



**Southern African Pentecostal Discourse and the
Construction of a New Spiritual Order: The Case of a Shift
in the *World of Life International Ministries* Discourse about
God**

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ABSTRACT

This discussion reveals and examines the intense dynamism of a highly unstable social practice in Southern Africa – the Modern African Pentecostal Movement (MAP) – as reflected in the discursive practice of a key actor, a Word of Life International Ministries (WoLIM) Senior Pastor, M.B. Shana. One of her prayer texts is examined from a perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It is shown that, much as WoLIM teach strict adherence to Biblical text (Maxwell, 2006; Togarasei, 2007), Shana’s text represents a milestone in the evolution of the definition of the Christian divinity from a cult of a Trinity dominated by God the Father to a virtually exclusive relationship of believers with the Holy Spirit. The latter appears to be gradually assuming the superior rank of the Father and playing more roles than the Father and the Son together. This is achieved through an infusion of new semantic values into the concept of the Holy Spirit while the semantic values of the other two persons of the Trinity are diminished. This infusion is not only aided but also prompted by the Southern African context in which WoLIM operates.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most potent forces in global Christendom has been Pentecostalism. Inspired by the Pentecostal event of the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, it was inevitable that a Pentecostal reading of the Bible would emerge to challenge other Christian teachings. It is also now inevitable that a Modern African Pentecostal (MAP; see Togarasei, 2005) reading should emerge from the copious discursive activity of the various MAPs active on the African continent and beyond. Kalu (2005) has called this newest understanding of Christianity and the Bible a “third response” to white

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cultural dominance in the church, the former two being Ethiopianism, on one side, and Aladura/Apostolic and Zionist movements on the other (Anderson, 2001a). According to Anderson (2001b: 11), this MAP reading reflects “the brokenness of African existence” as well as a holistic view with “roots in African religion”, features characteristic even of “black Pentecostalism” in the USA. To announce and underscore the notion of discursive change, Pastor M.B. Shana, the church leader whose text is studied here, frequently proclaims a “shift” in her church’s teaching. Using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) concepts of discourse representation, metaphor and agency, this paper seeks to characterise the nature and the extent of the said discursive shift. These conceptual tools have been chosen because they enable the revelation of the cognitive and ideological processes underpinning social practices and constructs.

The major contention of this discussion is that Pastor Shana’s text depicts the Holy Spirit as growing in stature to eventually supplant its partners in the Christian Trinity and become *the* Christian God. Amanze (1998: 101) has already noted tension among the Trinity’s persons as they are portrayed in African Christian discourse: “... there is a great deal of confusion regarding the relationship between the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. The three persons are ascribed different divine status (sic) with the Father assuming the highest position in the Godhead”. Already, therefore, the Trinity is not a stable entity but one characterised by jostling for superiority among the three persons that it comprises. Consequently, Shana’s use of the Trinity must be viewed as being not revolutionary but evolutionary. Also, her nascent notion of a non-Trinitarian deity must not be rashly equated to Unitarianism since this latter concept entails reducing the Christian Godhead to God the Father while Shana tends towards a God Holy Spirit.

Prior to my work on African Instituted Church (AIC) and MAP discourse (Manyawu 2008 and 2009), there appear to have been no known critical linguistic studies of the discursive practices of Southern African AICs and MAPs from a perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Examining WoLIM discourse draws much merited attention to the discursive practice of a transnational movement founded and led by Africans primarily for the consumption of fellow-Africans, and is thus likely to shed light on the evolutionary pattern of Christian teaching and liturgy in a region of the world where the religion is experiencing exponential growth. It is also likely to help the human and social sciences gain more insight into the modern African condition. This study will, therefore, add to literature in the human and social sciences documenting the linguistic strategies adopted by Africans in their attempts to define the world in relation to their existential needs and how best to cater for them.

The data collection method used for this study is participant observation. I have attended Maseru WoLIM Church since 2007 and have, therefore, had the opportunity to take part in various church services and meetings as well as to purchase church literature and media such as magazines, CDs as well as the DVD containing the text studied here.

Modern African Pentecostalism

Some of the largest Zimbabwean MAPs include Andrew Wutawunashe's Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) of Ezekiel Guti (Maxwell, 2006). Many of these churches are members of an ecumenical body called the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) of which Wutawunashe has been a chairman. The names of these MAPs reflect their Western roots in such Western denominations as the Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Faith Mission, many of which were first established in South African prior to spawning Zimbabwean off-shoots. The resultant Zimbabwean MAPs are, however, independent entities operating under the full control of their founders.

MAPs are Trinitarian movements: Wutawunashe describes God as "the one true God eternally existent in three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, yet one" (Wutawunashe: <http://www.africanrevival.com/Doctrine%20of%20God.htm>). He, however, sees Jesus Christ (the Son) as being more relevant to the MAP believer than the two other persons of the Trinity:

"All these names show how God meets our needs in our redemption through Jesus Christ who is Jehovah Jehoshua Christos i.e. the lord Jesus Christ or Jehovah saviour anointed ... The name of Jesus Christ in these three names is the greatest redemptive name because it contains all the other redemptive names put together. This is why it is the name above every name. Philippians 2:9-11" (idem).

While this perception of the Trinity underscores the MAP doctrine of redemption or being 'born again', its characterisation of Christ as "the greatest" and "above every name" clearly admits tension, conflict and competition among the Trinity's persons.

MAPs view the manifestation of the Holy Spirit among the Disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) as the seminal event not only of Christianity in general, but also of each church and each believer. Every individual believer must, therefore, experience a 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' in order to 'be born again'. The concepts of being 'born again' and redemption are so central to MAPs that non-believers often pejoratively refer to them as 'born agains' and by the various African language translations of the concept such as '*bo pholoswa*' in Sesotho (literally, those who claim to be saved) or '*chechi dze mweya*' (Shona for 'churches of the spirit' or 'spiritual churches'). To underscore the value of redemption, during MAP church services, leaders ask visitors and prospective members if they are 'born again' and urge those who are not to be 'born again'.

MAPs also believe in the 'Five-fold ministry'" ("Word of life worldwide": <http://www.wordoflifechurch.com/c/ex.php?action=e&fn=Our+Partners>), a doctrine derived from Ephesians 4:11, which says, "And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors

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and teachers". MAP leaders tend to specialise in at least one of these five areas and claim that the specialisation is given to them directly by the Holy Spirit. Many leaders' titles are indicative of their spiritual gift, such as Prophet Ezekiel Guti. Some may use different titles at different times and stages of their career such as Andrew Wutawunashe who has been called Prophet, Apostle and World Witness.

Most MAPs teach that believers must be possessed by the Holy Spirit and exhibit evidence of the Spirit's presence through such behaviours as speaking in tongues (glossolalia) and any of the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. They also believe in Biblical inerrancy, and thus use the Bible as their primary source of knowledge. MAPs are restorationist in the sense that they cast themselves as representing the renaissance of the early Church under the leadership of the Apostles hence some MAPs call themselves 'Full Gospel' churches. MAPs also teach that redemption leads to a transformation of the believer's material circumstances, a doctrine ordinarily referred to as 'prosperity Gospel'. Typical liturgical practices of MAPs include loud mass prayer, glossolalia and falling backwards under the influence of the Holy Spirit during prayer, all of which are Holy-Spirit induced behaviours (Maxwell, 2006). These doctrinal pillars shape MAP discourse. Consequently, discursive changes such as those alluded to in Shana's concept of a discursive "shift" in WoLIM practice may entail a different use of or attitude towards one, some or all of these teachings.

