

Why Rangi Christians Continue to Practice African Traditional Religion

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Introduction

The Uganda/Tanzania Branch of SIL conducts an orientation course for new members coming to work in East Africa. One of the components of the course is a scheduled lecture about African Traditional Religion (ATR). In 2006, ten expatriates attended the course. There were also five Tanzanian nationals present. The Tanzanians fulfilled various roles such as interpreters, Swahili language teachers and cultural guides. I was asked by the branch administrators to present a lecture concerning ATR. During the course of the lecture, I emphasized the fact that most Tanzanian Christians were still involved at some level in ATR. After mentioning some of the ATR practices I was aware of, I asked the Tanzanians if they could verify my assertions. One of the Swahili language teachers, a man in his mid-thirties, stated that my assertions were true. Then to everyone's surprise, he stated that after returning to his home village the previous year for the first time after being in the capital city for more than ten years, he and his relatives sacrificed a goat to the ancestral spirits. Why did the young man admit this and feel that, even though he was a Christian, it was necessary to make such a sacrifice?

Likewise, such practices are conducted in the Tanzanian village of Haubi. Haubi is a Rangi village comprised of more than 90% Roman Catholic Christians. In the Haubi highlands, there is a forest of very large trees which can not be cut down and within which no one is permitted to live. This is where initiation traditionally took place, and it is believed that the spirits which inhabit the area are quite strong. Because of the fear of these spirits, Rangi Christians avoid and protect the forest. Why would such a large Christian population, where Christianity has been established for nearly 75 years, still practice this component of ATR?

In this paper I will give reasons why Rangi Christians continue to practice elements of African Traditional Religion (ATR). First, I will give a background of the Rangi people, with a special focus on the village of Haubi. Then I will give a brief overview of ATR, especially those components which are important to Rangi traditional beliefs. Then several reasons will be given as to why Rangi believers still practice ATR. Finally, a conclusion will be given in which I look at the implications for Bible translation .

Background of the Rangi People

When the Rangi people emerged as a distinct ethnic group is a matter of debate: estimates range from 300 AD to some time between 1500 and 1700.¹ Ethnically, the Rangi constitute a union of Cushitic inhabitants in the Haubi Valley with Bantu newcomers from the west. They have migration stories stating that they came from Ethiopia or Sudan (reflecting Cushitic heritage). Another story coming from the Bantu strand is the assertion that the Rangi came from the west.² After moving into the Kondoa region, Rangi began to assimilate villages from their Cushitic neighbors, mainly the Burunge/Alagwa group,³ and from the Bantu Nyaturu tribe. In the past, the Rangi sent out salt-searching parties northwards to Magugu and founded colonies, the remnants of which are the Wabugwe of today.

Today, the majority of the Rangi people live in the Kondoa District of Northern Central Tanzania. The estimated Rangi population is 420,000⁴ and at least 80% live in small villages. On the main road of the district, which is part of the Great North Road going from Cape Town to Cairo, significant Rangi populations can be found in all villages from Kidoka (60 km south of Kondoa, the district capital) to Bereko (60 km north of Kondoa). To the east of the road lies the traditional heartland of the Rangi, including all villages within the Pahi-Busi-Mondo ring road.⁵

The Rangi are mainly small-scale maize farmers and grow cash crops such as sunflower seeds, millet, beans, lentils, peas, and onions. A small percentage of Rangi are pastoralists. The Rangi have been influenced by Islam since the middle of the 19th century, due to the fact that Arab ivory hunters and slave traders often stopped in Kondoa on their way further inland. The first mosque in the region was built in Kondoa in 1885.

However, the Rangi in the Haubi highlands, not directly on the trading route, resisted adopting Islam. The Rangi villages at the foothills of the Rangi highlands such as Busi, Pahi Mondo, Kolo and Kondoa had become more developed and had more western goods due to the fact that they benefited from the ivory and slave trade and had extensive contact with the Arab traders. The Rangi of Haubi refused to engage in slave trading, and there was animosity between the Rangi of the Highlands and Rangi of these other areas. The villagers of Haubi were often mobilized to fight off any attempts by slave raiders to invade the highlands and carry off prisoners for sale in Bagamoyo.

