We all pray to the same God.

Christian denominations in Kilangala, Tanzania.

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It is Easter Sunday and I am sitting in the Moravian church alongside the people from Kilangala, a small village in Tanzania. Men are sitting on the left side of the church, while women sit on the right side. When we all have to stand up during the service, I see to my astonishment one of my informants of the Roman Catholic Church. A Roman Catholic on Easter Sunday in the Moravian church, the most important service of the year for many Christians; I am puzzled. A few moments later my informant, Fortunate, is asked by the vicar to say a prayer out loud in church. I am even more puzzled.

After the three hour service, while all church-goers stand outside the church to wish each other well, I walk up to Fortunate. On my question whether he should not be in the Catholic Church, he answers with a smile: "I was expecting this question from you, but I did not feel well today, and I did not feel like walking all the way to Kipande (where the Catholic Church is situated)". "But as it is Easter Sunday, I decided to go to church here in the Moravian church".

Where I assumed that going to your own church especially during Easter was of great importance, Fortunate apparently does not feel the same. It was not the first time I encountered religious flexibility in Kilangala and it would not be the last time either.

Tanzania is a large country, situated in East-Africa with a majority Muslim and Christian population (mainland: Christian 30%, Muslim 35%, indigenous beliefs 35%[1]). Within the Christian faith many different denominations are present, even though they sometimes seem to be very similar. This thesis focuses on the question how different Christian denominations live in a peaceful coexistence in a rural area in Africa. I conducted a field-research from the end of January 2013 until the beginning of April 2013 in the missionary village Kilangala, in the south-west of Tanzania, where within a radius of three kilometers around the village, many different Christian denominations can be found.

In order to answer this question I will focus on the concept of (religious) identity in Tanzania by starting with a theoretical framework focusing on the concepts of identity and religion within an anthropological context. Consequently I will examine how my observations from the field can be linked with this theoretical framework.

In the discourse around religious tensions, as well as in peaceful relations between religious groups, religious identity is often mentioned. Identity in general is the categorization of people into categories of 'the same as oneself' or 'different' (Eriksen 1994). Those

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[1] CIA factsheet: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tz.html (19-05-13)

categories can be ethnic, national, but religious as well. Religious identity is used to describe the relation between religious groups in society. When religion gets a more important function in society, people are more likely to stress their religious identity (Peek 2005). In some cases religious identity can be problematic, nevertheless in Tanzania, religious identity is often seen as non-salient, which means that it is not very dominant in many situations.

An extensive body of literature exists on the relation between Christians and Muslims in Tanzania (Peek 2005, Campbell 1999, Kaiser 1996, Heilman and Kaiser 2002). Generally, the literature focusses on the peaceful and successful combination of Christianity and the Islam; a rather unique situation for Africa, where many countries have faced/are facing religious tension and conflict. In this literature the theory of African Socialism by Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania is often included to describe the relation between different religious ideologies. However, many argue that the *Ujamaa* theory of Nyerere is outdated and religious tension between Christian and Muslim population has been rising already after Nyerere's resignation (Heilman and Kaiser 2002, Campbell 1999, Kaiser 1996).

Much of the above mentioned literature however, is focused on the relation between the two largest religious ideologies in Tanzania; Islam and Christianity. Little is written about the relation between peoples sharing the same religious ideology. The question is whether the relation between different Christian denominations is similar to the relation between two major religious ideologies. How can so many different Christian denominations exist next to each other? By taking a closer look at different Christian churches in a small community in Tanzania I will try to understand the relation between those churches, and between the members of those different churches.

This thesis could add to the understanding of why and how different Christian denominations co-exist in a small area, and so be scientifically relevant. Furthermore, it could give more insight into how religious beliefs and practices are expressed in closely related Christian denominations, which means this research could open up new fields of study.

This thesis will start by elaborating on the theoretical framework underlying this field research in which theories related to this theme are discussed. The central concept in this thesis is religious identity. This will be examined first from a general theoretical perspective, thereafter the theoretical concept of religious identity will be narrowed down to the understanding of religious identity specifically in Tanzania. The theory of *Ujamaa* by Nyerere will be examined to see what is/was its influence on society today. To finalize the theoretical

framework, focus will be put on how religious differences co-exist within one village or even family. Here we find the basis of this research.

