land of the ancestors.

For the Lobi, cattle change hands most often as payment of bridewealth or for compensation after wife abduction. Neither matter is handled speedily and again the negotiations will be complicated as a man must seek assistance from many of his matrilineal relatives and all are reluctant to part with their animals. The Tembo have not traditionally paid a bridewealth in cattle but this has been known to occur in recent years.

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[11] During my stay, a very elderly Lobi woman died and the alliance was involved. During the second interrogation of the body at about 3am, she was asked if the family would be successful in getting a bull for the alliance. The answer was no. This caused a great deal of consternation and from then until daylight, small groups of men congregated in various clusters to discuss the problem. At 8am there was still no assurance that a bull would be provided. Members of the alliance giving the funeral had been saying for some time that they would not bury the woman until a bull was promised. A Tensé man, who was a sub-matriclan relative of the woman, arrived from some distance away and stated that he should be the one to give the bull but that all of his animals were corralled far from Banabé. He said that if someone would give a bull for now, he would replace it later. At about 8:30am, they went ahead and interred the woman in a community tomb outside Banabé, although it had not been settled who would 'lend' a bull.

Other Animals. Sheep and goats outnumber cattle by almost 4 to 1 (Fieloux 1980:160) but they are neither milked nor shorn and seldom eaten. Their main functions are for the purchase of cattle and as a reserve when money is needed quickly. One or more might be sold when taxes must be paid, when the granaries are empty or when a fine is levied. Chickens and guinea fowl are used for many of the same purposes as are sheep and goats but their primary function is as the medium for divination and the placation of protector spirits. They are rarely killed simply for their meat, and eggs are generally left for setting. Though wealth is indicated most prominently by cattle, it is a man's chickens that seem to occupy his attention and, one might even say, his affection. Poultry are necessary to the social and ritual life of the people. Their blood is said to wipe away offenses. In the past, one of the four primary causes of blood feuds between matriclans was the theft of another's eggs (Fieloux 1980:67).

Although chickens and other animals are seldom killed simply for their meat I must take exception to de Rouville's claim that the Lobi rarely eat the meat that results from animal sacrifices (de Rouville 1987:29). The implication is that the meat would be left to rot which is not the case. The man or woman who brings the sacrifice may receive only a small share, if any, of the meat, but the diviner and his family will certainly benefit.

Markets and exchange. Labouret says that to found a market is more a man's fate than due to any economic necessity (Labouret 1931:53). A protector spirit will demand of a man that he start a market at the outskirts of his village and he must do so, making the necessary sacrifices,[12] or suffer the consequences. The founder is then the owner of the market and responsible for tending the spirit altar at the edge of the market area. He may exact a 'tax' on the commodities sold to pay for the sacrifices made, to inhibit quarrels, ensure successful transactions, and in general make things run smoothly.

Markets are found in a number of villages in any given area, and an individual will have access to several within a 20–25km distance. The traditional cycle is 5 days and each cycle is a Lobi 'week'. The days of each week are named in each village either for the regional market that falls on that day or for the relevant stage in the process of making the millet beer to be sold at the next local market.

In more densely populated areas, where local government offices are located, a seven-day cycle has been instituted. In Banabé, for example, the market is on Saturday. In Nyamoin, it is on Wednesday, and in Bouna, on Sunday. Other markets, such as in Gogo, remain on a 5 day cycle. Local traders in larger villages with shops either in town or on the market square remain open every day.

Although barter or direct exchange still takes place, it seldom occurs in the market place. Traditionally, agricultural products were exchanged for agricultural products, and livestock for livestock. For example, 7 chickens could buy a goat, three goats a sheep, and 10 sheep a cow (de Rouville 1987:31).

Today the cfa or African franc, is the primary means of exchange. A chicken or guinea fowl sells for 500 cfa ($1.67), a goat for 2500–3000 cfa ($8–10), a pig for 3500–4000 cfa ($11–13) a sheep for 5000 cfa ($17), and a cow for 20,000 cfa ($67). However, the traditional cowrie has not entirely lost its purchasing power (20 cowries = 5 cfa, or about 1.6 cents) and it continues to be the medium of choice for ritual fines and exchanges. Although the Lobi pay bridewealth in cattle, the Tembo traditionally preferred to pay it in cowrie shells; money (coins), however, is now also acceptable. For either group, at a funeral given by the alliance, members of the deceased's family must pay their benefactors in cowries.

Anything that is grown or raised in Lobi country can be sold in the market place although livestock, except for chickens, tends to be reserved for other occasions. The commodities available depend on the time of year, but all agricultural products, invariably sold by women, show up at one time or another, as do millet beer, dried fish, ground maize or bean fritters deep-fried in shea nut butter, homemade bread and donut balls. Most vegetables have a

[12] A man must be De/Doya (of the slave line) to start a market. The matriclan protector spirit (watil/gbala) commands him to start the market and tells him first that he must trap the spirit of a young man or woman who is Wo/ Tosé (of the master line). This is done by methods known only to the diviners. The person whose spirit is trapped must eventually die for the market to be firmly established. watil/gbala then indicates to the founder a powerful protector spirit that will become guardian of the market. Having trapped the spirit of the young person he has chosen, be can plant the protector spirit altar and begin the market. The first day a bull is killed and shared with all those who come. If the young person has not yet died, the market will remain small, but once they have, it will become a big market. Only the founder knows who that person is. Even when the individual dies and the body is interrogated about the cause of death, the protector spirits will conceal the real cause because the family would be angry.

very short season, but the yellow onion is almost always present. It is not grown locally but imported from the Netherlands.

Many non-edible goods and services, generally offered by men, are also made available, some by local villagers, but most by outside traders. Examples include: used clothing, cotton fabric, shoes, chewing tobacco (locally made), soap and perfumes, batteries, cooking utensils, parts for bicycle or gun repair, mending or altering of clothing, etc. Outside traders will also purchase local foodstuffs for export, especially yams and shea nuts.

As with its founding, the market does not, in the eyes of the Lobi and Tembo, serve a primarily economic function. Any one market unites a network of villages into a semi-social unit. It is there that a person meets his or her friends and relatives as well as those who are not so friendly. The market is neutral ground. It is foremost a place of peace, or at least is meant to be. Anywhere that beer is plentiful, emotions can run high and women may prefer to choose a spot closest to the path leading back to their own village in case tempers flare.

The market is also a trysting place for lovers. Liaisons are formed and broken, plans are made for wife abduction or marriage by capture. News and jokes are passed back and forth, acquaintances made, old ties reinforced. In the process, large quantities of millet beer are consumed, fritters eaten and gossip exchanged. Fieloux calls the market the center of the Lobi world (Fieloux 1980:169).

Specialization. Areas of specialization among the Lobi and Tembo are few. Theoretically, any man can be a shaman but not many actively practice divination. Every man has at his fingertips the ability to grow or raise what his family needs, to construct any building necessary for their well being, and in general to produce all that is needed for daily life. Each woman is capable of preparing all foods eaten, of turning out an adequate condiment garden or of gathering the edibles that add flavor to the otherwise bland sorghum cakes. She learns from childhood all the techniques necessary for child-rearing or helping in her husband's fields.

Other than shamanism, the primary areas of specialization traditionally involve ironmongery, wood carving, granary construction and the fabrication of *balafons* (Fr.), a marimba-like musical instrument, and pottery and baskets. In the colonial and post-colonial period, the somewhat increased availability of a school education and the changes that have come with independence have brought about the need for other modern skills though these are not yet widespread in Lobi country.

Pottery making and basketry are women's tasks and the knowledge to develop these skills is open to all women. As with any craft, however, some women are seen to excel in these areas and their products are sought by others. A woman's cooking pots are her wealth and every woman's hut will have several stacks of the shiny black clay pots typical of the region. She does not have to have made them herself, however. Pots are available in the market place for sale either by the potter herself or by those who are selling some of their accumulation for some pressing need. Baskets are more widely made but, again, those who make exceptionally good ones can generally find a buyer.

There are several areas of specialization for men, each having some link to specific protector spirits. Blacksmiths, carvers of wooden items, makers of balafons and builders of granaries all fall into this category. Each make artifacts that are seen to be inhabited by the relevant spirits who see that the items function as expected by their owners. For this reason, such craftsmen are seen to have special abilities and powers.

The blacksmith and wood carver both make amulets for people to wear that house their particular protector spirits. They also make statues of copper or wood used in divination. The latter are believed to be the residence of the spirit that gives the diviner his abilities to interpret misfortune and predict coming events. They can be either male or female in form.

The tools for cultivation, such as hoes and axes, are also made by the blacksmith using iron he purchases from outside traders. It seems that the art of ironworking is a fairly recent addition to Lobi culture, probably within this century. It apparently passed to them from the Dagara (**Figure 2**) and many of the older people in Burkina Faso remember when hoes and axes were bought from Birifor blacksmiths (de Rouville 1987:30–31). Labouret says that when he was a colonial officer in Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), one would occasionally still see hoes made entirely of wood, or of wood and an oyster shell taken from the Volta River (Labouret 1931:131).

Development has come very late to Lobi country, but the colonial period and especially independence has brought changes that will continue to effect their technology and social structure. The possibility of a school education, though still limited in scope, has made people more aware of opportunities for specialization. Most men at one time or another go south toward Abidjan to work the cocoa orchards or yam fields of others, and hopefully to learn a skill or find a job that will offer much more than what they can find at home. The majority who leave home expect to

return but not all do. Some become apprentice mechanics, carpenters or tailors and a few bring these skills back to Lobi country.

Boys and girls who go far enough in school may eventually be able to find jobs in offices as clerks and secretaries, and a few such positions are available with the local government. Some can apprentice as nursing technicians in local dispensaries or maternities. Others might become shopkeepers, although this does not actually require a school education. For some men the army offers strong incentives. For those who manage to go beyond primary school the field widens considerably, although not many would be able to find positions in Lobi country itself.

Religion and World View

The supernatural world is a very real and vital part of the Lobi and Tembo worldview. Essentially five levels or types of spirits can be recognized although there may be a fair amount of variation within each of these groupings.

Supreme being. First there is *Tanbar*/*Nyelé*, the creator being, who made the world, humankind and the other spirits. Though he is referred to frequently, he is not directly invoked nor consulted but is believed to be the one who is responsible for sending or withholding the rain. The Lobi and Tembo agree that *Tanbar* and Nyelé are the same, and the Christians equate him with the God they read about in the Bible.

Protector spirits. The second and most prevalent group of supernatural beings are the protector spirits (*til/puni*), created and given to them by *Nyelé*/*Tanbar* for their well being, to nurture and care for them. The nature of these beings is, however, somewhat ambiguous, as they are also the ones who punish an individual if he or she does wrong. If anyone has a misfortune or dies, it is the '*til/puni'* who have brought about their suffering or death, often for a wrongdoing that is only revealed on consultation after the fact.

When a child is born, within a very few days the father consults or has a diviner (*buhordar*/*kwase*) consult the spirits to ascertain which of them has taken on the guardianship of this child. Although the number of such spirits is apparently unlimited, the one who takes on a newborn is invariably one of the father's personal spirits, which number seven or eight though possibly not that many. A ceremony is performed involving a set number of sacrifices of chickens or guinea fowl and some sort of amulet is tied on the baby's wrist, ankle or neck, where the spirit takes up his abode.

Throughout life, circumstances may indicate to an individual that another spirit wants to 'come on' him or her. Though this can happen to both men and women, the latter seldom seem to have more than one or two additional spirits and many apparently go through life with only their birth spirit. That does not mean, however, that women are not affected by their husband's, father's or brothers' spirits, but often their involvement is second-hand. Most men will acquire several additional spirits throughout their life and the number they finally nurture in their spirit house and courtyard is an indication of their strength and influence in the spirit world.

Those who acquire the most and strongest spirits, however, are generally also healers and/or diviners. All men are shamans (*tildar/punsebo*) to some extent. They have their personal spirits who often give them some knowledge about minor healing. But not all men are diviners (*buhordara/kwasebo*) or great healers. Certain spirits confer automatically on a person the authority to be a diviner, but not all individuals who receive such spirits actually take up the role. To acquire a new spirit can be very expensive, depending on the power of the spirit involved. A fair number of sacrifices are involved and for the more prestigious spirits it may be necessary to feed a large number of people. If the spirit is a particularly high level one that is coming on the individual to make him a great healer there are three levels of ceremonies necessary, involving several years and large numbers of sacrifices including a cow or bull for the final ritual.

Wild spirits. A third type of supernatural being is the wild spirit (*kontebuh/haysebo*) of the bush. These spirits are not seen as particularly good or bad, but coming into contact with them can be very dangerous. They may shoot darts into people who come too close and cause their death. They may jump on someone near a 'sacred' spot, often a wooded area or rocky outcropping, and render the individual unconscious. They are believed to travel in whirlwinds as they go to and from their own territory seeking water to drink. Being so capricious and dangerous, the wild spirits are not worshipped or placated. They, and anywhere they are known to dwell, are carefully avoided.

Witches. Common witches (sidara) differ from other supernatural entities because they are actually people who have the power (sir/gikaa) to cause harm to close relatives. The power of a witch is said to reside in his or her liver, and is believed to be there at birth. It is not unusual, therefore, for children to be accused of witchcraft. Common witches are able to lance objects into an individual and bring about sickness, but they are not able to change

themselves into other creatures, or capture the soul of a person in order to eat their flesh, as can the night witches (*dintindara*/ *dumasebo*).

Night witches. These more powerful witches (*dintindara*/*dumasebo*) have two areas of influence. First, in the bush (*huon/hayaa*) of his/her market area the witch may capture the life force (*tuh/tooré*) of a person passing by and bring it before the protector spirits (*til/puni*) to find out if the individual has done some misdeed which will cause the guardians to withhold their protection. Without that permission, they may not attack. The second area of influence is within the village itself. There, again only with permission, they may set upon someone from their own sub-matriclan. They may only assault other more distantly related individuals with the cooperation of witches of those sub-matriclans. If they share in the flesh of these people, they then owe some flesh from a person in their own sub-matriclan. If they cannot come up with someone in a reasonable period of time, they must offer their own flesh. Witches are said to always be on the lookout for someone to devour.

Ancestors. Although important in the Lobi and Tembo worldview, the ancestors do not seem to hold the prominent place they have been found to occupy in other African societies (Brain 1973). It is believed that the spirit of the ancestor remains in his or her village until the second funeral, and food is put out for them daily, but they are not invoked during this time, nor are they generally thought to want to cause harm to the living. Certain protector spirits are believed to be ancestors, but not all ancestors become protector spirits, nor are all protector spirits ancestors. The majority of those who die apparently are believed to pass, after the second funeral, to the home of the ancestors in the region behind Gaoua in Burkina Faso.

After the first funeral of a man, his quiver is placed by one wall in his house and a plate or gourd is set beside it. At each meal a little food is put into the plate for him and, if there is millet beer, a little is placed along with it. After an hour or so the children can eat the food and the beer can be drunk by others. The food is not considered sacred or dangerous but is like any other food. The same thing is done following the death of a woman, but instead of a quiver, her walking stick, with a few shea nut leaves attached, is leaned against the wall. Some say that the ancestors are to be feared during this time but others say they mean no harm to the living. All do agree, however, that the spirit of an ancestor can occasionally enter into a pregnant woman or newborn, seeking to return to the land of the living. But if this happens, the baby will almost certainly die. If a baby cries incessantly, it is believed to be a sign that the spirit of an ancestor inhabits the child.[13]

Both Lobi and Tembo seem to agree that although the ancestors become spirits like the protector spirits, they are not really the same thing. Nevertheless, some protector spirits are ancestors. 'Tré/Suwa', for example is an important patriclan spirit who looks after the house. He is the spirit of a man's father, grandfather, or more distant paternal relative. Every man becomes '*Tré/Suwa'* to his oldest son. If the man himself was the oldest son and already had '*Tré/Suwa'* in his house, he then becomes one with the grandfather and they pass together to the oldest son. A younger son who has left the village where the altar of his father's spirit is installed may be required by the protector spirits to return at times and make sacrifices to his 'Tré/Suwa'.

Another important protector spirit who is also an ancestor is that of '*Tilbuminani/Yosé'*. These are powerful matriclan spirits who talk so that all can hear. They only come on diviners and speak through their mouths. The Lobi say that if the diviner is a man, it is a mother's brother who comes on him, but if the diviner is a woman, as sometimes happens, it will be her grandmother. Any diviner who has '*Tilbuminani/Yosé'* must build a special house for him/her, but when the diviner dies, the altars of these protector spirits are not inherited by anyone else.

Even ancestors who do not become protector spirits may at times wish to communicate with the living and can do so through dreams or during the consultation of other protector spirits. Dreams in which one sees the image of someone who has died are generally feared. Such occurrences suggest that there is some danger ahead or that the individual has already done something that could bring trouble if the spirits are not placated. These dreams always lead to a consultation with a diviner to learn what the warning meant.

Sacrifices. It is with the second level of supernatural beings, the protector spirits, that the Lobi and Tembo are most directly involved. Only through them do they believe they can influence what happens in their lives. All misfortune comes because the individual involved has done some wrong for which their guardian spirits withdraw their

[13] A child who cries and cannot be comforted may be doing so because its spirit is that of an ancestor or of a child (of the same mother) who has recently died. In either case, the spirit is crying because it does not want to stay but to return to the land of the ancestors. To frighten the infant into staying in this world, one or both cheeks may be cut diagonally across the cheekbones. Just how this is considered to be efficacious is unclear but many children and adults bear the marks.

protection. If his chickens die, his child is sick, his wife is bitten by a snake, he dreams of a dead relative, or his roof caves in while someone is inside, it is because there is something wrong that must be corrected before it is too late. A diviner is sought and a sacrifice is made to find out the cause of the abnormal event. A particular spirit may be angry because no sacrifice has been made to him for a long time, or because a hunter has shared with relatives some of the meat the spirit sent his way, or because he has built his house on a location the spirit doesn't approve, etc. Usually, further sacrifices and gifts are made to correct the situation.

There is no effort to make sacrifices before a misfortune occurs. Though it is necessary to put food and water out regularly on the altar of each personal spirit, no further ritual activity is undertaken unless something goes wrong. On consultation, they say, the spirits do not always tell them the truth. Even if all the sacrifices are made, the child may die or the crops fail. When a person is ill, they may be told one cause, but after that person has died another reason may be given. Satisfying the spirits, I was told, is a very difficult thing to do.

Conclusion

There is a great deal more that can be said about the cultural system which the Lobi and Tembo peoples overwhelmingly share. The information given, however, offers a general overview of their way of life in what amounts to a fairly harsh environment. At first glance, it is tempting to say that, despite the linguistic barrier, the two populations actually comprise one ethnic group. This would not, however, show a full appreciation of the uniqueness of their interaction since approximately the turn of the century.

The village of Banabé is unusual in that it is an essentially Lobi community in the midst of a primarily Tembo territory. For decades, the two groups have been in very frequent contact and clearly borrowed a great deal from one another. They do not, however, tend to reside together, to marry one another, or to encourage their children to speak the other's language. It is in light of these things that the whole question of their ethnic identity needs to be considered.

3

Ethnic Identity

> *"Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, 'Come let's make bricks…let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens… But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the men were building….the Lord scattered them from over the face of the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth." Genesis 11:1–9*

Before moving on to a discussion of the Banabé church and the place it occupies in the larger community, it is necessary to ask a very elementary question. Given the similarity of their cultural systems, what basis is there for saying that the Lobi and the Tembo peoples actually constitute two ethnic groups and not one? To answer that question, it is necessary to lay out the theoretical framework for a discussion of ethnic identity and its defining characteristics. This will also provide the groundwork for a later examination of how cultural similarities and differences may enhance or inhibit multi-ethnic growth in religious movements.

Ethnicity as a Concept

The literature that seeks to define ethnicity generally does so by focusing either on ethnic content or on ethnic function. Those who would look primarily at content would like to establish just what criteria are crucial for delineating ethnic boundaries, either internally or externally. Those who consider ethnic function to be the more important characteristic for defining ethnicity cite either the cohesion provided by a shared cultural heritage, or the social organization made possible by the perception of common interests. I would like to give a general, but not exhaustive, overview of these approaches as a preliminary to presenting my own theoretical perspective and as a framework for a discussion of whether the Lobi and Tembo peoples should be considered as one ethnic group or two.

Ethnic content. Definitions of ethnicity or ethnic group that focus on content can generally be divided into objective and subjective approaches. Isajiw (1974) indicates that objective definitions assume that ethnic groups are real phenomena that exist 'out there' and give primacy to traits such as race, language, dress or religious persuasion, that can be seen or measured and catalogued. There has been little consensus, however, as to which traits are to be included or excluded. In an effort to compile a synthesis of various definitions of ethnicity, Wsevolod W. Isajiw of the University of Toronto, looked at 65 studies and 27 more theoretical works in which he noted that there were twelve essentially distinct attributes or traits suggested as definitive. The five most commonly referred to in the literature are a common national or geographic origin or common ancestors, the same culture or customs, religion, race or physical characteristics, and language (Isajiw 1974:117–118). Raoul Naroll (1964), for example, defined an ethnic unit as being made up of people who are speakers of the same language and who belong to the same state or contact group, i.e. live in territorial contiguity. Such a definition would seem too narrow, in that it excludes bonds recognized by peoples scattered or displaced after cataclysm or immigration, even where several generations have passed or a new language is adopted as primary.

Isajiw (1974:118) also points out that just what traits are emphasized in various definitions of ethnicity depends, to a certain extent, on the purpose the author had for making the definition. Ashley Montagu (1962) includes religion, language and separate social institutions in his essentially objective definition, but excludes race, because he wanted to show that race was not a necessary criterion for delineating human groups. Oscar Handlin (1957), on the other hand, sees ethnicity as involving people who share a common 'culture', without clarifying just what that culture entails. His purpose was to focus on the continuity of the ethnic unit across generations. For him, the emphasis is on the transmission of culture, rather than its content.

In contrast to objective definitions of ethnicity, subjective definitions tend to focus on the process of self, or other, ascription. Following Weber and Barth, proponents of this approach define ethnicity quite loosely as referring to any

group of people who identify themselves, or are identified by others, as belonging to a distinct group. Max Weber states:

> We shall call "ethnic groups" those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and emigration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists (Weber 1968:vol 1, 389).

Although some of the traits mentioned in objective definitions are present, it is not the existence of such traits that defines the ethnic group, but the belief held that members share a common origin, engendered by the presence of those traits. For Weber, ethnic groups are not real social groups, but categories of classification. Most subjective definitions, however, while continuing to focus on self, or other, ascription, assume that an ethnic group is more than just a category: it is an actual, concrete group (Isajiw 1974:116–117).

Fredrik Barth is probably the strongest proponent for making self, or other, ascription the critical feature for defining an ethnic group. He states:

> The emphasis on ascription…solves…two conceptual difficulties…
>
> 1. When defined as an ascriptive and exclusive group, the nature of continuity of ethnic units is clear; it depends on the maintenance of a boundary. The cultural features that signal the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed, indeed, even the organizational form of the group may change—yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content.
>
> 2. Socially relevant factors alone become diagnostic for membership, not the overt, 'objective' differences which are generated by other factors. It makes no difference how dissimilar members may be in their overt behaviour—if they say they are A, in contrast to another cognate category B, they are willing to be treated and let their own behaviour be interpreted and judged as A's and not as B's; in other words, they declare their allegiance to the shared culture of A's…
>
> The critical focus of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundaryô that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses (Barth 1969:14–15).

For Barth, as with Weber, the nature of the objective traits that define distinct ethnic groups, or in this case, ethnic boundaries, is not important. The key feature is the belief that these traits bring about the formation of boundaries and clearly indicate who is within a given group and who is not.

Objective definitions are unsatisfactory because no agreed upon trait, or set of traits, can be seen clearly to establish ethnic boundaries. Subjective definitions, on the other hand, while making the nature of ethnic groups clearer with their focus on the ideological aspects of ethnicity, are also unsatisfactory. Is ascription really sufficient for defining ethnic identity? In the Chinese example that will be discussed shortly, Pillsbury (1976) indicates that, while the Hui deny affinity with the Han, most outsiders, including many Han, see no distinction. So self-ascription suggests the Hui are a separate ethnic group, but other-ascription says they are not. Conversely, a people may desire, for the sake of prestige, economic gain or other reasons, to be seen as a part of another group, or to incorporate another group into their midst. But saying it does not necessarily make it so. Not only would both groups have to concur, but individuals may find that certain values and other cultural differences preclude their interacting as a single entity. More important, it would seem, than what people say, is how they behave toward one another. If certain cultural traits form boundaries which prevent unified action, or deny the possibility of intermarriage, then it would seem that, regardless of what people say, they are operating as two groups.

Another problem with subjective definitions is that by refusing to consider the objective criteria a given people may use to set themselves apart from others, many questions are not just left unanswered, but unasked. In any given instance, for example, why are those traits and not others recognized? Are all the traits used for defining boundaries given equal importance by members of the group in question? If not, how do certain traits become more or less important, or even disappear altogether as defining criteria? I suggest that some of the more predominant traits generally used to define ethnicity, such as religion, language and possibly race, should actually be considered sub-types, along with ethnicity, of the more general category of identity. Although it is not within the parameters of this paper to explore the subject thoroughly, I believe that by separating religion and language from ethnicity, it would

then be possible to focus research more clearly on the relationship between these various identities. How is it, for example, that religion may be used to reinforce ethnicity under certain circumstances, but cease to have any real significance when the situation changes? Some efforts have been made to relate language and ethnicity, (Haarman 1986; Van Horne 1987) but, although the need was expressed some time ago (Lewins 1978), little has been done to examine the relationship of religion to ethnicity.

As it seems clear that neither purely objective, nor extremely subjective, definitions are totally satisfactory, several efforts have been made to develop composite definitions which not only combine a focus on cultural categories with a belief in a common cultural heritage, but begin to suggest how these criteria function within ethnic groups. More specifically, it is said that objective criteria become symbols which are used to create a sense of peoplehood or belonging. An example of such a composite definition of ethnicity is that offered by Isajiw following his analysis of some 92 earlier efforts. He says that ethnicity is:

> an involuntary group of people who share the same culture or to descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group (Isajiw 1974:122).

The use of the term 'involuntary' refers to his notion that one is a member of an ethnic group by birth and not by choice. It also allows for the possibility of children, who may have given up practicing many of their parents shared cultural traits, to still see themselves as tied by birth to a particular ethnic group. He states that:

> The important thing in linking the two approaches is that the subjective ethnic identification should not be seen as something arbitrary but as a phenomenon based on a real ancestral link between a person and a group which has shared a culture (Isajiw 1974:121).

Other authors would not agree with Isajiw's insistence that the ancestral link in any given ethnic group be real rather than perceived. Numerous studies have indicated that the actual blood ties of whole segments of an ethnic group, let alone individuals within those groups, are, in many cases, suspect (Mitchell 1974:1–32). Isajiw's efforts to synthesize previous definitions of ethnicity and to develop a composite definition that combines the objective and subjective approaches is, I believe, on the right track, but it still fails to distinguish clearly just what it is that sets ethnicity apart from other forms of group identity.

Another attempt to resolve some of the inconsistencies found in definitions of ethnicity, was the 1973 Social Science Research Council symposium on ethnic identity. One of the primary goals was to agree on a working definition of such terms as 'ethnic group' and 'ethnicity'. The results were six criteria on which most contemporary definitions are based:

> 1. a past oriented group identification emphasizing origins
> 2. some conception of cultural and social distinctiveness
> 3. relationship of the ethnic group to a component unit in a broader system of social relations
> 4. the fact that ethnic groups are larger than kin or locality groups and transcend face-to-face interaction
> 5. different meanings for ethnic categories both in different social settings and for different individuals
> 6. the assumption that ethnic categories are emblematic, having names with meaning both for members and for analysts (Royce 1982:23)

These six criteria go a long way toward delineating the major factors which describe ethnic groups and their internal and external relationships. There are two points, however, that I believe should be made. First of all, five of the six criteria could apply to many groups with which an individual may be said to identify, e.g. a religious group. Only the first one, 'a past oriented group identification emphasizing origins,' can be said to be exclusive to ethnic groups. Second, although most groups, whether ethnic or not, have 'some conception of cultural and social distinctiveness' (#2), do ethnic groups make use of the same sorts of cultural symbols, in the same way, that non-ethnic identities do, or are some cultural symbols used more frequently by ethnic groups to express their 'primordial' character? That is, even if no specific culture trait can be said to be universally used to delineate ethnic groups, are there some symbols, such as religious rituals or language dialects, often used more persuasively to underline ethnic differences? Sweeping such matters under the 'cultural' rug leaves several questions unanswered, as already suggested earlier in this chapter. Specifically, what exactly is the relationship between ethnicity and language, or religion? As already indicated, it may be more fruitful to consider these, not as delineating categories for ethnic identity at all, but as separate identities that should be examined both independently from, and in relationship to, ethnicity.

A more recent and, I believe, more far reaching effort at a synthesis of objective and subjective definitions of ethnicity is found in the work of Anya Royce, who defines an ethnic group as:

> …a reference group invoked by people who share a common historical style (which may be only assumed), based on overt features and values, and who, through the process of interaction with others, identify themselves as sharing that style (Royce 1982:18).