The first Catholic priests arrived in Kondoa district in 1907. A Catholic church was built in Kondoa that year. Catholic missionaries then soon journeyed to Haubi. When the elders heard that Christianity did not allow slavery, they were surprised. Their only contact with outsiders had always been with the knowledge that they were in danger of being captured and carried off as slaves. They also discovered that they could receive rifles from the missionaries to protect themselves from slave raids. Once these weapons were acquired, they were able to end any attempts by slave traders to enter the Highlands again. This was a major reason that Haubi inhabitants developed a close relationship with the Catholic priests.

The second major reason for the elders of Haubi to desire more Christian contact is that the Haubi highlands were very much underdeveloped compared to other Rangi villages. This was because of their lack of trade with the outside. Therefore, Christian missionaries were seen as a way in which trade goods could be procured. They realized that they were behind their other Rangi neighbors and desired the same development.

As a result, in 1935 or 1936, by common community agreement, the elders of the Haubi highlands agreed to convert to Catholicism. They invited the Catholic priests in Kondoa (who were Italian) to Haubi to establish a Catholic parish. During the years 1937-1940, the majority of the Rangi in the Haubi highlands were baptized. In 1942-43 a church seating 2,000 was built by Polish refugees which is still in use today. The fact that the Bishop of the Dodoma region was a Rangi⁶ shows the extent to which Rangi became integrated into the Catholic Church. It is estimated that 93% of the Rangi are Muslim and the remaining 7% are Roman Catholic Christians. Almost all of the Christians either live in the Haubi highlands or in Kondoa town.

It is estimated that 90% of Rangi can speak Swahili (the national language) with varying levels of proficiency. Primary school education is in Swahili, while secondary school instruction is in English (with frequent Swahili insertions). Church services of all denominations are in Swahili, while Islamic services consist of recitations of the Koran in Arabic and exhortation in Swahili. In Rangi villages, Rangi is the preferred language and is used almost exclusively.

Reasons for Practicing ATR

Following Van Rheenen, ATR is defined as “the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs and that humans, consequently, must discover what beings and forces are impacting them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power.”⁷ My previous paper⁸ stated that ATR has as some of its central themes existence on three levels, spiritual beings, man in communion with this world, magic – the impersonal power, manipulation of the spirits and magic, and ATR religious specialists. Why these beliefs are still held and practiced by Rangi believers is the topic which is now considered.

Christianity adopted for material reasons

One of the biggest reasons for Rangi believers to still engage in ATR is because Christianity was not adopted for theological reasons. Rangi people did not hear the Gospel as preached by the Catholic priests and intellectually agree that such beliefs were 'better' or more 'true' than their ATR beliefs. Many, if not most, accepted Christianity because of the material benefits that it brought. Weapons were now available to defend themselves from slave traders, trade goods were now available and friendly contact with the outside world was now established.

It should be noted that since the 1940's, Haubi is the most developed and well-educated area of Irangi.⁹ Many Catholic priests and nuns have invested their lives in the Rangi community to raise the standards of health care and education. As a result, many Rangi of Haubi have gone on to establish business in the major cities of Tanzania; they have become priests and nuns themselves; they have found political power on the local level; and there are also some cabinet level Tanzanian government officials who are Rangi.¹⁰ Christianity has been a springboard which allowed the Rangi of Haubi to become the leaders among the Rangi tribe as a whole.

Church founders discounted the supernatural

There are still people alive today who remember the coming of the priests and the building of the Catholic church in Haubi.¹¹ The Italian priests who came to the Haubi highlands and first *soma missa* "read the mass," were trained and educated in Rome. They first came to the area knowing only Swahili, the language of wider communication, and having a western mindset. One of the tasks of the priests was to instruct the new believers in the Catholic faith and to encourage them to abandon their 'superstitions'. They were diligent to teach the new converts how to say the proper prayers and follow the liturgy in Latin.¹² Indeed, many older Rangi Catholics today can still recite the prayers in Latin, but the problem was the Rangi beliefs the priests labeled superstitions.