WoLIM Church

WoLIM is a relatively young but growing fast church originating from Zimbabwe. Like other MAPs though, it is aggressively spreading its wings across the region and beyond. It currently has branches in Zimbabwe, South Africa (Johannesburg), Lesotho (Maseru) and the UK. WoLIM was founded in 1992 by a young couple, Dr. Godwin and Mrs. Maureen Beryl Shana. Both Dr. and Mrs. Shana carry the title of Senior Pastor, the highest rank in WoLIM's hierarchy.

While the typical Maseru WoLIM believer is African (like the church leadership itself), s/he tends to be youthful urbanised and have some formal education. This trend confirms Togarasei's (2005) characterisation of MAPs in general. Signs that the church cherishes 'modernity' include the use of modern information and communication technologies (live video footage of services, DVD recordings of services, computers, etc.), international music genres and the use of the English language. Indeed, WoLIM leaders often quote Western Evangelical preachers and televangelists and WoLIM Maseru sells literature by some of them. This strongly suggests an ideological bias towards American Evangelicalism. However, the fact that believers and church leaders come from families and backgrounds often steeped in African traditional cosmology means WoLIM must find ways of reconciling believers' African existential challenges with their ideological preferences.

This study will reveal the effects of this tension on Shana's discursive practice.

African cosmology

I shall use the terms African cosmology and African worldview interchangeably to refer to Southern African traditional belief systems, which are hinged on the notion that interaction with what the Western scientific worldview may term inanimate and even inexistent phenomena is not only possible but also inevitable. African cosmology holds that success or failure in life is a function of the quality of one's relationship with the supernatural. Consequently, reward or punishment for behaviour takes place in the here and now and not after death. Talboid (1979: 27-28) concurs:

In African thought all things visible and invisible have a life... Everything has some force, some power, which can be tapped to increase or decrease the life span of a man. These forces are organized into a hierarchy of interrelationships. Above all is God... then divinities, spirits, ancestors... then man, animals, vegetation and other forces each reinforcing the other. The reality of their existence consists in their ability to reinforce each other in their web of interaction.

The relevance of the African traditional worldview to modern African society has been questioned. Mawondo (2006: 12) wonders whether traditional values and worldviews are "... still applicable and desirable in a modern, urban environment" such as the one in which WoLIM operates. However, research on African Christianity has shown that one major motive for the formation of an African Christian movement is to counter missionary churches' negative attitudes towards African traditional culture and worldview (Amanze, 1998; Kalu, 2005). Indeed, there are signs that so-called African traditional beliefs and practices have emerged virtually unscathed from decades of colonial oppression, persecution and suppression. Anthropologists Gerschiere and Fisiy's (1995) book, *Sorcellerie et Politique en Afrique: la viande des autres*¹ (literally: Witchcraft and politics in Africa: other people's meat), is one of several works that show, for instance, that "African witchcraft is no longer 'traditional', but rather operates as part and parcel of 'modernity' itself" (<http://www.jstor.org/view/00224200/ap050071/05a00100/0>). African worldview or cosmology will, therefore, be used to mean African tradition-inspired approaches to reality such as belief in good and bad spiritual forces.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Following renowned CDA practitioner, Norman Fairclough, the concept of discourse is used here "to refer to spoken and written language use. I shall use the term 'discourse' where linguists have traditionally written about

¹ English title: *The Modernity of Witchcraft*

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‘language use’, ‘parole’ or ‘performance’” (Fairclough, 1992: 62). The term text will be used to refer to the manifest face of discourse in the form of statements or utterances of various lengths and complexity, that is, a sample of a given subject’s discursive practice and production. The prayer text examined in this article belongs to the wider definition of literature, which encompasses texts beyond the literary arts (Allen, 2000, p. 174). CDA has been mostly associated with the study of political discourse and, in particular, with resistance to the hegemony of dominant political discourses such as capitalism. The social practice from which the discursive practiced studied here derives is not political but religious, and its impact not global but local (a WoLIM church in Maseru, Lesotho) and denominational (the entire WoLIM movement). Studies such as this one, therefore, are extending the reach of CDA beyond its traditional scope. Ultimately, therefore, this paper will thus contribute to the construction of a new form of linguistics that could be termed ‘Contemporary African Religious Criticism’. The key CDA tool that will be used in this discussion is intertextuality by which is meant the mutual interdependence between texts such that a given text necessarily incorporates portions of previous texts and invites responses in the form of texts subsequent to it. I shall more specifically rely on the intertextual concept of discourse representation (traditionally known as reported speech). One type of discourse representation – free discourse representation – will be of particular interest to this study. “Free indirect discourse... lacks a reporting clause and is ‘double-voiced’, mixing the voices of representing and represented discourse...” (Fairclough, 1992: 119). It is an element of voice translation which consists in “blending” the voice of the incorporated text into that of the speaker or author such that the boundaries between the two are blurred resulting, for instance, in voice ambiguity and/ or ambivalence (Fairclough, 1992: 108). Other analytical tools that will be used are agency (the entity to whom or which an event or action is attributed), and metaphor.

Pastor M.B. Shana’s prayer text

In the text transcribed below, WoLIM Senior Pastor Maureen Beryl Shana is leading a prayer session at a Women’s Conference held at WoLIM Church in Maseru, Lesotho sometime in 2008 (Shana, undated DVD). She speaks in English and her text is simultaneously translated into Sesotho. This paper will examine her original English text. The prayer session is recorded in audio-visual format on DVD. Shana’s text is preceded by a song whose refrain is “sweet sweet spirit of the Lord flow in this place... flow in my life”. Her pre-teaching prayer-related activity lasts a total of 35 minutes.

Transcription

The transcription style adopted below prioritises readability. The transcribed text is organised into sentences. I have used cues such as syntax, intonation

and pauses to punctuate the text. I have, however, limited myself to the use of only three punctuation markers: the full stop, the comma and the question mark. I have used three dots in brackets to indicate places where portions of text have been cut due to the constraint of space. Here is my transcription of the prayer text:

Today I want to encourage you. Don't just listen to the words but catch the anointing that speaks to the heart. Some things are not learnt but they are caught. Sometimes there's a minister in the house. You may not even hear what they are saying but make a demand and say I want what they have. Say I want what's upon their lives, I want what they have. I can tell you there is an apostolic and prophetic anointing in the house this morning. I may come a little bit crude sometimes. I may not shout and scream sometimes because the apostolic anointing puts things in order. The apostolic anointing is the anointing of mission impossible. Sometimes it comes and upsets the order in the house so that things may be put right. So I don't necessarily have to preach sometimes because the prophetic and apostolic anointing is upon my life. But what I will endeavour to do this morning is to flow with the Holy Ghost who is already present in this house. Why don't you just lift up your hands and remove your focus on a woman and remove your focus on a man and focus on him this morning. Tell him your expectancy. The atmosphere is already charged with expectancy and I want to tell you when there's so much expectancy in the house anything is possible. Sometimes we wait for someone to preach and teach and do all sorts of things before signs and wonders begin to manifest in the house. But I want to tell you sitting where you are expect God to do the impossible. Expect him to intervene on your behalf. Expect a breakthrough. Expect him to touch you. Expect a turnaround. Expect a breakthrough. Expect the impossible this morning. Expect anything because he's well able. He's well able to do far above what you can seek and what you can ask (inaudible) or what you can even imagine. And he's in the house this morning. He's in the house. He's in the house. The God of miracles, the God of the impossible. Ever loving God. The God who is good to all, the one who was and is and is to come, the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the one who is to come, the one who has no beginning and has no end, the great I am, is here today. He's here today. (*Prayer mode, sotto voce. Interpretation stops.*) Thank you father. We worship you. We adore you. We magnify your holy name. This morning I ask that I may decrease that you may increase in this place in the name of Jesus. Anoint my lips that your word is inscribed in every heart, father, that which you want, father, in the name of Jesus. Anoint every ear to listen in the name of Jesus. Father it's all about you this morning. None of me but all of you. I promise father that after everything has been said and done I promise that I will give you all the glory and all the praise and all the adoration because they belong to you. And the women of God say (Audience: *Amen*). And the women of God say (Audience: *Amen*). And the women of God say (Audience: *Amen*). (*End of prayer; resumption of interpretation.*) Hallelujah. Thank you praise and worship team. (...). Thank you Lord Jesus.