For Royce, ethnicity is 'simply ethnic-based action' (Royce 1982:18). She feels that any definition of 'ethnic' must be elastic enough to mark off what is meant by the category, but flexible enough to allow for exceptions and contradictions. Some of these she lists as a series of oppositions that must be dealt with in any consideration of ethnicity.

The first contrast to be examined, she suggests, is that which occurs between institutions and individuals, with ethnic identity involving a constant interaction between the two. Second is the contrast between ethnic content and ethnic boundary. Some symbols are particularly important for maintaining distinctiveness, while others, used by insiders to judge and rank individual and sub-group performance, are of no relevance to non-members. A third contrast is the dichotomy between the material and the ideological, already exemplified by objective and subjective approaches to definitions of ethnicity. A fourth question involves the matter of persistence versus change. How much change can a group undergo before it is no longer what it was? It is with this question in mind that Royce uses the word 'style' as opposed to the more usual 'tradition'. She feels the latter implies changelessness, while the former allows for choice, and therefore change. Fifth is the contrast between cognition and behavior. Members of an ethnic group may be quite unanimous in the values shared, and in the behavior that characterizes relations with outsiders, but may allow for much variation of both thought and behavior when it comes to internal relationships. There is then the contrast between myth and reality, which she immediately states is a false dichotomy, because what is myth for one person is reality for another, and vice versa. People react to others on the basis of assumptions held, as with stereotypes. It does not really matter whether those assumptions are valid or not. Finally, she says that the most important contrast is between 'us' and 'them' because without this dichotomy, ethnic identity would not exist. People define themselves, to a large extent, on the basis of what they are not (Royce 1982:6–13).

Functions of ethnicity. Many of those who want to come to a better understanding of ethnicity do so, not by describing what it is, but by considering what it does. Again, two broad approaches are seen in the literature. The first approach, which holds that ethnicity operates primarily as a shared cultural heritage that gives a sense of belonging, strong emotional ties, and relief from alienation, relies more on objective aspects of ethnic definitions. The second, that ethnicity functions as a form of social organization to aid disadvantaged populations to pursue common interests, is more clearly concerned with the way ethnic groups can use almost any criterion to reinforce a subjective awareness of cultural boundaries, both internally and externally.

Examples of the first instance generally look at groups partially, or nearly, assimilated to the majority population, but who maintain a separate identity based on one or more cultural traits that both they and outsiders agree set them apart. Barbara Pillsbury describes the case of the Hui and the Han in China, who speak the same language and are physically very similar. Their economic systems and social structures are much alike, and many non-Han, non-Hui do not distinguish them. But whereas the dominant Han consider themselves ethnically Chinese, the Hui view themselves as a distinct people. The Hui are Muslim, but it is not the religious difference in itself, Pillsbury claims, that they use to set themselves apart; it is the fact that they do not eat pork and the Han do. That one injunction, they say, makes intermarriage impossible, and establishes for the Hui, a sense of oneness and belonging that distinguishes them from the Han (Pillsbury 1976:154–158).

The Russian Molokans, an immigrant population in northern California, described by Ethel and Stephen Dunn, present a somewhat different situation. They have, to all outward appearances, assimilated into mainstream American culture. Many still worship apart, but children who have gone away to school often no longer profess to follow the faith of their parents. However, there continues to be a sense of 'togetherness' and 'belonging' due to certain family rituals, such as the 'obed' (community dinner), which draw even far flung family members back to identify with their beginnings. This is often enhanced by the wearing of traditional dress and eating traditional foods seldom cooked at other times of the year (Dunn and Dunn 1977:370–378).

For both cases, the authors suggest that ethnicity, on the basis of observed cultural traits consciously emphasized to distinguish the minority population, provides for the groups in question a sense of oneness and belonging that sets them apart from the ethnic majority, with which they experience no such emotional tie. I would maintain, however, that there is a component present in the Hui case that is missing for the Molokans. The prohibition on eating pork is

not used simply to give the Hui a common emotional bond, but is called upon in decision making, as regards behavior toward the Han. It is sufficient to make intermarriage between Hui and Han all but non-existent. Pillsbury (1976:158–160) also indicates that the Hui have actively pursued non-Han status when government policy has favored ethnic minorities. The Molokans, on the other hand, as described by the Dunns, apparently call on their ethnic status only sporadically. As aware as they may be of their cultural distinctiveness, it seems all but lost on the ethnic majority. They may have a sense of oneness and exhibit, on occasion, cultural traits that set them apart, but they "manifest (only) residual characteristics of an ethnic group" (Dunn and Dunn 1977:377). I would suggest that, whereas some notion of ethnicity is present in both cases, the Hui can be said to be a true ethnic group, whereas the Molokans, while possessing a degree of ethnic consciousness, do notô constitute an ethnic group.

This suggestion agrees with many writers who hold that ethnic groups inevitably have a political component with some degree of formal or informal organization based on the perception of a common heritage, common cultural traits, common values and the recognition of a common need or purpose that puts them in opposition with other ethnic groups. One anthropologist who follows this line of reasoning is Abner Cohen, who suggests that ethnicity is a matter of degree.

> The definition of ethnicity as cognition of identity obscures, even nullifies, the conception of differences in degree of ethnicity. (One must) appreciate the dynamic nature of ethnicity…ethnicity is a variable…interdependent with many other variables. But one must tackle one problem at a time…One way to make a start is to analyse ethnicity in terms of interconnections with economic and political relationships, both of which I shall, for brevity, describe as political (Cohen 1974:xiv–xv).

Cohen points out that all interest groups use symbols to aid and define group formation, motivation and goals. To be effective in achieving their purposes, interest groups need some degree of internal organization. They need mechanisms for setting themselves apart from others with competing interests, for communicating group ideals and goals, for establishing a recognized authority structure and decision-making procedure, and for socializing new recruits. Without at least minimal organization, there is no group (Cohen 1974:xvi–xvii).

Whereas some degree of organization is required, not all interest groups are able to organize along formal lines. There may be political, economic or ideological constraints that prohibit formal organization or recognition. Though likely to be less efficient and less effective, Cohen says that:

> The members of interest groups who cannot organize themselves formally will thus tend to make use, though largely unconsciously, of whatever cultural mechanisms are available in order to articulate the organization of their grouping (Cohen 1974:xviii).

Under 'cultural mechanisms', Cohen would include such symbolic activities as kinship, friendship, and ritual or ceremonial events. He subsumes these under what he calls 'style of life'. This allows Cohen to include under his definition of ethnicity, many informally organized interest groups that would not normally be classified as ethnic. For him, the economic elite that dominate the City of London can be joined right along with Hausa traders in Yoruba towns as examples of ethnic group formation (Cohen 1974:xvii–xxi).

Cohen's broad definition of ethnicity and ethnic group does make it possible to examine how previously overlooked elite populations manipulate cultural symbols and kinship ties to further common interests without formal organization. It does not seem justified, however, to classify these special interest groups as ethnic. Doing so obscures more than it clarifies. To say that all ethnic groups are interest groups does not mean that all interest groups, if informally organized, are therefore ethnic groups. Although certain individuals in the City of London may use clothing styles, marriage links and distinctive accents to manipulate and solidify their group identity as a dominant elite in the British business world, I would maintain that they are not an ethnic group, which requires, along with common interests, a belief that the culture traits they share are part of a common heritage passed to them through perceived descent lines. Before classifying this group as ethnic, it would be necessary to know how members are recruited, if all children of members remain in this group even if they take up different occupations, and if members do not also identify themselves with a larger group, including people from many walks of life with whom they overtly recognize a common history and descent.

What is lacking in Cohen's definition of ethnicity is the recognition that at least one aspect that separates an ethnic group from other informally organized interest groups, is the belief that the symbols used to establish and manipulate group boundaries, internally or externally, have a primordial quality. This is the first criterion for definitions of ethnicity or ethnic group suggested by the Social Science Research Council as described above. Ethnic

groups see themselves as sharing a bond, based on at least imputed blood ties, that is difficult, if not impossible, to dissolve. That the factors which establish this bond are weak or even invalid, or that they change over time, is not really relevant.

Just as there have been efforts to synthesize the objective and subjective approaches to defining what ethnicity is, similar attempts have been made to combine the two primary approaches to understanding ethnic function. In 1981 Charles F. Keyes suggested that, "The study of ethnicity has reached something of a theoretical impasse" (1981:4) He felt that neither the approach that viewed ethnicity as primarily implying a shared cultural heritage nor that which viewed it as a form of social organization for the purpose of common goals had been entirely adequate for explaining why ethnicity is such a persistent factor in social relations. His approach attempts, he says, to take both of these dimensions into account. He states his fundamental premise:

> …that a tension obtains between cultural meanings that people construct to differentiate their primordial identities from those of others and the patterns that emerge in social interactions as individuals and groups seek to pursue their interests (Keyes 1981;14).

Keyes maintains that the process of culture change is a dialectical one, that when circumstances are radically changed, previously acceptable patterns of social action may become unviable and new patterns are evolved to meet the demands of the new situation. This leads to a reassessment of ethnic identities in the context of public engagement with cultural meanings until, after a generation or so, new identities are formed. In the process, social patterns may also be altered and a degree of equilibrium between ethnic groups achieved. The classic case, he says, for such changed circumstances and identities would be that of migration (Keyes 1981:14–15). Other possibilities that might precipitate an ethnic crisis would include severe economic oppression, inTensé suffering, and religious repression or conversion. Such situations can lead to the re-interpretation of ethnic boundaries both as regards to the salient features that determine group limits and to the scope of inclusion or exclusion.

Theoretical Orientation

I take ethnicity to be a phenomenon that concerns the identity of an individual, family or community in relation to other individuals, families or communities as regards the presence or absence of material and ideological traits culturally defined to validate a sense of common history. As such, it includes both the notions of ethnic consciousness and ethnic group, which form the opposite ends of a continuum of increasing social organization based on common interest. The observation of cultural differences does not determine the presence or absence of ethnic consciousness. Only when individuals and groups use these objective criteria to determine whether others belong, or do not belong, to a particular group does ethnicity come into play. The criteria used to separate insiders from outsiders are different from those used by insiders to judge the performance of members. Ethnic consciousness can occur without the formation of an ethnic group, which I see as involving at least minimal social organization to validate group decisions or to facilitate the pursuit of common interests. This might be depicted in the following manner:

Figure 4. Ethnicity

Ethnicity does not exist in isolation. It is a phenomenon of contact. But two previously isolated peoples do not become ethnic groups, or even experience ethnic consciousness, on contact. Only when selected traits or values begin to be used to establish the existence of differing social histories that distinguish 'us' from 'them' does ethnicity come into play. Those traits and values become symbols that validate certain courses of action and may justify ranking 'them' as superior or inferior to 'us'. Though I would suggest that ethnic consciousness can occur without the existence of true ethnic groups, there is no precise point at which one becomes the other. The more highly organized an ethnic category becomes and the more able its members are to pursue their common interests,

the more clearly they constitute a true group. But even where organization is minimal, the manipulation of cultural symbols to accomplish common goals suggests the presence of at least a rudimentary ethnic unit.

Using this definition of ethnicity, it is now possible to consider whether the Lobi and the Tembo exhibit the presence of ethnic consciousness and, if so, whether they use that consciousness to maintain ethnic boundaries or prevent assimilation. For the purpose of applying Fernandez' model for successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements, it is not necessary to show that they occupy a place at the extreme right end of the continuum; that is, that they are two, fully organized ethnic groups, consciously pursuing competing interests. It is only necessary to demonstrate that they use their awareness of ethnic distinctiveness to perpetuate the existence of two separate populations through the manipulation of cultural symbols. I believe it is possible to do this, not only by examining differing cultural patterns, which are minimal, but by considering the implications of such things as language use, rates of intermarriage, and residence patterns. Doing so leads to the conclusion that the Lobi and Tembo peoples must, indeed, be considered two distinct ethnic categories.

One Ethnic Group or Two?

If ethnicity comes into play when certain traits and values are used to establish distinct social histories and are used to validate certain courses of action, it now becomes necessary to apply these criteria to the Lobi and Tembo, to discover whether they each exhibit, minimally, a separate ethnic consciousness, and can be considered to form two ethnic units. When those interviewed were asked how the Lobi differed from the Tembo, and vice versa, responses varied from 'there is no difference at all' to a fair list of cultural traits. The fact that the majority (63%) gave as their first response, either that they saw no difference (17%) between the Lobi and the Tembo, or named only the language (46%) as constituting a significant variation in the two cultures, suggests that, by ascription, the Lobi and Tembo see themselves as one ethnic group. Several other factors, however, need to be taken into consideration.

Of the 10 interviewed who responded that there was no difference between the two groups, 9 were women, 6 of them Tembo women. Of the 28 for whom language was the only significant difference, the majority (68%) were again women, with responses more proportionately divided between the Lobi and the Tembo. One can only speculate as to why women were less observing of cultural distinctions than men. As many of the differences cited, other than language, have to do with ritual and bridewealth, both of which tend to be of more concern to males, it could well be that many women see these differences as trivial. All could, with prodding, name other distinctions, especially as they relate to the funeral or marriage. These data make clear the difficulties that can arise if one relies on ascription alone to define ethnicity. The matter needs further investigation but it would seem that women, and especially Tembo women, feel a greater need to be recognized as one group than do men, or the Lobi in general.

Possibly more important than these initial responses for defining whether an ethnic boundary exists between the Lobi and the Tembo, are the behavior patterns they exhibit regarding village composition and intermarriage. However, before examining how these and other matters suggest a subjective awareness of an ethnic distinction between the two units, I would like to review the actual cultural differences that do exist.

Objective criteria

Language. Although both Lobiri and Teen are part of the Gur sub-family of the the major Niger-Congo linguistic stock in West Africa (Murdock, 1958), the two languages are clearly not mutually intelligible. Teen has been recognized to have far more affinities with the language of the Koulango to the east (Leenhouts and Petermann, 1979) than with that of the Lobi. Conversations between Lobi and Tembo, where neither speaks the other's language, are generally held in Dioula, the trade language for the area.

Even where Lobi and Tembo come into frequent contact with one another, not all will make the effort to learn the other's language. Being in the minority and more or less surrounded by Lobi, the Tembo seem to be more apt to know Lobiri than for the Lobi to know Teen. Many Lobi, of course, would seldom come into contact with Tembo, unless they were to reside near Galgouli in Burkina Faso, or migrate into the canton of Tehini in Côte d'Ivoire. Although many of those interviewed for this research had lived in relatively close proximity with people from the other group for most of their lives, a fair proportion (35%) denied any ability to speak the opposite language. Those Lobi who could speak no Teen (43%) far outnumbered the Tembo (20%), who could speak no Lobi. Looked at by gender, only 45% of Lobi men and 20% of Lobi women claimed to speak Teen well, whereas 60% of both men and women among the Tembo said they were confident speakers of Lobiri.

This variety in language ability means that communication between Lobi and Tembo who do come into contact can take many forms. Since a greater proportion of individuals speak Lobiri, the conversation is quite likely to take place in that language. I have heard Teen used, however, when the Tensé speaker does not communicate well in Lobiri and the Lobi speaker feels confident in Teen. The most interesting conversational style occurs when both individuals have considerable ability in the other's language. In those instances, both persons speak their own dialect without apparently showing preference for either language. As has already been indicated, where neither speaker knows the other's language, Dioula is used, or an interpreter is required.

All of this does, of course, affect language use in church. The fact that not everyone in the congregation can follow a message in the language which is not their own is a well accepted fact by church leaders. Whether the primary speaker gives his message in Lobiri or Teen, there is always a translator present to convert the sermon into the other language. In addition, there is someone to translate it into French for the two or three (usually educated) visitors, who do not speak either of the primary languages. Of the twelve to fifteen songs that are sung each Sunday during the meeting, every effort is made to sing an equal number of Lobiri and Tembo songs. Before the church divided (see Chapter Four) in April of 1987, an equal number of French songs were also generally sung, but following the division of the congregation, only one or two French songs were included in the service.

Rites of Passage. On the surface, it would seem that there are few, if any, differences between the Lobi and the Tembo, as regards material culture. Dress, hairstyle, adornment, house construction, food consumed etc. are all basically the same. Methods for hunting wild game, for gathering non-domestic foodstuffs, or for consulting the spirits, follow essentially similar patterns. The primary differences between the two groups come in regards to ritual practices, specifically during rites of passage. Interestingly, George DeVos has suggested that:

> A major source of ethnic identity is found in the cultural traditions related to crises in the life cycle…It is particularly in rites of passage that one finds highly emotional symbolic reinforcement of ethnic patterns (DeVos 1975:26).

Just why this may be so is suggested by Victor Turner (1969), who, following van Gennep (1960), suggests that rites of passage are characterized by a liminal period where the participant is placed in a vulnerable and 'dangerous' position, during which they must undergo certain ritual practices which represent,

> …partly a destruction of the previous status and partly a tempering of their essence in order to prepare them to cope with their new responsibilities and restrain them in advance from abusing their new privileges" (V. Turner 1969:103).

It is during these periods that the individual's identity as a true member of his or her group is shaped. It is during such times that the child, parent, neophyte, bride, groom or mourner learns fully what it means to be a participant in their unique socio-cultural system. Therefore, it should not be surprising that it is during rites of passage that a person's ethnic distinctiveness would be emphasized. Although the differences between Lobi and Tembo cultural practices at rituals pertaining to birth, initiation, marriage and death are not major, it is interesting to note that it is at such life-crisis situations that differences persist.

Birth. At birth, a Lobi child is given a 'medicine' (*thi*) made from mud taken from the base of the altar of the patriclan protector spirit (*tilka*) which stands in the courtyard of the compound. Given on the third day for boys and the fourth for girls, ingestion of this substance marks permanent membership for the child in the patriclan of his or her father. If the biological father is unavailable, the maternal grandfather, a brother, or the new husband of the mother, may be asked to administer the 'medicine'. Even if the patriclan of the substitute differs from that of the birth father, the child is seen as henceforth a member of the patriclan who's thiô he or she ingested. The Tembo do not have this practice. On the third or fourth day after birth, the room where the child was born is swept and for the first time the infant can leave the house. There is no ritual which binds the child to the patriclan of the father at this time. A man can, in fact, change his patriclan and that of his children, if he was dissatisfied with the initiation practices to which he was subjected.[1]

[1] Jean, the pastor of the Protestant Church in Banabé, says that his father's patriclan had been the Tchola, but he felt that the Tchola were in the habit of hitting the children too much and so he sent his children to be initiated with the Djula (same as the Yundar in Lobi). Since that time, one of his brothers, though initiated as a Djula, has changed back to the Tchola patriclan.

Initiation. As the initiation is a closely guarded, secret ritual never discussed or even mentioned in the hearing of the uninitiated or outsiders, it is somewhat difficult to get information on how the event might differ for the Tembo, as opposed to the Lobi. Christians in the church are willing to discuss it, though some are more reticent than others. Many of the differences which occur are apparently due to varying patriclan rituals, rather than because the two groups have different practices. It is highly likely that the Tembo took on the practice, more or less intact, after the Lobi migrated into their territory in the last century and assimilated it, (de Rouville 1987:185). The initiation was, however, one cultural feature which was said to be different for the two groups. It was said by some that the Lobi and Tembo do not go to the initiation at the same time. Though both are on seven-year cycles, the two initiations are a year apart. I later learned that up until the ceremony of 1960, there was only one initiation. Apparently that year, there was a dispute between patriclan ritual chiefs about whether that or the following year was the proper one for holding the ceremony. It was not resolved to everyone's satisfaction, and although the majority did indeed go in 1960, some, primarily Tembo, patriclan chiefs called for their children to come in 1961. Several assured me that there were both Tembo and Lobi in each of the initiations, but it would seem that ritual leaders never settled their differences and today few Tembo attend the larger first grouping and few Lobi attend the smaller gathering held a year later.

Marriage. Marriage is the rite of passage which seems to exhibit the largest number of cultural differences for the Lobi and the Tembo and the ritual cited most often as varying between the two groups. Distinct practices during the brideservice, the lack of cattle as bridewealth for the Tembo, the absence of a wedding ceremony for the Lobi, and the frequent use of the 'curse' by the Tembo, but not the Lobi, to assure the compliance of the bride, all suggest that marriage is viewed quite differently by the two groups.

For both the Lobi and the Tembo, the first marriage of a man is traditionally arranged for him by his father, often while he is still a child. When the boy is 15 or 16, if all the arrangements have been made and accepted, he begins to do brideservice for the girl's father. He makes periodic visits to his father-in-law's village to help in the fields, with house construction, or whatever else is required of him. This may go on for two to three years. Among the Lobi, the girl brings her sleeping mat and begins to have conjugal relations with her future spouse immediately. The Tembo insist that, for them, such relations are not allowed between the boy and girl until the marriage ceremony is held, which does not take place until the brideservice is completed.

After the Lobi couple have begun to reside in the husband's village and it seems that the marriage will be secure, negotiations are begun for the bridewealth of cattle to be paid by the boy's family to that of the girl's. Generally about four to six head are given over. If the marriage later fails, the husband can demand that the cattle be repaid, with interest, by the new spouse of his former wife. Gaining compliance, however, is not always easy. Some Lobi men have been known to pursue the husband, or husbands, of former wives for years before receiving back their cattle.[2] The Tembo do not traditionally pay a bridewealth of cattle, and so do not generally have this particular

[2] A Palé woman named Wiela, who resided at Tromolo in Burkina Faso, had been promised from her childhood to a Kambou, but she allowed herself to be courted by a man named Tefa, a Da from the village of Wola-Wola. She accepted and went to Gaoua with him where a year later her Kambou fiance came to claim her. She refused to go. The affair was taken to the 'circle of Gaoua' who judged all the wrong to be on Tefa's side and they ordered her to return to the Kambou. She refused, now being pregnant by Tefa. She was again judged in the wrong, but rather than go with the Kambou, she drove an arrow into her thigh and fled to the bush.

Tefa soon found her and tended her wound. He suggested they go to Ghana, but Wiela's mother was very sick and so she returned to her parents. Tefa left for Ghana, but before going, he paid the cattle for her. A Hien began courting Wiela, but a relative of Tefa tried to stop it, so energetically in fact, that he finished by striking the Hien with his cudgel. Finding him gravely injured, the relatives of the Hien blamed Wiela, who moved away until the man recovered. A few days later, an uncle of Tefa's father came to reclaim two cows from the Hien, even though Wiela insisted she was going to live with Tefa when he got back from Ghana.

After two years, Tefa returned at the time of the initiation. Wiela now ran off with him and the Hien came to claim four cows but only got three and a sheep. For a few months, Tefa and Wiela lived quietly but Tefa did not know that his wife was now being courted by a Kambou (different from the one she had been promised to). She ran off with him, and Tefa came and took eight cows by force from a brother of the Kambou and placed them with a close maternal relative of the second husband of his mother, who said he'd keep them for him. But almost immediately, two cows were stolen and the relative asked Tefa to come get those that remained. Tefa now gave the cows to a matriclan relative, a Da, who lived in Wiela's natal village. The brother of the Kambou heard where they were and went and tricked the herdboy into giving them to him. Before Tefa had a chance to get them back, Wiela had left her Kambou abductor to go to a matrilineal relative. She offered to go back to Tefa, but when he refused her, she went to a matrilateral parallel cousin of his mother.

problem. They deal with lack of compliance in the woman in a different way, as will be explained below. This may also be changing, as I was told that some Tembo are now paying cattle for their brides in typical Lobi fashion.

Although both Lobi and Tembo mark the start of the marriage with the removal of the bride from her own village to that of her husband, the ritual carried out by the Tembo is apparently much more elaborate than that of the Lobi. Possibly because marriage by abduction has become so much more common, there were unfortunately no traditional marriages, of which I was aware, by either Lobi or Tembo, during the time of my research. In any case, the arrival of the Lobi bride in the village of her husband is marked with relatively little fanfare. She generally makes two to three short visits to her new residence before remaining permanently with her husband. The Tembo, on the other hand, have a quite elaborate ceremony, as described in chapter two, in which the female relatives of the bride accompany her slowly to her new home, while her new husband plies her with cowries or coins to encourage her on.

As already indicated, the Tembo, who do not pay a bridewealth in cattle, have other ways of convincing a woman to marry the man to whom she was promised, or to remain with her husband. Should a girl refuse a man who wants her, or a wife decide to run off with another man, the one offended simply calls on one of his protector spirits to put a curse on the woman such that anyone who sleeps with her or helps her in any way will die.[3] Though it is not unheard of for a Lobi to call down a curse on another Lobi, it is apparently not generally done by a Lobi husband seeking to control his wife.[4]

Soon Wiela was taken by another Kambou. Tefa heard about it and came immediately to try and get some cattle. At the market, he met Wiela's co-wife, but being a stranger in the region, he didn't dare take her hostage for the cattle. Going the next day to complain to the chief of the region, he heard the co-wife he'd met the day before had died in the night. He had to wait until after her funeral and then, learning there was a sickness of cattle in the region, he decided to wait a while to try and recuperate his. But before he could try again, Wiela left the Kambou and returned to her maternal relatives where she was soon pregnant by a young man of the village, while also being courted by someone else. Tefa came again to try and get his cattle. Her present abductor said he'd give them after five days but died suddenly during that time. By now, Wiela was getting the reputation of drawing the men who took her to their death and it was said that it would not be wise to get too close to her. Nevertheless, she soon met another Da, who took her to Côte d'Ivoire, near Bouna. Tefa, after years of chasing after his cattle, gave up, and said he would not stir another step to try and get them back.

[3] **Case A**. A young Tensé woman by the name of K. Noufé, says that when she was born, a relative of her father's father asked for her for his son and she was promised to him. But this young man developed a disease that disfigured his face and he took poison and killed himself. A much older man, who was a 'brother' to the man who died, claimed her when she was about seventeen but she refused him and he called on a powerful protector spirit to put a curse on her. Her own father was dead and she was under the protection of the brother of her mother's new husband. As the curse was also against anyone who helped her, her guardian took her to the man who wanted her. She stayed with her new husband because she wanted the spirit removed from her, but she was very unhappy. She already had tuberculosis before she married the man, and for a year and a half, she just kept getting sicker. One of the man's other protector spirits told him that he had been wrong to take her in the way he had, and that if he kept her she would die. So he removed the curse and took her back to her family.

Case B. A young Tensé woman, T. Sia, was forced to marry a man she did not like. After some time she fled from him and he called one of his spirits down on her. Fearing the curse, no one would take her in, even after it was found that she was pregnant. For several months she lived in the fields and slept in the maize huts. Her hair got very long as she, as well as everyone else, was afraid to cut it. Finally, she heard that the Christians in Banabé would cut the hair of someone under a curse and she came to Jean, the pastor of the church. After her hair was cut she moved into the compound of a relative who was a Christian and later had her baby at the maternity clinic in Banabé. She attended the church sporadically but eventually left the area.

[4] A Lobi woman, L. Palé, was married for 10 years to a Lobi man, C. Hien, who spent the majority of that time working in the south. Though he would have liked to have his wife with him, L. Palé refused to leave Lobi country, and C. Hien had to be content with seeing her only during his occasional visits home. Nevertheless, they had several children. Finally, however, L. Palé tired of this and told her husband that he had to stay in Lobi country if she was going to remain his wife. He refused, took the children, and told her to find another husband who could pay back his cattle.

L. Palé married a Tensé, H. Kambou. She said that she saw right away that it was not going to work as her new husband did not have a 'good head'. She told him not to pay the cattle as she wasn't going to stay, but the brother of her first husband came and forced H. Kambou to pay without L. Palé knowing anything about it. She went to visit her parents village and when she returned her Tensé husband was very angry with her and put a curse on her such that if she again visited her parents she would die. She ignored the curse and went anyway, saying that her protector spirits were with her and she was not afraid of his.

Later she began to make food to sell in the market, but her husband wanted her to stay home and put another curse on her to keep her from returning to the market. Again she defied him and his spirits and again she sold food in the market. When she came home, he beat her, but she returned yet again to the market. This time, he was awaiting her return with a machete and began to beat her with the side of it. Some of her children by her first husband were present, however, and were old enough to stop him and take away the machete. She then left him and came to reside with relatives in Banabé.

Death. To all outward appearances, the funeral ritual is basically the same for both the Lobi and the Tembo. The body is interrogated by a diviner to find out the cause of death, the *balafon* is played as a medium for communicating with the spirit world, mourners address the spirit of the deceased over the balafon, the women wail for their loss and, for adults, there is dancing by those who have been initiated. Lobi will attend Tembo funerals and vice versa. The primary differences mentioned have to do with the timing of the interrogation of the protector spirits to learn the cause of death, and the type of 'cry' done by the women who mourn for the deceased.

Although some questioning of the spirits of the person who has died and of his/her matriclan are done during the first funeral to establish the final cause of death, one to four days later sacrifices are made and the spirits are questioned again. Even though the questions asked during the funeral are much the same as those put forth later, only when one or more chickens are sacrificed during the interrogation is the response, which may differ from the version given during the funeral,[5] considered official. This second ritual establishes what is to become of the deceased's belongings and dependents. For the Lobi, this is done on the third day after the funeral for a man, and on the fourth day for a woman. The Tembo do the interrogation the day after the funeral, regardless.