These superstitions, or *ushirikina*, were the traditional beliefs and practices of the Rangi. These beliefs and practices were, and still are today, in line with the basic principles of ATR. Before the priests came, all the Rangi in the Haubi highlands followed ATR and the Rangi who were Muslim practiced 'folk Islam', a mixture of ATR and Islamic beliefs.¹³

The priests denounced these *ushirikina* and proclaimed that these were not based in fact. They were simply the made-up explanations of a primitive and unscientific people to explain events which they could not logically understand. Therefore, the priests held that the Rangi thought sickness was caused by evil spirits or the living-dead because they did not have a scientific understanding of how illness worked. The priests also taught that the reason for the drought was meteorological phenomenon and not the curse of the living-dead or the *varimu*, the witches, as the Rangi traditionally believed. In fact, all the traditional beliefs that the Rangi held concerning the spirit world were considered to be a result of their ignorance in scientific thought and lack of exposure to the outside world.

As one stands back and observes the situation and talks to some of the people who were alive during the establishment of the church in Haubi, it is evident that the priests were to a large part ignorant to the depth and intensity of ATR among the Rangi. They had been trained in western theology and held a view that the way to salvation was through the intellectual teaching of the church and the path to development was through education and community development. The supernatural reasons that the Rangi applied to events and circumstances were rejected to a large degree by the priests. So the priests were, in effect, presenting a western religious system to the Rangi devoid of the supernatural. Granted, there were supernatural events which took place in the church during mass and baptism and the other sacraments of the Catholic Church, but outside of the church, almost outside of the churches' walls itself, nothing 'supernatural' happened. Such a religion void of the supernatural in the everyday life of the Rangi people was inadequate. The Rangi knew there was a supernatural world present, that it profoundly affected their lives, and that it impacted every significant daily activity.

Therefore, as a result of priests' view that the supernatural only occurred within the sacraments, Christianity was seen as what happened in the church building. ATR was left to explain and give answers to the reality of the world in which the Rangi lived everyday – in effect, anything outside the church walls was still seen in light of ATR. Christianity, as presented to them, simply did not have the answers the Rangi needed to impact the daily lives of the people in much more than a superficial way. Salvation must include the offer of protection against magic, sorcery, witchcraft and malevolent spiritual beings.¹⁴

No access to Scripture

Another reason why ATR is still practiced among Rangi Christians is their lack of access to the Scriptures. As stated above, most Rangi know some Swahili. Primary school instruction is officially in Swahili, but many Rangi teachers and students assert that when children in Haubi enter grade 1, they are unable to speak or understand Swahili. Fortunately, the teachers in the primary school are usually local people who are able to communicate to the children in Rangi while the children gradually learn Swahili over the next few grades. However, most children stop attending school after the 6th grade. Enough Swahili is learned to enable people to buy and sell in the market and to meet their basic communication needs with members of other tribes. However, their knowledge of Swahili is not at a high enough level for them to understand the Scripture.

Knowledge of the ability of Rangi people to speak Swahili is important to consider because the only Scripture currently available to them is the Swahili Bible. However, the most used version of the Bible in Swahili is the Union Version. It is a very literal translation from the RSV done in the early 1950's, not the original Greek text, and as a result it is not natural Swahili. It uses archaic vocabulary and grammar structures from Zanzibar and the coastal area of Tanzania; hence its poor intelligibility for the average Tanzanian. Because of this, people rely on the clergy to tell them what Scripture teaches. They cannot understand the Biblical text when it is read to them. Church leaders often don't understand the text themselves, but they use their limited knowledge of the Union Version of the Bible to consolidate their position as the authority on Biblical and church matters.

Compounding this problem is the lack of literacy among the Rangi people. Many people cannot read due to the lack of education they have received. Many of the older people who were educated under British colonial rule have a good ability to read the Biblical text in Swahili, but many can not read due to failing eyesight and the lack of glasses. Also, in the entire district of Kondoa, there is not one bookstore. People in the area cannot purchase a Bible even if they had the desire to do so. Bibles are only available in large cities, the nearest of which is a day's bus journey away.

