

TWINS AND UNILATERAL FIGURES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA: SYMMETRY AND ASYMMETRY IN THE SYMBOLIZATION OF THE SACRED

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"The harmony created by the conjunction of asymmetrical opposites replaces a past in which there was only death or nothingness or non-society."

Serge Tcherkézoff (1987:20)

Introduction

Unilateral figures may be said to constitute a quasi-universal mythological theme in view of the fact that in numerous cultures gods and spirits are being portrayed as anthropomorphic beings consisting of one side only. Less drastically, such beings may be depicted also as in possession of two sides, a human one and one modelled of beeswax, vegetal material, earth, stone, iron or suchlike. In creation stories we are sometimes told that the gods at first want to fashion humans in their own likeness as half-beings, immortal but incapable of procreation. In the end, however, they invariably decide to make them two-sided and capable of reproducing themselves, but there is a price to be paid, which is that henceforth man must die.

Apart from such radical forms of one-sidedness, we come across a great many instances of figurative one-sidedness in the form of otherwise normal personages, one of whose sides become mutilated or incapacitated in consequence of some heroic deed. In mythical discourse even single humans may be viewed as representations of one-sidedness, since from the viewpoint of biological procreation there must be two. An important conclusion to be drawn in the course of this paper is that these figurative cases belong to the same symbolic discourse as the 'strict' unilaterals, and that one category cannot be adequately understood without the other.

As will become clear in the course of this paper, representations of unilaterality are variegated to the point that at the present stage it seems impossible to accommodate them all within a single explanatory scheme. One of the reasons for this state of affairs is that unilaterality addresses a great diversity of human problems, spiritual as well as social and biological. This paper therefore limits itself to one specific task, namely that of explicating a notion which appears to be implicit in a great many representations of unilaterality. What we are referring to is the observation that corporeal symmetry often seems to symbolize anomie or lawlessness, and, conversely, that corporeal non-symmetry is frequently made use of to symbolize social order.

The rationale behind this becomes clear, when it is seen that the link between symmetry and lawlessness is provided by human twinship. Twins are not only proverbially alike (that is to say, symmetrical), they are in myth and legend also depicted as proverbial enemies, forever

engaged in bitter rivalry. Consequently, a society riven by lawlessness in the form of rivalry and conflict may be depicted in mythical stories as a society consisting of twins. Readers familiar with Plato's Symposium will no doubt be reminded of the fable, in which he describes early mankind as consisting solely of pairs of aggressive twins. But, as will be seen, Plato was not the only one entertaining that idea about the dawn of mankind.

The link between twins and the human body in its turn is established by the habit of representing the latter as a pair of twins. This need not cause surprise since, due to its erect posture, the human body, viewed either front or back, displays its symmetrical shape more clearly than any other mammal. Representing the human body as a pair of twins leads to the idea, fundamental to our discussion, that twins stand to two-sided individuals as two-sided individuals stand to unilaterals. Stated somewhat differently, from the perspective of unilaterals symmetrical individuals evoke the idea of twins. Since, as we have seen, twins are associated with rivalry and generalized social strife, we may therefore expect something similar in the case of symmetrical individuals. And this is what happens, for although normally no negative association is attached to the symmetrical body - indeed, the opposite seems rather to hold true - , we see nevertheless that a person called upon to restore peace to a community may have to be made into a figurative half-man. His body is un-twinning as it were, to proclaim that he is free of rivalry and therefore fit for the task to be performed. Hence the countless unilaterally mutilated heroes in myths and folk stories.

On the other hand, from the viewpoint of a twosome, especially a complementary twosome such as husband and wife, the individual is a half-being in need of completion. Such, then, is the predicament of individual man. Looked at from different viewpoints, he is at one and the same time overcomplete, complete and incomplete. To pull these various strands together: it is by no means accidental that twins, symmetrical individuals and unilaterals of various kinds co-figure in mythical stories, more particularly those pertaining to man's creation, fall and redemption. Together they form a symbolic warning system reminding humans of the dangers that threaten their continued existence.

I. Unilaterals in african ethnography

To familiarize the reader with the variegated character of our subject we begin by reviewing different categories of unilateral beings gleaned from Central and Southern African ethnography. There is no particular reason for concentrating on that part of Africa rather than another except that it is the one the author is the most familiar with. Throughout use will be made of the ethnographic present, since it is not relevant to the discussion whether a given representation is still current among a certain people or not.

The Basuto, our first instance, speak of a category of spirits with one leg, one arm, one ear and one eye, called matebele after the Ndebele and related peoples with whom they used to

entertain hostile relations (Werner 1933:176). It is not made clear by our source what kind of activity these matebele are supposed to be engaged in but the context suggests that they are pathogenic spirits that are to be placated or exorcised. Similar representations are found among a number of other peoples in south-eastern Africa. The Tabwa of Zambia for instance acknowledge a spirit category, called vibanda or viswa. These are the spirits of people who have perished unjustly, the victims of sorcerers (Roberts 1986). These exist in afterlife as half-beings, divided down the middle. While doing fieldwork among the Mang'anja of southern Malawi I came across beliefs in beings of a similar nature called ziwanda, although these were thought of as deceased witches rather than the victims of witches.

The Lamba of Zambia speak of goblins with only half a body who wander about, invisible, in troops, hopping along on their one leg. Sometimes the fancy takes one of them to possess a human being and then the possessed person hits some passer-by in the face. Afterwards that person is taken ill and begins to see visions (Werner 1933:236). In Tanzania, people believe in one-sided ghosts ('one leg, one hand, one eye and one ear') called kinyamkela. These ghosts delight in pelting people with stones, lumps of earth and even human bones (Werner 1933:86-7). The Masai, finally, have traditions about one-sided spirits that are cannibalistic (Jensen 1950:24). From this no doubt incomplete list it can already be inferred that the idea of unilateral spirits of a malevolent and vengeful disposition seems well-represented among the peoples of south-eastern Africa.