It is frequently said that funerals belong to the women. It is they who act as chief mourners, whether they belong to the family of the deceased or to the clan's alliance. Clustering around the body, wailing, dancing, and lamenting the loss of the one who has died are all part of the grieving process for women, whether Lobi or Tembo. But several pointed out that the 'cry' is different, depending on whether the deceased is a Lobi or a Tensé. Although there are patterns for mourning that are similar for both groups, Lobi women lament and wail more or less independently of one another. One woman may start a new period of vocal mourning, and the others seem to join in at will and all of their 'cries' overlap. For Tembo women, however, one woman, often a close family member, will start a chant and the other women will sing a refrain, generally picking up on what the leader has said. There is more apparent order to the Tembo 'cry'.

Relations with the Supernatural. The Lobi and Tembo each consider the spirit world of the other to be the same as their own. Both groups insist that the Lobi supreme being, *Tanbar* (rain), and the Tembo supreme being, *Nyelé* (sky) are identical. They seem to suggest that the sky and the rain that falls from it, are essentially the same thing. Also, many protector spirits are seen to overlap between the two groups. Lobi patriclan and matriclan spirits (*tilka/watil*) do not differ from Tembo patriclan and matriclan spirits (*punsan/gbala*), except in name. This is not true, however, for all protector spirits. The most powerful spirit of the region around Banabé, for example, is '*Kosami*', a Tensé spirit. Although Lobi may consult him through Tembo diviners, '*Kosami*' does not 'come on' the Lobi and therefore, no Lobi man will have an altar to *Kosami* in his courtyard. Nor do the Lobi have '*Suruwo a boko'*, who resides in the hills behind Banabé. He, too, is an exclusively Tensé spirit. Similarly, two major protector spirits of the Lobi, *Dandimar* and *Melkur,* do not 'come on' the Tembo. These spirits can belong to either a man or a women, and make it possible for the individual who has them to become a diviner, though not all do. But no Tensé diviner has them. Everyone agrees that there is no limit to the number of protector spirits that can exist. They say that they are always finding new ones. But certain ones are seen to be much more powerful than others and are more greatly feared. Some of the major spirits found in the Banabé area include:

[5] A very healthy young Tensé man, about 23 years old, resided in a village near Banabé. He suddenly sickened, and in two days was dead. When his spirit was consulted, early on in the funeral, it was disclosed that he had slept with a woman of his own patriclan, a particularly serious offense believed to bring about the withdrawal of all spiritual protection and almost immediate death. However, when the official consultation was done the day after the funeral, and chickens were sacrificed in order to learn the true cause of death, it was discovered that, in actual fact, the young man had been a witch, in league with a wife of his father, who had suddenly died 4 months previously, and with his older brother, who had died of snakebite exactly two months prior to the date of his own death. The three together were believed to have been responsible for the deaths of many children in previous years.

Lobi	Tembo
Di	Bruko
Tilkha	Punsan
Watil	mi Nyelé/Tolekay
Melkur	–
Dandamar	–
Nyelmasé	Nyelwusé
–	Kosami
–	Kundia
–	Suruwo a boko
–	Donkpasé

Although it is difficult to establish, it would seem possible that both the larger number of major Tembo spirits and their apparently greater power are related to the fact that the Tembo are, more or less, autochthonous to the region, while the Lobi are relatively recent migrants into the area.

It would seem that Lobi and Tembo shamans are also much the same, both in their installation and in their dealing with their personal protector spirits through divination. How a protector spirit reveals that it wants to 'come on' an individual is much the same for both, as are the rituals for making this possible. Methods for consulting the spirits are also very similar. The primary difference that was mentioned regards marital status. Both agree that a diviner must be an adult, but a Lobi man or woman does not have to be married to begin consulting the spirits. For the Tembo, on the other hand, a diviner should not only be married, but have received the hoe from his father and therefore be head of his own household. Similarly, though an older Lobi woman may receive a protector spirit that will allow her to divine, only a very few do. It would seem that there are no Tembo women diviners.

Subjective criteria

Self-ascription. If the primary criteria for ethnic distinctiveness is the perception of common origins, then the first matter to be considered is whether the Lobi and Tembo see themselves as having descended from the same ancestral source. As neither group has any written records and their oral history is quite brief, this is very difficult to ascertain. All those questioned were extremely vague on the topic. Most felt that both groups moved into what is now Côte d'Ivoire from the territory presently referred to as Burkina Faso, but the Tembo particularly seemed very vague about where their ancestors had lived previously. The Lobi are quite specific that their forbears crossed the Black Volta from the east in the distant past, but lacked oral tradition for the time prior to that. What both groups do agree on, is that when the Lobi arrived in the area of Banabé, the Tembo were already installed in the region. It is very possible that assimilation only began at this time.

Looking more specifically at how individuals perceive the situation, it was shown earlier that many Lobi and Tembo, especially women, feel that there is little, if any, difference between the two groups. Other than the language, cultural distinctions are regarded by many as trivial. A small majority of those who responded in this way were Tembo, suggesting that the Lobi generally do not recognize the same affinity with the Tembo as the Tembo do with them. If this is so, it would then seem that at least some of the Lobi and Tembo do, in fact, see themselves in a superior/inferior relationship, although no one questioned would admit to it. In any case, this can only be speculation without further research.

More important, however, than what people say about their supposed lack of cultural distinctiveness, is the behavior they exhibit which confirms that, at least at present, definite ethnic boundaries continue to exist. Three primary areas stand out. First, villages throughout the canton of Tehini are generally exclusively Tembo (or Loma) or exclusively Lobi. Secondly, though marriages between Lobi or Tembo do occur, they appear to represent an extremely small fraction of total marriages. Finally, one somewhat more abstract difference between the two groups that was mentioned over and over again by both Tembo and Lobi, is that of basic character. I was told that the Lobi are basically aggressive, direct and spontaneous, while the Tembo are more apt to be secretive, reserved and slow to act. Each of these matters now needs to be examined independently.

Village Composition. As will be shown in the next chapter, in 1985, the composition of the canton of Tehini, where the majority of the Tembo population resides, was 47% Tembo and 37% Lobi. The Loma and various other ethnic groups make up the remaining 16%. If Banabé, which is 75% Lobi with only a few Tembo families, is excluded, the

canton of Tehini is 56% Tembo and only 30% Lobi. Of the 61 villages in the region, 35% are entirely Tembo. They also form the majority (up to 90%) of another 31% of the villages. Only two villages, one being Banabé, are listed as being exclusively Lobi. In another 12 (20%), they form the majority population. Although the trend today is apparently toward more mixed villages, it would seem that the Lobi remain the minority population in a majority of cases. Even in those villages where the Lobi form a significant portion of the community, they tend to reside in their own enclaves, apart from the Tembo.

Intermarriage. Even more important for suggesting ethnic distinctiveness than village composition, is the matter of intergroup marriage patterns. No one questioned could see any problem with Lobi marrying Tembo, or vice versa, but the simple fact remains that such marriages seldom seem to occur. As few marriages or births are registered in local government offices, it is rather difficult to assess just how often marriages between Lobi and Tembo do occur. However, as part of the interviewing procedure done for this project, each respondent was asked to delineate both their family of orientation and their family of procreation, for the purpose of ascertaining certain demographic features of the population. In all, the 58 Lobi and Tembo interviewed listed well over 500 marriages in their immediate families, yet only 12 were between Lobi and Tembo. When asked if they had any other relatives who married within the opposite group, 24 could think of no one at all. The rest could name one or two mixed marriages, but when those which overlapped were eliminated, only about another 15 could be named. Although these figures are far from exact, this suggests that mixed marriages comprise no more than 5% of total marriages and therefore that marrying across the Lobi/Tembo ethnic boundary is rare.

Character. Although only eight of those interviewed initially indicated that a major cultural difference between the Lobi and the Tembo involved basic character traits, others were quick to concur when the subject was mentioned. Those from both groups related numerous incidents to illustrate the more reserved and secretive habits of the Tembo when compared to the Lobi. These ranged from failure to report relevant information to friends or relatives when such information could have possibly saved a great deal of trouble in the future,[6] to withholding the contents of dreams or visions warning about death or disaster until those events had occurred.[7] Interestingly, whether the one recounting the incident was Lobi or Tensé, the speaker seemed to indicate that such reserve was not acceptable. The Tembo were so secretive, some said, that men were known to die without revealing where they had buried their money and cowries, which made it impossible for their heirs to locate and distribute it. This would never happen among the Lobi, it was indicated.

The Lobi, on the other hand, were said to be much more open and direct about their dealings and their beliefs. Some years back, outsiders came to Banabé for only a short time and wanted to learn something about the local customs. They particularly asked to see some of the figures used by shaman during divination. Without hesitation, the Lobi involved brought them out and allowed them to be photographed. The Tembo insisted that they would never have allowed such a thing to be done.

Although the Lobi did not necessarily concur, some Tembo Christians say that the Lobi are much more likely to decide quickly to follow the 'new road' (Christianity) but retain one or more of their protector spirits so that they can go back if they desire. The Tembo, on the contrary, will deliberate much longer before converting, but will then make a clean break and not turn back to the old ways. This contention is supported by the history of those who have left the church since its inception (see Chapter Four).

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[6] Some years back, a Tensé man, who was not from Banabé, moved into the area and met the unmarried daughter of a Tensé man from a neighboring village. He wanted to marry her and as there was no objection from her or her father, arrangements were made and they were married. The father neglected to mention to the young man, however, that the girl had previously been promised to someone else and this might cause future problems, which it did. Any other among the Tembo in the girl's village could have reprised the young man of the situation, but no one did. The Lobi insist that this would never have happened among themselves.

[7] A very powerful Tensé shaman, some distance from Banabé, has built his reputation, partially at least, on his very close relation to his protector spirits. One particularly strong indication of this is that one of these supernatural forces speaks with an audible voice that all can hear. It speaks through the shaman's mouth, but with another voice. Another indication is that his spirits frequently tell him when someone in the vicinity is going to sicken and die. He seldom warns anyone, however, but waits to mention it until the funeral of the person about whom he received the warning.

Conclusion

The differences I discovered between Lobi and Tembo customs, whether objective or subjective, are not, I am sure, exhaustive. There is much that indicates that the two groups are on the road to assimilation. Many factors suggest, however, that amalgamation is not only far from complete, but whether they will finally unify as one ethnic group is still an unresolved question. Village composition tends to indicate that there is still a preference for residing with others of the same language group, and the rarity of intermarriages suggests a real disinclination to marry across ethnic boundaries. Although more Tembo speak Lobi than vice versa, I was not aware of any cases where Tembo show a preference for speaking Lobi as their primary language, or where they expect their children to do so. Ability in the other's language seems to be primarily a phenomenon of contact, or the lack of it. The recognition, in each group, of character traits in the other which they deprecate, suggests that each finds the other somewhat impenetrable. Real communication may not be perceived as possible where values, seen to be fundamental, differ.

I do not believe there can be any doubt that the Lobi and Tembo each exhibit, at least minimally, a sense of ethnic consciousness where the other is concerned. How far either can be said to have moved along the continuum of increased social organization based on common interest (see page ??), is another matter. Certainly they are not at the extreme end where, as highly visible ethnic groups, they would have formally or informally organized to compete for limited resources. At the same time there is an awareness that they are distinct entities, each of which bases many important decisions on those distinctions.

I believe that when all of the factors discussed above are considered together, the Lobi and the Tembo, regardless of their cultural similarities, must be seen as two minimally organized ethnic groups. Notwithstanding their apparent willingness, and even desire, to see themselves as one group, they do not, in actual fact, operate as one cultural entity. Although it is not possible to point to the clear manipulation of specific cultural symbols to maintain ethnic boundaries, many factors have been shown to indicate that such manipulation is indeed going on, however subtly. Their disinclination to reside together, to intermarry or to adopt a common language all support the notion that they see themselves as separate populations. Therefore, it must be said that linguistic barriers and numerous differing cultural traits and practices continue to establish a boundary which separates the Lobi and Tembo into two distinct ethnic units or groups.

4

History and Growth of the Banabé Church

> *"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28:18–20.*

It has now been established that the Lobi and Tembo peoples indeed comprise two ethnic categories. But yet another question arises before the Banabé church can be examined as a multi-ethnic local congregation and Fernandez' model applied. Has the Lobi/Tembo church consistently drawn its membership from both populations? In other words, is it a successful multi-ethnic congregation? This is not to say that a case in which a church has failed to recruit across ethnic boundaries would not be valid for a study of multi-ethnic religious movements. However, if such were the situation in Banabé, only one of the negative factors Fernandez proposed would need to be present to explain that failure. Far more interesting is a case of successful multi-ethnic recruitment where one or more of the positive factors do not seem to be operating, or appear to be functioning in ways different from those suggested by Fernandez. This allows for the possibility of not only testing the model as it stands, but of rethinking multi-ethnic recruitment into religious movements in general.

To help establish that the Banabé church has indeed been successful in recruiting across ethnic lines, it will be useful to consider the history and organization of the church, as well as the composition of the congregation as of the end of 1987 when the research was completed. In many ways, of course, the history of this church goes back much further than its apparent inception in 1979. Many unrecorded events, prior to that date, led to its establishment. Many unknown people, living and working in other places, had a part in those events. The history I offer is not complete, nor is it likely that it is totally accurate. I describe events as they were told to me by many different people, not all of whom agree in their accounts. For the period up until late 1986, what I relate is an abbreviated interpretation of those accounts. The remainder is a commentary on what I saw and had explained to me while I was conducting my research. It is meant to provide a further foundation for the analysis that follows.

History of the Church

Until l972 there was only sporadic Protestant mission activity among the Lobi in and around the village of Banabé. Twenty-five miles to the northeast, a small, US-based Baptist mission was working among the Lobi and had established both a church and a clinic. Missionaries and converts made occasional evangelistic forays[1] into the neighboring countryside but seldom as far south as Banabé. Much further to the north, across the Burkina Faso border in Gaoua, an independent mission based in England had also begun work among the Lobi. They have since completed a Lobiri translation of the New Testament in the northern dialect, but the Lobi of Côte d'Ivoire find it to be only minimally intelligible to them. Sixty miles to the southeast, a number of Protestant missions had begun work in what was historically the center of the former Koulango Kingdom. However, a large number of Lobi and some Tembo also now reside in the area due to their more than century-long tradition of gradual southward migration. The Baptists have been working for some time among the Lobi there, but, more recently, a charismatic or Pentecostal mission began a church with a desire to reach all language groups in the region. Their practice is to use French-speaking African pastors from other regions whose message is made intelligible to the non-French-speaking peoples by educated local translators. These Pentecostals made occasional trips into the Lobi territory to the east of Banabé to hold evangelistic and healing services but had established no congregation west of their original church.

In l972, two European women, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), an international, independent, Protestant organization, began work near Banabé among the Tembo which constituted the first such work to focus on this ethnic group. The purpose of SIL is not specifically to establish churches but to support whatever Christian

[1] Evangelistic forays—Believers from established churches in some of the larger villages go out into the scattered compounds of the neighboring countryside to preach and spread the message of the "new road" which they have begun to follow. The theme of these messages is often the deception of the protector spirits, who cannot really protect them, and the power of Jesus, who can.

churches or missions may be in the area by making the Scriptures available in the local language. They begin by learning that language, which has not previously been written, doing linguistic analysis and developing an alphabet, constructing literacy materials[2] and eventually providing the New Testament and portions of the Old in the local idiom to be used by Christians of any denomination.[3]

Language learning and the analysis of a previously unwritten language can be a long and drawn out process. When one member of the original team had to return home in l974, she was replaced first temporarily and then permanently, in l975, by another European member. Needing assistance in learning Teen, the language of the Tembo, the latter woman, whose first language was French, came across a young Tensé (singular of Tembo), about 11 years old, who was studying at the government school in Banabé. D. Hien agreed to come to their house in the afternoons to help her with the language. It was not long before he asked if he could live with them while he went to school. His own village was somewhat more than an hour's walk to the north of Banabé. His father, a powerful shaman, and his wives (D. Hien's mother had died) lived there as did several of his father's brothers. Some years earlier, D. Hien had been given, as was the custom, to his father's youngest brother, K. Sib, who had no children of his own old enough to help him in the fields. When D. Hien was about 8, K. Sib acceded to the child's request to be allowed to attend school in Banabé. Another relative who resided there agreed to take him in.

In l976, after receiving permission from K. Sib, D. Hien moved into the home of the linguist-translators. They soon learned that the burdens at least equaled the benefits of having a native speaker always close at hand. As with all the Tembo, D. Hien's life was very much regulated by how he perceived the spirits to be operating in the world around him. Many nights he woke sweating or even screaming from the nightmares 'sent' to him by the spirits. The hooting of an owl outside caused him, on more than one occasion, to hide beneath his mattress. Many nights, one or the other of the translators spent at least a portion of the time comforting and praying with the frightened boy. They told him of Jesus, who was stronger than the spirits, who loved him and would hear him when he called to him in the night. Eventually, D. Hien began to find comfort in praying to Jesus, had fewer bad dreams, and more nights when he could sleep unawakened. With the reduction of his fears, D. Hien soon began enthusiastically to tell others of this more powerful spirit who could protect them in ways the other spirits never had. Though no one paid him much attention at the time, years later, quite a number of the Tembo Christians would tell how they first heard of Jesus from D. Hien. As he learned more about the Christian message from the translators, D. Hien eventually asked to be baptized. This was done by the Baptist missionaries to the north in late l976. As was their custom, they gave him a Biblical name, Isaie (Isaiah).

K. Sib, Isaie's adopted father, continued to reside in his natal village and frequently heard from Isaie of his new found relationship with Jesus. But he let his 'son' know, in no uncertain terms, that he would never, under any circumstances, leave his own protector spirits to follow this other road. In l978, K. Sib's first wife, B. Noufé, went into labor with her sixth child, but she did not deliver. The second day, when she was obviously in great distress, he went to another of his brothers, who was, like Isaie's father, a respected shaman. They consulted the spirits and learned that though she was having a bad time, she would be all right and both she and the baby would live. But B. Noufé continued into the third and then fourth days of labor. Further consultations of the spirits continued to assure him that she would deliver well. On the fifth day without change, however, he got help to carry her down to Banabé to the maternity clinic. It was quickly seen that there was nothing that could be done there. The baby was apparently lying in a transverse position. It was arranged for B. Noufé and K. Sib to be taken to the closest hospital, 60 miles away. The doctor there, however, had no operating facilities and sent them 150 miles further south. The roads were bad, it was the middle of the night, and the ambulance broke down. In the morning someone finally passed who could take them on to the hospital, where a Caesarean was performed and their stillborn son was delivered. B. Noufé lingered for several days but then died as well.

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[2] Literacy materials—Linguistic analysis and translation of written materials of any kind are of little use if no one can read what is produced. An intermediate step is the construction of literacy materials. These consist of a series of primers for teaching all of the sound combinations found in the language and numerous texts and booklets for all reading levels. The latter may include written versions of oral history, stories about animals and/or people they know, accounts the first readers write themselves about events in their lives, etc. There may be "how-to" or information booklets that they themselves write or that are translated versions of topics they find of interest—"Where does salt come from?", "What makes the lightning?", etc. As there are more readers, scattered over a large area, a semi-annual or bi-monthly newspaper may be produced with stories and articles contributed from all over. The possibilities are endless. Not uncommonly, bilingual materials are also produced to aid in the transition from reading the local dialect to reading the national language.

[3] For further information on the work of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and Wycliffe Bible Translators see Townsend 1975.

When K. Sib returned home, he was enraged with his protector spirits, who he said had deceived him. For years they had 'worn him out', he said, bringing nothing but adversity, demanding all his chickens as sacrifices, and giving him nothing. This was the final blow. His fear of these same spirits, however, kept him from destroying their altars in his compound. The only recourse he knew was to go south, out of Lobi territory to work for strangers, away from the strong influence of his traditional spirits. His first wife had left 3 children, his second wife, F. Pale, had lost 2 sons but her first daughter had lived. To move so many south, he needed money. It was about this time that the translators in Banabé were looking for an adult Tensé to begin helping them with their first translation efforts, the gospel of Mark. From Isaie, K. Sib had heard of their search and offered to help. He figured that in a few months he could earn what he needed to move his family south.

The linguists soon found him an invaluable assistant. His ability to explain the inner workings of his language and capacity to grasp what, for him, must have often been very unfamiliar concepts, were very rewarding. As the translation progressed, so did K. Sib's questions about what he was hearing. Three days a week, he made the trip from his village to Banabé to help the translators. The other days, he worked his fields. After a few months he no longer talked of going south. He was very close to believing that this new road he was learning about was the 'true path' that God (Nyelé) intended, and that for centuries the spirits had been deceiving them. When his crops were harvested that year in his own village, he decided to move with his family to Banabé, where he could be more easily available, both to the translators and to his fields.

The linguists arranged to rent a small house near their own for K. Sib and his family. He himself moved down before the harvest was completely finished. On the first night that he slept in the house, he said he had a dream, though he's not entirely sure he was actually asleep. As he lay there on his mat, a young man, wearing a white shirt and pants, came into the room. His skin was light and his hair was long, past his shoulders. As he entered, the room became as light as day. The man looked at him and said, 'K. Sib, your name is written in heaven and you will become a big (important) person.' Then he was gone. K. Sib said he knew it was Jesus. From then on he had no doubts about what path he was to follow.

Soon, his family also came to live in Banabé, but his wife, F. Pale, was very frightened of what her husband had done. For the first years of their lives, children are protected by one of the spirits of their father. But it is the action of the parents that will determine whether the child will live or die. The spirits had already 'killed' her two sons, would they not now also 'kill' her two daughters. F. Pale was a shy woman who seldom expressed her opinions. When Isaie came to her village and told K. Sib of Jesus, she had simply not 'listened', but when K. Sib himself began to follow this new path, she had to try and understand. After she moved to Banabé she began to listen to what K. Sib and the translators were saying about Jesus and about the spirits.

When each of F. Pale's two sons had died, the spirits were consulted and they were told that the spirits killed them because she had married K. Sib. As a child she was betrothed to a man who was classified as a son to K. Sib. She had not wanted to marry him but her parents accepted the rooster anyway. Soon after, her mother lost a child and the spirits said, on consultation, that it was because they should not have received the rooster from this man. So they sent it back. But the man did not accept that the marriage was off. Some years later, K. Sib took F. Pale for his second wife. Both her family and his said that this was a disastrous mistake, as she still belonged to the other man, though she had never gone to live with him. She was told that she or K. Sib would die if she married him, but she didn't listen and married him anyway. When her two boys died, the spirits said it was because of K. Sib's stealing F. Pale from the man to whom she had been promised, a man who was a 'son' to him.

F. Pale was no more happy with the dealings of the spirits than K. Sib had been, but she was not yet convinced that this Jesus could protect them when these same spirits got angry. As his wife, she felt she must follow whatever path K. Sib was walking on, but she was still frightened. Not long after she came to Banabé, F. Pale became pregnant with her fifth child. Sometime before she came to term she was bitten by a snake as she returned from the fields. She went immediately to the clinic for treatment, but was very ill, spitting up blood and nearly unconscious. K. Sib said that they would put their trust in God. A Baule Christian who lived in Banabé came as well, read from the Bible and prayed with them. By the next day she was fine, and when her son was born, 2 or 3 months later, he was healthy as well. She said she knew now that this Jesus could protect her family. When K. Sib and F. Pale were baptized sometime later, they took the names of Jean (John) and Sara (Sarah).

Even before Jean came to help them with the translation, the linguists had the habit of inviting any Christians in Banabé to meet each Sunday on their porch to sing, read the Bible, and pray. As these Christians were generally officials who were from other regions of Côte d'Ivoire, not Lobi or Tembo, the services were primarily in French. However, about a year before Jean came, a Lobi woman, S. Kambou, who lived in Banabé, had also been bitten by a

snake when he was returning from a visit to her father in another village. At the time of her marriage, the spirits had given S. Kambou a taboo. She was never to visit her father again or she would die. After some years, however, she became tired of this restriction, and announced that she was going to visit her father. On the way back, she was bitten on the foot by a snake. Though she survived, her leg became gangrenous and she was sent to a hospital where it was eventually amputated. She spent several months there, recuperating, and learning to use an artificial limb. While she was in the hospital, some of the Lobi Christians began to tell her about the 'Jesus road' and she accepted. She was given the name Rachel. When she returned to Banabé, the Baptist missionaries sent down word to the translators about her, and asked them to look out for her. She began to come to the Sunday services and someone translated what was said into Lobiri for her.

After Jean and his family came to live in Banabé, they also came to the services. Soon Jean, who had been learning to read his own language, began to share with the people the scriptures that had been translated that week, and to talk about how he felt it applied to their lives. Someone, such as Rachel, who spoke Teen, translated what he said into Lobiri and one of the older school children would translate into French. Isaie, who was by then about 14, wrote simple choruses for them to sing in Teen, and Rachel would teach some in Lobiri that she had learned in the hospital. Soon Jean came to be seen as the leader or 'pastor' of the church and the translators took no part in the services other than as regular members of the congregation. Jean asked for, and received, occasional help from the Baptists to the north. From time to time, they would send a mature Lobi Christian to Banabé to preach and Jean would then translate into Teen. At intervals, Jean would also go there to receive instruction, but the mission took no actual part in the leadership of the young church except to answer questions or offer advice. They did, however, say that when they had someone from their mission to send to help with the leadership, they would do so. After some years, when several new Christians were ready to be baptized, one of the Baptist missionaries came to Banabé to administer the rites, but he himself did not question the new converts. He accepted the names Jean gave him as those who understood and were ready to follow the new road.

As the years passed, it became clear that no one would be coming to help them from the northern mission. Though there had been occasional new Baptist missionaries who arrived from overseas or Lobi Christians trained as pastors, they were always sent elsewhere. Jean became somewhat discouraged by the heavy load of preparing to lead services each Sunday, praying with the sick, counseling believers who had problems and also working his fields to meet the needs of his growing family. What he really wanted was a white male missionary to come and take charge, and to that end he prayed that one or the other of the women translators might get married and continue the work with her husband. By l985, however, he was ready to accept help from almost anyone.

For some time, various members of the church, as well as the translators, had had contact with Christians from the Pentecostal church to the east. A Christian doctor from Chad, who directed the hospital there, was a member of this church and had treated quite a number of the Christians who had come to him from Banabé. The pastor of this church, an Ivoirian from the south, expressed an interest in starting a similar church in Banabé. After some careful deliberation with the translators, the growing church in Banabé requested that the Pentecostal church send someone to help with leadership. It was felt that this was a far better course than to have two Protestant churches in so small a village, and Jean really looked forward to the help.

In May of l985, two young, unmarried men arrived. Jean had by now built a compound for his family on the edge of Banabé near his fields, and the two men moved into the rented house he had vacated. The young man who was clearly in charge was an educated Dioula who spoke no Lobiri or Teen. He had not yet been to Bible school but had worked some years with French-speaking African pastors of his Pentecostal denomination elsewhere. The second man was a Lobi whose family had originally come from around Banabé, but he himself had been born in Boake, far to the south, where his father had been in the military. He grew up in the Koulango region, where just a few years before he had become a Christian. For the past two years he had worked with the Pentecostal pastor there. For both these men, this assignment was by way of a probation period, to see if they were qualified to be sent on to Bible school, and become full fledged pastors.

By this time, the numbers meeting on the porch of the translators had grown considerably. Besides the fact that the area was no longer large enough for the growing church, the linguists felt it would be better, now that the church was identified with a particular mission or denomination, for the Christians to meet elsewhere so that they themselves could remain non-partisan. Consequently, Jean and the two newly arrived young men, arranged with the Subprefecture" to use a room in an old, abandoned, colonial building to the west of the village. Some years previously, while the translators were on furlough, a Lobi man who had become a Christian in the south came back to Banabé and brought the news that it was usual for Christians to take up a collection each Sunday during the

service. This was in order to give something back to God for doing so much for them. For some time they had been collecting this money, but really had no notion how it was to be used. The building they were offered came rent free but the money was now used to put in lights and to have some extra benches made.

The new association did not, however, work out well. Although the church continued to grow as members of the congregation told others about the new 'path', leadership within the church began to face difficulties. The Dioula young man left after only a few months. The Lobi man, Simon, married a Lobi girl from a village to the southeast and brought her to Banabé. Both he and the Pentecostal pastor from the originating church to the east, saw him as the real leader of the congregation and gradually Jean was being set aside. By the end of l986, Jean was preaching no more than one Sunday in five or six. Though Simon spoke the same dialect as the Lobi who attended the church, it was his mission's policy to have all services in French. That the overwhelming majority of the people who attended the church knew no French, but understood Lobiri as either their first or second language, made no difference. There were still translations into both Lobiri and Teen, but Rachel, as a woman, was no longer allowed to translate into Lobiri when Jean preached.

Whereas Jean had always dealt with problems in the church quietly and in private, Simon began to denounce specific people for their sins in the services themselves. Money became a much bigger issue, whether to support the 'pastor' (himself) and his family or to hold celebrations at holidays or at weddings that were meant to be more lavish than what the people could really afford. Though these requests and admonitions were usually ignored, the people began to be irritated at the constant demands, and those who were scolded publicly often ceased to come to services.

His supervisors were also encouraging Simon to take certain actions unacceptable to Jean and other leaders in the church in Banabé. Sunday services were not the only meetings held each week. For many years, house meetings had been held in the various compounds of Christians, in and around Banabé, each Wednesday night. Those who could read the Teen scriptures would either hold short gatherings in their own compounds or go to one where Christians lived. They sang, read scripture and prayed together. There was no preaching. Neighbors who heard the singing would often come listen, and some of these would then begin to attend the church and possibly come to accept the new message. But now Simon was told by his superiors that these meetings had to cease as no gathering should be held without his being present. Otherwise, they told him, there would be no control over what was being taught. This demand was also ignored by the people in the church, and the house meetings continued but the demand helped to widen the rift between Simon and the congregation.