The high illiteracy rate and the lack of books could be overcome with a strategy which employed non-print media. Radio, cassette tapes, drama, songs and other ways of presenting Scripture could be employed. The problem for some of the technology is that in the Rangi area only the town of Kondoa has electricity. Radio reception is often poor or non-existent. People also do not have the money to purchase cassette tapes, cassette players, radios or the batteries to operate them. Drama has not been a traditional way of presenting religious truth. The Rangi people love music, but the first Rangi bishop, in the early 1960's, commanded that Rangi songs would not be sung in church services. Songs consisting of western style with Swahili words would be allowed, but nothing else. This relegated Rangi music to traditional songs, and the potential to use Rangi music for pedagogical expression of the Christian faith was abandoned.

Because of their lack of access to Scripture, Rangi people do not see the Scripture as a source they can go to in order to understand the spiritual world. Swahili Scripture is inadequate for their needs and there is currently not a large enough portion of the Bible translated into Rangi to fulfill this vital need. Until the Scripture is seen as a valid resource for spiritual matters and is available and used by the majority of the Rangi of Haubi, ATR will continue to play a large role in Rangi religious life.

A current program is underway to provide Scripture for the Rangi people in the Rangi language. SIL has conducted a language project among the Rangi since 1997. This project has a literacy component which teaches people to read and write Rangi, along with publishing written materials in

Rangi. A translation of the book of Jonah has been published and portions of the Gospel of Mark are in circulation. The Rangi of Haubi are eager to read and write Rangi and gratefully receive any written materials produced in their language.

Key Biblical Terms are not understood

As stated above, the only Scripture which the Rangi community has access to is written in Swahili. This has resulted in a problem for the Rangi community. In Swahili, most of the religious and spiritual terms are borrowed from Arabic. These Key Biblical Terms,¹⁵ words such as *baraka* – blessing, *roho* – spirit, *pepo* – evil spirit, *peponi* – heaven, *rehema* – grace, are all transliterated into Swahili. As a result, such words do not have meaning for the average Rangi, or the meaning is misunderstood.

For example, the Swahili word *pepo* is used to mean ‘evil spirit.’ However, this leads to all sorts of problems for the Rangi. In the Rangi language, ancestral spirits are called *varimu* while evil spiritual beings are called *mirimu*. So the Rangi conclude that the Bible does not have anything at all to say about the evil spirits that inhabit the Rangi area. The *mapepo* are conceived of as living in Jewish lands and not among the Rangi. Therefore the Rangi are left to deal with the ancestral spirits and evil spiritual beings according to their traditional beliefs.

However, there are also words borrowed from Bantu languages that cause problems for the Rangi in understanding Scripture. One such word is the word for God. In Swahili, God is called *Mungu*, which is a Bantu word for the creator God. Rangi people recognize this word as referring to the creator God. However, he is perceived as distant and not necessarily interested in the Rangi people. The word most often used by the Rangi for God is *Ijɔva*. *Ijɔva* is the creator God whom Rangi call upon in a time of great need or crisis. When Rangi people hear Scripture translated into Rangi and the term *Ijɔva* is used, immediately their understanding of Scripture changes. God is not seen as someone foreign, but as someone who is dear to them and is near to them in a time of need or crisis.

Key Biblical Terms are just that; key terms in understanding the fundamental message of Scripture. Because the Rangi do not have adequate Key Biblical Terms to apply to their daily lives, they see the Scripture as not really relevant for how they live. For them, Scripture does not address the spirit world; hence they fall back on ATR to know how to relate to the spirit world. Scripture simply doesn't address the issues that Rangi are seeking answers for.

Lack of Biblical teaching

Another factor which contributes to Rangi continuing to practice ATR is the lack of Biblical teaching Christians in Haubi receive. Catechists are taught the liturgy of the Church which includes prayers and confessions of the faith. They are also taught how to use the rosary. This teaching ensures that they can correctly answer questions that show that they hold to the orthodox view of the Christian faith. However, all of this instruction is in Swahili, so the same problems as are cited above are evident here.