A striking contrast to these dangerous beings is formed by the spirits of the sky, which often take the shape of a one-sided bird. A particularly enlightening example comes from the Lunda of Zambia, who have a tradition of a godhead, Dinema by name (1). Dinema is thought of as a large aquatic bird with a lame leg, and is praised as the defender of the poor in society. Its power and fame it owes to its handicap, which enabled it in the distant past to successfully defend itself against all other animals and thus become king of the entire nature. It is likely that Dinema belongs to the family of storks or herons, which are a common sight in Zambia and surrounding countries. The fact that these birds keep one leg pulled up when in a resting position suggests that they have only one leg, and if one were to select an appropriate symbol of one-leggedness they would be obvious candidates. The person from whom I obtained this information about Dinema explained its power by pointing out that - like its legs - it was both living and dead. It used its 'dead', and hence invisible and invulnerable, leg to chase its enemies.

People in southern Malawi tell a similar story about a big bird with one wing, one eye and one leg, which carries children across a flooded river (Werner 1933:199). The theme of the flooded river is current also among the Nyamwezi of Tanzania who have a spirit representation called 'people of the sky'. These beings, though one-sided, are much stronger and capable of moving much more quickly than earthly people. It takes them no more than a moment to travel to a distant place and return from there. They too are said to help people cross deep rivers (Bösch 1930:46). Although anthropomorphic themselves, they seem nevertheless related to the

Dinema-type spirit since their familiars are said to be aquatic birds (Cory 1953:28). As far as can be made out, these sky spirits receive no cultic veneration and they are possibly to be regarded as fairy figures rather than members of the local pantheon (2).

A third group is formed by spirits known by the name Luwe or a variation thereof. Among the Tabwa, Luwe is the proper name of a unilateral spirit associated with luck in hunting wild beasts. It rides the shoulders of a lead game animal such as an eland, directing it and the herd toward human hunters who show proper respect to this spirit of nature (Roberts 1986). The Mang'anja speak of Chiruwi, whose name is a prefixed variant of Luwe (chi- carrying the meaning of 'big' or 'awesome'), and who like his near-namesake is a nature spirit, half man, half wax. It goes about with an axe and challenges any person whom it meets to wrestle with it. If that person loses, he will die, but if Chiruwi loses, it redeems itself by revealing to its opponent the medical properties of plants and trees (Scott 1892:97; Werner 1933:198-9). Spirit representations called some variant of 'Luwe', and variously described by anthropologists as tricksters or culture heroes, occur over a large area, stretching from south-eastern Zaire well into Zimbabwe (3).

Our fourth and final group are gods whose sides are fashioned of different materials. The Masai, whose dualistic religion is dominated by the belief in a benevolent black and a malevolent red god, possess a multitude of different-sided beings. Their very first god for instance was composed of a side consisting of green grass, and another consisting of black iron. When he begat a son, who was to be the second god and the creator of man, that son's body had a white human side and a black side made of iron (Jensen 1950:24). The grass/iron opposition may among other things refer to the godhead as mediating between nature and culture. The same contrast may serve also as a basis for further oppositions such as that between autochthons and invaders, or that between clans as mutual wife-givers and wife-takers, as among the Mang'anja of Malawi (Schoffeleers, forthcoming). The idea seems always that of two different elements constituting an encompassing totality, when presented in combination (Tcherkézoff 1987).

This brief overview suffices to show that one-sided spirit beings do indeed answer to very different descriptions. While some are clearly malevolent, others are benevolent. While some exist only as collectivities, others such as the sky spirits, operate as individuals. While some pertain to people's private sphere, others form part of the public domain. Although it will be necessary one day to examine these various categories more systematically in themselves and in relation to each other, we must for the moment abstain from such an exercise, since the goal we have set ourselves is limited and requires a different approach. That goal, it will be remembered, is to provide evidence that lateral symmetry tends to be associated with anomie and, conversely, that lateral asymmetry tends to be associated with social order.

At first sight our four categories of unilateral beings appear to be contradictory in that particular respect. For, while some of those beings may be indicative of social order, others,

such as the vengeful spirits are definitely not. A further problem consists in the fact that the representations reviewed so far do not provide us with an explanation of their unilateral nature. It is true, in the case of the ziwanda representations, we are told that their one-sided shape is due to their having been witches or the victims of witches, but that only raises the more pertinent question on what basis the link between witchcraft and one-sidedness is established. In other words, what is it in witchcraft that leads to the idea of portraying deceased witches and their victims as unilaterals? That question is nowhere answered. My proposal therefore is to focus on narratives, that state explicitly what causal link there is thought to exist between one-sidedness and the social order. One category that answers this particular requirement are creation stories; the other are redemption stories.

II Asymmetry in creation stories

As stated in the Introduction, a theme which appears frequently in African creation stories, is that originally it was God's plan to create nothing but one-sided humans. This for instance was the case with Liova, the solar god of the Kumbi of Rwanda, who created two men and two women who were fully one-sided. One day, Liova told his daughter Mwezi (Moon) to establish these humans somewhere to the west where they were to multiply. Mwezi, however, answered that this would be impossible as they were physically not yet equipped for procreation. Liova thereupon made them two-sided (Janssens 1926:554). In this story we do not yet receive an answer to our question why God at first willed men one-sided, but we do learn of another important theme, viz. that unilaterality entails being incapable of sexual life (4). For a more direct answer to our question we have to turn to a Luba myth according to which the godhead in heaven, who had decided to make all human beings one-sided, was secretly overruled by the godhead on earth who made them two-sided:

'A woman bore ten children one of whom was crippled. His brothers made fun of him. One day the crippled boy learned how to get to Mvidi Mukulu ('God'). He had to say three times "Quietly, quietly, till I reach God". In heaven he met Mvidi Mukulu and another Mvidi Mukulu, and a woman. The cripple said, "I have come to be cured of my lameness. My brothers mock me too much". When Mvidi Mukulu heard this, he said to the other Mvidi Mukulu, "How is this? Did I not say, I shall create man with only one ear, one eye, one buttock. And you said, 'Create man two-sided'. It had been my intention to make all men equal; you willed one to be whole and others to be lame". Yet Mvidi Mukulu cured the cripple and told him to make it known to people that the lame and the maimed should not be made fun of, for ultimately all men must die' (Janssens 1926:560).