Simon also began to hold evangelistic meetings, such as he'd apparently seen done by his former pastor. The first was held near the house of a leading government official who was Lobi and also a Muslim convert. Though he was not home at the time, several other Muslims from other ethnic groups also lived in that sector and heard Simon's message. Many of his statements about Islam were extremely offensive to the Muslims, and they let it be known they would be complaining to the Mayor, who was Muslim as well. Jean had not been present and some of the Christians who were, were very upset at the things Simon had said. Jean and several of the Christian leaders got together and went to the Muslim leaders and apologized for what Simon had done, without letting him know they were going. This was accepted and the matter was dropped. The following week, when Simon tried to have a similar meeting in an entirely Lobi area just outside Banabé, few of the Christians joined him. Those who did later reported that though some women came out at first to listen, their husbands quickly arrived on the scene with machetes and cudgels and drove the Christians away. There were no further attempts to hold such gatherings.

In early l987, the building the church had been using came to be needed for other projects and the church began to look toward putting up their own meeting place. The mayor's office had already allocated land in the center of town to the church for the purpose. One or two days every week, those who could spare the time met at the site to make mud bricks. Long before it was completed, however, they had to find a new location for services. For just a few Sundays, they gathered in the courtyard by Simon's house, under a large tree. The difficulties with leadership were coming to a head, however, and all efforts at working out the communication problems with Simon's superiors had failed. Jean, with the support of all the church leaders, told Simon that he had to leave. In April of 1987, on the last Sunday they met together, Simon announced that from then on, there would be two Protestant churches in Banabé. Those who wanted to continue to hear him would meet at his house each Sunday. Those who wanted to go with Jean would meet in a new temporary building until the church was completed.

The following Sunday, all Tembo members and all Lobi, except two single men, met with Jean at the new location. Those two, and four or five people from other ethnic groups, who knew French, stayed with Simon. One of the two Lobi, as well as a young Koulango man, switched back to the larger congregation after a few weeks. During the same time, three or four other town officials, who knew French, but not Lobiri or Teen, began to attend the

Pentecostal church in Simon's home. In August of l987 the, now independent, congregation of the Protestant Church of Banabé moved into their new building in the center of the village.

One of the first things that Jean did after breaking with the Pentecostal church, was to send a message to the Baptist church in the north that he would like to resume their previous relationship. This was quickly accepted. Once or twice a month, one of the missionaries, or one of the Lobi Christians, would come and preach. They made it clear that they were there to help and to offer advice when asked, but the local leaders were responsible for all decisions affecting the church. The other Sundays, when no one from the Baptist Church was present, Jean or one of the other local Christians, who could read the Teen scriptures, would speak. By now, there were 70 or more adult believers in the church, in a ratio of about 3/5 Lobi and 2/5 Tembo. At the time of my departure from Banabé in November of 1987 the majority of the tensions that had existed the previous Spring seemed to have dissipated, and the leadership appeared confident in their ability to handle each new situation as it arose. A number of new converts joined the congregation from both ethnic groups and people were beginning to question whether they had made the new building big enough. The Banabé church appeared to be a stable and thriving multi-ethnic institution.

Two Protestant Churches in Banabé

Before focusing exclusively on the Lobi/Tembo congregation, which came to comprise the Protestant Church of Banabé, it might be helpful to look at the small Pentecostal church which developed when Jean and Simon each decided to go their separate ways in April of 1987. When I arrived in the village, some seven months before this date, I soon became aware of a certain tension between Simon and the original leaders of the Banabé church. As already described, this increased over the months until a division seemed inevitable. When the split finally occurred, however, it was interesting to note that not only did the tension disappear, but both congregations experienced something of a growth spurt over the next few months. They each appeared to have been strengthened by the ordeal they had been through. I believe there are three possible explanations for this. It was clear that Jean had developed a greater confidence in his ability to lead the congregation without the help of someone coming from the outside. Also, the Baptist mission to the north began to provide more assistance to the Banabé church than they had prior to the arrival of the Pentecostals. Finally, the new smaller church, relying exclusively on French, met a need previously lacking in the community.

The first two points concerning Jean's renewed confidence and the Baptist mission have been dealt with to some extent in the previous section. I will add only that Jean came to feel that he had been wrong to request someone to come from outside when God had asked him" to be pastor of the church. All the problems with Simon, he believed, came from disobeying God. Having accepted that and asked forgiveness of both God and the congregation, he and the other leaders told Simon to leave. They renewed their relationship with the Baptist mission but sought from there on to take responsibility for governing themselves.

Once the Lobi and Tembo church had moved into other quarters in the center of town, those who continued to meet with Simon were few enough in number to meet in a small room in his house. Besides he and his wife and the two Lobi men who initially continued with this congregation, there were 4–6 others who were working in or visiting Banabé but came from other parts of Côte d'Ivoire. Over the next few months, however, a number of others began to attend the church regularly. Most were non-Lobi, non-Tembo military or civil service employees who worked in various government offices in or around Banabé. All were educated. All spoke French. One Tensé girl, who was a believer but who had gone to school for many years outside Banabé, also began to attend, saying that it was too confusing in the larger church where she understood all three" languages.

The new little gathering, therefore, attracted primarily those who spoke French, but not Lobiri or Teen. It, too, was a multi-ethnic church as its congregation represented almost as many language groups as it had members. The bond they felt came, not through a common ethnicity but through similar beliefs, a common language and, possibly for some, a sense of superiority over the essentially uneducated congregation which comprised the other church. Until the original church divided there was no real place for the majority of these people.

There is one other very important point that needs to be made before leaving this topic. Examining what led up to the partitioning of the church does far more than demonstrate that ethnic conflict was not the cause of the division. It also demonstrates something about religious movements themselves. Throughout the dispute, it was clear that the difficulties the two factions were experiencing had little to do with the message being taught. They disagreed on how the church should be run. They disagreed, at times, on how the message should be applied or acted out in daily life. But they did not disagree on the message itself. This suggests that any real understanding of how religious

movements succeed or fail, whether multi-ethnic or not, requires that the message of the movement be considered apart from its structure.

This in turn suggests that the whole notion of the proliferation of new religious movements needs to be re-examined. If a congregation, or even group of congregations, seeks independence from a parent church or mission because they want to do things in their own way but continues to propound the same message, is it really correct to say that a new religious movement has begun? I suggest that if the political and ritual structure of a church or movement is considered separately from its message, one gets an entirely different picture of what transpired in Banabé than if the message and the structure are analyzed together. In the latter instance, it would have to be said that the movement to some extent failed because it could not keep all of its members together. One religious movement became two. But if it is accepted that the message is the movement, the situation is reversed. Not only were no individuals lost due to the division but having two congregations made it possible to attract people who would not have come to the former church. In that sense, there continues to be only one religious movement in Banabé, and that movement has been enhanced. Having clarified that point, however, from here on the focus of this paper will be the multi-ethnic Lobi/Tembo congregation which calls itself The Protestant Church of Banabé.

Leadership and Organization of Worship

Up to this point, I have referred to an undefined group of church leaders, headed up by Jean, who is accepted as the pastor of the Lobi/Tembo congregation. In actual fact, leadership in the church in Banabé lacks clear definition. Jean is seen as a man who has a special relationship with God/Jesus, but people do not regard him as having authority over them, nor has he claimed such a position. Perhaps the greatest difficulty people had with Simon, the young man sent by the Pentecostal mission to help Jean in leadership, was his insistence that as 'pastor' of the church, who preached God's Word, he should be obeyed more or less without question. Neither Lobi nor Tembo cultural practice has a place for a human leader who can dictate how they behave. Only the spirits can command such obedience and compliance comes, not from a respect for their perceived superiority, but to avert harm that can come from neglecting them.

When the Pentecostals first came, an effort was made to establish a group of church leaders (French: *responsables*) to be involved in decision-making for the congregation. These were to include both Lobi and Tembo men and women, but in all cases they were to be married, not single, individuals, though this requirement was apparently relaxed even before the association with the Pentecostals ceased. Though I was told that there were originally 15 or 16 people named to this group, I was never able to get a complete listing that everyone agreed upon. Regardless of who was involved, however, it was apparent that a number of those originally asked to serve in this capacity were not inclined to do so. *Responsables* were occasionally asked to stay after the Friday night service to discuss one or more decisions that needed to be made, but these meetings were often poorly attended. After the Pentecostals left, the process for being admitted to leadership became much less formal. There seemed to be two primary qualifications expected. First, they had to have shown that their feet were firmly planted on the "new path", with no inclinations to return to the spirits when things became difficult. Second, they had to want to be involved in church decision-making. There were quite a number in the congregation who demonstrated the first, but had no apparent motivation for the latter, especially women. Only one of the Lobi women originally asked to be a *responsable* made a practice of attending meetings, but she too ceased to come after she became pregnant by a man to whom she was not married. She did, however, continue faithfully to attend Sunday services. As she voluntarily dropped any pretension to leadership, no issue was made of the matter. There was a case before I left, however, of a single Tensé man (not one of the original *responsables*) who was told he could no longer be involved in church decision-making because of his involvement with two Lobi women outside the church, both of whom bore him children. It seemed that though requirements for becoming a church leader were flexible and relatively undefined, what constituted unacceptable behavior for those involved in church decision-making was quite clear-cut.

Church leaders were responsible, not only for the week by week running of the church, but for deciding how to handle any crisis that might arise involving church members. This included counseling those who had domestic problems,[4] dealing with those who were involved in behavior considered unacceptable for followers of Jesus'

[4] A Tensé believer named W. Wuse, lived on the outskirts of Banabé, and had been a believer for about three years, as had both of his wives. During the corn harvest, W. Wuse asked all of his younger children to go to the fields to keep the monkeys away from the corn. His younger wife, P. Sia, asked that one of them stay to look after her baby so that she could work. Her infant was only a few months old. W. Wuse argued with her and they both became very angry. All the children went to the field. That night, W. Wuse asked her three times to make his bed in her house but she ignored him. He became so angry he wanted to hit her but

path,[5] and deciding how the church should be involved when those in the congregation, or their relatives, had material needs.[6]

The organization of worship in the Banabé church is quite straight forward. Since separating from the Pentecostal mission, it was Jean who was most responsible for leading Sunday services, but he seldom preached more often than one Sunday in four. As already mentioned, his first act after the split was to get word to the Baptists to the north that the Banabé church wanted to resume the relationship that they had had up until May of 1985. Consequentially, once or twice a month, someone came from there to preach. This was either one of the expatriate missionaries who preached in French, with translations into Lobiri and Teen, or a mature Lobi Christian who preached in his own language, with translations into Teen and French. On the other Sundays, if Jean was not preaching, he asked someone else to do so. During the time I was there, there were three men other than Jean, two Lobi and a Tensé, who preached. The primary requirement seemed to be that the speaker be able to read the Scriptures for himself so that he could preach on some passage from the Bible. Songs were often led by a number of individuals, both Lobi and Tembo. Although not all the congregation speaks both languages, everyone tended to learn all the songs, regardless of language, and joined in enthusiastically. Most Sundays, ten to eighteen songs were sung and there seemed to be a conscious effort to have an equal number in Lobiri and Teen, plus one or two in French.

Besides Sunday services, there were two other regular weekly meetings, one on Wednesday night and one on Friday. The former were house meetings held in various outlying parts of Banabé, generally in the compound of one of the Christians in the area. Someone who could read Scripture in French or Teen would lead, a few songs would be sung, they would pray and the passage would be read and translated if necessary, but often without comment. The singing tended to attract neighbors who would then stay to hear the rest. Such meetings seldom lasted more than 30–40 minutes and those present might number anywhere from 10–20, counting children. On Friday nights, there was a short meeting at the church. The format was much the same as for Wednesday night but Jean or one of the others generally talked more at length about the Scripture passage read. It was not uncommon for these meetings to include some discussion of matters that needed a decision. If it was known ahead of time, the subject to be discussed would be mentioned in the Sunday services and all were encouraged to come to the Friday meeting. Those who attended

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didn't because of the baby on her back. He took his sleeping mat and went to the house of his older wife. He told P. Sia that she could take her things and leave if she wanted to. (She had born him 17 children though most had died in infancy). She didn't leave but W. Wuse stayed with his first wife and did not talk to her for several weeks. Eventually, he told Jean, the pastor of the church what had happened. The latter came with four of the church leaders to talk with them. They read from the Gospel of Mark about how a man who leaves his wife, or vice versa, causes him or her to commit adultery. They prayed with them and asked each to forgive the other, which they did. All subsequent reports indicated that they were doing well.

[5] A Lobi woman, by the name of S. Kambou, who lived in Banabé and had been a member of the Banabé church for a number of years, borrowed a drinking gourd from one of her neighbors and lost it. When she told the other woman, the latter, who was not a believer, became very angry and yelled at her so that everyone could hear. S. Kambou gave her one of her own gourds but the woman was not satisfied. That evening the woman came through S. Kambou's compound, where the latter was sitting on a stool. The angry woman pushed S. Kambou off her stool and tried to hit her with a stick but other people stopped her. S. Kambou was so upset and angry at the woman, she called Kosami (a very powerful protector spirit) down on her. She told the woman who had tried to hit her that if she did not come to the pump the next day to fight, hand to hand, with her, Kosami would kill her. The next day, S. Kambou took her basin four times to the pump, but the woman never came. Four days later the woman she had cursed came to her and asked her to remove the spirit she had called down on her. By this time, S. Kambou was very afraid of what she had done. She didn't know what had made her call on the spirit as she knew that this was not acceptable behavior for a follower of Jesus' path. She told the woman she didn't know what to do and would have to talk to the church leaders. The woman who had been angry with her went on her own, in the meantime, to pay the sacrifices to have the curse removed.

S. Kambou went first to Jean to tell him what had happened. He called one of the other leaders, a Lobi man, to come with him to talk to her. They read from the Bible with her and told her that believers must never again have anything to do with the protector spirits. They said that what the other woman was doing was sufficient for her but that S. Kambou, after she had prayed to God for forgiveness, must still stand up before the congregation on Sunday and confess what she had done. At first, she was too afraid to do this, but about two weeks later, she did stand and tell everyone what had happened.

[6] Although it is not yet a widely held concept, some of the believers have heard of tithing, or giving 10% of what one earns to God and were attempting to carry it out. Since few people have much money they have decided that this means they should tithe of their harvest. A granary was built to receive what was donated and people were encouraged but not commanded to participate. As far as I was able to tell, the year I was there was the first time they had done this and about 4 or 5 families participated, all among the leaders of the church. The question then arose as to how it should be used. The consensus was that it should be for families in the church whose granaries were empty before the next harvest. At the time I was getting ready to leave Banabé, the leaders were discussing giving some to a man who had only daughters and who himself was ill. There was never enough food from one harvest to the next. The leaders were in the process of deciding how much to give him.

these gatherings, however, were few in number, as many lived a long distance from the church, and coming so far after dark was not popular.

There were no other regular services. Sporadically, when someone new made the decision to abandon his protector spirits and follow the Jesus path, there would be a burning of his or her spirit altars. This ritual was always held on Sunday though the only reason seemed to be that that was when the most Christians were convened to perform the ceremony. If the new Christian lived nearby, almost the entire congregation would attend, but the number dropped as the distance increased. The women especially seemed reluctant to travel an hour or more to burn spirit altars, giving the practical excuse that there were meals to prepare and water to fetch. The leaders always encouraged them to come anyway, however, as they said it was important for the women in that compound, where the altars were to be burned, to see that there were women as well as men who followed Jesus' road.

It is possible that the flexibility of requirements for leadership and the lack of any real centralized authority structure has contributed to the success the Banabé church has had in attracting new members from both ethnic populations. Although Jean is recognized by all as the 'pastor' of the congregation, there is no sense that this gives the Tembo any prominence in the church. Jean seeks and welcomes help with leadership and most decisions are arrived at by consensus. This does not mean, however, that individuals in the congregation feel obliged to comply with those decisions. The leaders are well aware that their task is to guide and not direct. At this they are quite successful.

Profile of the Banabé Church—1987

The previous sections have given a picture of how the church in Banabé came into being by examining the conversion stories of a few of the key participants at its inception and by describing some of the struggles they have encountered in maintaining their relatively independent status. I have also shown the rather simple framework around which church life is organized and decisions are made. But a picture of the church is not complete without giving consideration to some of the demographic features of the Banabé congregation. This will not only give a clearer picture of the make-up of the Banabé church but will demonstrate that the congregation is fairly balanced as regards ethnic category, sex, age, marital status, residence, education and clan membership.

During the research period, adult attendance at the church during Sunday services each week rose from about 55 to 60 persons in late 1986 to between 70 and 75 at the end of 1987. There were almost always a number of visitors, Christians passing through from other areas, or local non-believers who were coming to see what it was all about. Of the sixty nine who attended regularly, when they were in Banabé, I was able to interview 60 and to collect some demographic data on the other nine. What follows is a profile of the church congregation by sex, age, marriage status, residence, education and kinship group.

Language group and gender

Tembo men	10	(14%)
Tembo women	17	(25%)
Lobi men	16	(23%)
Lobi women	24	(35%)
Other (men)	2	(3%)
Total	69	(100%)

Table 2. Church Membership by language group and gender

These figures include the Lobi Pentecostal pastor, his wife and one Lobi male who left when the church split to form their own congregation. Excluding them from the total, the church, as of the end of 1987 was then comprised of 41% Tembo, 56% Lobi and 3% others.

Age and gender. Church members varied in age, from about seventeen, to over seventy. A large number of children also attended the services, but as many from the neighborhood came in frequently to listen to the singing, it was difficult to keep a close count of those under fifteen who attended regularly.

Age	*men*	*women*
17–20 (14%)	5	5
21–30 (38%)	12	14
31–40 (23%)	7	9
41–50 (12%)	3	5
51–60 (5%)	1	2
61–70 (7%)	0	5
>70 (1%)	0	1
Total (100%)	**28**	**41**

Table 3. Church Membership by age and gender

One man, well over eighty, died during my research period and before I was able to interview him. He had been a Christian for about a year. Shortly before I left, a woman in her sixties, and two men over seventy, asked the Christians to come burn their spirit altars, so that they could follow the new road.

Marital Status. Looking only at the sixty interviewed, this information reflects the number of spouses an individual indicated having during their lifetime. It does not reflect the situation during the research period, nor does it attempt to make a statement about polygyny for the community at large.

	Men	*Women*
Never married	11	8
One spouse	8	18
Two spouses	4	6
> two spouses	2	5
TOTAL	**25**	**37**

Table 4. Church Membership (90%) by marital status

Of those who indicated that they have not yet been married, three of the men said their fathers had arranged marriages for them, but the women involved refused them, and they were now on their own to find a wife. Some of the women in this category do have children even though they have yet to marry. Two of the four men who have had two wives, continue to have two wives at present. The other two have each had one wife die. As women can only have one husband at a time, plural spouses for them indicates, that a woman has remarried following either the death of a husband or divorce.

Each of the two men who said they have had more than two wives, have had three in all. One of these still has two, the third wife having died. The second man has only one wife at present. The other two are now living with, or are married, to other men. Of the women who indicate that they have had more than two spouses, one has had four husbands and another six. The rest have had three. In all five cases, at least one change involved the woman leaving a husband rather than his death.

Residence. As of the end of 1987, the majority of the members of the congregation lived in Banabé itself, although not all resided there when they first converted to Christianity.

Of those listed, twenty-three moved to Banabé, or the surrounding area, either directly or indirectly to be nearer the church. Generally, these individuals had begun to follow the ‘new road’ due to the influence of visiting Christians, or during a sojourn in the south. Most indicated that it was very difficult being the only one(s) in their village not making sacrifices to the spirits, and they moved to Banabé to be near other believers.

	In Banabe	<1 hour away*	>1 hour away*
Men	12	9	4
Women	20	10	5

*walking

Table 5. Church membership (87%) by residence

Education.

	No school	Some primary	Some secondary	Some French	Good French	Read Teen
Lobi men	9	5	0	5	3	3
Lobi women	17	3	1	4	2	5
Tembo men	7	1	1	4	1	5
Tembo women	12	1	1	2	2	7
Other	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total*	46	11	3	15	8	20

*some members are represented in more than one column

Table 6. Church membership (87%) by education

By far the majority (77%) of those interviewed had never had any formal schooling. Only three individuals (5%) had gone beyond primary school, and only one of those, a Tensé male, had completed secondary school. Even without schooling, due to migrations to the south, 40% can speak some French, 15% speak it well. 75% said they could speak at least some Dioula, the trade language for the area.

Since the inception of the church and the availability of portions of the Bible in Teen, a number of both Lobi and Tembo Christians have begun to learn to read Teen, including some of those who have never been to school. Twenty individuals, or 30% said they could read some Teen.

Kinship. All four major matriclans and a fair number of patriclans are represented among the fifty-eight Lobi and Tembo interviewed.

	Lobi	Tembo
Matriclans	Pale/Som/Sib 19	Folma/Som/Sia 15
	Kambire/Kambou/Noufe 13	Djane/Kambou/Wuse 6
	Hien 0	Webe 2
	Da 3	Da 0

Table 7. Church membership (87%) by matriclan

The heavy emphasis on the Pale and Kambire clans reflects the population in Banabé and the surrounding area. Though both groups tend toward patrilocal (same patriclan membership) residence, those within a village are generally predominantly of one matriclan. Where there is more than one matriclan represented, those of the same matriclan reside near each other.

	Lobi	Tembo
Patriclans:	Tchola 3	Tchola 9
	Yolkweto 3	
	Brefor 6	Welan 8
	Bundato 6	Bonse 1
	Balanko 1	
	Yundar 1	
	Kubedar 2	
	Ponto 2	
	Vinvindar 6	
	Jembu 1	
	Barambi 1	Borombo 1
	Tchenomato 1	
		Djula 2

Table 8. Church membership (87%) by patriclan

Four individuals, two Lobi and two Tembo, did not know what patriclan they belonged to. The two Lobi, a couple whose families had both moved to the fringes of Lobi country and beyond, had never been initiated. Not only did they not know the name of their patriclans, but they did not seem to know what I was talking about. In each case, they gave the name of their father's matriclan. As initiation is so secret, and talking about it with the uninitiated is believed to incur the immediate wrath of the patriclan spirits, it is unlikely that anyone around them ever talked about their patriclan affiliation as this is very closely associated with the initiation. The two Tembo who did not know their patriclans were both young women. Both had been initiated, but I am not sure if they made the actual trip. One is married and has lived for many years in the south away from Lobi country. The other was born in Banabé, but has been in school since she was six or seven. She presently attends secondary school some distance from Banabé. In recent years, school children have not all made the trip into Burkina Faso, but are initiated near home, using mud from the Volta brought back by the initiated. Though given a new name, and able to dance the 'dyoro', they are not considered completely initiated, and few will talk with them of the actual ritual, or of their patriclan affiliation.

In actual fact, there were several other women who seemed very unsure about their patriclans, although they had made the trip to Burkina Faso in their childhood. It was clear that patriclan membership made more of an impression on men than on women. In each of these incidents, where a woman did not know her patriclan affiliation, my assistant knew their families, and the patriclan of their fathers, so I was able to fill in the information.

It may be noted that only one patriclan name occurs both among the Lobi and the Tembo, that of the Tchola. It seems that the Welan" are the same as the Brefor, although I got some difference of opinion on that. I suspect that the Bonse" and the Bundar" are the same as -se" in Teen indicates 'one who is' and -dar" in Lobi refers to 'those who are'. The similarities in the names Barambi" and Borombo" also suggests they are the same.

Is This a Successful Multi-ethnic Church?

The church in Banabé has now been examined from both an historical and a temporal perspective, and organizational features have been briefly considered. It is now time to discuss whether the Banabé church can be considered successful as regards multi-ethnic recruitment from both the Lobi and the Tembo populations. Though the unity of the church was rocky prior to my research leading to a split during the time I was there, I believe it has been shown that the rift had little, if anything, to do with differences between the two primary ethnic groups involved. The real issue, then, concerns whether it can be said, since its inception, that the church has been able to draw and keep new members from both ethnic groups, that one ethnic group has not gained disproportionately on

the other, and that those who later return to their traditional religious practices are not predominantly from only one of the two groups.

Any of these points needs to be looked at in relation to the population ratios from the area from which the church primarily draws. Accurate figures are not easy to come by. As already indicated, the estimation for the overall size of the two ethnic groups, show the Lobi (180,000) to outnumber the Tembo (10–15,000), twelve to one. Lobi villages, however, can be found far into Burkina Faso to the north, and to Bondoukou, or farther, in the southeast. There is a concentration of Tembo, located within Burkina Faso around Galgouli, but their numbers are few in comparison to the Lobi. There are Tembo along all roads leading out of Lobi country, but again their numbers are yet small. Tradition says that the Tembo were in the area of Banabé when the Lobi arrived from the north, possibly around the turn of the century. The figures presently available from the Ministry of the Interior, for the canton of Tehini, where Banabé is located, seem to support this. Although my source for these figures felt the total was too low, the numbers do suggest a clear pattern for Lobi/Tembo ratios in the area (see TABLE 9).

In the canton of Tehini, of 61 villages, 21 were exclusively Tembo, 5 exclusively Loma[7] and 2 exclusively Lobi. Another 27 villages showed mixed Lobi/Tembo populations, but in 16 of these, the Tembo comprised 60–90% of the population. Only 11 villages had a Lobi population which outnumbered the Tembo. In the 5 remaining locations, where there was a significant population (20–30%) from other ethnic groups, the Tembo population still exceeded the Lobi in 3. Of these, only in Banabé, the largest village in the canton, were the Lobi in a truly significant majority. In fact, in l985, no Tembo were listed as residing in Banabé proper. Therefore, as of 1985, in the canton of Tehini, the Tembo made up 47% of the population, the Lobi, 37% and other groups 16%.

Contrast this with the neighboring cantons of Lankio and N'Zan. To the east in Lankio, with 35 villages, 31 are exclusively Lobi and none exclusively Tembo. The latter only comprise 2.5% of the population. In N'Zan, to the west with 20 villages, there are only 6 that are exclusively Lobi. 61% of the population is from other ethnic groups, though none really predominate. The Tembo comprise only about 3% of the N'Zan population.

As already indicated, this seems to support the notion that the Tembo populated the area around Banabé first, although the Lobi later founded the village proper.[8] It also suggests that a further difference between the Lobi and Tembo is that the propensity to migrate in a southern or southeastern direction is much more predominant among the Lobi. The Tembo have tended more often to stay put.

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[7] The Loma are a small population living in several villages to the northeast of Banabé. Linguistically closely related to the Tembo, their cultural practices are quite distinct. They are exclusively matrilineal and do not initiate their children in Burkina, as do the Tembo. They have no brideservice, and say that their marriage and funeral rituals differ significantly from those of the Tembo. There is some intermarriage between the Loma and the Tembo, but seldom, if ever, between the Loma and the Lobi. It is tempting to speculate that the Loma and Tembo were one group until the coming of the Lobi into their territory, and that the Loma are a remnant who chose not to begin assimilation with the Lobi. A great deal more research would be necessary to see if there is any factual basis for this suggestion.

[8] According to one tradition, before the coming of the Lobi to the region of Banabé, the Tembo occupied many villages in the area under the protection and with the permission of the Koulango land chief at Saye. The Koulango Kingdom at this time, claimed a vast territory, which included the area where the Tembo resided. Much of this region was yet uninhabited and anyone wanting to found a village needed to seek permission from the nearest Koulango land chief and pay a tribute. Possibly about 1880, a Lobi, T. Noufé, came from the village of Timbikora, in what is now Burkina Faso, to the site of present day Banabé, where he encountered the camp of a Tensé man, who was of his same matriclan. The Tensé, G. Djane, had left his former village and recently installed himself and his family in this place. He invited T. Noufé to establish his family there as well, and he did so. For some time they lived together on the site without difficulties, until one day T. Noufé visited Saye. It seems that G. Djane had not sought permission to found a village on the site where he and T. Noufé were now living and the land chief was enraged. He ordered the Tensé off the land but gave T. Noufé permission to found a village there. This he did, naming it after the river on which it was situated. He was required to pay 20,000 cowries and 3 cows to establish his claim. (Fieloux 1980:137)

I was told by a present day resident of Banabé that it was not actually T. Noufé who founded the village, but his son, Y. Sib. The latter chose, however, to found the village in the name and matriclan of his father. When T. Noufé died, his other sons left their father's village and joined Y. Sib at Banabé.

	Makeup of village	Number of villages	Population
Exclusively Lobi/Tembo villages	All Tembo	21	1303
	All Lobi	2	285
	All Loma	5	667
	T>L (60–95%T)	16	1767
	L>T (60–80% L)	11	1064
	L/T (50/50%)	1	44
Include other populations	T>L	3	550
	L>T	1 (Banabe)	1139
	L/T (50/50%)	1	169
Total Population			6979
	Tembo		3254
	Lobi		2579
	Loma		667
	Other		479

Table 9. Population of the Canton of Tehini in 1985

If one looks, then, primarily at the canton of Tehini, excluding Banabé, it can be seen that, as of 1985, the Tembo outnumbered the Lobi by a fair margin (56% to 30%), whereas, in Banabé itself, the Lobi comprised the majority population (75%), and there were no Tembo registered at all. As of the end of 1987, possibly due to the influence of the emerging church, Banabé has about a 5% Tembo population.