As previously noted, the Rangi now have Rangi priests and nuns who work in Haubi parish. These are men and women who were identified at an early age to enter the priesthood or become a nun. Catholic training to enter these professions is extensive. As a result, the children attend Catholic secondary schools in places such as Tanga or Morogoro, many miles from home. There the instruction is in Swahili, Latin, and English. The students are taught a traditionally Western curriculum and after secondary school usually study further outside the country, in either Kenya or Italy.

This creates a problem for the priests and nuns. From the time they are 12-13 years old they are living outside the Rangi community with their training always being in a western environment. Those who return to work in Haubi do not usually do so until they are in their late 20's or early 30's. As a result, it is

debatable how much of the traditional Rangi worldview they still possess and how aware they are of the traditional beliefs that the members of their parish have. It could also be debated how well they know the language, as many topics would not have been discussed with them before beginning their education in secondary school. Rangi culture traditionally avoids discussing certain subjects with children, as they are seen as not yet mature enough to know such things.¹⁶

Due to the above mentioned factors, Rangi Christians suffer from a lack of solid Biblical teaching. Often the priests or nuns do not know the Rangi words for certain subjects and so resort to the Swahili terms, which do not carry much weight with the Rangi. They also teach the people in a 'western' way, as that is how they themselves have been taught. Finally, certain topics are not addressed whatsoever by the ministers of the church. Teaching concerning initiation rites, traditional rituals to appease the spirit world and other components of ATR is simply non-existent. Due to this lack of teaching, Rangi Christians simply substitute the knowledge that ATR provides for the areas of life that the Church's instruction does not address.

Christianity is foreign

There have been Rangi Christians in Haubi for at least 75 years. The Catholic church is at the center of a large church compound. There is a primary school, a dispensary and a meeting hall all on the church grounds. A book is kept in the church that is an official register for all those who have been baptized, married, and buried by the church. In many ways the church is a central part to the Rangi community there.

However, there is a certain sense in which Christianity is seen as foreign and different. It is recognized that Christianity first came to the region through white men from Europe. This is in itself strange as to this day no Europeans live in Haubi. Christian names are different than traditional Rangi names; the Church mass is very different from their traditional way of practicing religion; and the educational and health system are different from what was traditionally practiced.

In many ways, many ideas from the Bible are seen as good and beneficial, while many others are simply strange and not understood. Christianity is seen as a solution for the Jews and people who lived far away in strange lands, who were dealing with different spirits and problems than the Rangi deal with everyday. The customs are different, the language is different, and the way Christianity is presented is foreign to how the Rangi have traditionally lived.

Family Pressure

Families in African often exert tremendous pressure upon individuals within them to bow to the desires and wishes of the family as a whole. As stated in the previous term paper, for the Rangi, "man is not an individual; he is always seen in relationship to others; both dead and living, along with the spirits which inhabit this world. Swahili has a proverb which says '*Mtu ni Watu*' a person is (a community of) people. This means that a person does not really exist outside of community."

The reason the young man at the beginning of this paper agreed to offer a sacrifice can be found here. His family still practiced many rituals associated with ATR. This young man had neglected to do so for the many years he was away from the village. His relatives were afraid that the young man's return would remind the spirits of his lack of respect for them. So they encouraged him to participate in the sacrifice. Even though he did not want to, the pressure they applied was enormous. Didn't he care about the family? Did he want to be the person responsible for bringing misfortune to the family? Why was it necessary for him to abstain from practices that the family and tribe had practiced for hundreds of years? After all, they have plenty of money and would not miss the goat at all, and who would the sacrifice hurt anyway? Everyone in the community approved of it, and it would also provide a nice meal and welcome home gift for the family and neighbors.