Here at least we get an answer: God willed man to be one-sided - which in this case means

crippled - so that no-one would be privileged over his neighbour and that there would be no reason for one to make fun of and despise the other. This means that we do have here an intimation, however veiled, of a correlation between two-sidedness and lawlessness, since the brothers' disrespectful behaviour went against God's law. We shall return to this presently. First, we need to pay attention to the woman whom the cripple finds in the company of the gods. Apparently, she is a reference to his missing side, and although the story does not say so in so many words, the suggestion clearly is, in line with other stories of this type, that she will be his wife once he is cured. The fact that she stays with the gods has the important implication that the missing side of the cripple was not missing in the sense of being non-existent. It did exist and it was part of him, but it was kept in a superior sphere where, one imagines, it had access to experiences that no symmetrically shaped individual ever has. There are thus two levels at which this story is to be interpreted, that of relations between humans, and that of the relations between humans and the supernatural. What looks like sheer misery or needless suffering at one level - that of being a cripple despised by all and sundry - denotes blessedness at another. Indeed, as it turns out, at the level of the supernatural the crippled's missing half reveals itself literally as his 'better half'.

I am aware that I am going beyond my evidence as far as my interpretation of the female figure in this story is concerned. Although the interpretation I have just attempted appears to be quite acceptable in the sense that it does not contradict part or whole of the story, the text as it stands does theoretically allow for a number of alternative interpretations. (One might for instance think of the woman as God's own wife, although this would be hard to reconcile with the image of God as a unilateral). I am of the opinion, though, that the interpretation I gave is the more plausible since, as we shall see, it takes into account one of the standard features of such stories. The unilateral protagonist, apart from being cured of his deficiency, is often provided with a spouse as well so as to accentuate the completion of his mission and his community's return to normality. In other words, corporeal asymmetry is replaced by the asymmetry of the marriageable couple, which is a common symbol of a viable society. We have already been given a hint to this effect in the Kumbi myth of the godhead Liova. There too, as we have seen, the restoration of corporeal wholeness coincided with the formation of marriageable couples. Further instances are to follow at a later stage in this paper. Returning now to our interrupted discussion on the connection between lawlessness and two-sidedness, it will be pertinent to quote another Luba myth, according to which the original inhabitants of the earth were twins instead of halfmen:

'The first human pair met accidentally. The man was a builder of huts and the woman a maker of pots. One day, when the man heard the noise of an axe hitting a tree, he went to look and saw the woman, and from then on he lived with her. At first they did not realize that they were different but one day, when they saw a pair of jackals copulating, they realized that they might be

able to do the same. The woman bore twins, a boy and a girl, who in their turn bore twins, and so the land became gradually populated. These twins, however, lived in continuous conflict with each other, and only the strongest survived (Theuws 1962:202) (6).

The question may be asked whether there is any relationship between these two myths, which at first sight seem contradictory, one describing a primal world inhabited by single-birth humans, the other describing it as inhabited by twins. The answer, however, is that there need not be a contradiction, if we accept that the world of twins came before the world of single-birth humans. The logical connection between these supposedly successive phases in the early history of humanity may be described as follows. The first humans were twins, who in the nature of twins were aggressive to the point of making community life impossible. The gods thereupon decided that humans from now on should be made unilateral as this would put an end to their aggressiveness. However, as this meant that life would be absolutely static, there being no creative differences between them, a compromise was reached by making them two-sided and symmetrical, although this would entail the risk that from time to time they would relapse in their former aggressiveness.

This scenario is not an invention of my own, but has been borrowed in its entirety from Plato's Symposium. I shall refrain from invoking it as proof of my theory about the interrelation of the two myths, but Plato's text may at least be taken as evidence that the appearance in creation stories of both twins and unilaterals is not something confined to the Luba people. However, this does not absolve us from concluding that the gods apparently made a mistake by populating the primal world with twins, in view of the fact that in both accounts, Plato's and the Luba's, the result was chaos. What gave the gods the idea in the first place? The answer is that we are simply mistaken when thinking that the twins were created by the gods. Plato never said so, although his text is somewhat misleading as he portrays gods and twins as contemporaries, one group inhabiting the earth, the other inhabiting the sky. Moreover, even before Plato the idea had been developed, by Empedocles among others, that the first humans had evolved from the animal world (Hicks 1912). The Luba myth is more helpful on these two points: Gods appear on the scene only when the earth has been cleared of twins, and the Luba clearly see the primordial twins as descendants of the animal world, since their parents got the idea of cohabitation only when seeing two jackals engaged in copulation.

This, then, raises the question where the gods came from. Two answers are possible: either they did or they did not exist at the time of the twins. Supposing they did already exist, one could perhaps say that they were not directly responsible for the emergence of the twins as the first inhabitants of the earth, since the twins had evolved from the animal world. Upon seeing, however, that the twins were destroying themselves, the gods may have decided to split them up so as to become less self-destructive. This as a matter of fact is what Plato says. When Zeus decides to split the twins, he states explicitly that this is done to diminish their

aggressivity.

But there is the other possibility, suggested by the Luba myth, which is that the gods had not yet come into being when the twins were masters of the earth. It is the Luba mythology therefore that forces us to pose the question about the origin of the gods. If I am to suggest an answer - and it is for the moment no more than a suggestion -, it is that the Luba twins themselves did invent the gods so as to put an end to their eternal conflicts. The two myths themselves contain no direct evidence in favour of this particular interpretation, but it seems supported by the writings of René Girard and Victor Turner, both of whom have contributed a great deal to our understanding of the place of twins in society.

III Twins and violence

In some of his works, notably Violence and the Sacred (Girard 1977; orig. 1972) Girard sheds new light on a number of classical topics in anthropology, among which, as just stated, beliefs and rituals about twins. He sets off from the observation that our desires are to a large degree mimetic, even if we are often not aware of it. What proves attractive to others may thereby become attractive to us. Although he would probably not go so far as maintaining that virtually all our desires are mimetic, the tenor of his theory is that our desires are mimetic to a much larger degree than we would care to admit. The next point is that where many people are after the same thing, scarcity may be one of the consequences, followed by open conflict and the outbreak of violence. Violence in its turn may escalate to the extent that it threatens the continued existence or viability of a society. When such is the case, Girard speaks of a 'sacrificial crisis', a term which will presently become clear. The third point is that during such a crisis people tend more and more to resemble each other. They make use of the same tactics and the same arguments, and in the end they may even forget what started the conflict. Increasingly, those involved become each other's doubles or twins. The process of undifferentiation which causes that multitude of doubles to come into existence evokes the idea of a contagious disease, which is what the birth of twins in some societies is believed to bring about. If that process is not halted one way or other it will involve ever larger segments of society.