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(...). Well let's relax in the presence of God. Don't fear for me. Just relax in the presence of God. It just happens to be a woman at the authority. Hallelujah. Thank you Lord Jesus. Oh when he leads me I will talk. When he says start I will start. Oh hallelujah. He's worthy. He's worthy. He's worthy to be worshipped. (...). You can worship him too. You can love him. I'm just loving my daddy. I just love him this morning. He's worthy. It is so sweet to trust in Jesus. Mmh thank you gracious father. Full of compassion. We love you this morning. We love you this morning. Ha ha haha. Ha ha ha ha haha. Thank you Lord Jesus. Ha ha ha ha haha. Thank you for a change. Thank you father. Thank you. We are in a good season. We are in a good season. Well silence must not terrify you. Silence must not intimidate you. He's here already. Ah thank you father. Thank you Lord Jesus. We give you praise and worship you. We give you adoration my God. Thank you thank you thank you. Pastor Mrs. Dube can you come up. Thank you God. (...). (*To Mrs. Dube*) I want to tell you the doors to the nation are open. Lift up your hands. This is your time. This is your season. For a long time you hesitated. For a long time you have come in and you've gone out. You have taken a step forward and you have taken a step back. But this is a new season. That gifting that is in your life, that gifting, the precious giftings that are upon your life, they will come to the fore this season. You think you have sung, you will sing and dance. Arise because this is the season. You will not only sing but you will minister the word of God with power and authority (*Mrs. Dube falls backwards trembling into the waiting hands of ushers.*) because the doors have been opened. The doors have been opened. It's a new season. It's a season of grace, grace upon your life in this season. Why don't we just stretch our hands towards her? Ah it's a new season. But you will minister in song in such a power and such an anointing. Ha. Thank you father. Thank you for the gifting upon this woman's life. Thank you Lord that she's going higher. Higher higher higher higher. There's a new passion. There's a new intensity. There's a new tenacity upon her life. There's a shift. Thank you father for shifting gears in this life. Ah a new passion. New level. New level of doing things. There's a new way of doing things. A new and a better way of doing things. There is a new way. There is a new way and there's a release. God is releasing you to the nation. There's a release. Maseru will not hold you back. Nobody will hold you back because there is a release. There is a release and a shift. There's a shift even in this ministry. There's a shift so women get ready. There is a shift in this ministry. Get ready to take your place. It's not by might or by power but it's by my spirit, says the Lord. There is a shift. There is a shift. There is a shift. There is a shift. I want to tell you something. God is going to raise up those women that he wants. Not necessarily those that a woman wants. Not necessarily those that are on a man's mind but there is God's will and God's purpose in the house. So there is a shift. There is a shift. There is a shift. There is a shift. Can I just get all the women in this church who are in leadership? If you are in leadership in this church. The guy in the keyboard is he gone? (...) Oh there's a shift in the house. (...). If you know you're in leadership. (*Glossolalia*). And if you are

here and you know there's a call of God upon your life, you may not be in leadership here but you are in this ministry and you know there's a call of God upon your life, I want you up here as well. Because there's a shift. (...). Quick. Let's do it quickly. (...). Cause God is doing a quick work in the house. Yes, there's a quick work in the house. (*Glossolalia*). I'm going to need ushers behind these ladies. I need ushers behind here. I need ushers behind here. Just like you do every Sunday. (...). (*Glossolalia while women are coming to the front.*) Father, thank you for an impartation. The same anointing that's upon my life. I thank you father for a transfer of your anointing through the laying on of hands. An impartation oh God in the name of Jesus. Thank you father for the anointing that is upon Word of Life. The same anointing that's upon Pastor Shana is the same anointing that's upon my life this morning. Thank you. *Mme Ma Dube* can you come with me? There's an anointing, an impartation in the house. (...) (*Glossolalia*). (*To Pastor Mrs Dube*) Just stand to my right. It's going to go very fast so I need you to come with me. (*Starts going from woman to woman laying hands on them but taking on only about a second with each woman as she utters the following text.*) In Jesus name impartation, impartation, impartation, impartation (*woman falls; glossolalia*). Impartation. (...) Let the fire of God fall in the name of Jesus. You will live and not die. Impartation, impa (...). Oh changing her into another woman. Impartation, impartation in the house. Impartation, impartation. Feel overflowing impartation. Impartation, impartation. Your days of standing on the edge are over. Jump in. Jump in. Jump in. Yes, woman of God, God will take you to the nation. You will rise strong. You are a psalmist. You will worship, you will minister. Don't look down upon yourself. Don't compare yourself. Don't say but the others. You are not others. You are a woman of God called by God to a time such as this. Ha ha ha surprise. Surprise. Surprise, surprise. Thank you father for your hand that is strong upon this woman. (...) Increase the anointing upon her life. Ha ha ha. Spirit of fear I bind you, I resist you in the name of Jesus. Loose this woman and let her go in the name of Jesus. I speak life, life. Yes yeah it's not too late to jump into the things of God. It's not too late. It's not too late. It's not too late, mama. Thank you for stability, bringing stability in the church. Just your being there. Feel. Feel. To the mother, a nurturer. Quiet spirit. Quiet spirit. But lovely countenance. You desire so much for such a youth. You desire so much to do the will and purpose of God. You are in the right track. Keep on going girl. One day, one day, it shall come to pass but keep on going. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feel. Feeeel. Feel Jehovah flowing. (...) Fire of the Holy Ghost (*glossolalia*). Church we are praying, church we are praying. (...) Yah, yah, yah, time to move. It's your move that will make a difference, it's your move, it's your move. Don't be too shy to make it, don't be too careful. Move and jump into the river. Yes, yes, the old is past. Everything has become new. Don't look, don't look at the past. All things have become new. Things have become new. In the name of Jesus. Yah, yah, yah, yah. Impartation, impartation, impartation. Yah, yah. (...) There is a burning bush experience for you. (...). Confident woman of

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God. (...). Impartation, Impartation in the house! ... Change her into another woman... days of standing on the edge are over. Feel, feel, feel the presence of God. Don't be too careful. Don't think of the past. All things have passed away. All things have become new. Perseverance. Woman of God, full of the anointing of God, feel, feel, feel. Binding negative spirits. Favour, favour, favour, favour. (...).

SHANA'S CONSTRUCTION OF 'GOD HOLY SPIRIT'

Several textual strategies inform Shana's construct of the Holy Spirit and its transformation of the Christian Trinity into a Holy Spirit-dominated godhead or what I propose to call 'God Holy Spirit' after MAP's God Jesus Christ.

a) Tension, conflict and competition within the Trinity

Despite the fact that WoLIM is a Trinitarian church, Pastor Shana is not content to talk about or to "God". On the contrary, she invokes one or the other of the Trinity's persons, occasionally even calling each of them "God". Her text demonstrates absolute faith in the Holy Spirit while glossing over the other persons of the Trinity. Not only does this strategy make the Holy Spirit her favourite person but it also turns the Trinity into a tense, conflict-ridden and competitive space wherein the three actors jostle for supremacy. As was noted earlier, Shana's tendency to treat the three persons as discrete, virtually independent and rival gods may reflect the treatment of the Trinity in African Pentecostalism. However, in both MAPs and Pentecostal AICs statuses and roles are distributed differently from what we see in Shana's text since. While MAPs are essentially Christocentric, for AICs, the Father is the senior member of the Trinity while the Son and the Holy Spirit "... can even be considered as secondary Gods" (Amanze, 1998, p. 101). So maybe what Shana's "shift" is pointing to is that, gone are the days of the Father and those of the Son who, in going to join the Father in Heaven surrenders his place on Earth to the Holy Spirit, a tangible presence in the believer's life. This resonates well with Jesus' ultimate promise to his Disciples:

"The Helper will come – the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God and who comes from the Father, and he will speak about me" (John 15: 26-27) and "I did not tell you these things at the beginning, for I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me" (John 16: 4-5).