Statements such as these are commonplace among Rangi families. If the leader of the family, usually the oldest male relative, makes a decision that he thinks is the best for the family as a whole, all

agree and support his decision. To not participate would be to separate oneself from the family. In Rangì, there are no government social services to help care for those who are unable to care for themselves. If a person becomes ill, elderly, or has a financial need, the only resource he has to help him is his family. It is inconceivable to most Rangì to separate themselves from the family in such a way. His identity and support is from his family and his clan. Hence there is great pressure among Rangì believers to continue in the traditions and practices of the elders and family members.¹⁷

Lack of Relevance

In many ways, another contributing factor to ATR still being practiced among the Rangì is the lack of relevance to their everyday lives. Dye states "People respond to the Gospel in proportion to their conviction that God and his Word are relevant to the concerns of daily life."¹⁸ Rangì life is replete with rituals. There are rituals for purifying a woman after childbirth, for smelting iron, for welcoming in the New Year, for beginning the harvest, for purifying a man after sexual activity, for announcing a marriage and many more. These activities take place everyday among the Rangì.

It is granted that the Catholic Church in Haubi does have rituals, but these are almost exclusively limited to the sacraments, church holidays and the order of the church service itself. For the Rangì, Christianity does not offer help in these other areas. There are no rituals to help with the harvest or to welcome in the New Year. The Italian priests only taught what they learned themselves in Italy. They were not aware that in Rangì culture there was the felt need for a ritual to cover these other items mentioned.

As a result of a Christian alternative to these rituals, Rangì Christians, in effect, operate on two different planes. In the church building, they follow the rituals (sacraments and holidays) that the priests first taught them. For the traditional rituals that the Church did not address, they continued with their traditional practices. Granted, some of the traditional rituals have been changed and some of the most overt animistic elements have been either removed or repressed, but the fact remains that these traditional practices continue to this day. Man does not live in a vacuum and needs rituals to help through the transitions and difficult situations in life. A Christian substitute has not been given for a felt need; therefore the Rangì continue to rely upon ATR practices which do meet this need.

Lack of effectiveness

Another reason why ATR is practiced by Rangì Christians is that they feel that in some areas it is more effective than Christianity. When sickness strikes, as it often does, Rangì will go to the clinic for medical help. Supplies of drugs are limited, and they may or may not have the medicine that is needed. They will ask a priest to pray for them, but their search for a cure does not end there. They will also seek help in ATR. This is because they are often unable to pay for the medicine that they would need to travel to the city of Dodoma to purchase, or it could be that the medical help that they are given is not available anywhere in the country.¹⁹

Rangì are also faced with other problems besides sickness which they believe Christianity does not address. If they are attacked by spiritual beings, they must go to the *mganga*, diviner, who will help them repel the evil spirits. If they are having a problem with success in school or in business, they will again ask the shaman to invoke the spirits to help. Problems of infertility, poverty, family tension and other complex issues are in need of a solution. A solution will be sought in the Church, but if help does not come immediately, ATR will be consulted to see if a solution is to be found there.

Christianity for afterlife; ATR for the present

For many Rangì Christians, Christianity is something that has particular relevance for the afterlife. One becomes a Christian and practices the Christian faith not necessarily for any particular benefit today, but for the hope that after death they will be rewarded in heaven. It is difficult for Rangì believers to see how Christianity can and should impact their daily life. This is because there is not always an effective

Christian witness present. Few other Rangi have modeled a dynamic Christian faith and lifestyle for them. There are few faithful pastors or Rangi believers who are applying these principles in their daily lives.

Rangi believers see how the church leaders act. They know that when an elder or a lay leader has an ill child, the child is prayed for by the priest, but sacrifice is also made for the child. They know that the leaders practice some of the traditional rituals. They also know that many of the church leaders are fearful of the spirits and seek to appease them. Therefore it seems natural for them to do the same. This is not to say that there are no examples of such Christians among the Rangi, only that they are relatively few. The goal of the Rangi Christian is to ensure his entrance into heaven through his baptism in the Church and to use ATR principles to affect and order his daily affairs.

ATR allows syncretism

Finally, ATR allows a person to 'be a Christian' while still practicing ATR. ATR, which is not a systematic system as practiced by the Rangi, doesn't have to exclude Christians. In ATR, one can attend church services, be baptized, partake of the sacraments, and still practice ATR. It is not necessary for people to hold a tightly structured and logical belief system in order to function in their everyday life. A person's theology is what they act out, not what they profess to believe.