One possibility to halt that process - and here we come to our fifth point - is to find a scapegoat, who is then exiled or destroyed. Once this has been done and peace has returned, people realize that the scapegoat that was the cause of the crisis has now become the cause of their restored unity as well. This turns the scapegoat into a sacred being whose salutary potential is then regularly activated by the making of sacrifices or by performing rituals reminiscent of the sacrificial scenario. Hence Girard's habit of speaking of a 'sacrificial crisis'. The person, animal or matter to be destroyed substitutes for the original scapegoat. It is one of Girard's contentions that the scapegoat scenario is at the origin of religion. Consequently, religion is to be defined as a strategy to replace naked and unlimited violence by limited and ritualized violence.

The specific question we are asking of Girard is whether his theory can help us understand the logic according to which the unchecked violence of twins is transformed into the limited violence of single humans. It is definitely not my intention to defend Girard's thesis on the origin of religion, since that is not a relevant question as far as the present article is concerned. All I want to demonstrate is that the scapegoat scenario provides us with a unique framework in which twins, half-men and the gods can be logically connected with each other.

Apart from Girard, the most relevant author for our purpose is Victor Turner who devoted a substantial chapter of The Ritual Process to what he calls 'the paradoxes of twinship' in Ndembu ritual (Turner 1977:44-93; orig. 1969). I shall begin by summing up the main points of Turner's analysis which, it will be noticed, was published three years before Girard's.

According to Turner, the Ndembu of present-day Zambia perceive several absurdities in the physiological fact of twinship. Thus while a high cultural premium is placed on fertility, twinship confronts them with an exuberance of fertility that results in physiological and economic distress. Since the Ndembu do not milk sheep and goats for human consumption, it is difficult for a mother to supply twins with adequate nourishment by lactation. Often their survival may depend on help given by neighbours and other villagers. For this reason they are symbolically represented in the rites as a charge upon the community. Secondly, Turner notes, following observations made by Schapera and others, that among the Ndembu too the birth of twins is a source of classificatory embarrassment as well. Children born during a single parturition are held to be mystically identical. Yet, there is only one position in the structure of the family or corporate kin-group for them to occupy. Thus twinship presents the paradoxes that what is physically double is structurally single and what is mystically one is empirically two (Turner 1977:45).

Next, he reviews some of the ways in which African societies resolve this problem. Among the Bushmen of the Kalahari one or both of the twins may be destroyed. In other cases they may be removed from the kinship system to which they belong by birth and be given a special status, often with sacred attributes. Among the Ashanti twins of the same sex belong to the chief and are given a position at his court (6). The Nuer resolve the paradox of twinship by relating the single personality of twins to the sacred order, and their physical duality to the secular order. Each aspect operates on a distinct cultural level, and the concept of twinship mediates between these two levels.

More often, though, among the Bantu-speaking peoples twins are neither put to death nor permanently assigned royal or supernatural status. Instead they are made to undergo rites which make are held to make them 'different from each other' and rid them and their parents from the contagiousness of their condition. To illustrate the character and extent of that contagiousness Turner quotes Monica Wilson on the Nyakyusa, among whom the parents of twins and twins themselves are felt to be very dangerous to their relatives and immediate neighbours, and to cattle, causing them to suffer from diarrhoea or purging, and swollen legs, if

any contact takes place. Therefore the parents are segregated and an elaborate ritual is performed in which a wide circle of kinsmen and neighbours and the family cattle participate. Thus among the Nyakyusa as among the Ndembu twins are regarded as a charge upon the whole community. What falls outside the norm may be either destroyed or made a matter of concern for the widest recognized group. In the latter case that what falls outside the norm will be sacralized, regarded as holy.

There is a final paradox which is that twinship, though hard to fit into the ideal model of social structure, becomes sometimes associated with rituals that exhibit the fundamental principles of that structure. 'Indeed', so Turner states, 'one often finds in human cultures that structural contradictions, asymmetries and anomalies are overlaid by layers of myth, rituals and symbol, which stress the axiomatic value of key structural principles with regard to the very situations where these appear to be most inoperative' (Turner 1977:47). The paradox that what is good (in theory) is bad (in practice) becomes the mobilizing point of a ritual that stresses the overall unity of the group, surmounting its contradictions (Turner 1977:49). In ritual and symbolism several possibilities stand open:

'You may, for example, in some situations focus attention upon the duality of twins, and in others upon their unity. Or you can reflect upon natural and social processes whereby what were originally two separate and even opposed elements fuse to form something new and unique. You can examine the process whereby two become one. Or you can examine the converse of this, the process whereby one becomes two, the process of bifurcation. Still further, you can regard the number Two as being itself representative of all forms of plurality as opposed to unity. Two represents the Many as opposed to the One, as derived from it, or as fused with it again. Furthermore, if you pay attention to the Two, disregarding the One for the moment, you may regard it as comprising either a pair of similars, a dioscural pair like Castor and Pollux, or a pair of opposites, like male and female, or life and death` (Turner 1977:49-50; italics original).

Turner concludes with the observation that the Ndembu, in the symbolic idiom of the twinship ritual, have elected to emphasize the aspect of opposition and complementarity, the equal but opposite aspect of duality. They think of a coincidence of opposites rather than a doubling of similars. Having said this, he makes the fundamental remark that the Ndembu use sexual symbolism to represent this process, for the idiom of sexuality represents the processes by which social forces approximately equal in strength and opposite in quality are exhibited as working in harmony (Turner 1977:50). I call this remark fundamental because it is fundamental to the whole discussion. Man is to be two, not one, and the two have to be of different gender in order to realize equivalence and the continued existence of the species.

Here, we may take up his suggestion, mentioned earlier on, that twins tend to become sacralized and associated with rituals that exhibit the fundamental principles of a society's

structure, for it is at this point that Turner makes his most original contribution. To illustrate the tendency present in many cultures to sacralize the anomalous, he refers to eastern Europe where idiots used to be regarded as 'living shrines, repositories of sacredness that had wrecked their natural wits' (Turner 1977:49). The anomaly is thus not only removed from the structured order of society, but it is in Turner's view even made to represent the simple unity of society itself, conceptualized as homogeneous, rather than as a system of heterogeneous social positions. In a later chapter, he will use the term 'communitas' for this particular state of affairs. But in what way do idiots suggest and symbolize communitas? Turner is not altogether explicit on this point, but we may take it that idiots represent that idea because their affliction makes them more or less alike. However, Turner goes further than that, for he also applies the biblical phrase 'stone that the builders rejected' to these idiots. The meaning is of course that, what from a secular or material point of view is considered valueless and despicable may be transformed into something valuable and honourable, when looked at from a religious or spiritual point of view. Twins appear to represent a similar set of meanings as the idiots just referred to: they too resemble each other, and they too are rejected unless in some sense sacralized.