It is as if being sent makes the messenger superior to the sender: the Father sent Christ and for MAPs Christ became "Jehovah Jehoshua Christos i.e. ... Jehovah saviour anointed" and, of the three names of the Trinity, "the name of Jesus Christ (became) the greatest redemptive name ... the name above every name" (Wutawunashe: <http://www.africanrevival.com/Doctrine%20of%20God.htm>). Similarly Christ sent the Holy Spirit, which now becomes the Trinity's champion in Shana's text (see "Genealogy" and "Proximity" below). As a result, whereas Jesus says of the Holy Spirit, "He will not speak on his own authority... He

will give me glory, because he will take what I say and tell it to you”, Shana’s Holy Spirit, though received “in the name of Jesus”, does not seem to be taking orders from him.

b) Discourse representation

Shana draws upon the intertextual strategy of free discourse representation (Fairclough, 1992) as a quasi-pedagogical strategy to naturalise her use of the concept of the Holy Spirit. Her prayer text uses key words from two songs about the Holy Spirit sung by Maseru WoLIM’s “Praise and Worship Team”. I have already alluded to the first one, which serves as a prelude to her prayer activity: “sweet sweet spirit of the Lord flow in this place... flow in my life”. The second one is frequently used as background to prayer sessions at Maseru WoLIM: “It’s a new season, I know it’s a new day, fresh anointing, it’s flowing my way, it’s a season of power, and prosperity, it’s a new season...” (Shana, undated). The image of the Holy Spirit as a flowing substance underpins its portrayal in both songs. Shana uses the noun ‘season’ 10 times and ‘anointing’ 15 times in her prayer activity without acknowledging the song or any other WoLIM document that uses the same words. The fact that the Praise and Worship team sings the songs throughout ordinary prayer sessions is a sign that the church considers them as important tools in helping believers acquire the church’s understanding of the Christian faith. Repetition of the songs’ text and the expectation to sing along ensures that believers learn them quickly. In fact, the songs’ lyrics are scrolled on a giant screen hanging above the pulpit area to help believers learn them.

The songs’ texts reflect the view of the Holy Spirit as the ubiquitous and, therefore, most relevant person of the Trinity. The concept of a season reflects a heightened sense of the dynamism of the passage of time. It is the antithesis of doctrinal conservatism; on the contrary, it casts WoLIM teaching as explorative – almost experimental – and continually seeking doctrinal truths. The concept of season also casts Pastor Shana’s prayer activity as the result of a revelation on the long journey to even more revelations hence her warning against conservatism and routine:

I may come a little bit crude sometimes. I may not shout and scream sometimes because the apostolic anointing puts things in order. The apostolic anointing is the anointing of mission impossible. Sometimes it comes and upsets the order in the house so that things may be put right. So I don’t necessarily have to preach sometimes because the prophetic and apostolic anointing is upon my life.

In other words, the concepts of the season and the anointing signal that WoLIM liturgy must necessarily remain unpredictable and unstable. Three linguistic devices underscore the notion of instability: the verb ‘may’ (implying doctrinal and liturgical options), the adverb ‘sometimes’ (used four times in four lines) and the negative ‘may not’ and ‘don’t’.

Another document that has intertextual links with Shana’s prayer text is a tract distributed to visitors and new members at all Maseru WoLIM Sunday

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services. Here is how the WoLIM tract, a statement of the church's credo, defines the Trinity.

- (Article) 2. We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (Article) 3. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His personal return in power and glory.
- (Article) 5. We believe in person (sic) of the Holy Spirit, whose ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to convict the world of sin and to regenerate the sinner upon believing in Christ, and indwell the believer, sanctifying him to live a holy life and to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ.

While God is defined as the Trinity, the person of the Father is not defined at all and no role in believers' spiritual lives is ascribed to him. While the Father is discursively neglected and not explicitly believed in, the persons and functions of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are described in relatively copious detail. Eight attributes and one role (his mediatorial work) of Jesus are cited. In comparison, the Holy Spirit plays eight distinct roles in a believer's life but is not described at all in terms of what it is. While the single role played by Jesus is presented in nominal terms (mediatorial work), the roles of the Holy Spirit are all in verbal forms (infinitive form or present continuous tense). Moreover, the Holy Spirit is explicitly described as having a "ministry" to perform vis-à-vis both Jesus (the Holy Spirit glorifies him) and human society. However, no relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Father is specified. These strategies emphasise the highly active nature of the Holy Spirit and contrasts it with the total inactivity, if not absence, of the Father (once he has availed the Holy Spirit/ anointing to the Church) as well as the immense worth but near-total passivity of Jesus. This understanding of the Trinity is rendered possible by the definition of Jesus as God, a view which contradicts Article 2 where God signifies the three inseparable and "eternally existent" persons of the Trinity. While the view of Jesus as God goes back as far as New Testament times and is a fundamental doctrine of MAPs (see 'MAP doctrine' above), the view of the Holy Spirit as being a worshipper and servant of Christ does not. The Trinity, therefore, is cast as operating through the Holy Spirit, the agent of all activity attributable to God (Christ). My discussion of agency below shows how Shana draws upon the WoLIM doctrine of God to point towards a 'shift' from this doctrinal position to one where the Holy Spirit may soon be worshipped as God in the place of Christ. Suffice it to say that the strong resonances between Shana's prayer text and key WoLIM educational texts, two songs and a doctrinal tract, reflect her intention to draw upon believers' knowledge of these texts to legitimise her prayer activity and naturalise the teaching of the said texts. The lack of a boundary between Shana's text and text from other sources reflects

a desire to prompt believers to treat Shana's prayer text as a natural derivative and extension of WoLIM doctrinal texts. Two strategies that prolong and crystallise Shana's discursive activity are a genealogical view of the Holy Trinity as well as the resultant notion of the proximity of the Holy Spirit to believers.

c) Genealogy: genetic continuity but physical separation

The order in which the three persons of the Christian divinity are ordinarily presented is significant: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Shana's prayer activity is prefaced by references to the anointing that believers must claim, "the Holy Ghost who is already present in this house" and an exhortation to "expect God to do the impossible". This prioritization of the anointing or Holy Spirit/Ghost reflects a desire to cause believers to focus first and foremost on it. She then proceeds to characterise God in these terms:

The God of miracles, the God of the impossible. Ever loving God. The God who is good to all, the one who was and is and is to come, the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the one who is to come, the one who has no beginning and has no end, the great I am.

Most attributes of God in this segment of text, such as "the God of miracles", "the lion of the tribe of Judah" and "the one who is to come", clearly point to his identity as Jesus Christ. Immediately after this characterisation, the persons of the Trinity appear in their individual capacities. First is the Father who is simply thanked (as seen earlier), worshiped and praised followed by Jesus, who is not characterised but only appears explicitly in three phrases: "thank you Jesus/ Lord Jesus" (4 occurrences), "in the name of Jesus" (nine occurrences) and "trust in Jesus" (one occurrence). Unlike the Father, Jesus is not worshipped but is shown gratitude and his name is used as a trustworthy conduit to access such resources as the anointing/ Holy Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit availed by the Father can only be accessed by having faith in Jesus. This process is symbolically borne out by the fact that, once these conditions are established, Shana proceeds to minister to the women gathered before her by literally giving them (through the speech act of impartation) the anointing/Holy Spirit which, as she says at the beginning of her prayer activity, is upon her church, her husband and her. It is this use of the anointing/Holy Spirit that she views as representing a paradigm shift in WoLIM: "There's a shift so women get ready. There is a shift in this ministry. Get ready to take your place. It's not by might or by power but it's by my spirit, says the Lord".