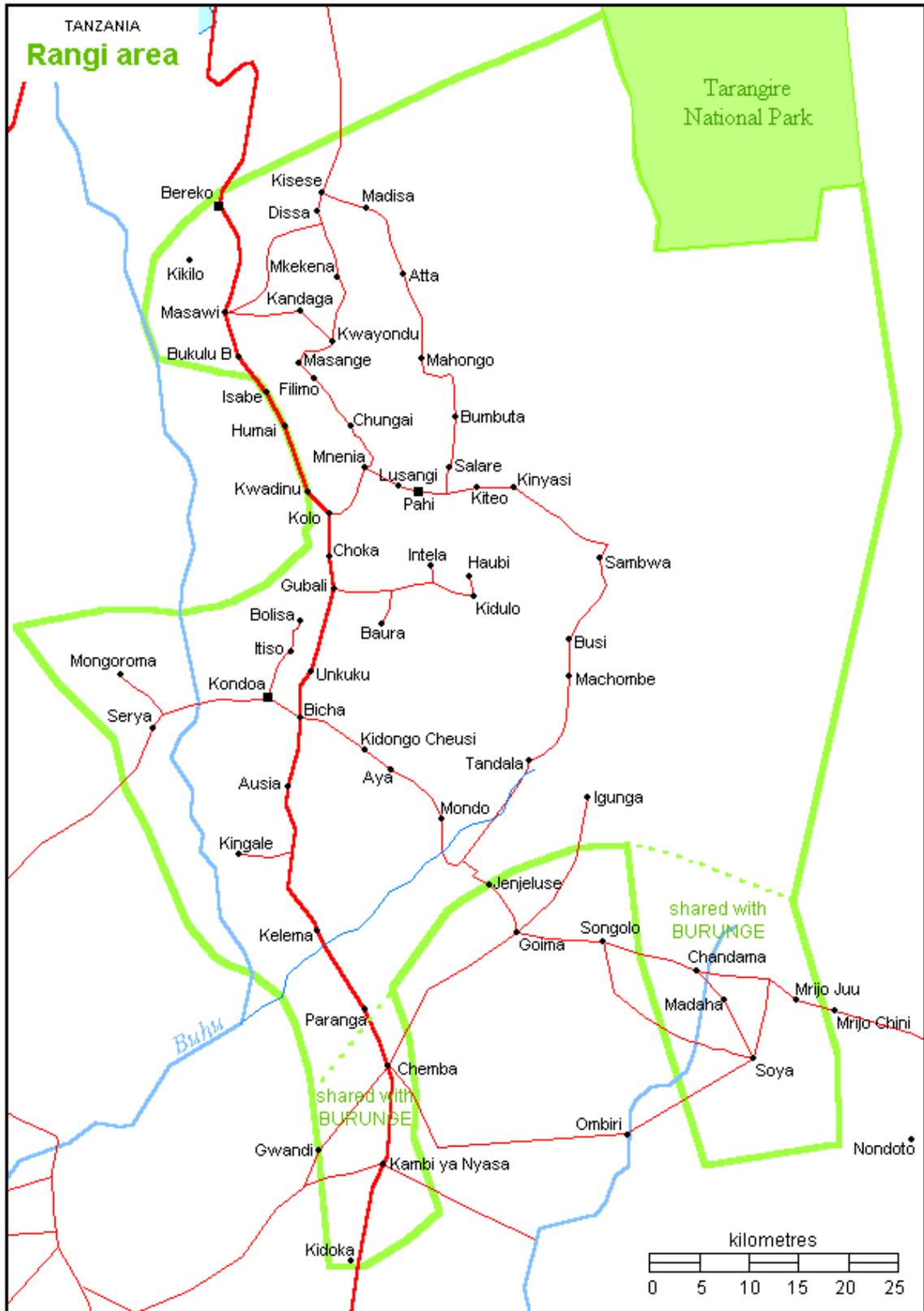
Many Rangi do not see a problem with holding on to both ATR and Christian beliefs. For many in the West this is a logical inconsistency, but for the Rangi this is a practical outworking of their lives and cultures. This syncretistic mixture is what has been modeled for them in the past and it seems to work for them practically. Indeed, it could be said about most believers in a particular religious tradition that the belief espoused and the practices adhered to are not logically consistent. Therefore this syncretistic amalgamation is acceptable among the Rangi. It is simply a matter of fact that Rangi Christians do not understand the majority of the implications that Biblical teaching has for their daily lives; thus the reason for the continued syncretism.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have given reasons why ATR is still practiced among Rangi Christians in Haubi. It must be noted that I state that these are Rangi Christians, as opposed to Rangi Traditional African believers who practice some aspects of Christianity. It could be argued that all religions are syncretistic to some extent. The point of this paper is to shed light on some of the reasons for the continuation of some aspects of ATR. A great reason for this is the failure of the early missionaries to present the Gospel in a culturally relevant way. Christianity must address the questions and problems that people are struggling with in their daily lives.