In sum, in Turner's view twins are held to be dangerous because they embody a set of paradoxes which run counter to the existing social, cultural and classificatory order. Girard agrees, for classificatory confusion, as Douglas has demonstrated (Douglas 1966), is tied up with ideas of impurity. And if anything, 'twins are impure in the same way that a warrior steeped in carnage is impure, or an incestuous couple, or a menstruating woman' (Girard 1977:58). But there is more at stake than a problem of classification. In Girard's view twins inspire fear above all because they seem to embody the process of undifferentiation that is characteristic of a situation of uncontrolled rivalry and violence. That is why they are held responsible for deadly epidemics and mysterious illnesses that cause sterility in women and animals. Even more significant to Girard is the role of twins in provoking discord among neighbours, a fatal collapse of ritual, the transgression of interdictions - in short, their part in instigating a sacrificial crisis (Girard 1977:58). This in its turn explains why they may be physically or symbolically killed or driven out like scapegoats are. In Girard's view westerners overlook this fact because unlike those socialized in pre-literate cultures they are strangers to the idea of a causal link between the loss of distinctions and the emergence of generalized violence. More recently that view has come to be shared by Tcherkézoff (1987), who seems to have reached that viewpoint independently of Girard.

As stated earlier on, a particular advantage of Girard's theory is that it explains these various beliefs and practices by means of a coherent scenario rather than a series of statements about independent mental processes. Turner's example of the treatment of idiots provides us with an opportunity to demonstrate this particular advantage of Girard's. We are told by Turner that people treat them well because they consider them repositories of the sacred, but we are not told what led people to think that way. Within Girard's scenario they would rather have to be

seen as alike and impure and thus as society's scapegoats. Their scapegoat character accords with Turner's own definition of them as 'stones that the builders rejected'. But where Turner seems unable to explain why idiots turn into sacred beings, Girard provides us with a theory which not only offers an explanation but which at the same time deepens our understanding of the phenomenon by pointing out its profound ambivalence.

IV From real to figurative unilaterals and from creation stories to redemption stories

Earlier on, we have distinguished between the strict one-sidedness of the viwanda and the mediated one-sidedness of Luwe, whose 'missing' side was made of beeswax. A still milder form is that of figurative one-sidedness, whereby one side of an otherwise normal body is malformed or mutilated. Many of these belong to the category of what Peter Hays has called 'limping heroes' (Hays 1972). The biblical patriarch, Jacob, who developed a limp after his fight with the angel (Genesis 32: 23-33) is a well-known example of this group.

Such asymmetries need not necessarily be human as we know from the bird Dinema with its dead and its living leg, which was thought of as being simultaneously dead and alive. The same theme of being simultaneously dead and alive appears in stories of people who say they have returned from the dead. Such people are no exception in Africa or elsewhere for that matter, for the vocation stories of many famous healers or founders of religious movements mention that experience. And they are not the only ones, for even town beggars may claim that experience. One of those was Nazikhale (litt.: 'Thou-Shalt-Remain-There!'), a man from southern Malawi, who upon arrival in heaven was told by God that his time had not yet come and that he had to return to earth. However, since he had been among the dead, he would henceforth have to sleep in the open air so that God could find him easily. Nor was he allowed to eat fresh food but only food that was a few days old and on the verge of going bad. Finally, God also shortened one of his legs so that he could not flee to some distant place. Nazikhale lived in the township of Limbe, near Blantyre, where he earned a few pennies by collecting discarded tins and suchlike. He was liked on account of his stories about God and the hereafter, but even more so because he was reputedly able to see into the future. It was said also that he was able to sleep and be awake at the same time so that even when asleep he could see if someone wanted to steal from him (7). This reminds us again of the idea of being alive and dead at the same time. What strikes one also in Nazikhale's case is the emphasis placed on his capacity to see what is hidden. Nazikhale saw God when he went up to heaven; he is able to see in his sleep, and he can see in the future. Jacob too referred to this coincidence of death and life and this special gift of seeing, when he gave the location where he wrestled with the angel (i.e. God) the name Pniël, 'Because I have seen God face to face', he said, 'and I have survived' (Genesis 32:31).

It is not relevant to our argument whether a person really thinks to have been dead or

that he invents the story to impress the public. We are here interested in the symbolism used to describe 'death-and-return' experiences and not in the veracity of these statements. As far as symbolism is concerned the instances just cited show us that the supernatural is not only associated with strict or mediated forms of unilaterality, but also with forms of figurative unilaterality in which a person's legs are of unequal length or in which one leg is 'dead' and the other 'alive', or in which one leg is missing. Asymmetrics too appear to possess extraordinary powers, but those powers appear to be considerably less negative than those of some unilateral beings. The bird Dinema is the protector of the poor. Jacob went to reconcile himself with his twin brother Esau, and many of those who claim to have returned from the dead serve the community as healers. Another recurrent theme in these stories is the change of name after the death experience as an indication of a changed personality due to an inner conversion. The beggar became Nazikhale, Jacob became Israel ('God fights'), and many founders of religious movements who claimed that experience also changed their names.

I shall now give an account of how people became asymmetrical in the form of a folk story from Malawi. While researching folktales in that country, I was struck by the fact that lateral mutilation or differentiation was a recurrent theme in love stories in which the male was the protagonist. When the female was the protagonist the symbolism was not of the lateral but of the hierarchical kind (Schoffeleers and Roscoe 1985:135-57). As we are in this article primarily interested in lateral symbolism, I shall confine myself to a somewhat shortened text from that category.

The story of Kansabwe

'Once upon a time there lived a beautiful girl whose name was Kawala or the Shining One. Many young men came to seek her hand in marriage but she refused them all. One day, however, she fell ill. The best herbalists were called in but none could help and her condition grew steadily worse, her lovely body shrinking to skin and bone. Handsome young men came no longer.