At the same time, late l987, the membership of the church in Banabé was 57% Lobi and 41% Tembo. Though these figures are somewhat reversed from those in the area at large, the fact that the village is primarily Lobi, must be taken into consideration. Nor can it be said that conversions are tending to come from one group more than another. Although it is somewhat difficult to get accurate dates for when people began to follow the ‘new road’, general recollections suggest that both Lobi and Tembo have converted to Christianity throughout the brief history of the church (see Table 10) The slightly larger proportion of Tembo in the last column reflects several members of one family who converted together in mid l987. Of the 69 persons represented in Table 10, 41 were converted through the direct influence of someone in the Banabé church. The remaining 28 converted in other parts of the country, either before moving to the area of Banabé, or during a sojourn in the south, where they had gone to find work. Many of both groups actually reside in outlying villages and come into Banabé primarily for church functions or market.

Protestant Church of Banabe

Conversions				
	Prior to 1979	1979–1982 (4 years)	1983–1985 (3 years)	1986–1987 (2 years)
Lobi (39)	4	16	13	6
Tembo (28)	1	10	10	7
Other (2)	–	–	1	1
Total	5	26	24	14

Table 10. Approximate conversion dates of church members

It would seem there are primarily two reasons why people later leave the church to return to their traditional religion. Either they find that the new path prohibits some behavior they are reluctant to forego, or they have gotten what they wanted in coming and see no need to continue any longer. The other Christians say that both these groups were people who tried to follow two paths, and Christians must be willing to make a total break with the old path and follow only the new one.

The way that a new convert first shows his or her commitment to the new road is by burning the altars and amulets dedicated to their various protector spirits. They are counseled to burn them all, but as the number any one person has can vary greatly, no one but the individual involved, knows if he or she has really done so. If they retain one or more, there is a tendency to try and both pray to Jesus and sacrifice to the spirits. Since the latter usually involves consulting a diviner, it is generally not long before the person is found out. At this point, they must decide either to burn those last ties to the spirits, or to leave the church. According to Jean, only four or five people have left in this manner since the church began. All but one were Lobi. Jean and Isaie say that the Tembo take much longer to decide if they really want to follow Jesus, but when they do, it is final. The Lobi, they say, are more quick to follow, but for them it is not always a final decision.

The other significant group of people, who have joined and then left the church, is comprised of five or six Tembo women who have come to the church to have a curse removed. The Lobi can put pressure on wives who run off with other men by demanding the return of the brideprice. The Tembo, who do not pay a brideprice, have no such leverage. Therefore, when a Tensé wife runs off, or she refuses to marry the man who wants her, the man involved is likely to put a curse on her, such that anyone who has anything to do with her will die. If she is stubborn, even her own family will not take her in, and she may have to sleep in the corn huts in the fields. The curse is somehow tied to the woman's hair, so that no one, not even the woman herself, dares cut it. Almost inevitably, the woman will finally give in and do what is required of her. The Christians, however, are not afraid of the curse and will take such women in. Jean and the other leaders will even go so far as to cut their hair for them, which marks the end of the curse. Over the years, several Tembo women have come to the church to have the curse removed and their hair cut. Almost without fail, however, within weeks or months, they leave the church to live with a man they want to marry, and return to the spirits. In fact, this trend has become so universal, that in mid-l987, Jean let it be known, that though such women were still welcome in the church, he would not remove the curse for them for a year. Since that time, only one of the women who came due to a curse, said she wanted to stay and follow the new road.

The history, leadership and direction of the church in Banabé has been influenced by both Lobi and Tembo believers. New members of the congregation have joined in numbers proportionate to the general population of the area, if one considers the differing residence patterns of the village of Banabé and that of the surrounding canton. Those leaving the church come from both the Lobi and Tembo contingents in roughly equal numbers, albeit for different reasons. Therefore, examining the patterns of growth and attrition in the congregation, in the light of general population figures for the area, it would seem that the church in Banabé can be considered a successful multi-ethnic institution.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to give a clearer picture of the Banabé church, how it has grown and developed, and how crisis situations during its eight year history (1979–1987) have been handled. Its success in recruiting members from both ethnic categories also establishes its validity as a case to which Fernandez' model can profitably be applied.

This application is made in Chapter Five and some of the strengths and weaknesses of the model are demonstrated. Even more important, however, the Protestant Church of Banabé offers material for going beyond Fernandez to a new consideration of how religious movements should be viewed and understood, as well as making possible a redefinition of the relationship of religion to ethnic identity. My findings are summarized in Chapter Six.

5

Successful Multi-Ethnic Recruitment: Fernandez' Model

> *"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galations 3:26–29.*

In Chapter One it was shown that the Protestant Church of Banabé, founded in 1979, is an independent church as defined by Barrett (1968) and Turner (1979). Its membership is comprised primarily of individuals from the Lobi and Tembo populations residing in the somewhat remote region of northeastern Côte d'Ivoire. In Chapter Two an examination of the traditional culture of the Lobi and the Tembo peoples indicated that their systems are so similar it calls into question the possibility of considering them as two ethnic categories. Chapter Three, however, clarified the notions of ethnic consciousness and ethnic group and demonstrated that the Banabé church is indeed a multi-ethnic institution. That it has also been successful in consistently recruiting both Lobi and Tembo into the congregation was shown in Chapter Four. It has, therefore, been established that the Protestant Church of Banabé is a successful multi-ethnic, independent and rural church which can profitably be examined for a better understanding of the ethnic factor in new religious movements and churches. Such a scrutiny will, in addition, help to clarify the relationship of religion to ethnic identity as exemplified in such movements.

As also described in Chapter One, Fernandez' model for successful multi-ethnic church growth provides an excellent framework for beginning the proposed examination. In this model, he selects a number of factors that might explain the success or failure of a church or movement to recruit across ethnic lines. Some of the factors which he suggests may be necessary for, or at least enhance, multi-ethnic growth are known to be absent in the Banabé case. The church operates, for example, using three (Lobiri, Teen and French) mutually unintelligible languages. It also is located in a clearly rural environment. Some explanation for this is necessary. In this chapter I will apply Fernandez' model, proposal by proposal, and attempt to ascertain how the Banabé material supports or refutes his claims. It is first necessary, however, to review the problem for which it was developed and to outline how the case evidence will be applied to each portion of the overall model.

The proliferation of new religious movements around the world, and especially in Africa, has already been discussed. The question we are now addressing concerns the trend for many of these movements to make universalist claims, accompanied by an apparent inability of most local congregations to succeed in drawing significant numbers of new members from other than the founding ethnic group. Yet, even as the rate of failure for multi-ethnic church growth seems extremely high, there are congregations which appear to have achieved at least a modicum of success in this area. Why have some succeeded where the majority have failed?

In his study of independent churches and religious movements (see Chapter One) Fernandez noted that some of these groups were more successful in recruiting across ethnic lines than others, and sought to discover what factors might play a part in explaining this success. Looking at such things as relationships between the pertinent groups, organization of worship, content of the message taught, expectations placed upon the membership, and locality of the congregation, Fernandez developed a model for successful multi-ethnic church growth which could be tested in other religious movements which made pan-ethnic claims. To restate this model, Fernandez says:

> "My experience suggests that in a situation where strongly preserved intertribal antagonisms are absent and where there are no sharp cultural or linguistic differences between ethnic groups pan-ethnic recruitment is facilitated by:
>
> 1. collaterality as opposed to lineality in worship
> 2. spectator rather than participant ritual
> 3. focus upon ceremonial acts rather than upon the "word"
> 4. therapeutic rather than redemptive orientation

5. matter of fact rather than ecstatic initiation
6. decentralization and liberality of authority structure
7. peri-urban rather than rural location" (Fernandez 1975:143–145)

This model can easily be divided into two parts. First are the three necessary conditions alluded to in his initial statement. These include cultural similarity, lack of linguistic barriers and the absence of inter-group hostilities. Second are the list of seven facilitating factors, which Fernandez suggests will, by their presence or absence, inhibit or enhance successful multi-ethnic recruitment across ethnic lines. Each of these will be dealt with in turn.

In attempting to test this model, it was not always clear how Fernandez meant to apply each of the ten hypotheses, either by his restatement of them or from the comparisons he made of the five religious movements he discussed. Therefore, as each of the proposals is presented, it will be interpreted, using Fernandez' own comments where possible, but suggesting various other readings or motivations where these seem to be lacking. Following this, the relevant material from the Banabé case will be presented to ascertain whether, in fact, each hypothesis is supported or refuted by the new evidence. In most cases, this will lead to a discussion of the conclusions reached, a re-interpretation or rewording of the original hypothesis and further areas of research that should be considered. This will make it possible in the final chapter, not only to develop a new set of propositions for successful multi-ethnic recruitment but, to show how the Banabé material makes it possible to gain a better understanding of religious movements in general.

Necessary Conditions

Before looking at Fernandez' hypotheses regarding the factors which he feels will facilitate or inhibit successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements, it is necessary to examine the conditions which he suggests must" be present for such recruitment to occur at all. The assumption seems to be that significant cultural variation (n1), mutual linguistic unintelligibility (n2), and the perception of a past history or present situation of inequality, oppression or injustice between the two groups (n3) are all incompatible with successful multi-ethnic growth patterns in a religious movement. Each of these proposed conditions needs to be examined individually in light of the Banabé material.

n1. "…no sharp cultural differences…" (Fernandez 175:143)

He restates this:

> "The greater the affinity of cultures available for recruitment to religious movements, the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez 1975:145).

The example offered by Fernandez is one from the Bwiti case, which will be discussed more fully later, but where "…the conversion experience is a reliving of the Fang past, and symbolic episodes of the Fang migration into the equatorial forest are often included" (Fernandez 1975:137). The problem was apparently not the form" these initiation rituals took, which was, after all, familiar to the southern Gabonese peoples, from whom much of Bwiti was borrowed. "…it is the culture-bound content that should be emphasized, for it constitutes a gnostic challenge which is discouraging to the stranger from another culture" (Fernandez 1975 :137). On this basis, it is necessary, if a religious movement is to recruit successfully across ethnic lines, for the cultural content of worship to be essentially neutral or draw more or less equally from all ethnic groups involved.

It is clear that a religious movement whose message is ethnically defined would have extreme difficulty in fulfilling its pan-ethnic claims. This cannot be the only reason, however, for viewing the lack of sharp cultural distinctions as a necessary condition for successful multi-ethnic recruitment. Fernandez neglects to mention an even more obvious area of conflict for two or more groups whose cultural traditions are quite distinct; that of the political arena. People who want to work together must agree on how this is to be done. Not only would it be necessary to come to an agreement about choosing leaders who would not allow one group to dominate the other, but the methods of defining and resolving conflict situations must be equally favorable to all groups. The focus of this point is not so much on whether there is a predominance of leaders from one group or another, though that may also be problematical, but on whether one ethnic group has a greater influence on the definition and interpretation of the decision-making process. Regardless of how fair the attempt may be, those who traditionally resolve their conflicts in a manner different from the one used by church leaders, are likely to feel the other group has an unfair advantage. To be acceptable to all, and therefore facilitate multi-ethnic recruitment, it would be necessary to adopt either a quite new and distinct method of defining and resolving conflicts, or one which would draw in a relatively equal manner

from all groups involved. Fernandez' hypothesis should suggest that, whether in the culture of worship or in that which defines conflict resolution, a situation of sharp cultural differences makes such cooperation unlikely.

The case of the church at Banabé does nothing to disprove this hypothesis. Regardless of linguistic differences, regardless of their residing in separate villages or in distinct enclaves, regardless of their reluctance to intermarry, the Lobi and the Tembo share so much of the same culture that they can be said to operate within two very heavily overlapping cultural systems. Rituals may vary, spirit altars may house distinct occupants, and basic character traits may be seen to differ, but the two groups share essentially the same world view.

There is little doubt that such unity in cultural matters, value systems and world view serves to lessen, if not abolish, the number of points where ethnic conflict might occur. The strain, then, for two groups to operate successfully within the same religious movement is greatly reduced. Such conflicts as do occur would not necessarily divide along ethnic lines, nor would the manner in which efforts were made to resolve these disagreements necessarily be the source of further conflict.

Although the Banabé case supports Fernandez' hypothesis that a multi-ethnic religious movement will be more successful where the groups involved are culturally similar, it does not follow that such a situation is a necessary condition" for successful multi-ethnic recruitment. It seems highly likely that, as with the Bwiti case, any religious movement whose ritual activity presupposes cultural knowledge will not succeed in drawing from other ethnic groups. If, on the other hand, the content of the movement does not favor one group over another, quite extreme cultural differences may well be tolerated. Cultural similarity should possibly be considered a facilitating factor rather than a necessary condition. Whichever it is, greater focus needs to be placed on what constitutes significant cultural difference. How similar must two groups be to succeed in multi-ethnic recruitment? What traits or combinations of traits are insurmountable? Which can be tolerated or ignored? A great deal more study is needed.

n2. "No sharp linguistic differences…" (Fernandez 1975:143).

Fernandez does not restate this as a hypothesis, but he does make fairly clear why he feels this may be a necessary condition for successful multi-ethnic church growth:

> "…local exclusiveness will be seen as a natural enough consequence of population distribution and of the fact that worship cannot be effectively conducted in a number of languages at once" (Fernandez 1975:141).

He offers the example of the Apostles' Revelation Society in Ghana which valiantly tries to hold services in three African languages, and in English, if a European is present. But, he adds, the effort is so cumbersome that any dynamic of worship is lost and, therefore, the procedure is ineffective. The first language is always Ewe. All songs are in Ewe, as are all ritualized portions of the service. Language, in this case, clearly is an important factor in establishing one ethnic group as dominant in the local worship center (Fernandez 1975:141).

It certainly seems obvious that if people do not speak the same or mutually intelligible languages, communication would be all but impossible. The expected scenario would be that each group would try to give their own language priority and that this would result either in division, due to the chaos that ensues, or in the domination of one group by the other, this would lead to the minority group seceding or failing to recruit further from their own ethnic group. In either case, recruitment would cease to be multi-ethnic.

It appears that this criteria, if valid, would doom the Banabé Church to failure as a successfully growing multi-ethnic institution. Although of the same language family (Gur), the languages of the Lobi and Tembo peoples are mutually unintelligible.[1] The Tembo, living as they do, in relatively small areas within the much larger Lobi territory, are more apt to speak some Lobiri than the Lobi are to know Teen. Many Lobi reside in areas where they seldom come in contact with the Tembo and thus have had no cause to learn their language. Even in the area around Banabé, where Lobi and Tembo commingle in the market place and occasionally have begun to reside in separate enclaves within the same village, there are many of both groups who speak little, if any, of the other's language. The situation is such that, according to Fernandez, no religious movement should be able to successfully recruit from both linguistic units.

[1] See Chapter Two, pg.

To the contrary, the church in Banabé has, since its inception, successfully drawn from among both Lobiri and Teen speakers.[2] Church organization and worship indicates that the congregation accepts the communication challenge, drawing leadership from both groups and conducting all services in both languages, giving precedence to neither. It is clear that the Banabé case suggests that sharp linguistic differences are not necessarily a barrier to successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements.

I found an interesting corroboration of this point during one of my visits to Abidjan, the former capital and largest city in Côte d'Ivoire. During this time, I attended a Protestant church in the suburb of Aboboga, some distance from the city center. Although the church was begun by a French mission, which continues to run a Bible school in another part of Abidjan, the congregation no longer has any formal ties with the founding organization and has been led for many years entirely by Ivorians. There are five 'official' (Baulé, Dida, Bété, Wobé and Yakouba) and one 'unofficial' (Toura) language groups which make up the membership of the church. The home areas of these languages are in widely separated portions of Côte d'Ivoire and they represent several different language families, yet it can be safely said that the church successfully draws new members from each of these groups. The pastor himself is a Dan speaker but Sunday services are held primarily in French. People sit together with others from their ethnic group and each has the opportunity during the service to sing and to pray in their own language. A choir of about 20 men and women is made up of speakers from all the groups and they sing a medley of songs in French and the other languages. Following the service, those who do not understand the French sermon meet together by ethnic group with a bilingual speaker to discuss the message. During the week, there are nine other meetings: two more general meetings, a meeting for the women, one for the youth, and a separate meeting for each of the 'official' languages. I was told that as the number of Dan and Toura speakers increased, they too would become 'official' languages and could hold their own meetings. It seems clear that, for this congregation as well, language differences do not constitute a barrier to successful multi-ethnic recruitment.

What then does this say about the place of language in religious movements that hold to a universal message and seek to draw their membership from across ethnic lines? Looking at the Banabé and Aboboga cases, there are three points that can be made. First, although speaking the same or a similar language may not be a necessary condition for successful multi-ethnic church growth, some measure of bilingualism is. In the Banabé church, leaders tended to know both languages well and every effort was made to ensure that the entire congregation understood the sermon, the songs, and the announcements. As it was always allowed that there might be someone present who did not speak either of the local languages, the sermon and announcements were also translated into French by a man who was trilingual, and one or two French songs were usually sung. The lengthy services, which often lasted from two and a half to three hours, were primarily due to the added time needed for translation. In Aboboga, where up to seven languages were involved, no effort was made during the meeting to translate the sermon or announcements into each of the other languages and services were consequently shorter. Songs were sung by the various ethnic groups and by the choir without translation. French was the cement that held it all together. While many individuals in the congregation had very little French, the leaders of each of the ethnic units were generally bilingual and were responsible for communicating what was being taught to the other members of their language group.

The second point that can be made regarding language and multi-ethnic religious movements is actually a corollary to the first proposition concerning bilingualism. Both the Banabé and Aboboga cases indicate that church leaders will be chosen from among those who are bilingual in the relevant languages. A monolingual speaker of either language has little hope of being chosen and anyone aspiring to leadership must seek to have an adequate ability in the other language(s). In the Aboboga case, this means that the leaders of each of the ethnic groups will likely have attained some level of formal education, since a good understanding of French is a qualification for leadership. In Banabé, however, where the relevant languages are both local dialects, the leaders are not required to have, and in fact generally do not have, any formal education. In spite of this, most have attained some facility in learning to read the Scriptures in their own language.

A third and final point actually relates to the third of the necessary factors in Fernandez' model (see below) regarding the absence of intertribal hostilities, but looks specifically at the place given to language in church services. It would seem that part of the reason why these two churches are successful in recruiting across ethnic lines is that a very conscious effort is made to give equal weight and opportunity to each of the language groups involved. One of the things that stood out in the Banabé church was that, not only was all spoken material translated so that everyone could understand it, but the same number of songs were sung in each language, almost without fail. Each

[2] See Chapter Four, Table 10, pg.

group was also given equal opportunity to pray aloud in their own tongue. If two Lobiri songs were sung, these were then followed by two Teen songs. If someone taught a new song in Teen, another person would come up and teach a new Lobiri song. The words and messages of these songs were carefully translated so that all the congregation could sing each of them enthusiastically, even if they did not always understand exactly what they were singing. In Aboboga, all five of the 'official' groups might not get a chance to sing a song or pray in each service, and the choir could not sing a song in every language every week, but over a period of time each of the groups was given equal representation. Respect for each of the languages involved, demonstrated in concrete and visible ways, may well be a key factor in successful multi-ethnic church growth.

n3. "No strongly preserved intertribal antagonisms…" (Fernandez 1975:143).

He restates this:

> "The greater the 'equality' of cultures (defined in terms of their freedom from historical and contemporary experience of domination and subordination) available for recruitment, the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez 1975:145).

Of the five groups Fernandez studied, the Christianisme Celeste Church and the Apostles' Revelation Society have made the greatest inroads towards overcoming ethnic ties where gross membership is concerned. Fernandez states, however, that, "…beyond the language problem there remains in both these churches an ethnocentric enthusiasm that discourages outside membership" (Fernandez 175:141). He suggests that religious exaltation implies an exaltation of the group that has gathered together to worship. Any hostilities or antagonisms between groups worshiping together will become an impediment to that exaltation and discourage pan-ethnic membership. In spite of this, the Christianisme Celeste Church has been more effective in developing an overall multi-ethnic membership than has the Apostles' Revelation Society, although neither is especially successful at the local level. Fernandez attributes this to the greater historical affinities among the Goun, Fon and Mina peoples which constitute the various congregations of the Christianisme Celeste Church. Such ties do not exist for the Ewe and Akan of the Apostles' Revelation Society.

An even stronger case can be made for the northern and southern Gabonese peoples to whom the Bwiti cult is directed. Fernandez does not go into details but says that the inter-ethnic hostility which has its origins in the colonial situation is substantial. Even without the Fang retribalization of the cult, such hostilities would seem to provide an essentially insurmountable barrier to a multi-ethnic development of the movement.

It is clear that where one group feels inferior to, or hostile toward, another group, the chances for working together with any real degree of harmony or sense of equality is greatly diminished. People are unlikely to be attracted to a movement that automatically allots them an inferior position or puts them in conflict with an historical enemy. On the other hand, a universal message that purports to dissolve such boundaries or eliminate inequalities may, at least initially, draw together people who would not otherwise consider functioning within one institution. Fernandez is suggesting, however, that the presence of such enduring hostilities makes an ongoing association impossible.

The Banabé material does nothing to refute this hypothesis. Although I had heard, before arriving in northeastern Côte d'Ivoire, that the Lobi felt superior to the Tembo and that the latter accepted this designation, I found nothing concrete to support this assertion. I examined three areas in seeking insights as to how each of the groups ranked the other in relation to themselves. First, I compared Lobi and Tembo perceptions of their migration history. I asked how their ancestors came to occupy the territory where they now reside and whether they regard the other group as having more, or less, right to the land than they themselves have. Second, I looked at their own statements as to whether they felt any sense of superiority or inferiority in relation to the other group. Finally, I considered whether any cultural practices suggested a discrimination by one group in regards to the other. Each of these needs to be examined in turn.

First of all, there is no indication in the oral history of the region that the Tembo hold any bitterness toward the Lobi for invading the territory that they already occupied. The Lobi and Tembo who have settled the area in and around Banabé say they migrated out of present day Burkina Faso into what is now the Canton of Tehini, although it is recognized by both that the Tembo arrived in the territory first. This does not seem to mean, however, that the latter, therefore, had prior claim to the land or that they can even be said to be autochthonous to the region. Although unoccupied when the first Tembo arrived, the entire area was apparently already under the auspices of the Koulango Kingdom which had its center in present day Bouna to the east. Both groups had been required, in the past, to pay tribute in order to establish and maintain their villages. Neither group seemed to believe that the other had usurped

space that rightfully belonged to them, although the Tembo, who built the first villages, are believed by both groups to have the more powerful protector spirits.

The second area of consideration, involving explicit statements that individuals might have made regarding any generalized animosity or feelings of superiority toward the other group, also offers little to suggest that such feelings are held. As has already been indicated,[3] those interviewed often asserted that there was little or no difference between the Lobi and the Tembo. This is an unlikely response, if the other group were felt to be inferior. Similarly, although the number of marriages between Lobi and Tembo are few,[4] when asked, every individual indicated that they saw no problem with themselves or their children marrying across ethnic lines.

Finally, it must be asked whether there are any cultural practices that contradict these statements of equality between the Lobi and the Tembo? Three areas, all of which have been discussed before, could suggest possibilities of this. Mixed marriages seldom occur, villages tend to be exclusively Lobi or Tembo, or to be segregated, and conversations between a Lobi and a Tembo are held most often in Lobiri. The first two, as already contended,[5] suggests that each group sees itself as distinct from the other, but does not necessarily imply a sense of superiority, especially in light of statements to the contrary. The last matter, that of language use, is the strongest indication that the Lobi may feel themselves superior to the Tembo and that the latter more or less acquiesce to that designation.

I would suggest, however, that the dominance of Lobiri in these situations does little to support the notion of a superior/inferior ranking between the two groups. As already pointed out,[6] the fact that more Tembo speak Lobiri, than Lobi Teen, is hardly surprising. Many Lobi, presently in the Canton of Tehini, have migrated fairly recently into the region and only those who have resided in or near Tembo villages for some time are likely to have picked up any of the minority language. Most Tembo, on the other hand, are generally in contact with Lobi individuals on a regular basis and therefore have learned more of the majority language.

It is also not true that Lobiri is the language used in every situation where a Lobi and a Tembo are found conversing. Though this was true in the majority of cases, I was present on several occasions when Teen was the language of choice, even when one of the speakers was Lobi. From time to time I even heard both Lobiri and Teen spoken, where each individual was using their own language. I was not able to learn what motivates the use of one language as opposed to another but it may well be that the real criterion for deciding what language is spoken in any given conversation is simply language ability.

Before concluding this topic, one other point needs to be made as regards language. It may not be possible to show, by language usage, that either group feels superior to the other, but the fact that two groups which share so many cultural patterns and claim to be essentially one people, are yet showing no efforts toward language assimilation, suggests that neither feels inferior to the other. If it were true that the Tembo saw themselves as inferior to the Lobi and wanted to be considered one and the same with them, it would seen that there would be greater numbers speaking Lobiri well, and more encouragement of its use by their children and in the home. Such does not seem to be the case. If the trend toward more mixed villages continues and Lobi and Tembo children grow up in each other's company, this may change, though it is also possible that the only real difference will be a higher rate of bilingualism. Only time will tell.

None of the evidence suggests that either the Lobi or the Tembo hold any degree of animosity toward the other or that they recognize any real sense of inequality among themselves. The fact that they still maintain certain practices that keep each other separate and distinct suggests that each feels adequate and in no way inferior to the other. They seem to be satisfied to continue more or less as they are, together and yet apart. Although there is nothing in this case to substantiate that multi-ethnic religious movements must" be free of a history of animosity and inequality to succeed, such hostilities can hardly facilitate church growth, and their absence is a plus for the Banabé congregation.

Facilitating Factors

In his comparison of the five religious movements which made universalist claims, Fernandez often found a cluster of factors which might help explain the success or failure of each movement to recruit members from across ethnic

[3] See Chapter Three, pg.

[4] See Chapter Three, pg.

[5] See Chapter Three, pg.

[6] See Chapter Four, pg.

lines. None applied to all cases, and none could be said to necessarily operate independently. By looking at all of the cases together, however, Fernandez felt that he could delineate certain factors that, by their presence or absence, could facilitate multi-ethnic church growth. Each of these (f1–f7) now needs to be examined.

f1. "Collaterality as opposed to lineality in worship" (Fernandez 1975:143).

He restates this:

> "The greater the emphasis upon lineal and genealogical ties to deity the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership. Conversely the greater the emphasis upon a generalized filial principle (collaterality) the greater the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez 1975:145).

Fernandez offers the Bwiti case[7] as an example of a religious movement where lineality in worship, along with other social and cultural factors, has limited multi-ethnic recruitment. Begun by the Fang of northern Gabon at the time of World War I to revitalize their ancestor cult, Bieri, it borrowed many of its beliefs and liturgical patterns from another ancestor cult, Bwiti, of the southern Gabonese peoples. At its inception, therefore, it had a wide appeal to a number of ethnic groups throughout Gabon, and since World War II the Fang leaders have maintained that Bwiti is open to all Africans. In spite of its multi-ethnic beginnings and pan-ethnic claims, however, Fernandez says that Fang Bwiti has tribalized to the point where no more than 10% of the membership in any given congregation is non-Fang (Fernandez 1975:132–133).

The factors which Fernandez suggests have brought about the retribalization of the Bwiti cult are numerous:

> "…(1) the appeal made in the cult to the patrilineal principle projected out into the supernatural, (2) the intensity of the conversion experience and the degree of devotion demanded of the membership after conversion, (3) a residual mistrust and mutual deprecation between the Fang and the autochthonous peoples of southern and coastal Gabon, (4) a tendency towards universe building through self-isolation (Fernandez 1975:135).

The focus in this section will be on the first of these factors. Number 3 has already been dealt with in the preceding section and 1 and 4 will be discussed as they apply to succeeding propositions within Fernandez' model.

One of the primary objectives of the Bwiti cult, Fernandez says, is to restore an effective relationship with the ancestors which had been lost under the influence of Christian evangelization. It is through the ancestors that one can reach the reigning supernaturals: God (Zame ye Mebege) and his sister (Nyingwan Mebege). Worship, then, is based on the lineage principle and many rituals are begun by the recitation of genealogies to summon the ancestors. The universalist ethic propounded by Bwiti leaders is thus betrayed through the invocation of lineal ancestors, who have special meaning and greater capacity for benevolence for Fang adherents. The few non-Fang drawn to the cult, Fernandez says, are the social isolates, who no longer have viable networks within their own groups (Fernandez 175:135–138).

A religious movement which holds beliefs and fosters worship based on the lineage principle cannot be truly universalist in its intent. Those not born into the founding system, regardless of how welcome they are, would forever be outsiders. It is, therefore, the content of the the message that is in focus. A belief system which concentrates on collateral affiliations, however, has more chance of recruiting across ethnic lines. Where the link to the supreme being(s) is membership itself, and each individual is, therefore, equal to every other member, the identity of one's ethnic origins need not be a major source of conflict.