One of the ways to reduce the influence of ATR among Rangi Christians is through Bible translation. If the Bible were to be translated into Rangi and people made use of it, it has the potential to greatly impact the Rangi of Haubi. God can use the Scripture to reveal to people that the spiritual riches of the Gospel far outweigh the material gain that Christian education, development and Western business can bring. It can provide a true understanding of the nature and working of the supernatural world in which all people live. It can be presented in a language that really speaks to the heart and is not seen as foreign and as something that originated with white people. It can be relevant for their daily life and can call the whole community to faith in the power and grace of Christ. The Scripture in Rangi, coupled with frequently applying the Good News to everyday encounters and problems, will be a powerful tool for Rangi Christians to create a true, authentic Rangi culture that has been redeemed by the power of the Gospel.

Appendix A: Rangi Area Map



Endnotes

- ¹ Kesby, chapter 2. The latter date range is preferred by most.
- ² Kesby, chapter 2.
- ³ A hypothesis held by many states that the Alagwa and the Burunge were originally one tribe in the past but were split into two groups by the arrival and growth of the Rangi. The Alagwa are estimated to have a population of 30,000+ and the Burunge 13,000+ .
- ⁴ *A Dialect Survey among the Rangi of Tanzania*. Unpublished manuscript. Cox & Stegen, 2007.
- ⁵ See map in Appendix A.
- ⁶ Bishop Isuja is a Rangi from Haubi who was bishop of the Dodoma Region from 1972 to 2005.
- ⁷ Van Rheenen, page 20.
- ⁸ Cox, Richard *African Traditional Religion*. Term paper 1 for Religion and Worldview AL5373
- ⁹ Irangi is the name the Rangi people call the land in which they live.
- ¹⁰ The Rangi of Haubi were the first tribe outside of his own which supported President Julius Nyerere.
- ¹¹ Indeed, Babu Kijuu, who is the grandfather of one of the Rangi mother-tongue translators, remembers building the church. I have been privileged to have several conversations with this 90+ year-old man.
- ¹² This practice is similar to the Muslims who teach Rangi the Koran. Both the Rangi reading the Koran in Arabic and the Rangi citing the mass in Latin do not understand the meaning of the words. It is something that they are repeating by rote memory. However, since Vatican II, the mass is now said in Swahili in Tanzania.
- ¹³ Indeed, it would be difficult for orthodox Muslims to call the syncretistic mixture of Muslim beliefs and ATR 'Islam.'
- ¹⁴ Hiebert, Shaw and Tiénou, 363.
- ¹⁵ Barnwell, chapter 9.
- ¹⁶ Such subject matters include criminal behavior, sexual morals, initiation rites, marriage customs, and traditional practices designed to invoke the favor of spiritual beings.
- ¹⁷ One is reminded of the story of Naaman in 2 Kings 5.
- ¹⁸ Dye, pg. 39.
- ¹⁹ For instance, when our 3rd child was born, we were advised to go out of the country, because at that time there was not one hospital that could offer any adequate neo-natal care for children born with medical problems.

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