In the end her father decided to call in a herbalist from a different country, who enjoyed great fame and would, so everybody said, be able to cure her. The problem, however, was that the journey would be very dangerous. As was to be expected, nobody volunteered to go. But just when the father had decided to give up in despair, a young man presented himself who said he was prepared to go. His name was Kansabwe (Little Louse), and the name bespoke his appearance, for he was dirty and covered in rags. The father was taken aback, for, like everyone else, he had always considered the boy a disgrace to the village. But, there being nobody else, he accepted the offer.

Kansabwe went on his way, crossing rivers and traversing forests. Wild beasts attacked him. He lost an eye, and one of his legs was so badly mauled by a leopard that he would have to limp for the rest of his life. Yet he arrived and was able to convey his message. Fortunately, the

way back was much easier, as the herbalist had great magical powers. Streams were crossed with the greatest of ease. Wild animals became meek as lambs, and even the distance seemed much shorter, for before Kansabwe knew it they had already arrived back home.

The herbalist administered the medicine and soon Kawala's health and beauty had been restored. Once again she was sought by handsome youths and wealthy nobles. But all of them were told to come back on an appointed day when she would finally make her choice. When that day arrived the village was crowded with suitors. So many came that the chief ordered them to form a queue, which soon stretched into the fields beyond the village. Kansabwe, one of the first to arrive since he lived in the village, was rudely pushed to the end of the queue and even there was forced to keep his distance from the others, as everyone shunned him.

The arrangement was that suitors had to present themselves one by one until Kawala made her choice. The first one went in, and then the second, but each returned after only a few minutes, the smile gone from his face. The same happened to the others. Finally, by the end of the day, the last man entered, delighted that he had defeated his rivals, for there could no longer be any doubt that he was the lucky one.

But unfortunately, when the door opened, it was clear from the last man's face that he wasn't the lucky one either. Not knowing what to make of this, the suitors all looked at one another in amazement. And while they were doing this, Kansabwe began to limp towards the door. Seeing him, they booed and jeered, but he ignored them. Again, eyes were fixed on the door, this time to see Kansabwe being thrown out. But nothing of the sort happened. After a while, however, the door opened and there he was with Kawala!

"You may be surprised", she said, "that I have chosen this poor man to be my husband. Yet I have not done it without reason. For when I was ill, he alone did not desert me and even risked his life to save me. Therefore he alone, and nobody else, is worthy to become my husband". Kansabwe was then taken to be bathed and dressed in new clothes. And all the others went home, too ashamed to say a word'.

Kansabwe's story seems eminently girardian. The girl is surrounded by a throng of potential husbands, who are all rivals to each other. The girl's illness suggests that the community is in the throes of a crisis: though in principle marriageable she is de facto not marriageable. At the height of the crisis a marginal character presents himself to find a solution. This involves among other things that he undertake a long and dangerous journey. While engaged in this, one side of his body is severely mutilated. But he finds the magician and the medicine, and the sick girl is restored to life. In the end it is he who marries the princess.

The theme of the two halves thus appears in two variants. In one variant it is the princess who cannot find someone to form a pair with because, due to the ongoing rivalry, all candidates have become like identical twins. Choosing one would be tantamount to choosing all, whereas there is only one position to be filled. In the second variant of the theme of the two halves it is

Kansabwe's body that is severely mutilated and made asymmetrical while seeking the medicine. There appears to be a causal connection between the two variants, since the princess finally finds her missing half (i.e. a husband), when Kansabwe allows one half of his body to be made different from the other. I cannot here refrain from referring to Genesis 2, 21-22, where it is said that Yahweh God took one of Adam's ribs and built it into a woman, whom he then gave to Adam to form a pair with. Apparently, in this passage too the husband-to-be has to be made asymmetrical in order to be able to be joined to a woman. This suggests that we may be here in the presence of a theme which is not confined to a few Malawian folk tales. We shall return to this in the concluding part of our article.

Kansabwe has thus some traits of Girard's scapegoat. He is a marginal figure and as such an easy target to get blamed for society's ills. He is also driven out as it were, but at a later stage, when he marries the princess, he is made into something of a sacred character. But there are important differences as well. Thus for instance, he is not driven out in the strict sense of the word, as he undertakes the dangerous journey at his own initiative. Secondly, when he returns he is not immediately made into a sacred being, for when he joins the suitors he is once more driven back to the end of the queue and even there he is kept at a distance. And when it is his turn to enter the house he is booed and jeered. Instead of undergoing a transformation in the mind of the crowd - which in the regular scapegoat scenario is thereby transformed into a community - he undergoes a transformation in his own person, a change in identity symbolically expressed by his asymmetrical appearance. This the crowd apparently remains blind to for the jeering continues even when he has performed his heroic deed.

The essence of the story, then, is that the protagonist at his own initiative subjects himself to a process during which his body becomes asymmetrical and that by so doing a societal crisis is solved. In both cases a marriage is made possible, which appears to be a symbolic way of saying that a community is once again capable of normal functioning. The protagonist thus becomes a redeemer. For the benefit of the reader let us repeat the various aspects of this alternative scenario once again point by point:

- (1) At the beginning of the story the body of the suitor/redeemer, then still in its symmetrical state, represents the community as a whole, which finds itself in the throes of undifferentiation.
- (2) The agency responsible for transforming the hero's body from its symmetrical to its asymmetrical shape is once again the community, because it is the community that sends him on his dangerous errand.
- (3) The violence that brings this transformation about is the mimetic violence that makes the young men into rivals and that makes it impossible for the community to function properly.
- (4) By permitting the community to make his body asymmetrical the suitor/redeemer frees that community (at least in principle) from its undifferentiation.
- (5) That the suitor/redeemer of his own free will allows the community to render his body

asymmetrical can only mean that he himself renounces all mimetic desire and thereby all rivalry. He thus establishes a model for functional human relations.

(6) Finally, the fact that he offers himself to the community to be mutilated implies that he sees through the mimetic process and the scapegoat mechanism. One of the characteristics of asymmetrical heroes, as mentioned earlier on, is that they are able to 'see' what remains hidden to ordinary people.

Briefly, I conclude, pace Girard, that in myths and folktales we come across scapegoats of two kinds: the 'real' ones, who do not see that they are being used to restore peace to the community, and those that see through that mechanism and are willing to challenge it. That, however, is only possible if they allow their persecutors to exercise all manner of violence against them, for only thus will it become clear that those who can 'see' are ultimately invulnerable. To follow this type of logic in greater detail let us turn to a crucial episode in St. John's Gospel.