Shana presents the persons of the Christian Godhead in a sequence common to all Trinitarian Christian denominations ranging from Roman Catholicism, through mainstream Protestantism to AICs, a sequence that tends to suggest the historical seniority of the Father as the creator and source of all life. However, unlike prayer texts from many other denominations, at no point does Shana's text present the three persons of the Trinity together as

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in the phrase “in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit/ Ghost”. On the contrary, she refers to the one or the other as in “the Holy Ghost who is already in the house”, “thank you Father”, or “thank you Jesus”. The three persons are thus separated and set to function as virtually independent entities; hence the competition for seniority alluded to earlier. They further appear to be arranged in a chronological order reminiscent of a family tree starting with the ancestor (the Father) who begets a Son, Jesus Christ, and culminating in the contemporary descendant, The Holy Spirit. This notion is reminiscent of the WoLIM tract (see above) wherein an “article 4” on “sin” is inserted between articles 3 and 5 (Son and Holy Spirit respectively). This fourth article defines and highlights the redeeming role played by the Holy Spirit who alone can save the human race from its sinful nature: salvation is “... appropriated by faith apart from works and through the regeneration of (sic) Holy Spirit”. This is in sharp contrast to the MAP doctrine of redemption whereby Christ is the sole redeemer and, therefore ‘senior partner’ in the Trinity: “The name of Jesus Christ in these three names is the greatest redemptive name because it contains all the other redemptive names put together. This is why it is the name above every name” (Wutawunashe: <http://www.africanrevival.com/Doctrine%20of%20God.htm>). Thus the attention of the believer, a sinner forever doomed without the intervention of the Holy Spirit, is clearly and irrevocably drawn to focus more or less exclusively on the Holy Spirit. The underlying message appears to be as follows: the believer must gratefully worship the Father and cherish as well as believe in memories of glorious (but past) exploits of the Son, which are his death and resurrection. But the believer must at all cost know and possess or be “indwelt” by the Holy Spirit, the active and redeeming force of a Trinity in which the Son now appears to rest next to the Father after the triumph of the resurrection (as he awaits the day of “His personal return in power and glory”) while the Father seems to have simply retired from active duty after availing the Holy Spirit to believers. Thus is achieved a genetic continuum between the Trinity’s persons along with their physical separation and individualisation.

d) Proximity

The discursive dominance of the Holy Spirit in Shana’s prayer text is accompanied by an all-pervading notion of spiritual warfare which WoLIM worship leaders ceaselessly evoke during prayer sessions (Shana, undated). It also, as we have just seen, due to a sense of the historical remoteness of God the Father, who has never and cannot be seen as compared to a Christ who actually lived on earth (but then died) and to a Holy Spirit who is conceived as being a living and active presence in believers’ lives, a presence to which they can relate in tangible ways. This relative proximity of the Holy Spirit to humans and the remoteness of the Father are reminiscent of Southern African cosmology whereby humans do not interact with *Mwari/Molimo/Unkulunkulu* (God) but with various intermediary spirits such

as those of their ancestors. The function of the pastor as the one through whom believers receive the anointing/Holy Spirit is reminiscent of ancient Hebraic prophets such as Samuel who anointed both Kings Saul and David. The notion of a human intermediary between the spirit world and humans echoes the Hebraic concept of the priesthood as well as the Southern African traditional concept of the *svikiro* or *sangoma* (spirit medium). The function of the latter as diviners is strongly reflected in Shana's knowledge about believers she is likely to be meeting for the first time as shown in her characterisation of believers as she prays for them. For instance, she touches one woman and declares: "Quiet spirit. Quiet spirit. But lovely countenance. You desire so much for such a youth. You desire so much to do the will and purpose of God. You are in the right track." Shana's behaviour in this instance is also similar to that of Apostolic AICs 'prophets' whose liturgical role includes divining and declaring the status of believers in terms of innocence or unconfessed sin. Shana's use of the anointing/Holy Spirit thus casts her social practice as highly ambivalent: she is at once a priest, a diviner/spirit medium, a child of God (since she calls him "father" and even "daddy"), and a prophet (in the Hebraic and Apostolic AIC senses). This practice, therefore, portrays the Holy Spirit in Hebraic, African traditional and Apostolic AIC terms implying Shana's attraction to similarities between ancient Hebraic and African traditional cosmologies. The prominence of the Holy Spirit in Shana's prayer thus reflects an innate need for a deity that operates in close proximity to human believers.

e) Manifestation

Manifestation refers to the ability of God to reveal himself in one form or another to humans. While the Father has never really been seen or otherwise perceived by humans, Christians believe God has manifested himself in the human form of Jesus Christ. It is through this manifestation of God that MAP believers have been able to relate to God (see 'MAP doctrine' above). In this context, it is, therefore, significant that Shana insists on the presence in the auditorium, not of Jesus, but of "the Holy Ghost who is already present in this house". The need for God to appear among believers in one form or the other is a key element of WoLIM doctrine. The WoLIM tract describes Jesus as "God manifest in flesh". It follows that, since the human God died on the cross, God must necessarily operate among humans in a new form. Shana posits such a manifestation in the form of the Holy Spirit. Since Jesus Christ only became God subsequent to his manifestation in the flesh, the Holy Spirit must now be viewed as God because of its manifestation in the auditorium where Shana is praying. Shana does not use the Holy Spirit as a representative of the Trinity; rather its ability to be with believers while the Father and the Son remain remote and absent makes it the only God believers actually know. While the notion of a materialisation of deities is common to many indigenous religions the world over, Shana's use of God's

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manifestation in the form of a spirit is particularly appealing to Southern African audiences familiar with direct contact with the supernatural.

f) Metaphors

Shana uses several metaphors to refer to the Holy Spirit, beginning with the metaphor of the anointing as in this segment of her text:

I thank you father for a transfer of your anointing through the laying on of hands. An impartation oh God in the name of Jesus. Thank you father for the anointing that is upon Word of Life. The same anointing that's upon Pastor Shana is the same anointing that's upon my life this morning.

Shana actually only mentions the Holy Ghost by name twice in her 35 minute-long prayer activity. Use of the substitute term 'anointing' with its characteristic of a flowing substance allows Shana and the song to treat the Holy Spirit as a physical entity that can be given to others by those who already have it such as Pastor Shana who will now proceed to pass it on (impartation) to the believers before her. Avoidance of the term Holy Spirit or Ghost suggests a heightened sense of the sanctity of the name and resonates well with the commandment not to use the name of God in vain thus reinforcing the notion of the equation of the Holy Spirit to God. Metaphor is thus used to achieve the "shift" to which Shana alludes so often in her prayer activity. The material properties of the anointing, evocative as they are of ancient Hebraic prophets, are a means through which the WoLIM pastor claims power over believers since the anointing can only be obtained from the pastor who already possesses it, hence Shana's exhortation of her audience to "claim that (anointing) which is upon" the pastor's life. By accepting that they cannot access the anointing/Holy Spirit on their own without the intervention of their pastor, believers give the latter power over themselves. This is why they submit to Shana during the prayer activity, allowing her to describe them, instruct them, impart the anointing to them and, therefore, give them new personalities and characters, just as Jesus described Peter as the Rock. Pastor Shana imparts the Holy Spirit/ anointing to believers by touching their heads. Indeed, the touching of heads or laying on of hands as a means of imparting the Holy Spirit is a key feature of WoLIM liturgy. Believers often respond to the energy of the anointing/ Holy Spirit by falling backwards. The anointing/ Holy Spirit's physical nature is underscored by the song's notion of "flowing" which evokes the oil traditionally used in Hebraic anointing. Oil thus becomes a salient metaphor representing the Holy Spirit. The idea of flowing also implies the peace and tranquillity desired in the individual lives of believers as well as in the church (see above). The direction taken by the Spirit ("flowing my way", according to the song) underscores the idea, salient in Pastor Shana's text, that the Spirit is obedient to the invocation of an anointed believer.