The Banabé case again does nothing to refute this proposition. Although both the Lobi and the Tembo operate within strong, lineage based cultural systems, where one's ties to deity are through genealogical lines, the Christian message, as taught by the church leaders and generally understood by the congregation, is seen to supersede these conventional links to the supernatural. The traditional world view is not done away with, it is re-interpreted. The primary link to Tanbar/Nyele, the supreme being, was once believed to be the protector spirits, some of whom were ancestors. The Christians now say that these same protector spirits deceived them. In actual fact, they were sent by Satan to keep them in bondage to a never-ending cycle of suffering and sacrifice, and apart from God (Tanbar/Nyele). The spirits did not want them to know that God had long ago provided a way to him through his Son, Jesus Christ, so that all men and women who believed could be free from the bondage that Satan imposed and have access to God. These beliefs assure that all believers, regardless of ethnic group, gender, age or rank are equal

[7] See Chapter One, pg. , and also Fernandez, 1982.

before God and brothers and sisters in Christ. The lineage principle, though still operative within the social structure, especially in the ties Banabé believers have with non-believers, is not a relevant factor, therefore, in church organization and worship.

Although Fernandez' focus is on the content of the message proclaimed by any given religious movement, it seems to me that the lineage principle could offer a source of conflict in other areas as well. The Banabé material has little to say on this matter, due to the overlapping of the two cultural systems, including matriclan and patriclan affiliations. However, I would suggest that even where a universal message is proclaimed, two ethnic groups which have quite differing lineage (or non-lineage) based systems, either in their organization, their links to the supernatural, or in their influence on individual lives, could have real difficulties in their interpretation and application of the message within the local church. Further research needs to be done, to better understand the relationship between social structure and world view, in a situation of conversion.

f2. "Spectator rather than participant ritual" (Fernandez 1975:143)

Fernandez restates this:

> "…the greater the complexity of ritual and the greater the emphasis upon full membership participation, in its intricacies, the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez, p. 145).

To amplify this point, Fernandez compares two South African religious movements, the Old Man's Cult (Amakhehleni), fourteen miles south of Durban in Natal, and the Church of God in Christ, formerly in Durban itself, but now in the Umlazi township. At the time of Fernandez' research, both groups were small, having about 400 and 500 members respectively, originating in, and drawing primarily from, the Zulu population. Both also, however, make universalist claims and attempt to attract adherents from other ethnic groups, especially the Xhosa and Sotho peoples. The Old Man's Cult is clearly more successful at doing this than is the Church of God in Christ. Fernandez says that at least 30% of the permanent membership of the first movement is non-Zulu, whereas this is true of only 10% of the latter group. Furthermore, the Old Man's Cult, which has a strong focus on healing, has an ongoing transient population living on the grounds, at least half of which are non-Zulu. Considering that these churches began within the same population, having the same language and culture, and that they each include a non-Zulu membership with a similar make-up (Xhosa and Sotho), what factors might explain their differing success in pursuing their pan-ethnic aims? As with the Bwiti, Fernandez indicates several factors that may be involved, but one important influence is the focus the Old Man's Cult places on spectator worship, versus the greater participation required of members by the Church of God in Christ (Fernandez 1975:133–134, 138–139).

The Amakhehleni or Old Man's Cult operates as a center for healing, where anyone who is sick, from any population or language group, may come for solace. It is fully expected that many of those who come will return to their own settings, but some stay to worship and become part of the permanent membership. Rituals, however, are almost entirely in the hands of diviners and can be passively attended by others. Any stranger is welcome and is not required to participate actively for a very long time, in fact not until he or she is ready to do so. In the Church of God in Christ, on the other hand, there is no place for the long term spectator. The goal of spiritual restoration can only be met by the laying on of hands, a ceremonial event which demands complete cooperation and an expected response which indicates the success of the procedure (Fernandez 1975:138–139).

Fernandez is not explicit as to just why those who do not make up the majority population in a religious movement might be more drawn to a movement which requires little active participation. It seems likely, however, that the active participant puts himself, or herself, into focus, such that other members may judge his or her behavior and commitment to the movement. The stranger, unfamiliar with the cultural requirements that are the foundation for worship and rituals, especially if they are explained in a language that he or she does not fully control, is unlikely to want to be in a position to be evaluated and judged by the majority of members for a very long time, if ever.

Although the Banabé material essentially supports this hypothesis, it also raises at least two questions. First, it needs to be asked just how active participation is to be defined? Is it not possible, that what would be considered passive participation in one situation, may well be active in another? A second question regards my interpretation of Fernandez' hypothesis concerning spectator versus participant ritual. I have suggested that he means to imply that the reason for this preference by rank and file members of the congregation is their desire to avoid being judged by those of other ethnic groups in the movement. After considering the Banabé material, however, it must be asked whether priority given to spectator status is the result of multi-ethnic involvement or of an already existing cultural

trait? Before dealing with each of these questions, it is necessary to look at the place that both active and passive participation have in the Banabé church.

Unlike many of the religious movements described by Fernandez, worship at the Protestant Church in Banabé is not, at least as yet, highly ritualized. There is certainly form and order to their services and ceremonies, but there is little extra paraphernalia involved. The timing and format of non-scheduled rituals is not highly structured, and there seems to be an openness on the part of the leadership to try new ideas or adopt practices brought to them by believers from other congregations.[8] On the whole, there is little active participation expected by members of the congregation. The leadership informs them when services or rituals will be held and members attend, or not, as they see fit. Most participation, if not always passive, tends to be done on a group, rather than on an individual, basis. Though efforts have been made to get members to be more actively involved, these are usually met with resistance such that they are seldom successful.[9]

The formalized activities of the Banabé church can basically be divided into three types. First are the scheduled worship services held on Sunday mornings, and on Wednesday and Friday nights. Second are the burnings of the spirit pots and altars of anyone who has decided to follow the new road. Finally, there are the times of prayer for the sick, which are done for anyone who asks, whether a believer or not. Only the Sunday service is attended by the majority of believers. Wednesday and Friday services attract those who live close by, the others saying it is too far to come after dark. Distance also affects the attendance at the burning of spirit altars. Only if the ritual is being performed in Banabé itself and held immediately following the Sunday service do most of the believers go. If it is any farther away the numbers dwindle considerably, and of the women, only young girls can generally be persuaded to attend. The older women say they have food to prepare and cannot take the time. Prayers for the sick involve the fewest numbers of all, usually only a few leaders and the sick person, though all are invited to join in. Such events usually take place right after one of the scheduled services, but can occur at any time a request is made and one of the leaders puts out a call, for any who can, to come and pray.

Looking now at each of these types of rituals, there is little question that participation in scheduled services, by all but the leaders, is essentially passive. Other than joining in with the group singing and clapping, there are only three ways that a regular member of the congregation can actively participate. He or she can read scripture, pray aloud, or lead a new song. Only the second is open to everyone, as reading Scripture and leading new songs assumes a certain amount of education, which only a few in the congregation have. Even the praying is done only by a few who have overcome their fear of speaking aloud to God.

In comparison to scheduled services, the burning of spirit altars certainly requires more participation. But again, only those who desire to get involved actually do so. A distinction does need to be made between the individual for whom the ritual is being performed and those who come to support him or her in the acting out of the decision to leave the old path and begin walking on the new. The person in focus is participating actively by asking that the ceremony be performed at all. This point cannot be emphasized enough. To destroy one's spirit altars is perceived as a life threatening act which no Lobi or Tembo will instigate unless thoroughly convinced that he or she has protection from another source. Also, as the ceremony is invariably held in the courtyard of the compound where the new believer resides, a number of non-believers will be present, though these latter generally leave the vicinity or

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[8] (a) When the church began in 1979, it was not the custom for some time to take an offering. Eventually, however, a non-Lobi, non-Tembo believer from a congregation in the south came to work in Banabé for a few months and began to attend services. When he saw that the congregation did not take a collection for the work of the church he pointed this out to the pastor, Jean, who discussed it with the other leaders. They decided that it was important to give something back to God for all He had done for them, and from then on a collection was made, though no one was really sure what it was to be used for.

(b) Two weeks before I left the area it was announced in the Sunday service that beginning the following Sunday, men would sit on one side of the congregation and women on the other. Up to that time, people sat wherever they wanted, except that most of the children sat in back. I was not able to learn the source of this new practice except that they had heard it was a good thing to do and commonly done in other congregations.

[9] During a Sunday service in July of 1987, one of the Lobi leaders of the church came up to give the sermon and commented that he noticed several of the women had come late and missed the singing. He named them and said they would now come up and sing a song for us. One said she was late because she had been sick. Another said she had had food to prepare. The other two said nothing. None moved to comply and nothing more was said. It was very rare that anyone sang a 'special' number and then only if they were teaching it to the congregation. The only exceptions were two instances of women who had been to school coming and singing something in French.

recede to a 'safe' distance to observe the proceedings.[10] Very little is required, however, of the new convert, except pointing out all of his or her altars, and taking part in actually putting fire to the accumulation of spirit paraphernalia. Other (male) believers actually break apart the altars and build the pile, while the women seek out the brush and wood necessary for a hot fire. After that everyone joins in singing and praying and one of the leaders gives a short message. The entire procedure seldom lasts more that half an hour.

The third and final type of ritual,[11] that of praying for the sick, requires the most involvement of all, as each individual present is expected to lay hands on the sick person, and at some point to pray aloud for his or her healing. Although I was present at such events where even children actively participated in the praying and laying on of hands, it was far more common for those who participated to be drawn only from among the leadership of the church,

It did not seem, in any of the events described above, that either the Lobi or the Tembo could be said to have participated more actively. The Banabé case does support the notion that successful multi-ethnic recruitment occurs more often where spectator ritual is tolerated and there is little requirement for active participation. But as has already been suggested, both the hypothesis and its interpretation need to be re-examined in light of the Banabé material.

The first question concerns defining just what is meant by active, as opposed to passive, participation. Certainly active participation is involved when a specific response is expected to a given stimulus. Fernandez gives an example of such a situation in the laying on of hands ritual in the Church of God in Christ, where the participant is expected to voluntarily display a certain 'excess of behavior' (Fernandez 1975:139). I would suggest, however, that some apparently passive acts involve many of the same dynamics in particular situations. In peri-urban environments, such as those where the movements Fernandez describes occurred, the simple attendance of an individual at the ritual activities of a religious movement may well be a passive event. In a rural, traditional

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[10] During the course of my research, I attended six such rituals. Most often the compound in question, as well as any nearby, were totally deserted by all but believers. I was told that the others feared the anger of the spirits who were being forced out of their habitats by the burning of the altars. Occasionally, however, a few of the older men would remain in view, watching from one or two hundred yards away.

About a month before my departure, I attended a burning in a village a little over an hour's walk from Banabé. The man making the break with the spirits was the son of a very old man who had had seven wives during his lifetime. Three were still living. One of his wives had been one of the earliest and remains one of the staunchest believers in the Banabé church. Since her conversion, the majority of the old man's children and another of his wives had also become believers. The son who now was going to burn his altars was the last one, still residing in his father's compound, to convert. The third and last of this young man's three children had just died, though he had done everything the spirits had asked.

When we arrived in the village, word had gone ahead and the area was deserted, except for the old man and his youngest wife, who was also not a believer. She remained in the courtyard while greetings were exchanged and water was passed but left as soon as everyone rose to begin dismantling the altars. The old man, however, remained. I had never seen this happen before. He did not watch the activity, however, and when the various artifacts were piled at the edge of the compound for burning, he turned his bench so that his back was to the believers, but he remained well within earshot. After the completion of the ceremony, many of those present again joined him in the courtyard and conversed for some time.

For many years, the old man, a highly respected diviner, had been hearing about the new path from his wife, children and other believers. He had said on more than one occasion, that he would like to follow this new road himself, but was too fearful of the powerful spirits he housed in his courtyard. He even had Kosami, the most powerful one of all. After the burning of his son's altars, he told some of the church leaders that it was his desire to burn his own, as well, before he died. I learned after I returned home, that about a week after my departure, he did just that.

[11] It may have been noticed that I have not referred to the ritual of baptism, which is, in fact, practiced in the Banabé church. First of all, no such services took place during my stay in the area. The last one occurred more than a year before my arrival. There was talk of having one during the period of my research, but something always happened to delay it. The leadership feels that only ordained ministers can administer the rite and so have always called on someone from the church to the north of Banabé to perform the ritual in the past. During their association with the Pentecostal church to the east, no baptisms were held. Before I left, they had re-established their ties with the northern church and plans to baptize all converts of the past two years were again being discussed.

A second reason for not including the ritual of baptism in this discussion, is that I had the definite impression, that, to the congregation at large, this was yet an unfamiliar practice, done primarily because it was expected of them, not because they understood its significance. They had, as yet, had little teaching on the subject. At present, the burning of the spirit altars acts more as a rite of initiation than does baptism. At the same time, I would predict that this could change in the future, as the similarities between baptism and their own initiation rituals, now abandoned by believers, are too profound to be ignored.

environment, however, the same attendance at rituals which directly, or indirectly, denies the validity of local religious customs, can place the individual in a situation of active confrontation with members of his or her family and ethnic group. The evaluation of their behavior comes not (only) from those within the new belief system, but from those without. In the Banabé area, this has not, at least as yet, meant physical persecution, but believers must endure mockery and the constant prediction, by their relatives, of the dire consequences that will transpire for defying the spirits. In these circumstances, just leaving their compounds to attend services can be said to be a form of active participation.

Even if a satisfactory definition of active versus passive participation can be agreed upon, the question arises as to just how the preference for spectator over participant ritual is to be interpreted. Fernandez does not specifically say why such a preference should facilitate multi-ethnic church growth, but I have interpreted it to imply that individuals do not want their performance in ritual to be judged by members of other ethnic groups. This would mean that the lack of a requirement by the religious movement for active participation is necessary for the minority population to feel at home. It may be that I have misinterpreted his position, but if my reading is correct, the Banabé material suggests that it may be too narrowly focused on the policies of the movement and not giving enough consideration to what values the various ethnic populations bring with them into the church. The desire for passive, or at least apparently passive, involvement may already be a highly held cultural value, impossible to separate from motivations which may arise when two ethnic groups interact within one institution. To understand why this may be so, one must look at the history of colonial contact between the French and the Lobi and Tembo peoples.

Côte d'Ivoire (formerly Ivory Coast[12]) has been one of the more economically successful nations in West Africa. Modern development, to at least some degree, has reached most areas of the country—except that of the northeast, where the Lobi and Tembo reside. Paved roads connect all major cities, and public transportation, by road, rail and air, makes it possible for almost anyone to travel relatively quickly to any part of the nation—except into parts of the northeast, where no roads are paved and public transportation is limited to bush taxis following highly unreliable schedules. The reasons given by officials for the underdevelopment of the northeast is the total lack of interest by the Lobi (and Tembo) to move into the modern world.[13]

Even prior to the arrival of the French, the Lobi were known for their policy of passive resistance. Efforts by invaders to occupy Lobi territory and subjugate its inhabitants were defeated by the simple practice of abandoning their villages and retreating with their herds into inaccessible regions, where they harassed their supposed conquerors like invisible gnats (Fieloux 1980:24). In the end, it was the 'conquered' who 'won'. The Lobi continued to operate in a similar manner in the first decades of French occupation. Any efforts to administer the region seemed doomed to failure by the Lobi (and Tembo) ability to appear to comply while they continued to do as they wished. After World War I, the French colonizers made it their goal to disarm the Lobi and move them from their 'fortresses', built for protection during blood feuds, to villages, where they could be more easily administered. In 1920, 800,000 arrows and 1,200 guns were confiscated in the area around Gaoua, with little resistance from the Lobi, who simply made more arrows and traded with outsiders for more guns. The order to move into individual, thatched roofed houses from their their multi-roomed, pueblo style compounds was simply ignored (Fieloux 1980:26). Today the Lobi of Burkina Faso continue to live in the traditional 'fortresses' of their ancestors even though the blood feuds finally ceased in the 1930's. In Côte d'Ivoire, most of the Lobi and Tembo did finally move into thatched roofed houses arranged in patterns more commonly found among their neighbors to the south, but this was not accomplished until the independence of Côte d'Ivoire became imminent in 1960. At that time, many ethnic groups were convinced to give up 'archaic' customs which might impede their acceptance by the French as a people ready to be granted the right to rule themselves. It was at this time as well, that the practice by women of inserting wooden or metal plugs into holes in their upper and lower lips was abandoned. Today, only women over 40 are seen to wear such adornments. It would seem that if changing house styles and ceasing to utilize what had been an almost universal method of adornment meant they could rid themselves of their French oppressors, they were willing to comply.

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[12] In 1987, a resolution passed in the United Nations, making it standard to refer to the nation formerly called Ivory Coast in English, by its French name, Côte d'Ivoire, regardless of the language being spoken or written.

[13] Both Labouret (1932) and Fieloux (1980) support this viewpoint, but I also found it to be very prevalent among non-Lobi, non-Tembo officials who resided in Banabé during the time of my research. Most suggested, not only that they had left the civilized world behind when they came to Lobi country, but that the people impeded their ability to do the jobs they had come to do by their indifference.

This same policy of passive resistance has come into the church. It has already been described, in Chapter Four, the difficulties the leadership has had with instituting new policies within the church. When the Pentecostal pastor was still present he made innumerable proclamations about things people were to do or money they were to collect. No one ever commented or complained to his face. They simply ignored him if they did not wish to comply. Even when Jean was once again "in charge", the situation did not change. He made requests, not demands, and he frequently called on their professed desire to serve God as a rationale for compliance but they still essentially did what they preferred. This is not to say that they did not often do as asked, just that their method for handling an unpleasant situation was not confrontational. They simply appear to agree and walk away from it.

I have made this rather lengthy digression to show that, to a certain extent, passivity, or at least apparent passivity, on the part of the Lobi and Tembo peoples is a part of their cultural make-up, which they will bring with them even after conversion to a new religious movement. This rather negates any support the Banabé case could give to Fernandez' hypothesis that the expectation by the religious movement of minimal participation or in other words, spectator status, will more likely facilitate multi-ethnic church growth. As shown, any efforts to encourage more active participation in the church are met with the same passive resistance that was practiced in colonial times. But even if the evidence cannot be used to either support or refute the hypothesis, it does indicate that any future testing must look, not only at what is happening in the religious movement involved, but at what cultural values held by each of the ethnic groups may be influencing the acceptance or rejection of certain styles of ritual practices.

f3. "Focus upon ceremonial acts rather than upon the 'word'" (Fernandez 1975:145).

He says:

> "The greater the dependence upon kinesthetic expression (ritual) in a religious movement, the greater the possibilities for multi-ethnic membership. Conversely, the greater the dependence upon the 'word the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez, p. 145).

This is actually a corollary to the hypothesis (f2) above. Fernandez suggests here that people from diverse ethnic groups will more likely be successful in worshiping together where more emphasis is placed upon ritual than on "the word". However, the efficacy of this policy will be lost, he says, if rituals become too complex, or there is a demand for full membership participation in ritual activity. What does Fernandez mean by "the word", and why would it be less attractive to those from the minority or non-originating ethnic group?

Other than in the presentation of the hypotheses, "the word" is only referred to twice in Fernandez' article. The first instance is in regard to the Bwiti cult of Gabon, described in f1 above, where much of the content of the religious movement is drawn from Fang culture history.

"Equally recondite in denotation and connotation, very often, are the sermons (midnight "evangiles") put forth in this cult. The "word" is very allusive and difficult to comprehend for anyone not fully in the mainstream of Fang culture. The stranger would easily get the sense here that something is being put over on him" (Fernandez 1975:137).

The second example comes from his comparison of the Old Man's Cult with the Church of God in Christ, both in South Africa (see f2). The first movement, which focuses on healing, places a high emphasis on rituals which can be passively attended. This is not true, however, in the second movement.

> "…the "word" is of exceptional importance in the Church of God in Christ as a vehicle of grace, and many hours are spent during services in long sermons given only in Zulu to which any non-speaker or poor speaker would feel very alien" (Fernandez 1975:139).

Both instances clearly refer to sermons or public speeches given to instruct and encourage members in their commitment to the new religious movement. On the surface, it would seem that "the word" is a problem in the Fang cult because non-Fang cannot understand or relate to the culturally embedded message. For the non-Zulu members of the Church of God in Christ, the difficulty is linguistic. In either case, the emphasis on "the word" is a barrier due to lack of comprehension. This is not, however, satisfactory. If that is all there is to it, this hypothesis is unnecessary.

In the Bwiti case, the inability to comprehend the message is due to cultural difference and therefore has already been dealt with in the first of the necessary conditions (n1) for successful multi-ethnic recruitment. For the Church of God in Christ the linguistic problem has already been discussed in the second of the necessary conditions (n2). Is this hypothesis actually redundant, or is it necessary to delve a little deeper to understand its implications?

Although the references by Fernandez to "the word", in all instances, are to actual speech events or sermons, the implication can be drawn that what is not being understood by the minority groups in question are the core beliefs on which the movement is based. But this remains misleading because, even if one substitutes "belief" (abstract notions) for "the word" (concrete sermons), the implication remains that if the cultural and linguistic barriers to understanding were removed, no problem would exist. In actual fact, Fernandez' article leaves the impression that that is exactly what he does mean. Again, if that is a valid interpretation, the hypothesis is unnecessary.

Based on a much earlier work by Fernandez, however, I would suggest both that it is helpful to substitute "belief" for "the word", and that a separate hypothesis is necessary. In the article, "Symbolic Consensus in a FangReformative Cult" (1965), Fernandez shows, among other things, that where people differ culturally or in the understanding of their basic belief system, they can yet achieve integration through their focus on shared symbols which stand in place of those diverse beliefs.

> "We are led to observe that…though common symbols are indeed necessary for integration, interpretation of these symbols in a common way is not a prime requisite" (Fernandez 1965:907).

Taking an example from Christianity, beliefs about the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ may serve to divide people who claim to share a common faith, but the symbol of the cross has, at least in some circumstances, the ability to unite them. Similarly, Americans differ widely, both in their political views and in their degree of patriotism, but put two or more of them in a difficult situation overseas (from culture shock to war) and the sight of the American flag will generally establish a common bond. In light of this interpretation, it is now possible to re-examine Fernandez' original proposal that multi-ethnic recruitment will be more successful where ritual is given precedent over "the word".

This hypothesis suggests that different ethnic groups may be drawn to the same religious movement through the deployment of symbols which they may, in fact, interpret quite differently. As long as these ritual symbols remain in focus, there is little opportunity for disagreement. If, on the other hand, greater emphasis is given to the meaning of those symbols, and especially where members are expected to indicate their conformity to those beliefs, the possibility of dissension is much greater. This hypothesis is saying that in a situation where correct belief is continually placed before the congregation through the preaching of "the word", successful multi-ethnic church growth could be severely inhibited.

On the surface, it would seem that the Banabé material refutes this proposal. Though successful in drawing their membership from both the Lobi and Tembo populations, all evidence points to their giving prominence to the promulgation of right belief, and of giving relatively little emphasis to 'kinesthetic' or ritual activity. That church rituals are few in number and fairly simple in their execution has already been dealt with in the last section. What now needs to be seen is the place that "the word" or belief has in the life of the congregation of the Banabé church.

As was noted in Chapter Four, the history of the church began when, Jean, the present pastor, started meeting with other believers to read and talk about the Teen Scriptures which he had been helping to translate. Gradually these meetings became more formalized, but the center of all regularly scheduled services remains a presentation of a portion of the 'Word of God' and a message dealing with how that particular passage should apply to daily life.[14] He

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[14] The following is a sampling of sermon topics and points made during various services in 1987:

John 4:24; Genesis 1:1 and Acts 27:24—God is spirit; God created everything; God is Lord of all. With God all things are possible.

Matthew 7:13, 23 and 25:23; I Corinthians 6:9; Galations 5:19–23; Romans 8:18—God is in heaven. Can we go there? Some will and some won't. There is a wide and a narrow road. Those that follow Jesus path will go to heaven. In heaven there will be no suffering, no death, no need for medicine, no one will steal, etc.

John 6:24–27—Why do we come to church? Is it to dance, to sing, to be healed of our sickness, to be rid of the spirits, to ask God for a child, or for money? Don't come for these things, they are temporary. Come to hear about Jesus and to receive eternal life.

Matthew 27:45ff—We all know what a sacrifice is. When a person does something wrong he must make a sacrifice to make it right. Jesus had done no wrong, yet he gave his life as a sacrifice for our wrong. We shouldn't play around with this sacrifice. Don't go back to the spirits, they can never do for you what Jesus did.

Mark 2:7ff—Following Jesus' path does not mean that we will not die. But if we believe, when we die we will go to be with God.

Genesis 7:8–9—When Noah built his ark, people mocked him for doing such a strange thing. In the same way, those who still follow the spirits mock us because we do what is strange. But God will do what he has promised. Don't turn back from Jesus' path because they mock you.

and the other leaders continue to emphasize that a believer must understand and follow what the 'Word of God', the Bible, says.

It is not only in scheduled services, however, that the Word is in focus. Portions of Scripture are read, though with less comment, at times of prayer for the sick, when spirit altars are burned, and in situations of conflict, specifically where an individual has done something contrary to what is seen to be correct behavior as it is understood from the Bible. In each instance, Jean, or one of the other leaders, reads a portion deemed to illustrate the necessity of what they are doing, i.e., that God heals, that a clean break must be made with the old path, that certain behavior is not acceptable for one who follows Jesus' path. In every circumstance, the 'Word of God' is believed to be the source for right belief and right behavior.

This evidence seems to show that the Banabé material refutes the hypothesis that ritual rather than belief must be in focus for a multi-ethnic religious movement to be successful. I do not feel, however, that a strong case can be made for this as far as the Lobi and the Tembo are concerned, considering the interpretation I have given to the hypothesis. The basis for this proposal is that an emphasis on ritual over belief allows for many cultural differences, which could otherwise disrupt the group, to remain hidden, or at least obscure. But in the Banabé case, the cultures of the two groups are so similar, this may well not be a problem. Before dismissing the evidence, however, I would like to consider whether the Banabé material suggests not so much that the hypothesis is invalid, but that it needs modification.

In the two cases given by Fernandez, where a focus on "the word" is seen as a barrier to successful multi-ethnic church growth, the difficulty seems to be that the beliefs emphasized focus on one ethnic group, either culturally or linguistically, to the exclusion of the other. In the case of the Fang, regardless of their universalist claims, a non-Fang soon realizes that, without Fang ancestors, he or she has little chance of communicating with the supreme beings, and if the message being given out is true, they are automatically second class citizens. For the Xhosa in the Church of God in Christ, it is not just that they cannot always follow what is preached in Zulu that is the problem, but that such linguistic dominance again proclaims that they are the inferior group.

The situation in the Banabé church is distinctly different. Not only is the linguistic situation not a barrier, as has already been shown, but the content of the beliefs being propounded by the leadership of the Banabé church does not apparently favor one group over the other. This hypothesis might better be tested in a movement where the cultural differences are greater, but it could also be that the content of the message (beliefs) and their application must be taken into consideration. It is possible that ritual must take precedence over belief only in situations where the content" of message, or its application, would favor one ethnic group. Where such is not the case, a focus on the message (the word) may not be a barrier to successful recruitment across ethnic lines.

f4. "Therapeutic rather than redemptive orientation" (Fernandez 175:145).

Fernandez restates this:

> "The greater the therapeutic orientation of a religious movement the greater the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership. Conversely the greater the redemptive orientation of a religious movement the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez 175:145).

Fernandez spends very little time on this particular hypothesis and makes no apparent effort to explain why a focus on healing should offer a more attractive appeal than would a focus on redemption. This proposal again arises from a comparison of the Old Man's Cult (Amakhehleni) and the Church of God in Christ. The former is more successful in recruiting across ethnic lines and one reason, he says, may well be its orientation toward healing.

> "(The Cult's) principal objective is to accomplish healing of physical and mental ills by means of divination, sacrifice, and medicinal methods characteristic of the Zulu Cult of the Dead. It employs some techniques of modern medicine but relatively superficially and depends mostly on the power of the dead and particularly the spirit of the founder, John Mfene, to disclose causes of ailments and to specify folk cures…Divination seances are carried on constantly for the benefit of

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John 3:31–36—We must read what God has written in his book. It is the truth. If we are really people of God, we will then do what it says.

Romans 1:1–6—Jesus is our master/lord. He paid for us with his life. We are his slaves. If we are not slaves of Jesus then we are slaves of another (the spirits/the Devil). Who are you a slave of?

> the sick. All who are sick or suffering are invited to this cult and all are made welcome (Fernandez 175:133–134).

The Church of God in Christ, on the other hand, has a Zionist orientation, by which he apparently means a focus on redemption, although this is not spelled out. It remains 90% Zulu, considerably higher than the 70% of the Old Man's Cult (Fernandez 1975:134).

Motivation is difficult to understand and probably impossible to measure. It seems reasonable that people might be more drawn to join a movement which is seen to meet present, and often urgent needs, such as the relief of suffering, than to one which offers an abstract notion of sins forgiven and possibly a hope that things will be better in the future, generally after death. This, in itself, has nothing to do with the ethnic factor. Individuals, however, have been known to be willing to go to quite drastic extremes to relieve their own suffering or that of a loved one. Joining a religious movement founded by another ethnic group would be a small price to pay if the result were an end to the illness. Crossing ethnic lines for the sake of an abstract concept, on the other hand, would be more difficult to understand.

This interpretation, however, leaves many questions unanswered as regards the two cases concerned. Why would any non-Zulu join the Church of God in Christ at all? Why, in the case of the Old Man's Cult, do some come only for the healing, while others remain and become active members of the group? Do all those who stay in the movement perceive themselves as being healed? If not, why do they stay? Do all those who go feel the movement has failed them? If not, why do they go?