V The pierced Christ (John 19, 31-37)

'31 It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies remaining on the cross during the sabbath - since that sabbath was a day of special solemnity - the Jews asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken away. 32 Consequently, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with him and then of the other. 33 When they came to Jesus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of breaking his legs 34 one of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance; and immediately there came out blood and water. 35 This is the evidence of one who saw it - trustworthy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth - and he gives it so that you may believe as well. 36 Because all of this happened to fulfill the words of scripture: 'Not one bone of his will be broken'; 37 and again, in another place scripture says: 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced'.

This scene has no parallel in the synoptic gospels and in view of the fact that it is a relatively long passage as well, we may suppose that it is meant to fulfill an important function in St. John's account of Christ's passion. Briefly, what it tells us is that Pilate - in view of the Passover celebration - sent soldiers to Golgotha with the order to break the legs of the three crucified men before taking their bodies from the cross. This was normal practice at executions to hasten death. But seeing that Christ had already died, they did not break his legs. Instead, they pierced his side with a lance, and out of the wound flowed not only blood but also water, which was regarded as a highly meaningful miracle.

The fact that Jesus' legs were not broken is probably a reference to Exodus 12: 46, where the Israelites are told not to break any bone of the Passover lamb. Jesus dies at the moment when in the Temple the slaughter of the Passover lambs begins. He is thus the true Lamb of God 'that takes away the sin of the world' (John 1: 29).

As far as the spearwound is concerned, the Christian tradition has from the beginning put special emphasis on the symbolism of the water and its co-appearance with blood. The latter came to be associated with important theological dualities such as baptism and eucharist and the co-existence of human and divine nature in the person of Christ, the blood referring to the human, and the water to the divine element. In view of the fact that in Christ's time man was thought to consist of water and blood, the simultaneous appearance of water and blood could also be explained as a confirmation of Christ's human nature. This was considered important in view of the Docetes, who already at the time of the genesis of St. John's Gospel denied the humanity of Christ.

The scriptural quotation in verse 37 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced', reads integrally 'But over the House of David and the citizens of Jerusalem I will pour out a spirit of kindness and prayer. They will look on the one whom they have pierced; they will mourn for him as for an only son, and weep for him as people weep for a first-born child' (Zechariah 12: 10). The water flowing from Jesus' side seems thus in the author's line of thought connected also with a spirit of compassion and prayer that will be imparted on the population in the messianic time. This refers back to John 7: 38 where Christ prophesies about himself that 'from his breast shall flow fountains of living water'. The liturgy of the Feast of Tabernacles which formed the background of these words, included prayers for rain, rites which commemorated the Mosaic water miracle (Exodus 17, 1-7), and readings from biblical passages foretelling life-giving water from Zion (Jerusalem Bible 1966: 163). Now, the point to be made in the context of our article is that the lateral wound forms the culmination point of John's account of Christ's passion not only because of the extraordinary dense theologisation which has developed around it and which we have barely touched upon here, but also because of the build-up of the episode in which the contrast between symmetry and asymmetry appears to play a crucial role.

To appreciate this we have to take special note of two aspects, which have largely remained unnoticed in the exegesis of this passage, *viz.* the presence of the two other men, who were crucified with Jesus and the asymmetrical location of the spear wound. At first sight neither element does seem to have special meaning. The fact that there were two people crucified with him and not one or three may be purely accidental. Neither need the lateral location of the wound call for special comment, since it may have been the only possible location. But precisely such seemingly trivial elements acquire a different meaning when

examined in the light of lateral symbolism.

As said already, the Gospel of St. John, like the other gospels, mentions two people, who were crucified with Christ, one to his right; the other to his left. Their names are not mentioned, nor any other detail by which they could be distinguished from each other. Being unnamed and undifferentiated they are representative of twinship with its associations of mimetic violence. By their symmetric location vis-à-vis Jesus ('one on either side with Jesus in the middle'; John 19: 18) they emphasize the symmetry of his body and thus evoke the idea of equality: the one hanging between them is not different from them. John reinforces this in his own way (because no other gospel has this) by having the theme of doubles escalate, when the legs of both men are broken. Note that this escalation takes place after Jesus' death. In contrast to what is supposed to happen in the normal scapegoat scenario the death of the victim does not end the existing crisis but causes a worsening of the situation. The turning point arrives only with the unilateral mutilation of Christ, which in John's account is emphatically contrasted with the breaking of the legs of the other two. Here at long last the increasing symmetry is broken, and his redemptive power immediately manifests itself in the simultaneous appearance of blood and water, the latter substance being the truly miraculous one.

St. John's Gospel - and once again, it alone - has a remarkable sequel to this story, when Thomas the Apostle refuses to believe in Christ's resurrection unless he can see and touch his wounds. Perhaps it is no more than a coincidence that the name Thomas in Aramaic means 'twin' and that in the Gospel of St. John he is three times called Didymus as well, which has the same meaning and is the Greek translation of the first name. John does not say with whom Thomas formed a pair of twins, but there used to be a widespread tradition in early Christianity that he was Jesus' twin brother. This need not mean necessarily that they were physical twins, but Thomas may have received that nickname because he resembled Jesus in some striking way. Be this as it may, if we apply Girard's theory to the twins Jesus/Thomas, it would mean that Jesus had become so differentiated from Thomas by the crucifixion that the similarity made no longer sense. Thomas had therefore no trouble at all exclaiming that Jesus from now on was his Lord and his God (John 20, 28). Note also that we are here in the presence of the most intensive representation of our theme: twins that becomes differentiated not by the intervention of an outsider but by the intervention of one of their own who first undergoes a lateral differentiation in his own body.

Conclusion

We have been occupied in this article with twins and unilaterally mutilated people. In both cases symmetry functioned as a symbol of rivalry and social conflict. The problem facing individuals

and social groups was how to break through that symmetry. Twins as well as the sides of the body had to be made asymmetrical. Once this had been achieved twins became a source of blessing and asymmetries became seers and redeemers.