The metaphor of a new season is most evocative of Shana's concept of an ideological shift in WoLIM as it implies both a new era, a new understanding of GOD and WoLIM's concept of the spiritual and material

renewal of believers (being born again). Pastor Dube, Maseru WoLIM's resident pastor, explicated this idea on 02 September 2007 by saying believers should experience the new season not only through spiritual empowerment but material gain as well. Thus "new season" signifies the era of the Holy Spirit which enters a believer's life bringing with him power and prosperity, which are the hallmarks of WoLIM's concept of redemption. The concept of novelty also underscores the notion of a paradigm shift touted by Shana in her prayer text.

Pastor Shana uses the expression "the apostolic anointing" four times in six lines: "there is an apostolic and prophetic anointing in the house this morning"; "the apostolic anointing puts things in order"; "the apostolic anointing is the anointing of mission impossible"; "the prophetic and apostolic anointing is upon me". These multiple references to the apostolic anointing begin in the fifth line of her text thus forming the core of its introduction. What Shana calls the apostolic anointing is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit specified by Paul in Ephesians 4:11: "It was he (Christ) who 'gave gifts'; he appointed some apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers" (*Good News Study Bible*, 1994). Twice Shana juxtaposes the prophetic and apostolic gifts, first to declare that it is in the auditorium and, in her final mention of the apostolic anointing, to state that she has both gifts/ anointings. These two gifts help her define the Holy Spirit as a pioneering entity that has the double mission of breaking new ground (apostolicism) and declaring the will of God (prophecy). Since God uses the word to create, the Holy Spirit thus assumes the power of God to create out of nothing. This is why in her prayer activity Shana performs such functions as telling believers what they are and what they will be: she is using the anointing that is upon them to turn them into new beings.

g) Agency

Pastor Shana gives the anointing/Holy Spirit prominence by attributing more actions and interventions in believers' lives to it than to the other two members of the Holy Trinity. Pastor Shana's notions of 'anointing', 'feel', "binding negative spirits" and "favour" are all connected to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit as used by Shana may thus be characterised as follows: it is an anointing that can be felt by 'women of God' (believers) and its function is to defeat the spiritual adversaries of believers and intervene in their favour to ensure that they accede to blessings and thus prosper and make the church prosper. The word 'anointing' appears 15 times in my transcription of Shana's prayer text, while 'feel' appears 21 times, and 'spirit' five (5) times in a 1967 word-long transcription of a 35 minute-long prayers activity. The Holy Spirit/ anointing also engenders behaviour change in believers. Some desirable behaviours cited in this segment of Shana's prayer include bringing stability in the church, presence (being there), quietness, and desire to do the will and purpose of God. This short list is reminiscent, if not identical, to that of the gifts of the spirit enumerated by Paul in his letter to the Galatians: "But

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the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control” (Galatians 5: 22-23).

Whereas Shana’s prayer text invokes a large number of actors [the Father’s hand, Shana, the spirit of fear (who should “loose this woman”), a woman (who brings stability by just being there), and a young woman (who desires to please God)], one salient agent connects them all: the anointing. While God’s hand “is strong upon this woman”, that hand alone will not change her until the anointing upon her is increased. Ostensibly, therefore, God holds or chooses a believer whose faith and function in the church will be activated and fuelled by the anointing. Shana’s propensity to attribute to the Holy Spirit virtually all of the Holy Trinity’s activities is reflected in an uncanny confusion of it and the Father in her prayer text. For instance, both the anointing and the Father’s hand are portrayed as being “upon” a person or an institution such as the hand of the Father being “strong upon this woman” and, elsewhere, “the anointing (being) upon Word of Life” and “upon Pastor Shana”. The fact that this quasi assimilation of two persons of the Trinity occurs right through the prayer text suggests a desire to collapse them into one. Such frequent alternation is a way of turning the two persons into one such that the Holy Spirit is progressively associated with the historical seniority of a now redundant Father. This understanding reflects WoLIM teaching about the Holy Trinity (see my discussion of the WoLIM tract above) and thus reflects the doctrinal shift announced by Shana in her prayer text. Shana only separates the two to indicate the Holy Spirit’s origin: it emanates from the Father. But the Holy Spirit’s overwhelming value is underscored by Shana’s frequent use of the phrase “thank you father” (10 times), a limitless and endless outpouring of gratitude pointing to the fact that the one thing the believer needs is the anointing/ Holy Spirit which the Father has graciously provided. Stressing the role of the Holy Spirit in believers’ lives underscores a view of the Christian deity relating to humans solely through the spiritual dimension. Shana’s use of agency with regard to the Trinity thus gives the strong impression that when she says ‘God’, as in “expect God to do the impossible”, she really has the Holy Spirit in mind.

FUNCTIONS OF GOD HOLY SPIRIT

Shana’s prayer text portrays the Holy Spirit as performing several functions. A study of these functions confirms the notion that she regards the Holy Spirit as the principal element of the Trinity.

a) Impartation or the transmission of a supernatural power to humans

Impartation is the single most frequently used word in Pastor Shana’s prayer text. She chants this noun 23 times mostly as she touches believers’ foreheads. Impartation is reminiscent of the “gift” of the Holy Spirit

contained in Jesus' promise to his disciples: "But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power..." (Good News Study Bible, 1994, Acts 1: 8). Elsewhere, when the apostles preach the Gospel, the Holy Spirit can spontaneously come upon the congregation (Good News Study Bible, 1994, Acts 10: 44). If the phenomenon of the impartation of the Holy Spirit is Biblical and belongs to the culture of the early Christian Church, Shana redefines it by adding the element of transmission by means of a human being, in this case the pastor. Similarly, in African traditional cosmology, families can cause an ancestral spirit to indwell a particular individual. We saw above that WoLIM views itself as a family where the Pastor is the father/mother of the congregation. By imparting the Holy Spirit to believers, Shana may thus be fulfilling an African and a MAP expectation with regards to her position and responsibility in the family. She is also confirming Talboid's (1982; see above) claim that, in African traditional worldview, humans can access the spiritual power of other living, dead and supernatural entities in order to strengthen themselves. Thus transfer of the impartation takes place from a successful individual, the pastor, to less successful believers. The notion of success is underscored by her instruction to believers to "catch the anointing", "make a demand and say I want what they have", and "say I want what's upon their lives" because "some things are not learnt but they are caught".

It is significant that the transmission of the Holy Spirit is no longer attributed to God the Father ["the gift my Father promised" (Acts 1:4)]; neither is it attributed to Christ who promised to send the Holy Spirit as a Helper for his disciples. In the place of both now stands a human church leader. The frequency with which the speed act of impartation is performed underscores the pastor's power and proportionally diminishes that of Christ who no longer performs this self-appointed posthumous task. Christ's retreat creates more space for the Holy Spirit to occupy in the Christian Godhead. But along with that is an elevation of the pastor to divine status through her replacement of Christ in his key function. In the next phase of the "shift", therefore, this elevation of the pastor may well entail the subordination of God Holy Spirit to the human church leader who dispenses it and perhaps lead to the deification of pastors.

b) A physical presence among believers

The charismatic pull of Pastor Shana's text revolves around the Holy Spirit's ability to relate in space and real time with believers. Several Biblical texts suggest that God is perceptible through our senses. Some texts report God assuming the form of an earthly phenomenon. Such is the case of the "flame coming from the middle of a bush" which appears to Moses (Good News Study Bible, 1994, Exodus 3: 1 – 6). Another example is that of Jesus himself, simultaneously man and God, or as John calls him, "the word (that) became a human being ... and lived among us" (Good News Study Bible, 1994, John 1: 14). The Holy Spirit's ability to communicate with human beings is

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evoked by Jesus: “Why then... did the Holy Spirit inspire David to call him ‘Lord’?” (Good News Study Bible, 1994, Matthew 22:43).