From Fernandez' description, it would seem that all adherents to the Old Man's Cult came originally because they, or possibly a loved one, were sick. There is no indication that those who are well were ever independently drawn to join. We do not know, however, the state of health of those who became members of the Church of God in Christ. Were they all well? Was there any provision for the sick, even if that was not the principle orientation? What needs did the adherents of this movement perceive were being met by their commitment to it, especially by those who were not of the originating ethnic group? Whether for the Old Man's Cult or the Church of God in Christ, were the factors which drew people to the group different from those which kept them there? It may not be possible to know the answers to these questions as regards the two movements under consideration, but asking them in light of the Banabé material may make it possible to interpret more clearly just how this hypothesis can be understood and applied.

It should already be clear that the Protestant Church of Banabé has more of a redemptive than a healing orientation. Although prayer for the sick occurs and the expectation of healing is high, such rituals are not elaborate, nor regularly scheduled, and the topic of sermons rarely touches on the matter of curing the sick. What Jesus has done for them, their present behavior, their devotion to God, and the hope of heaven, are much more common themes (again see footnote 14). It would be a great mistake, however, to conclude, therefore, that sickness and healing play only a small part in the thinking of the church.

When interviewing the members of the congregation in 1987, one question I asked was, "What made you decide to follow the Jesus road?". The stories they told were fascinating. By far the majority[15] related a series of events that began with a long term illness, which the protector spirits were unable or unwilling to cure.[16] Sometimes it involved

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[15] Of the 60 members of the congregation interviewed as to why they left the spirits, 29 attributed it directly to a need for healing for themselves or a child, and 15 others said they came because the spirits had killed one or more children or other family members. Another 11 attributed it to being deceived by the spirits but not in relation to their health or the death of a loved one. The remaining 5 gave other reasons.

[16] When K., a young Tense woman, was still a child, she developed a bad cough (tuberculosis). Diviners frequently consulted the spirits and she was rubbed with a great deal of medicine, but her cough did not get better. Because her cough was non-productive, it was said that it was a cough of the tombs. When a young girl of 6–7 died and was interred in a community tomb, K. was also lowered in by the mortuary team where she was told to cough 4 times. Having done so, she was lifted back out. Her illness did not improve.

When she was a teen-ager, a much older man, who already had two wives, asked for K. as well, but she did not want to go. He put a curse on her, however, and her uncle made her accept him. She lived with him about two years but during this time her sickness got much worse. Her husband consulted the spirits and was told that he had been wrong to force her to come and that if he did not return her to her family, she would die. He did so, immediately.

One of her 'brothers' was a follower of the Jesus road and convinced her to at least come to Banabé to get help for her illness. The translators took her to the nearest TB treatment center, fifty miles away, and arranged for her care. She was unhappy,

the death of a spouse or child that the spirits had assured them would get well.[17] In every case, including those not specifically related to illness, a consistent theme was that the protector spirits had deceived them.[18] What began to be apparent was that whatever the orientation of the church, what drew people to it was the hope of relief from suffering or misfortune, along with freedom from the burden of being tied to spiritual beings who could not be trusted. Their expectations were that the relief would be immediate and that the freedom was from an evil, not within themselves, but from outward forces beyond their control. There seemed, at first glance, to be a discrepancy between the orientation of the church and the perceived focus of the congregation. In actual fact, this was not the case.

The problem lies, I believe, in a failure to separate what draws people to a movement and what keeps them there. It is also the failure to distinguish adhesion from conversion. Humphrey Fisher (1973), in his rebuttal to Robin Horton's 1971 effort to explain African conversion, has suggested that there are always at least two stages to religious change. The first involves exchanging one faith (or none) for another. The second involves exchanging an indifferent, doubtful or half-hearted faith for conviction. The two can occur almost simultaneously or the second stage can be delayed or never occur at all. Fisher says that Horton erred in focusing only on the first stage and ignoring the second. Emefie Ikenga-Metuh (1987) points out that Fisher's article does not really challenge Horton's thesis, because Fisher himself, while underscoring the importance of factors internal to the religion in assessing conversion, ignores the first stage. He did not explain why people changed faiths to begin with, the question that Horton was attempting to resolve. To fully understand religious change, it is necessary to understand both what draws people to a religious movement and what keeps them there.Looking again at the Banabé case, it is clear that people are drawn by the possibility of having their needs met. For some, the suffering or misfortune they or a loved one is undergoing is the immediate concern. They want to see healing. For others, death of a loved one or the

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however, and returned after two days to Banabé. The translators got permission to give her the medicine themselves and she stayed with them until she was healed. During that time, she attended the church and heard about the new road. She said she did not want to accept until she really understood. About six months later she became a believer as well.

[17] B. is a young Lobi man with two wives and several children. In 1986 two of his children died on the same day (apparently of measles) and he buried them in the same grave. The diviner consulted the spirits and he was told that they had killed his children because he had not worshiped the spirits as he should. B. accepted this and made the required sacrifices. A relative of the children's mother came to the funeral with her husband. They were both followers of the new path and attended the church at Banabé. The man told B. he should leave the spirits and follow the Jesus road. B. listened to what they said but he didn't accept.

A few months later a third child became very ill. B. did everything the spirits said but the child just got sicker. He decided that if the child died he would never consult the spirits again. Finally they told him to go to a man of the alliance from whom he should get medicine to rub on the child. He was gone overnight. When he got back the child was dead. He kept his promise but was afraid to accept the new path because all of his relatives said the spirits would kill him if he burned their altars. After a time, however, he found that he was no longer afraid and went to the church leaders to find out how he could accept. In February of 1987 he burned his altars and joined with the believers in Banabé.

[18] L. is the second of three wives of a Lobi man who lives in a village far from Banabé. Some time ago, her husband returned from hunting and entered the house of his first wife. He leaned the gun against the wall, but it fell over and went off, shooting his wife in the arm. He got her to a clinic in Burkina Faso where it was necessary to amputate the arm at the shoulder. When they returned to the village, a diviner consulted the spirits and he was told that they had tried to kill his first wife because they did not want him living in that village. Since she had only one arm and could no longer work, his wife left him and returned to her own village.

L.'s husband took her and her co-wife and moved to yet another village some distance away. Not long after this, L., herself, got sick with severe stomach problems. When she did not get well, her husband took her to the hospital in Ferkesedougou. Tests showed that she had intestinal tuberculosis. She needed to have an operation to remove portions of the bowel and then to be on medication for a long time. L's husband again consulted the spirits and was told that the spirits now wanted to kill L. because they did not want him in his new village either. He was very discouraged and wanted to abandon the spirits but didn't know of any alternative.

Shortly after this, L.'s father, a powerful Shaman who lived near Banabé, came to visit. Jean, the pastor of the church, had been talking to him about the Jesus road for years but L's father said he would never accept. The spirits would kill him. He told his daughter and son-in-law, however, that if they didn'tô accept the spirits would kill them. The Jesus road was their only answer. As soon as L. was well enough, she and her husband and her co-wife came to Banabé to learn about the new path and to accept. After a few days, L.'s husband and co-wife returned to their village and left L. to continue her medication and to attend the church.

Sometime later, L.'s husband sent her co-wife back to Banabé to stay a while and learn more about the road. She reported that she and her husband had been meeting with two other Christians in their village to pray and talk about Jesus. They were waiting for Jean and some of the leaders of the church to come and help them burn their spirit altars.

perceived unreasonable harassment from spirit forces has given them the desire to exchange what they have for something they hope will prove better. They do not, in most cases, initially seek to understand all that the new road teaches. They seek relief, and the majority say they have found it.

The orientation of the church in Banabé may not be toward healing, but there is every expectation, by both leaders and followers, that it will occur. Another question in my interview concerned whether each person had experienced healing since they began walking the new path. All but two individuals could recount at least one, and generally several, instances where they had prayed, alone or with others, and they or their children had been healed. In the history of the church, from 1979 to 1987, only four deaths had occurred among the people of the congregation. One, during my research period, involved a very old Lobi man who said he had served in the French army during World War I. He had been a believer for about a year. Two others were apparently quite elderly as well. The fourth death involved a middle-aged woman who also had been coming to the church for about a year but who had been ill the entire time. No children of any of the believers had died during those nine years.

Regardless of having the majority of their initial expectations met, however, my interviews showed that people had often begun to perceive benefits from belief other than healing. I asked them what had changed since they began following the Jesus road. Although some mentioned the healing that had occurred, the focus tended to be on less tangible results, especially by those who had been believers for some time. Some mentioned the absence of bad thoughts or bad dreams. Others said they were no longer afraid all the time or constantly angry. Several said they had peace now, that there was joy in their hearts. Still others mentioned that they no longer had the desire to drink all the time, that they didn't fight anymore, that they were more content, or that insults no longer bothered them. A frequent comment was that now they could talk to God (Tanbar/Nyele) themselves.

I do not want to suggest that it is always possible to tell when an individual has made the transition from adhesion to conviction and therefore true conversion. There were certain signs, however, that it had apparently occurred in some and that it had not in others. I have already mentioned those who left the congregation for one reason or another over the nine year history of the church. Some came only briefly and then left. Others remained for several years before returning to their spirit altars. The length of stay and reason for leaving varied, but those who remained generally attributed the departure of each defector to the same cause. They left because they did not really believe. Jean, the pastor, told me that it is not always possible to tell that someone is not a true believer until they leave the church. He says they come to the services and sing and pray. They say they believe, but in their hearts they still belong to the spirits.

Conversely, there are others who stay who would appear to have every reason to leave, if healing were the primary attraction of the church. Although most members of the congregation have experienced healing of some kind, not all who came received what they hoped for when they left the spirits. Three of the members are blind. Another is severely crippled. Each came seeking healing but did not receive what they sought. All say they have stayed because they found something better. I asked a 37 year old Lobi man who had been blind for more than ten years how he felt about the fact that God had not healed him. He told me that God <u>had</u> healed him. He said that before he believed, he went from place to place seeking healing. He tried every shaman and every remedy he could. While he was still able to see a little, he worked and worked, and all his money went for medicine that didn't make his eyes any better. He got very discouraged and even tried to kill himself. Then, in about 1982, he heard of a church in Bouna that held healing meetings and that many had been cured of their illnesses. He borrowed the money from his uncle (MB) to make the fifty mile trip and went. For three days he heard about Jesus and they prayed for his healing. He liked what he heard but his eyes did not seem any better. He asked how long he should stay and was told that if he now believed the message of Jesus, it was not necessary to stay in Bouna. There were believers in Banabé who met together. He should return and join with them and continue to pray. He did so and gradually realized that, though his eyes got no better, they had gotten no worse. He could distinguish light and dark and could follow after someone who led him. With help he could still work his field. He no longer wanted to kill himself. He now had peace and joy in his heart and that was the true healing. One day he would go to be with Jesus and have a new body. Then he would be able to see again. He tells everyone he knows about how wonderful it is to follow the Jesus road.

Others told quite similar stories. All of their problems may not have been solved but they now have something far better than what they had originally sought and would never return to the spirits again. All of this can be understood only if it is recognized that conversion is often a process rather than a static event. The members of the Banabé church were frequently drawn to the new movement in the hope that quite precise needs would be met. In many cases, but not always, these expectations were fulfilled. To understand why some of those healed then left, or why

some not healed stayed, requires looking beyond the therapeutic focus that produces adhesion, to the beliefs being taught that seem to lead to conviction.

It is now possible to return to Fernandez' proposal that a religious movement with a therapeutic orientation will be more successful in multi-ethnic recruitment than one geared toward redemption. How might this be modified to accommodate the Banabé material? Primarily, it would seem that it is necessary to divide it into two parts. While a therapeutic orientation may be more successful in attracting individuals from groups other than the founding ethnic group, something that goes beyond healing may be necessary to keep them there. Healing may draw adherents but it would seem that it takes something more to bring about conviction.

The point should be made that much of what has been said about adhesion versus conviction, does not, in itself, apply only to multi-ethnic religious movements. Even where ethnicity is not a factor, any study of religious change must consider both what draws people to exchange one faith for another, and then what convinces them to become committed members. However, it seems that where a movement which makes universalist claims is composed primarily of one ethnic group, its ability to attract adherents from other groups, and to keep them in the movement, may well depend, at least in part, on its having a message which is culturally neutral, both in those parts which appeal to outsiders and those which bring about conviction for members.

f5. "Matter of Fact rather than ecstatic initiation" (Fernandez 1975:145).

Fernandez restates this:

> "The more highly ecstatic and disassociated the initiation experience the fewer the possibilities of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez, p. 145).

To understand this proposal, it is necessary to return to the Bwiti Cult among the Fang of Gabon, which, while claiming to be universalist in its intention, is yet able to attract few non-Fang adherents. Fernandez has already indicated that this is partially due to their focus on the patrilineal principle which is projected into the supernatural. The supreme beings can be reached only through the mediation of Fang ancestors (see f1). Added to this is the 'residual mistrust and mutual deprecation' felt by the autochthonous peoples of the region toward the Fang (see n3). There is little incentive offered to non-Fang to join the Bwiti cult (Fernandez 1975:135–136).

A third factor which Fernandez says has deterred outsiders and led to a retribalization of the movement is the ecstatic orientation of the initiation experience. In order for the new member to come into full contact with the ancestors and the great gods, it is necessary to ingest a large amount of an alkaloid substance that brings about the complete psychic alienation of the individual. During this episode, the initiate contacts the ancestors through a "highly predictable vision experience" which is, in a sense, a "reliving of the Fang past" (Fernandez 175:136). Not only is it difficult for a non-Fang to participate in such culturally specific visions, but Fernandez suggests that,

> "Psychic alienation is so complete in this experience that the member is thrown into entire dependence upon other members. It is reassuring to have other bonds than the religious one, that is, cultural bonds, ensuring one's safe passage through this deep psychological trauma (Fernandez 1975:136).

This seems quite reasonable, although it is difficult to evaluate in light of the other religious movements Fernandez describes, as he says nothing about the initiation experience of any of those. It is presumed that all but the Bwiti cult had matter-of-fact rather than ecstatic initiation rites. As several of these were also unsuccessful in attracting members from across ethnic lines, this would suggest that it is not so much a matter-of-fact initiation experience that enhances successful multi-ethnic church growth, but that an ecstatic initiation inhibits it. That being so, another negative case, such as that of the Banabé church, does little to support or refute this hypothesis. The evidence, however, will be presented briefly.

In Banabé, the ritual for burning the spirit altars and amulets of the convert comes closest to marking an initiation into the new religious movement. By this action, the believer indicates that he or she is totally leaving the old path of the protector spirits and stepping onto the new path instituted by Jesus Christ. No aspect of this initiation involves an experience of psychic alienation for any of the participants. As shown earlier, the new convert actually is only minimally involved in the proceedings. He or she must point out each of the altars to be broken apart and then aid in setting the pyre alight at the appropriate moment. Ecstasy does not play a part.

Even if the Banabé material does little to strengthen or weaken this proposal as it now stands, other evidence, not yet discussed, does suggest that this hypothesis may be too narrow in its scope. It also brings into question just what is

meant by the term ecstatic. The evidence I refer to is the practice of speaking in tongues, generally described as an ecstatic experience, but which plays a minimal and rather 'matter-of-fact' part in Banabé worship.

Speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, is a common practice in Pentecostal or charismatic churches such as the one with which the Banabé church was associated for just under two years. Webster's Dictionary defines it as

> "an ecstatic or apparently ecstatic utterance of unintelligible speechlike sounds, viewed by some as a manifestation of deep religious experience" (1976).

Adherents claim that the language each speaks is a real, but unknown, language, given to them by the Holy Spirit, as a special form of communication with God. Though the speaker does not understand what he or she is saying, the experience allows the Holy Spirit to pray through them even when they do not know what to pray for themselves. When used in public it is generally expected that an interpretation, often given by someone else, will follow, so that the entire congregation will know what has been said. Both speaking in tongues and the ability to interpret what has been said are seen to be gifts from God. How fervent, or ecstatic, these experiences are, however, varies a great deal from congregation (denomination) to congregation. In some, the expectation is a highly emotional response, throwing oneself on the floor, or going into a trance-like state. For others, a much more circumspect and subdued atmosphere is required and those who get too carried away are reprimanded.

In Banabé, those who speak in tongues do so primarily during group prayer at Sunday services or in praying for the sick. Although the language changes, the tone or apparent intensity of the prayer is seldom altered. In these situations, there is generally no attempt at interpretation. Very few members of the church actually practice glossolalia and those who do, do not do so prominently.[19] There is no indication, especially since the break with the Pentecostal church, that speaking in tongues is something that everyone should do, or that those who practice it are ranked higher in the membership. Furthermore, if glossolalia is an ecstatic experience, and ecstasy involves a highly emotional state or a trance, there is little that is ecstatic about speaking in tongues in the church in Banabé. What, then, does all this have to say about Fernandez' proposal regarding ecstatic initiation experiences?

First of all, it indicates that some clarification needs to be made about what is meant by the ecstatic state. The example Fernandez gives is a drug induced trance which leaves the participant vulnerable and dependent on those around him. Other less intense, but highly emotional states, such as some forms of glossolalia, may have the same effect if they are a requirement of membership. Several universalist religious movements which expect their members to undergo intense emotional transformations need to be examined to clarify this hypothesis further.

Second, it must be asked why this proposal limits itself to the initiation experience? Would not the same vulnerability apply whenever it occurred? For the followers of the Bwiti cult, this state was achieved when they ingested an alkaloid substance at initiation, but anyone in a trance or highly emotional state, however it was induced, would experience much the same thing. Those religious movements which require their members to undergo such experiences on a regular basis may well be excluding those who do not feel a close cultural bond with the main body of adherents.

f6. "Decentralization and liberality of authority structure" (Fernandez 1975:145).

Fernandez does not restate this among his six major propositions in any obvious way. Nor does he seem to discuss the point while comparing the various religious movements he studied. Nevertheless, it is clear that the inclusion of this factor was a result of that comparison. A more careful reading suggests that it is a part of his hypothesis regarding the place the filial principle has in worship (f1), and derives again from his description of the Old Man's Cult (Amakhehleni) of South Africa. They were more successful in achieving their pan-ethnic goals, he says, not only because they focused on therapeutic functions and ritual, rather than redemption and "the word", but also because of the place of women in leadership.

"…three women in particular have taken over from the recently deceased male founder—because though the instance is exceptional in Natal, there have been many women leaders of African religious movements and (this is the point) their dominance breaks that lineal exclusiveness of spiritual experience I have discussed in relation to Bwiti. Though these women appeal in divination to the Old Man who founded the cult, their relation to him is not

[19] Of the 60 members of the congregation interviewed, 18 said they presently spoke in tongues, 38 said they had never done so, and 4 said they had spoken in tongues at one time, but no longer did so. Of those who said they presently speak in tongues, 11 were men and 7 were women. All but one of the women were Lobi. Four of the men were Tembo and one was Kulango. Many, but not all, of the leaders of the church speak in tongues, at least on occasion.

defined lineally, and hence their use of his power is an instance of the opening out of spiritual exploitation from a purely patriarchal, patrilineal focus (Fernandez 1975:139).

Fernandez adds that even the leadership of the Amakhehleni has been detribalized, as one of the most important women is a Xhosa, related very distantly to the founder through an inter-ethnic marriage decades before. He then generalizes that the dominance of women in relation to the supernatural can produce a more inclusive religious atmosphere and therefore be more successfully multi-ethnic (Fernandez 1975:139).

If I am correct in my interpretation, I find it somewhat problematical to make the jump from the place of women in leadership or worship to the more general proposal regarding the decentralization and liberality of the authority structure. Certainly, the retribalization of the Bwiti cult that Fernandez describes suggests that anything which tends toward detribalization will likely make a movement more successful in recruiting across ethnic lines. Thus, anything which weakens the filial principle or makes for a more flexible and egalitarian authority structure will be more apt to succeed in its pan-ethnic aims. One such possibility is the acceptance of women in leadership. At the same time, it may be more fruitful, in examining the success or failure of a pan-ethnic religious movement, to separate the place of women in worship from a consideration of the structure of authority in the church. In the final analysis, they may be one and the same thing, but that should not be decided until further research shows it to be so.

Having said that, I find there is little I can say on this topic from the Banabé situation. Although women outnumber men by a fair margin they do not take a prominent place in either leadership or worship. The group of *responsables* (Fr.) who are meant to help guide the church include several women but when the pastor or one of the other leaders asks them to meet, only one or two of the women are likely to attend. Except for two Lobi women who have occasionally sung or taught a song they learned elsewhere, women take almost no active part in the worship services. A few will pray out loud during group prayer. Unless very close by, they also generally avoid attending the burning of the spirit altars.

As indicated in Chapter Four, prior to the collaboration with the Pentecostal church, one bilingual Lobi woman did help out in translating during the Sunday services from Teen to Lobi. They were apparently told that this was not appropriate and the practice ceased. It was not resumed when the congregation was again on its own. The topic of women being in submission to men was never a major theme of Sunday services while I was there, but the expectation, by both the Lobi and the Tembo, that a woman is to obey, first her father and then her husband, is a strongly held cultural value that has carried over into the church with little re-interpretation.

Although women have no real part in the leadership of the Banabé church, this lack has not, however, meant that the filial principle is emphasized (see f1) or that the authority structure is centralized. In that respect, the Banabé material clearly supports the hypothesis. But if the liberality of the authority structure does not come from the acceptance of women in leadership, what is its origin? I would suggest two sources, the acephalous political structure of both the Lobi and the Tembo, and the lack of ethnic focus in the religious movement itself.

As has already been shown in Chapter Two, the Lobi, and by association, the Tembo, are well known in Côte d'Ivoire for their lack of a highly developed political structure. Efforts to control them during the colonial period were notoriously difficult as each family was more or less autonomous (Fieloux 1980:24–28). Though each village has a 'chief', he has no political authority. His primary function is to deal with the spirit protector of the village and to make sacrifices when necessary. Traditionally, each head of household makes his own decisions regarding his extended family and recognized no higher authority. When conflicts arose, certain ritual chiefs could help in arbitration but again had little real power. Today, the state (Burkina Faso or Côte d'Ivoire) as represented by various government agencies, is accepted as having jurisdiction in certain areas but every effort continues to be made to handle disputes using traditional means.[20]

[20] In early December of 1986, a Lobi man from a nearby village accidentally burned a corn field of a man who lived in Banabé. There was a celebration in town, he was in a hurry and got careless. All the corn, and the storage hut it was in, were lost. The government had begun to come down very heavily on careless burning and was exacting large fines or even prison sentences for such an offense. The man who lost the corn did not want to take it to the town officials and get the offender in serious trouble. It was agreed between them that the latter would try and pay back the corn. He went to his uncle (MB) who said he didn't want to pay to buy more corn. As of February, 1987, the corn had not yet been replaced but the matter had still not gone to court. I was told, however, that the uncle who has refused to pay drinks a great deal and has been complaining about the situation to others. The family was afraid that if the matter wasn't settled soon, the government officials would hear about it and put the offender in jail.

This general principle of individual autonomy has carried over into the church. Though I have spoken throughout of the 'leaders of the church', this is a very nebulous concept. As already shown, the criteria for leadership are not strict, nor even well defined. It seems that anyone who wants to get involved is accepted, as long as he is not seen as trying to follow 'two roads'.[21] Nor are decisions made by the leaders necessarily accepted by the congregation. If they don't agree, nothing is said, they simply do not comply.[22] The authority structure of the Banabé church is clearly decentralized and liberal.

This flexibility is enhanced, however, by the fact that the message propounded by the movement does not draw from the ancestral background of either group but emphasizes the universal tie every believer has to (Tanbar/Nyele) regardless of ethnic affiliation. That believers of whatever language or culture form a family, is a vital part of the thinking of the congregation in Banabé. They quickly welcome anyone who is passing through, if that person claims to follow the Jesus road. They are aware that the privilege can be abused[23] but are as yet seldom suspicious of strangers who come claiming to be Christians. That neither their own cultural backgrounds, nor the focus of the religious movement itself, seeks to bring one group into prominence over the other, cannot help but enhance the possibility of successful multi-ethnic church growth.

f7. "Peri-urban rather than rural location" (Fernandez 1975:145).

Fernandez restates this:

> "The more peri-urban in orientation the greater the possibility of multi-ethnic membership" (Fernandez 1975:145).

This is again an area that Fernandez does not really discuss, but he does state that a "…rural locus of activity" seems to be "negatively correlated with a pan-ethnic communion" (Fernandez 1975:143. This hypothesis appears to arise from two somewhat distinct situations in the religious movements he studied. The first is in regards to the Apostles' Revelation Society, which began as a Ewe movement in the Volta region of Ghana, but has branches among the Akan in Koforidua and Kumasi, and has spread into Togo. Numbering more than 20,000 at the time of Fernandez' research, the overall movement gives the appearance of being quite multi-ethnic. An examination of local congregations, however, indicates that in each case one ethnic group predominates. On the other hand, looking at only the Ewe based churches in Ghana, Fernandez noted that those based in Accra were slightly more effective in attracting members from other ethnic groups than were similar congregations in the more rural Trans-Volta Region.

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[21] A young, unmarried Tense man who had been involved in church leadership for some time was found to have had affairs with two Lobi girls in Banabé and both were pregnant. Neither of the girls were believers. The man said he did not want to marry either of them and, in fact, was promised to a girl in the church. The other church leaders called him in and asked if it were all true and he confessed that it was. He said that he recognized that it was wrong, that he had sinned. He was suspended from leadership for three months and they told him he must stand up before the congregation the following Sunday and confess his wrongdoing. One of the leaders, a Lobi, had been involved in a similar infraction many years before in another church, and this was what was required of him. The young man agreed to do as the leaders asked but had an excuse for being out of Banabé the following week. As of my departure, six months later, he had not as yet stood up to confess, though he continued to attend services most weeks. He was not restored to leadership.

[22] Shortly after beginning to meet for Sunday services in the center of town rather than on the extreme outskirts, the leaders announced to the congregation that they would now begin starting an hour earlier, at 7:30 rather than 8:30 in the morning. The Lobi man giving the announcement, with Jean translating it into Teen, said that they would start the following Sunday at 7:30 even if there was only one person there. He told them that they had 6 days to cultivate and the 7th is for God. Next week, he added, we will find out who is really interested in singing. No one asked any questions or offered any comments.

The following Sunday I arrived with two of the church leaders a little after 7:30. Jean, the pastor, had been called away on some matter and the Lobi man who gave the announcement the previous week was sick and didn't come. There were three members of the congregation at the church. Everyone sat around and talked but the service didn't start. The next person to arrive came at 8:15. Jean arrived shortly after that and others began to come. The service started at 8:25. Nothing was said, nor was the subject was ever mentioned again. Services continued to begin about 8:30.

[23] On one Sunday in October of 1987, one of the leaders told the congregation that they should consider having 'baptism cards'. He had heard about these from a believer who had visited from a church in the south. It was like an identity card, with the individual's picture on it, which showed that they were actually a member of a given church. It seems that further south, strangers had been coming to villages where there were Christians and saying they were also believers because they knew that they would be given food and a place to stay. Then during the night, they would get up and steal valuable items and sneak away. 'Baptism cards' would show that someone was really a Christian. There was no discussion about this and the subject did not come up again while I was there.

Churches of the Apostles' Revelation Society in Accra were about 80% Ewe, while in the countryside, the Ewe comprised up to 90% of the membership (Fernandez 1975:135). He does not offer any explanation for this distinction.

The second possible source for this proposal is again from the comparison he makes between the two South African movements, the Old Man's Cult (Amakhehleni) and the Church of God in Christ. He suggests that a further possible reason for the lack of success of the latter in multi-ethnic recruitment, is their relationship to the "tribal" reserves.

> "By this I refer to the fact that the Church of God in Christ periodically returns to Zululand for festival and curing ceremonies, although these are conducted there largely in a Christian manner. The church feels the need of this return, and such experiences are one of the happy promises of membership. The Old Man's Cult, on the other hand, is located on land which…is held on indefinite grant from the government…It has no need or possibility of periodic return to any homeland and thus…does not impose the burden…upon the stranger of an orientation to greater and more satisfying realities in an ethnic heartland (Fernandez 1975:139–140).

It seems quite clear in this second example just why a tie to a "rural locus of activity" would not enhance successful multi-ethnic church growth. Those who had no tie to the homeland would be perpetual outsiders. The first case, however, is less obvious. We do not have enough information to understand just why the congregations in Accra are more successfully multi-ethnic than those in the hinterlands, but it is not impossible to suggest an answer. Studies on urban migration have shown over and over again that,

> "Individuals may find themselves drawn…to personal attachments outside of their original kin and identity group…breaking down the rigid social and cultural boundaries that characterize more isolated peoples. Cross-cutting ties develop…" (Gonzalez and McCommon 1989:4).

Those who leave their villages to come to the city, for whatever reason, have already broken many effective ties with their relatives and communities. They will typically seek out friends and family from back home, and possibly discover for the first time that they belong to an already defined ethnic group (us), distinct from other ethnic groups (them), with whom they must compete for jobs, housing and prestige. Though the cultural ties they share with others from their homeland form the bond which solidifies them as a group, these ties are often defined and redefined to accommodate the new and ever changing urban reality. If they are also attracted to a new religious movement, again for whatever reason, those same cultural ties will often need to undergo an even more drastic re-interpretation. In an urban situation, an individual will get support from others of his group who have joined the movement and can more easily avoid those who have not. In a rural situation, however, family and friends who continue to follow traditional cultural patterns and to hold the traditional world view, will provide a constant source of pressure and persuasion to return to the old ways. This would be especially true for the minority population of a multi-ethnic church. Pan-ethnic movements, therefore, would more likely be successful in peri-urban, rather than rural, situations. This does not, however, seem to be the case for the Banabé church.