Our re-analysis of twins and asymmetrical people provided us with an opportunity to place the episode of the pierced Christ in the Gospel of St. John in a broader comparative frame-work (8). In John's account of the crucifixion both the theme of the twins and the theme of lateral asymmetry proved to be emphatically present. The sacrificial crisis symbolised by the two men crucified with Jesus was ended by the spearwound. In the iconography that wound is found in most cases on the right hand side of Jesus' body, but not infrequently one finds it also at the left hand side. As a matter of fact, it does not matter which side is being mutilated, since the central issue is asymmetry and not which of the sides is involved. Quite in line with that symbolism, out of that wound flowed the spirit of compassion, which is the opposite of the spirit of mimetic rivalry. There is one other question I should like to answer before ending this article, which is why the heroes in our redeemer stories - Kansabwe, the town beggar, Jacob, Christ - are all male. It is possible that there are stories about female asymmetries too, but I do not know of one and for the time being I shall hold on to the idea that the majority are males. The answer to the question why this should be so is to a certain extent given by the stories themselves. The protagonists are all looking for someone they already form a pair with or someone they are to form a pair with. In the former case the outcome is a reconciliation with an estranged twin brother; in the latter case it means finding a marriage partner. After his deformation Jacob was able to effectuate a reconciliation with Esau, and Christ could make Thomas see that he had truly risen from the dead. In the case of Kansabwe, a poor boy found an ideal marriage partner after having been deformed. The reason why the protagonists are always (or commonly) male appears to hang together with two homely truths: it is usually brothers and not sisters that compete with each other for rank and wealth, and it is usually men that are supposed to woo a marriage partner and not women. The reason for making use of the twinship symbolism is clear, because twinship appears to be the most pregnant symbol of mimetic rivalry and symmetry. The reason for making use of the marriage symbolism is equally clear because the marital union is the most pregnant symbol of a totality consisting of two asymmetric halves. Or, as Turner has it, the idiom of sexuality is used to represent the processes by which social forces approximately equal in strength and opposite in quality are exhibited as working in harmony (Turner 1977:50).

Even in the account of the pierced Christ the marriage symbolism is not altogether absent because the piercing of Jesus' side has been compared from early times onwards with the opening of Adam's side. Just like Eva was born from Adam's side, so from Jesus' side was born the Church as the new Eve. It is of course possible that this is a product of later theologizing. But in the light of what has been said here it is equally possible that the marriage symbolism has been implicitly present from the time the Gospel of Saint John was written. It is further to be

noted that of the various stories considered in this article, that of the pierced Christ appears to be the only one, which combines both the theme of the twin brother and the wife. Kansabwe was searching for a wife and not for a twin brother. Jacob was looking for his twin brother and not for a wife. Only Christ does both. As a twin he is an insider to the mimetic process; as a bridegroom-to-be he is an outsider to it.

In the introductory part to this paper it was stated that two items were to be discussed in particular, which were said to be of fundamental importance to an adequate understanding of unilateral figures. One of these items was the category of figurative unilaterals; the other was the phenomenon of twins. To begin with the latter, I think it has been shown that they do indeed form an indispensable part of the discussion. This appeared already from some of the creation myths in which twins featured prominently alongside half-beings, but it proved possible also to advance our understanding of corporeal symmetry and asymmetry via the concept of twinship. Most importantly, we learned to conceive of the human body also as a pair of twins, which made it possible to apply some of the central ideas of twinship to the discussion of unilateral beings. This helped us for instance to see the asymmetric savior/redeemer as proclaiming through the shape of his body the necessity of social differentiation and the horror of undifferentiation. Although we could in principle have done without Girard, since it is a matter of everyday observance that twins are alike and that in myths and folktales they are proverbial rivals, the great advantage of introducing Girard was that he provided us with a scenario capable of accommodating the various stories about unilaterals. This does not mean that each and every story is to exhibit each and every phase of that scenario. Some will represent only one particular phase; others perhaps one particular facet of the story.

We have found also that, broadly speaking, there are two groups of myths involved in the phenomenon of unilateral figures. One group is formed by the creation myths; the other consists of redemption myths. In the creation myths, the problem facing the gods is to find a balance between the unilateral with his stone-like, unproductive existence, and the twins whose reproductive power resembles that of animals, and whose aggressiveness threatens even the continued existence of the gods themselves. The compromise is two-sided man, who in contrast to unilaterals is reproductive and who is less aggressive than twins, but who is still able to make society unworkable, when rivalry breaks through the boundaries of law and custom. When that happens, order has to be restored, and the person called upon to perform that task must show through his body that he is not a twin. It is these restoration stories, which typically feature the poor boy searching for the solution to a difficult problem and marrying a princess in the end. Here again, the two groups cannot always be clearly differentiated. Themes of one group may form part of the other, but by and large the groundpatterns remain visible.

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NOTES

1. Information obtained from A.R.Mbimbi, Kachebere Seminary, Malawi, January 1971. The informant hailed from Zambia and described himself as Lunda.
2. The Swazi have a tradition about a one-legged god, Umlenzengamunye ('One Leg'), who is the messenger of the Great Ancestor and who seems concerned with women and children (Kuper 1947:191). He has therefore some of the characteristics of the sky spirits, but the reference to rivers in flood seems missing.
3. Sicard 1966; Roberts 1986:29. Theuws 1962:201. The Lugbara of Uganda have a spirit representation, called Adro, which is attributed the form of a human being, tall, white in colour, and cut in half lengthwise, with one leg, one arm, half a face and head (Middleton 1973:374-5). It has some similarity with the Luwe figures in that it, too, is particularly associated with wild nature.
4. That observation seems to be contradicted by a Yombe myth from Zaire about the first humans, which says that they were all created one-sided by God with the exception of a woman, called Mbende. It was his intention to kill all those who bore two-sided children. All women therefore bore half-men. However, when the woman Mbende gave birth to a two-sided boy of extraordinary handsomeness, he changed his mind and decided instead to burn and destroy all those born one-sided. Mbende became the ancestress of all men (Janssens 1926:565). Although this text, like any other, deserves to be analysed on its own terms, I wish to stress nevertheless that it appears to be exceptional.
5. Note that de Heusch (1982:11-12) prefers to use a version of this myth which makes no reference to strife and conflict among the twins. He infers from this (1982:27), contrary to what is suggested by Theuws' version, that the Luba world of twins was characterized by monotony and tediousness.
6. Cf. the Nyamwezi saying, 'Twins are kings' (Tcherkézoff 1987:48).
7. I thank this information to A.Makwainja, Kachebere Seminary, Malawi, January 1971.
8. The re-analysis of an episode from the Gospels in the light of African religious ideas as provided in the present article seems to open up an entirely new line of thinking with regard to African Theology.

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