In the Biblical texts referred to above, two senses are used to perceive God and/ or the Holy Spirit: sight and hearing. Shana’s text seems to suggest that believers can perceive the Holy Spirit (and/ or God) through yet another sense: touch (“feel”). However, God Holy Spirit seems to only be perceptible in prayer sessions. Finally, the order/ command contained in the imperative “feel!” is absent from Biblical discourse.

The invocation of a third sense coupled with the urgent need to interact with the Holy Spirit through that sense (touch) reflects Shana’s desire to naturalise the idea of the “physical” nature of the Holy Spirit. The behaviour of the ladies for whom she prays reflects this naturalisation: as she lays a hand on their foreheads to “impart” the Holy Spirit to them, they each fall backwards ostensibly in response to the (physical) touch of the overwhelming being of the Holy Spirit. This resonates well with some Gospels which report people being healed upon touching Jesus’ garment or coming into contact with an apostle’s shadow. Jesus has thus been replaced by the Holy Spirit in Shana’s liturgical behaviour.

Shana’s idea of the physical nature of the Holy Spirit is anthropomorphotic. God Holy Spirit is portrayed as being present in the church (“is here this morning”). This reduces God to a being limited in space, size, and time implying that he is not necessarily omnipresent and omniscient. He, however, can appear among believers, much like an African family’s ancestral spirits may appear to perform a specific task. Consequently, the Pastor’s joy lies in the fact that God has accepted to be in that particular church at that particular time. Anthropomorphosis signals that even though Shana is talking about “God”, she actually means the Holy Spirit since it is only the Holy Spirit that is perceived as having a physical “nature” given that the Father never had one and Jesus is no longer human. Thus even though Shana is aware of the existence of the other persons of the Trinity, her text tends to give hegemony to the Holy Spirit, transforming it into a God Holy Spirit. Her declaration that “*God is here this morning*” is a triumphant announcement suggesting that the WoLIM has God Holy Spirit’s favour (see the use of the word “favour” in prayers for believers below) as well as the ability and authority to invite him. This access to an ever available benevolent supernatural being evokes the African traditional concept of the ancestral spirit whose role is to watch over his/ her descendants and intervene in response to the stimulus of their hands engaging the spiritual “engine into gear” (Rakotsoane, 2000).

a) Fighting for the believer

Pastor Shana’s prayer text may be viewed as a conjuration of the Holy Spirit to intervene in believers’ lives. Utterances such as “binding negative spirits”, “Devil, loose your hand on this child of God”, or “perseverance” evoke the notion of a spiritual struggle. “Anointing” and “change her into another

woman” are directed at the Holy Spirit. All notions in the text prepare the believer for battle with Satan and his “agents”. Once a believer is born again, has a new character and is anointed, s/he is ready to fight and vanquish the devil and all evil spirits on any terrain through the Holy Spirit. Such an understanding evokes Paul’s discourse: “For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world...” (Ephesians 6: 12). There is, however, no clear tendency towards such conjuration in the New Testament.

The Holy Spirit’s physical nature allows it to perform miracles in believers’ lives. However, Shana portrays the believer as being responsible for the outcome of the Holy Spirit’s interventions. Healing, even of incurable diseases, is guaranteed: “No one should leave this place sick”. Shana explains to the congregation that once one is declared healed (by the Pastor), one should not doubt the veracity of that assertion despite any lingering signs of illness (WoLIM DVDRW Easter Faith EM, 2007). In other words, God Holy Spirit is sensitive to human doubt such that a healing otherwise guaranteed can be undone by the concerned individual’s doubts. The success of God Holy Spirit’s work is thus firmly founded on absolute faith. This idea is emphasized by the question: “Will you believe the report of the doctor or are you going to believe the report of the Lord?” (DVDRW Easter Faith EM, 2007). The implication is that the sick person shall overcome or be overcome by the evil forces (sickness, for instance) besetting him/her depending on his/her attitude and towards God Holy Spirit. God Holy Spirit thus shirks responsibility for his intervention in human affairs. Consequently, whereas the power of God Holy Spirit who gives victory to the believer is constant, a life of victory is conditional. It’s up to the believer to act upon this power, both constant and sensitive to human character, to obtain the victory he/she seeks. That is the reason why, as we saw earlier, Shana’s text insists on character change. The idea is that only the “born-again” believer freed from his/her harmful secular and non-Pentecostal socialisation can attain the required levels of faith in God Holy Spirit and thus accede to a life of victory in a perpetual spiritual struggle. This is exactly how African ancestral spirits behave. Thomas Mofolo’s novel “Chaka” (1981) relates how Isanusi warns the famous Zulu King that failure to abide by all the conditions stipulated by the world of the dead will lead to his demise. Shana suggests that one’s anointing may be lost through, for instance, “looking back” towards one’s past life. Such appears to have been the fate of King Saul. He disobeyed the conditions of his anointing and God literally abandoned him (1st Samuel). His demise was both humiliating and devastating, not only for him but also for all his family members. On the cross, that ultimate symbol of ignominy, Jesus himself feels abandoned by God: “My God, my God, why did you abandon me?” (Mark 15: 34). Similarly, in Sesotho.

when one is plagued by all sorts of misfortune in life, you will hear people say: his/ her ancestors have deserted him or her (*o furalletsoe ke Balimo*), or that his or her ancestors are with him or her (*Balimo ba hae bana*

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le eena) in such cases as when one has mysteriously survived a serious danger (Rakotsoane, 2000: 70).

b) Character change

Pastor Shana views a believer as one who has received a completely new personality from God Holy Spirit: “change her into another woman...”. Such a believer abandons his/her timidity, cynicism or aloofness (“days of standing on the edge are over”) with regards to liturgical activities. This is typical of MAPs: David Maxwell reports fighting “to overcome my English reserve” during a Pentecostal church prayer session (Maxwell, 2006, p. 1). In African culture, possession of a person by a spirit is evidenced by radical behaviour change. This may be observed in the person’s voice (a woman may assume the deep voice of a man), language (a Mosotho person may suddenly speak in a distant foreign language like Shona) and discourse (the person’s text may sound completely strange to the audience). These are all signs to the audience that it is now in the presence of a spirit operating through the visible medium of a human person who is usually in a trance and completely unaware of his/her behaviour at that moment in time. Pastor Shana’s call for a personality makeover seems to echo this scenario. She expects anointed members of the church to behave differently from ordinary un-anointed Basotho. This is what stunned David Maxwell (2006) in the ZAOGA church he attended. Such radical transformation under spiritual possession is also reminiscent of Old Testament prophets.