By any definition, the Protestant Church of Banabé is in a rural, not an urban, area. However, it is necessary to qualify this somewhat. Banabé, though it has a population of only about 1100 (1985), is the site of the Sub-*prefecture* (chief administrative body) for the area and thus has representatives from every branch of the government residing in the vicinity. The *Sub-prefet* and his officials are primarily from other parts of the country and therefore of other ethnic groups. The *commandant* of the *gendarmerie* (police) and his *gendarmes* are all non-Lobi, non-Tembo, as are the members of the forestry guard who are responsible for protecting the game reserve to the south of town. Since August 1986, there has been an elected mayor and his secretary, neither of whom are Lobi or Tembo, who have taken certain responsibilities for the development of the town. Two Lobi hold important government positions, and others are on the staffs of the various government offices. There are no Tembo in such jobs. Also, Banabé is a market town (every Saturday) that draws both buyers and sellers from surrounding villages. What makes it distinct from traditional market towns is that it also has a number of permanent shops. When I arrived there were four. Two were owned by Lobi, one by a Tense and one by a Mossi. By the time I left, 15 months later, there were at least another 8 or 9, all run by 'outsiders', mostly Muslims.

Another feature that distinguishes Banabé from traditional Lobi and Tembo villages is the fact that their houses are clustered together near the road, instead of scattered over the countryside. Except possibly for their proximity to the shops, these distinctions do not greatly alter the village lifestyle. The people of Banabé live very much like those from villages farther away. They have their gardens and their fields to supply their livelihood and their economic status is no better. They live near family and have the same cultural pressures that others experience. Although it

could be argued that Banabé has some of the features of a city in microcosm, it in no way offers either the economic incentives of a major urban area, nor the cultural stimulation or potential for anonymity that such an environment generally entails.

In spite of this, I was curious whether Banabé's slightly greater cultural diversity, and especially the presence of the church itself, provided an attraction for believers from other areas who felt pressured by relatives to forego their newfound allegiance. In interviewing the church members, I therefore tried to find out if any had moved to Banabé specifically to be near the church or to get away from family who might make life difficult for them. There were some instances of this[24] but by far the majority had either lived there all their lives, had moved to Banabé before they knew anything about the church, or were still living in their own villages and making the trek to services each Sunday by bicycle or on foot.

The last matter to consider is why the Banabé case does not support the proposal as put forward by Fernandez. If a rural environment indeed has a negative correlation with a pan-ethnic communion as he suggests, why is it not a problem in this case? First of all, the message of the religious movement is in no way tied to the territory where the church is located. There is nothing in the setting which makes one group or the other predominant. Secondly, the extremely close cultural affinity which the two groups share presents far fewer areas for conflict to arise as regards what it means to be a follower of the new road in this setting. There is, in fact, a great deal of pressure, especially on new believers, to forsake the movement and return to the old ways. They are assured that the protector spirits, who are ever present and jealous of their power, will kill them or their children if they do not come to their senses. They are mocked both for what they do, as in church services and the burning of spirit altars, as well as for what they don't do, such as dance at funerals and drink beer. Some have yielded to the pressure[25] but most have stood firm. It would seem that the identification they make with the church and its message, and the encouragement they receive from other believers, suffices, in most cases, to overcome the negative pressure they must endure from members of their own families and ethnic groups. Therefore, it would seem that an urban, as opposed to a rural, environment for a developing religious movement may not be essential, if cultural differences are not great, and members get the encouragement they feel they need within the church to withstand family and community pressure without.

Conclusion

Fernandez' model for successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements has provided a very helpful framework for examining the independent church of Banabé. Not only has it been possible to strengthen, modify or eliminate several of the proposals, but efforts to interpret Fernandez' hypotheses and to apply the Banabé material has suggested a number of other observations about religious movements in general that must be considered if their

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[24] A Tense man with two wives lived in a village several days walk from Banabé. Both wives had had many children but all his sons died in infancy and he had a great many daughters. One had married a man who went to work in the south and both had become Christians. When this daughter moved back home she told her parents about the new path but they were not interested.

One day, the man heard that another of his daughters had died in Burkina Faso and he left to attend the funeral. He was gone several days and when he arrived back in his own village the funeral of another daughter was taking place. The spirits said that this girl had refused to marry the man she was promised to and continued to do so even after her rejected suitor put a curse on her. Therefore the spirits killed her.

It was necessary to take the funeral to the powerful spirit, Kosami, who demanded a cow, which the dead girl's father didn't have. He had gone to the village of Kosami on his bicycle and the spirit now said that the bicycle was 'spoiled' and must be left with the spirit as well. He had to walk back to his village. His daughter, who was a believer, kept telling him that none of this would be necessary if he would leave the spirits and follow the Jesus road.

He paid several chickens to Kosami and finally paid the cow, but all this time he was listening to what his daughter said. Finally, he decided to believe, as did his two wives and another teen-age daughter. There were no other believers in the village and people mocked him for the stand he took. After about a year he moved his family to a village outside of Banabé near one of his wife's relatives. He said it was better to be near the church and other believers.

[25] In 1982, when there were healing meetings at a church in Bouna, many people from Banabé went hoping to be cured of their illnesses. One was an older Lobi man who was well known for playing the balafon (similar to a xylophone) at funerals. He was blind and hoped to get back his sight. This did not happen, but along with another man and two women who were also blind, he returned to Banabé and joined the church there. He burned his spirit altars and began to attend services regularly with his wife and children. It was taught that a believer should not play the balafon as it was a method of talking with the spirits. Others gave up the practice but he continued to play the entire three years he attended the church. When the two men from the Pentecostal church came to help in Banabé they insisted that a believer could not continue to play the balafon. He left the church and rebuilt his spirit altars.

development and operation is to be better understood. These observations along with some of the findings discussed in earlier chapters will be summarized and discussed in the following chapter. I will also attempt to present a revised model for successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements and independent churches and to express again what I believe to be the relationship of religion to ethnic identity.

6

Rethinking Multi-Ethnic Recruitment

> *"Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth--to every nation, tribe, language and people. He said in a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." Revelation 14:6–7.*

The success or failure of an independent church or religious movement to attract members from other than the founding ethnic group is clearly dependent on many complex and inter-related factors. Fernandez, in his 1975 article on inter-ethnic recruitment in African religious movements, delineated several of the important elements which he believed, by their presence or absence, would affect the outcome of a movement's pan-ethnic aims. Relating this model to the Protestant Church of Banabé, however, has suggested that, while each of the factors Fernandez proposes deserves careful consideration, the overall model has certain weaknesses which make its application, at best, difficult and, at worst, invalid.

Any study of successful multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements must clarify at least four important issues which Fernandez does not directly address in any of his propositions or in his discussion of the five cases from which he draws his conclusions. First of all, ethnicity and ethnic group must be clearly defined. More specifically, the ethnic relationship(s) of the two or more units or groups involved in the religious movement must be clearly understood. Second, consideration of the local congregation must be separated from that of the wider movement. Factors which make successful multi-ethnic recruitment possible at the level of the local congregation are different from those which permit the overall movement to succeed in its pan-ethnic goals. Third, the content or message of the religious movement must be scrutinized independently of its structure. Depending on the circumstances, more cultural variation may be tolerated in one of these areas than in the other. Finally, the motivations that lead people to join and then remain with any given religious movement must be better understood. What draws individuals to join a particular movement may be different from what inclines them to remain as members. Each of these four issues now needs to be examined more closely.

Ethnicity: ethnic consciousness/ethnic group

In Chapter Three I suggested that ethnicity, properly understood, includes both the notions of ethnic consciousness and ethnic group. The awareness by members of cultural differences between groups does not determine the presence or absence of ethnic consciousness. However, when individuals and groups use these objective criteria to validate the existence of differing social histories, and thereby to determine whether others are part of "us" or part of "them", ethnicity has come into play. This ethnic consciousness, while establishing the presence of ethnic units, does not presume the formation of ethnic groups. The latter involves at least minimal social organization to validate group decisions and to facilitate the pursuit of common interests. I therefore posited that ethnicity should be seen as a continuum ranging from minimal ethnic awareness (ethnic consciousness) to intense ethnic competition (ethnic group).

Based on this conceptualization of ethnicity, the Lobi and the Tembo peoples do exhibit distinct ethnic awarenesses that prevent extensive intermarriage and residential commingling. They cannot, however, be considered true ethnic groups in relation to one another. That they indeed recognize themselves as separate ethnic categories was vital for my work as, without that designation, the Protestant Church of Banabé can not be a valid case for the study of successful multi-ethnic recruitment in an independent church. The necessity of establishing this fact has also suggested the need to determine, when studying any pan-ethnic religious movement, the nature and intensity of ethnic awareness and competition between the groups involved.

It is certainly understandable, as Fernandez has suggested, that religious movements making universalist claims will likely have more success in recruiting from diverse ethnic populations if the peoples involved share some degree of cultural similarity or "affinity of cultures." In the same vein, it is clear that the less two groups share an "'equality' of cultures (defined in terms of their freedom from historical and contemporary experience of domination and subordination)" (Fernandez 1975:145), the less likely there will be any possibility of the two ethnic units

cooperating in a single independent church. As helpful as each of these propositions is, neither recognizes that ethnicity involves more than an accumulation of cultural distinctions or the perception of past or present inequality. A clearer awareness of the type and intensity of ethnic relationships operating in any given religious movement or independent church will contribute to a better understanding of the success or failure of that movement to recruit across ethnic lines.

The Protestant Church of Banabé has been successful in attracting new members from both the Lobi and the Tembo populations since the church began in 1979. The fact that their cultural systems overlap to such a great extent has undoubtedly played a major part in that success. I believe it is of even greater significance, however, that neither the Lobi nor the Tembo perceive themselves as being in competition with each other for scarce resources, either socially or economically. Although each is conscious of their ethnic distinctiveness, neither has developed into an organized ethnic group that stands in opposition to the other. Were resource competition added to the already prominent linguistic barrier, cultural similarity might not prove sufficient to make inter-group cooperation successful.

A better test case for understanding how the intensity of ethnic consciousness might interact with a high level of cultural diversity is that of the Aboboga church described in Chapter Five (n2). In this urban independent church, five official linguistic populations (Baulé, Dida, Bété, Wobé and Yakouba) are recognized and another (Toura) is seeking official recognition. These diverse ethnic units or groups have managed to worship together successfully for many years and to continue to draw members from each of the six ethnic categories. It would be very helpful to know more about the actual ethnic relationships between each of the language groups, both inside and outside the church. How much cultural diversity actually exists? Do some of the groups cooperate more closely than others? If so, on what basis? This is a matter I hope to look into when I return to Côte d'Ivoire.

It seems clear that, in any study of multi-ethnic recruitment, the question of ethnic consciousness and competition needs to be separated from both that of cultural diversity and intergroup hostilities due to past or present situations of domination. It also needs to be recognized, however, that each of these may operate differently depending on whether one is examining a local congregation or the overall religious movement.

Involvement: local congregation/wider movement

There is, I believe, a major flaw in Fernandez' treatment of the various African cases he describes to establish the basis for his propositions concerning successful multi-ethnic religious movements. He assumes that movements which demonstrate a modicum of overall success in recruiting members from other than the founding ethnic group are somehow frauds if the same success in multi-ethnic recruitment is not exhibited by all local-level member churches. Whether or not this is true may be more of a philosophical than a sociological question.

This assumption presents two problems that contribute to the weakening of Fernandez' model. First, it severely limits and even trivializes the concept of a successful multi-ethnic religious movement. By his definition, a movement could conceivably spread to dozens of different ethnic groups, each of which establishes its own local congregation, and Fernandez could still say that the movement has not been "successful" in recruiting across ethnic lines. Second, factors which might make a local congregation successfully multi-ethnic may be quite different, or at least operate differently, from those which contribute to a movement's overall success in attaining its pan-ethnic aims. To fail to recognize this has meant that the proposed hypotheses are both inconsistently interpreted and inconsistently applied.

The two problems are, after all, related. It should be clear that some factors, such as extreme cultural and linguistic differences, could make local level cooperation logistically very difficult, but might present far fewer problems for the overall movement. It may even be possible that a strategy of ethnic autonomy at the local level could lead to greater success for the religious movement as a whole. Whether each local congregation of a multi-ethnic religious movement *ought* to be multi-ethnic as well is a philosophical question that goes beyond the scope of this paper. I will only say that behind that notion seems to lie the implication that an individual's ethnic identity and his or her religious identity cannot be considered separately. This goes back to early definitions of ethnicity that considered religion to be simply one of several objective criteria that individuals or groups might use to emphasize their ethnic uniqueness.[1] Such a conception now seems quite outmoded. To say that a religious movement can be viewed as successfully multi-ethnic without having multi-ethnic local congregations is not to say that the latter cannot occur, as both the Banabé and the Aboboga cases attest. Accepting the distinction between the two levels of ethnic

[1] See Chapter Three under the section, Ethnicity as a concept: ethnic content.

involvement, however, now makes it possible to consider a re-interpretation of the factors that might make one or the other successful. It may well be that all ten of Fernandez' proposals can be applied to both the local congregation and the wider movement, but they do not operate in the same way at each level.

Before considering how some of these proposals might be re-interpreted, it is necessary to discuss another related dichotomy with which Fernandez failed to deal directly in his study. I refer to the question of message versus structure, or what he called "the word" versus "ceremony".

Content: message/structure

Part of what makes some factors more important at the level of the wider movement than at the level of the local church is that they also deal with the message or ideational content of the movement. Structural factors, including organization of leadership, worship and ritual, must be considered separately, as they are often more crucial for successful local level cooperation.

A religious movement may be described both in terms of the message it propounds and the expression given to that message through the structure of leadership, worship and ritual activity. Though it is often difficult to divide the two and no such division may exist in the minds of the majority of the participants, the message and the structure of a religious movement can operate quite independently. To some extent it may be said that the message is the movement, for if it changes to any great extent a new movement has begun. The message may be expressed, however, through the structure of religious activity, in many different ways by different groups in different locations. When examining how successful a multi-ethnic religious movement is in recruiting across ethnic lines, the message will be more in focus at the level of the wider movement, while the structural expression of that message may have more influence on pan-ethnic recruitment at the local level.

A message which is ethnically dominated (what Fernandez calls "retribalized") has little hope of attracting members from other ethnic groups regardless of the founders' pan-ethnic aspirations. The Bwiti case clearly demonstrates this. That is not to say that, even where the message is ethnically neutral, each ethnic group will not interpret it to some extent in line with their own cultural perspectives and worldview. But where admission to the movement or advancement in its ranks requires a relationship to deities or ancestors ethnically defined, those without such ties are unlikely to consider affiliation desirable. It seems, therefore, almost an axiom that for a multi-ethnic religious movement to succeed at all, it must propound an ethnically neutral message.

Structure, on the other hand, can be more culturally diverse without it being necessarily detrimental to successful pan-ethnic recruitment. This would be especially true if local congregations were allowed ethnic autonomy in matters such as the organization of worship, decision-making and ritual symbolism. Whether the latter situation ever actually occurs is another matter. This would depend to a great extent on the authority structure at the level of the wider movement, which could conceivably be distinct from that of the local congregation.

The point being made here is a rather obvious one. Any religious movement making universalist claims must have a truly universalist message. That message can then be interpreted or "acted out" in quite culturally diverse ways. This again argues for the need to separate ethnic and religious identity. The religious behavior of Irish Catholics may be quite different from that of Italian Catholics, but both groups are clearly Catholic. That they are both Catholic, on the other hand, does not make them one ethnic group. Similarly, the fact that Irish American and Italian American Catholics often prefer to worship in separate congregations (partially because they tend to live in separate communities) does not negate the fact that the universalist message proffered by the Catholic church has been the vehicle for a highly successful religious movement for hundreds of years.[2]

One final dichotomy, related to the message, needs to be examined before the factors effecting successful multi-ethnic church growth at the level of either the local congregation or the wider movement can be considered. This concerns the motivations individuals express for joining a movement versus those they perceive to keep them there as active members. Failure to consider this distinction also clouds any real understanding of how factors influencing recruitment actually operate.

[2] It is granted that the Catholic Church does not come under the category of independent religious movements discussed throughout this paper, but the necessity for keeping ethnic and religious identity separate is universal and does not apply only to independent churches.

Conversion: adhesion/conviction

The focus here is on the message rather than the structure of the religious movement. There may well be people drawn to some highly ritualized religious movements for the aesthetic satisfaction they attain from participation, but the majority seem to be attracted because they have come to understand enough of what the movement teaches to believe that there is hope of having some deeply-felt need met. It would appear, however, that what draws them in may not be sufficient to keep them active members of the church. If their perceived needs are not continually met or further teaching repels them, initial adherents will often return to the belief system to which they previously subscribed.

Conviction, on the other hand, seems to grow when further teaching by church leaders reveals benefits not previously understood; benefits which may be seen to outweigh those initially desired. In the case of the Banabé church, intangible benefits often came to be more important than tangible ones, though the latter were expected to continue in most instances. What concerns us here is not to explain how adhesion becomes conviction, but to recognize that conversion is not a static event. Rather it is a process which is directly related to the message propounded. Those aspects of the message which produce adherence are likely to be different from those which produce conviction.

An examination of the four issues just described in relation to whatever religious movement is under study should contribute to a better understanding of why some movements are more successful than others in fulfilling their pan-ethnic goals. Failure to consider directly ethnic relationships, the level of involvement, the content of the movement, and motivations for conversion can only lead to an inadequate comprehension of what factors actually effect multi-ethnic church growth. Keeping this in mind, it is now possible to summarize how such factors as cultural and linguistic diversity, ritual participation, orientation of worship, and liberality of the authority structure, might effect the success or failure of a religious movement to recruit across ethnic lines.

Rethinking Multi-ethnic Recruitment

Although the focus of my research was a single independent church, it was clear that both church leaders and members in Banabé saw themselves as part of a wider movement comprised of churches and congregations found, not only in other Lobi and Tembo villages, but in other ethnic groups and other countries. It was an awareness of this fact that caused me to recognize the necessity for separating a consideration of the local congregation from that of the wider movement. The need to consider all other factors affecting multi-ethnic recruitment in religious movements followed from this initial division.

Wider movement. My work with the Protestant Church of Banabé and my efforts to apply Fernandez' model for successful multi-ethnic church growth suggest that pan-ethnic recruitment at the level of the wider movement will be facilitated by the presence of:

1. a truly universal message that is perceived to fulfill more present tangible needs and to promise more future intangible benefits.

2. a liberal and ethnically balanced authority structure that allows for considerable local (and possibly ethnic) autonomy.

3. a greater focus on the message than on the organization of worship and the structure of ritual activity.

4. a neutral language[3] of communication; that is, one that does not give dominance to any of the ethnic groups involved.

5. a low to moderate level of ethnic consciousness; that is, minimal competition for scarce resources such as trained pastors, places in schools for religious instruction, aid for construction of buildings, and positions of leadership.

[3] I recognize that the use of a trade language, especially where it is the language of former colonizers, is seldom actually neutral. I use this term simply to mean that it is not the primary language of any of the ethnic groups involved in the movement.

Conversely, a religious movement will be less successful in its pan-ethnic aims where:

1. the message is re-interpreted to give dominance, in this world or the next, to one ethnic group over another.

2. the authority structure becomes more centralized or ethnically dominated and local congregations are more closely controlled by the leaders of the wider movement.

3. organization of worship and the structure of ritual activity are made universal for the entire movement.

4. the language of one of the ethnic groups involved becomes a more acceptable vehicle for communication throughout the movement.

5. ethnic competition becomes more intense and resources are perceived to be distributed inequitably.

If it is true, as I have suggested, that the message is the movement, then there is a further point that needs to be made concerning the success of pan-ethnic recruitment at the level of the wider religious movement. It is not only important to examine the motivations people express for joining and remaining with a given movement, but to consider the motivations people or groups give for leaving. In the latter case, an ethnic group, or even a mixture of ethnic groups may split from the main body because they feel disenfranchised or have a desire to reorganize the structure of worship and ritual activity along different lines. They may have no problem with the message. The question needs to be asked whether, in such a case, it is correct to say that a new movement has arisen or that an old one has failed in its pan-ethnic aims. I would again argue for the need to separate religious and ethnic identity and to recognize that, though either may be used to re-interpret or manipulate the other, they should be seen to operate more or less independently.

Local congregation. I have already indicated that, where the local congregation is concerned, there are two possible scenarios. First, if the wider movement permits ethnic autonomy at the local level, some congregations will involve only one ethnic group and the factors affecting multi-ethnic church growth become almost irrelevant. Language and cultural differences are no longer an issue though the bilingualism of some members, not necessarily leaders, would be necessary for communication with the wider movement. A rural location would be more feasible. In the second situation, where local congregations involve more than one ethnic group, factors influencing pan-ethnic recruitment are numerous. My work suggests that successful multi-ethnic church growth will be facilitated by the presence of:

1. the acceptance of all the core elements of the universal message with minimal re-interpretation by local groups.

2. ritual symbolism meaningful to all but allowing for some difference of interpretation by participants.

3. similar cultural practices.

4. little linguistic diversity or a mutual respect for all languages with none dominating; the possible use of a neutral language, e.g. French, English, etc., for cohesion.

5. bi-lingual leaders from each ethnic unit or group; where relevant, fluency in the neutral language as well as their own.

6. an urban location, where ties to traditional ethnic identities are weak.

7. a quite low level of ethnic consciousness; essentially no competition for scarce resources.

It must be kept in mind that what is being considered here are local-level member churches of a wider multi-ethnic movement that are seeking to be multi-ethnic as well. Those congregations comprised of only one ethnic group would not have the same concerns. As some of the factors, but not their applications, overlap with those at the wider level, it might be helpful to consider each of these propositions briefly to demonstrate how they differ for the local congregation.

The first point for both levels is essentially the same. The success in multi-ethnic recruitment for the wider movement or for the local congregation depends on their propounding a truly universal message. At the same time, it is recognized that different ethnic groups are likely to do a certain amount of re-interpretation of that message in

light of their own traditional world views. If this re-interpretation is too great, however, and core elements of the original message are rejected or changed, it may well be that a new movement will develop.

Where re-interpretation is marginal, differing conceptualizations may be minimalized by the acceptance of a common ritual symbolism which encompasses all variations. This was the point Fernandez (1965) made in his article on symbolic consensus. It is also why, in successful multi-ethnic movements, similarity in ritual practice is more important at the local level than for the wider movement. In fact, a religious movement that insists on uniform ritual activity for all member congregations may be defeating its pan-ethnic goals.

For a local-level church to adopt a common ritual symbolism, however, it may be necessary that the cultural practices of the groups involved be quite similar. Even where new converts reject much of their traditional world view and desire to accept all new religious observances more or less "intact" from the wider movement, it may not be possible for culturally divergent groups to agree on how these ceremonies and practices should be integrated into the life of the church. This may be true, not only because they bring widely differing world views and values to the situation but, because they could conceivably be accustomed to operating with totally distinct decision-making procedures.

The fourth point deals with the problem of communication. Though linguistic diversity may present few difficulties for the wider movement, it can be disastrous for a local-level congregation seeking to cross ethnic lines. I am suggesting success will depend on one of two scenarios. The first is that proposed by Fernandez that the groups involved speak languages which do not greatly differ. Presumably, either group would be able to understand the other's language. Though such a situation could conceivably occur, it does not negate the possibility that one group could be made to feel inferior if the other's language were used for services and ceremonies. Any real success in multi-ethnic recruitment at the local level is likely to depend on the second possibility, the one found in both the Banabé and Abogoba churches. In these cases, no language spoken as the primary tongue of any group in the congregation is given prominence but a real effort is made to respect all languages and see they are more or less equally used. If more than two languages are involved, the use of a neutral or trade language may be adopted to avoid the cumbersome necessity of translating everything several times. If such is the case, further efforts must be made to see that all listeners who do not understand the outside language have the opportunity at some point to hear things explained in their own tongue.

For all of this to work it is necessary that leaders in the local congregation be, in some measure, bi-lingual. If only two groups are involved and no outside language is used, leaders would need to have at least a minimal competence in each other's language. Where several groups and a neutral language are concerned, each leader would likely need to know, at the very minimum, the neutral language as well as their own. The point here is a very simple one. For a local multi-ethnic congregation to be successful leaders must be able to communicate with one another and to do so in such a way that none of their languages is given pre-eminence.

Point number six echoes Fernandez who felt that an urban location would make multi-ethnic recruitment more successful than would a site in the country. In the latter situation it is likely that one ethnic group is already in prominence and others, not native to the territory, would be at a disadvantage. Similarly, in a rural situation, ethnic identities remain strong and even where two groups share a territory there may be sufficient family and community pressure to prevent conversion, especially where another ethnic group is involved. That the Lobi and Tembo have been so successful in establishing a multi-ethnic church within their own territory is likely attributable to their greatly overlapping cultural systems.

The final but extremely important factor for successful multi-ethnic recruitment in a local church is that the level of ethnic consciousness between the ethnic groups involved must be very low. I would suggest that, in most cases, this will be true, not only for members of the congregation but, for the wider community as well. This is certainly the case in Banabé. Even in an urban situation, if one ethnic group feels they must compete with specific other groups for jobs, education or prestige, they may have difficulties worshipping together in a single church. They could bring the need to compete with them. This would not preclude their forming separate congregations even while they recognize their common membership in the wider movement.

It should be clear that many of these factors overlap and intersect with one another. They do no operate independently. However, as with the wider movement, the successful multi-ethnic growth of the local congregation will likely diminish if any one of these factors is absent or changes. Such would, therefore, be the case where:

1. local groups have widely diverse interpretations of the universal message.
2. cultural differences are great.
3. the language of one of the ethnic groups dominates the services.
4. leadership comes from only one ethnic unit or group.
5. ritual symbolism is tied to one ethnic group more than another.
6. the church is located in a rural environment, where one ethnic group is seen to dominate.
7. ethnic competition or animosity develops.

Once it is accepted that it is the message that shapes the wider movement and the structure of religious activity in light of that message that shapes the local congregation, it becomes quite easy to see how factors affecting multi-ethnic growth might operate differently at the two levels. New movements start not when local churches or ethnic groups break away from the authority structure of the wider movement, but when the core elements of the message are discarded in favor of other opposing elements which constitute a new message.

Summary and Conclusion

Studies of independent religious movements and churches have, in the past, focused on attempts either to explain the proliferation of such movements since the advent of the colonial era in the 19th century (Lantenari 1963, Jules-Rosette 1979, Peel 1968, Fernandez 1982) or to develop a typology that classifies them on the basis of some set of defining characteristics (Linton 1943, Wallace 1956, Fernandez 1964, Turner 1979). Little effort has been made to examine the part that ethnicity has played in either their definition or development (Lewins 1978). Nor has much attention been given the fact that the majority of these movements, while claiming a message with universal application, has failed to attract members in any great number from ethnic groups other than that represented by the founders. An exception to this is the examination by Fernandez (1975) of a series of five multi-ethnic religious movements where he himself had done extensive fieldwork. On the basis of this study, he offered a set of propositions that might explain their success or failure in recruiting across ethnic lines.

In 1986–87, I spent long periods in and around the village of Banabé in northeastern Côte d'Ivoire observing and worshiping with the Lobi and Tembo members of the Protestant Church which began there in 1979. During that time, I kept in mind the factors Fernandez had proposed and sought to see what part they played in the success the church was having in attracting new converts from both ethnic categories. As a result of that study I found it necessary to rethink much of what I had read about new religious movements and to develop a clearer conception of what I felt was the relationship of religion to ethnic identity.

In regard to the religious movements themselves, I came to see that any attempt to understand why they succeed or fail in their pan-ethnic aims requires that more attention be paid to a number of inter-related aspects usually neglected in studies of multi-ethnic religious movements. These include: a) a closer examination of inter-ethnic relationships found within the movement, b) a recognition that factors affecting multi-ethnic church growth may operate differently in the local congregation and in the wider movement, c) a need to separate the message propounded by the movement from the structure which expresses that message, and d) a better understanding of the motivations that first attract new adherents to the movement and then bring about the conviction necessary to cause them to remain as members. Having re-examined the Banabé case and Fernandez' model in light of these aspects, I have suggested a new set of proposals which might explain the success or failure of multi-ethnic recruitment at both the level of the wider movement and that of the local congregation.

The results of this study have contributed, however, not only to a rethinking of new and multi-ethnic religious movements, but to a better understanding of the relationship between religion and ethnic identity. It is no longer satisfactory to subordinate religion to ethnicity as simply one of many objective criteria used by ethnic groups to define their distinctive character. That religious movements can cross ethnic lines at all underscores this fact. Lobi and Tembo Christians have not, at least as yet, established a new ethnicity. Their identity as Christians gives Lobi and Tembo believers a bond they did not previously share, and while for some this may have diminished the importance of their ethnic ties with non-believing relatives, it has not severed them. Only when religious and ethnic identities are considered independently is it possible to begin to understand the rise (and fall) of multi-ethnic religious movements.

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