When Saul turned to leave Samuel, God gave Saul a new nature... Suddenly, the spirit of God took control of him, and he joined in their ecstatic dancing and shouting. People who had known him before asked one another, ‘What has happened to the son of Kish? Has Saul become a prophet?’ (1 Samuel 10: 9-11)

c) Regeneration:

Shana’s text declares: “Don’t think of the past. All things have become new. All things have passed away. All things have become new”. This is her definition of the state of those who are born again through receiving the Holy Spirit. While Jesus defines being born again as the fact of being baptised by water and by the Holy Spirit (Good News Study Bible, 1994, John 3: 5), a registration form given to people attending a WoLIM service for the first time asks: “are you baptised and are you born again”? WoLIM thus distinguishes between being born again and being baptised as compared to Jesus’ view of baptism as a synonym of being born again. On the contrary, it would appear that Shana’s text is, to a large extent, aligned to Pauline teaching which emphasises abstract and therefore spiritual signs of a new birth. Here is how Paul describes the Colossian church: “... (you are) the new being which God, its Creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, in order to bring you to a full knowledge of himself” (Good News Study

Bible, 1994, Colossians 3: 10). Repetition of the adjective new in the Paul's text echoes Shana's "all things have become new". Utterances such as "all things have become new/ have passed away" also imply rupture with one's past and cultural values, a key notion in Paul's epistles. Being born again thus implies alienation from one's ordinary community and culture.

The assumption of a new spiritual identity can hardly be considered a strange phenomenon in African culture. Ancestral spirits or evil spirits do "inhabit" human bodies in order to perform various functions in the family or community, thus the existence of the concept of a spirit medium. The African believer may, therefore, perceive a rebirth through the Holy Spirit as becoming the medium of the new spirit, more powerful than his own ancestral spirits. In fact, WoLIM preachers often claim to speak on behalf of the Holy Spirit, introducing their utterances with formulas such as: "the Spirit says...".

Finally, situations and circumstances ("all things") can also be born again (be renewed) through the concept of seasons. This meaning is absent from Biblical texts. It, however, is salient in African cosmology since ancestral (and other) spirits can, for instance, cause or prevent an accident and cause or prevent prosperity.

d) Anointing

Pastor Shana describes a believer as a "woman of God, full of the anointing of God". The notion of anointing has a long history in Biblical texts. It evokes the God-ordained method of designating Kings such as Saul and David who were both anointed by the Prophet Samuel (Good News Study Bible, 1994, 1st Samuel). In these Old Testament texts it is a ritual symbolised by the pouring of oil on the head of the chosen individual. Many Christians see the flight of the dove above Jesus' head as John baptises him at the beginning of his ministry as a form of anointing (Good News Study Bible, 1994, John 1). One constant semantic value of such anointing is the spiritually-ordained selection and consecration of an individual for a given mission. Again, African people have equivalents of such rituals. The Shona people of Zimbabwe use beer to consecrate the medium of a spirit, which can be a human being or an animal. Many families consecrate a maiden to be the medium of an ancestral spirit that protects the family (such a maiden cannot marry) while others consecrate a black bull. The African believer may, therefore, be attracted to a Christian consecration anointing that seems omnipotent while coming at no cost at all. Shana cites some missions for which individuals are anointed such as bringing stability to the church or being a "psalmist".

e) Favouring the believer

According to Pastor Shana's prayer text, the Holy Spirit does not treat human beings according to merit but rather according to some mysterious and

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apparently arbitrary criteria captured by the noun “favour”. Some Biblical scholars equate favour to grace.

In the OT, the corresponding Hebrew term refers to God’s favour, especially to his people Israel. In the NT, grace is most commonly God’s willingness to give good gifts, especially SALVATION, even to those who do not deserve them, without asking anything in return (Good News Study Bible, 1994: 2029).

This view of favour differs from Shana’s in its inclusion of the value “without asking anything in return”. For her, favour may be undeserved but it is not “free of charge”. There are conditions attached to it such as abandoning one’s past habits, character and lifestyle. This is the sense of statements such as “don’t look back” and “all things have passed away”. This understanding is close to Pauline understanding of the notion of grace. Paul berates “foolish Galatians” who confuse merit and grace but he still gives them a condition for receiving God’s favour, which is to “... hear the gospel and believe it” (Galatians 3: 5). Favour is therefore clearly an abused term in WoLIM discourse since the idea of satisfying a condition/ conditions glaringly contradicts the semantic value of “undeserved”, which should normally also imply “free of charge”, contained in the notion. This contradiction may, however, not occur to African believers coming from a spiritual background where the ancestral spirits protect and bless a person on the basis of that person’s relationship with them.

On another note, Shana’s instruction to the Holy Spirit to bestow favour on the designated believer signals that she – and, therefore, WoLIM – is in control of the selection process for receiving the said favour. This is a departure from the Biblical understanding where it is God himself who bestows favours as and when and to whomsoever he wishes. Such institutional designation for receiving favour may, however, find links with African tradition where it is customary for family heads to commend young people venturing into the cities to ancestral spirits for protection and blessings. It also reflects the tendency to replace Jesus with the Pastor that salient in Shana’s text.

DISCUSSION

In the final analysis, Pastor Shana’s idea that the Holy Spirit must permeate all aspects of a believer’s life is in agreement with Paul’s instruction: “What I say is this: let the Spirit direct your lives ...” (Galatians 6: 16) and with Jesus’ instruction to his disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit before venturing out of Jerusalem. Being, to a large extent, products of a Global Pentecostalism dominated by Western culture, African Pentecostal leaders like Shana tend to favour the same Biblical references as their Western models. Our brief study, however, finds in her text the salient presence of African traditional hermeneutic keys, which tend to produce meanings with strong echoes of the OT understanding of the faith. This understanding converges with African cosmology where events and processes are all perceived as being driven by

spiritual forces. Further, the purpose for which the Pauline “Holy Spirit” directs lives differs greatly from a WoLIM and African understanding. For Paul, the Spirit must direct lives so that “... you will not satisfy the desires of the human nature” (idem). In African cosmology, human desires cannot be separated from spiritual ones since all creation is spiritual in nature (Rakotsoane, 2000). Pastor Shana’s teaching takes this African understanding into cognisance through the notion of the material transformation of both the believer and his/her circumstances, which, according to her, is the Holy Spirit’s way of satisfying the human needs and aspirations of believers.

Also, while Biblical texts do not conjure the Holy Spirit, conjuring is the fundamental activity of Shana’s prayer activity. She addresses the Holy Spirit like a living a person, giving it orders and specific instructions, clearly believing in its immediate response. This attitude to the spiritual world resonates well with the African worldview whereby various spirits can be requested to intervene in particular ways in human affairs.

CONCLUSION

While earlier research has shown that MAPs are generally “Christocentric but share an emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit with other Pentecostals” (Anderson 2001a: 172), this article finds that WoLIM discourse is shifting towards Holy Spirit-centredness. Pastor Shana’s basic perception of life is that of perpetual spiritual struggle or warfare. Could this be reflective of the modern African condition characterised by military, political and socio-economic struggles? In fact, much as the idea of a discursive “regeneration” of the Christian God as God Holy Spirit may appear outrageous and even shock some Christians, it may actually be definitive of the African Christian’s struggle to liberate him/herself from a Western cosmology s/he may perceive as being sterile and irrelevant to his/her condition. Pastor Shana’s prayer text clearly illustrates the futility of seeking to freeze for all time the semantic content of certain Biblical signs deemed foundational pillars by dominant theologies. The redefinition of God in Shana’s prayer activity is revolutionary in the sense that it contains a salient intolerance and rejection of the concept of the Trinity by the African traditional worldview, imperceptibly returning the Godhead to the familiar indivisibility and spirituality [“In the beginning... the Spirit of God was moving over the water” (Good News Study Bible, Genesis 1: 1-2)] of *Molimo*, *Unkulunkulu* or *Mwari* (God). The Apostle Paul seems to underscore this understanding when he argues, “But a go-between is not needed when only one person is involved; and God is one” (Galatians 3: 20). The introduction of this view of the Holy Spirit is a delicate affair given the tension between foundational views of God prevalent in Southern Africa and the African traditional inclination towards Shana’s unitary tendency to usher in a God Holy Spirit. Her tendency to replace the term Holy Spirit with

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euphemistic metaphors suggests a need for a conceptual mask to deceive detractors as she pushes her agenda.

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