The three empirical chapters give an overview of the situation and the people in Kilangala. The first empirical chapter (chapter 2) looks into the specifics of the location of the research, namely Kilangala village in Tanzania. The village, the mission and the religious landscape in Kilangala will be described. Chapter 3 will focus on the interpretation of the services in three different denominations, namely the Moravian, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Holiness church. The similarities and differences will be deliberated. The final empirical chapter, chapter 4, will focus on the religious identities of people going to those different churches and examines the personal interpretation of religion. Finally a conclusion will be drawn by connecting the theories discussed in the theoretical framework with the empirical data collected and described in the empirical chapters. At the end of this thesis you will find three appendixes; a reflection in which I will reflect on my own role as a researcher in a small Tanzanian village and on the research process and the choices I made during the process. The second appendix elaborates on the methods used during this research and the final appendix contains a summary of my research.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter the theoretical concepts underlying this research will be further elaborated. I will start with an overview on how religion in anthropology can be approached, followed by exploring three definitions of religion and discussing general theories on religious identities. Next I will examine the concept of identity in an anthropological concept, in which distinctions are made between different forms of identity, specifically religious identity. After looking at the general theories, the focus will be on Christian religious identities in Tanzania. This paragraph will start with examining the flexible boundaries of religion in Tanzania followed by the ability to change between Christian denominations in a lifetime. *Ujamaa*, African Socialism, will be examined as a component of national identity in Tanzania. Finally this theoretical framework will end by taking a closer look upon the Christian church in Tanzania.

RELIGION IN ANTHROPOLOGY

To understand religion in a Tanzanian village, it is crucial to first define what is exactly understood by "religion". Over time there have been different interpretations and definitions of religion. One of the first definitions was formulated in 1871 by Edward B. Tylor. He defined religion as 'the belief in spiritual beings' (Tylor 1871). The strength of this definition lies in its simplicity (Crapo 2003, Southwold 1979). It makes no further distinction between different forms of belief; not between spirits or gods, nor between polytheism and monotheism. Although it still is an often used definition of religion, many anthropologists have argued that this definition is too simple. Several attempts were made, aimed at improving the definition while still trying to maintain Tylor's simplicity. One of those modified versions comes from Spiro. He defines religion as, "an institution consisting of culturally postulated interaction with culturally postulated superhuman beings," (Spiro 1966:96).

The French sociologist Emile Durkheim took a different stand on defining religion. According to Bowen (2010), Durkheim proposes that religious belief and sentiments cannot be purely illusive or imaginary, but they have to be real in some sort way. So in Durkheim's view, religion is not something supernatural, unobservable or unverifiable, in contrast to what Tylor argues. On the contrary, religion focuses on the tangle aspects. As discussed by Crapo (2003), Durkheim examines the way in which religion manifests itself as a social phenomenon. The main questions Durkheim asks about religion are: Why do people join, and

remain part of, organized relations? Durkheim saw the birth of religion in the ideas and emotions generated out of collective social action. He argued that "religious representations are collective representations that express collective realities," (Bowen 2010:19).

Yet another often used definition of religion is described by Geertz in 1973. Geertz's approach to religion stays in the same realm as Durkheim's social point of view, but it is more focused on sacred symbols. His definition is the following: "Religion is: (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these in conceptions in such an order of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (Geertz 1973:4 in Crapo 2003:22).

Geertz emphasizes the powerful role of symbols in human life. According to Crapo (2003), Geertz describes symbols, used in religious systems as great sources of powerful moods and motivations. Or as Winzeler (2008) argues, meaning involves both cognition and emotion. That means knowing, believing or supposing on the one hand, and feeling or experiencing on the other. Without any reference to the supernatural or supernatural beings, Geertz opposes Tylor and supports Durkheim. Geertz's view on religion has received much criticism as well. Problematic in Geertz's definition is that without supernatural beings and processes, it is hard to distinguish what is religion and what is not (Winzeler 2008, Crapo 2003). In his definition one could argue that socialism, communism fascism and perhaps capitalism could be seen as a form of religion. "In highlighting the similarities between such institutions, Geertz's definition also blurs any distinction between them" (Crapo 2003:22).

In short, Tylor highlights the importance of the supernatural in his definition of religion, while Durkheim and Geertz both abandon the element of religion as supernatural belief, but put their focus on religion as a social phenomenon. Geertz takes it a step further and emphasizes the powerful role of symbols in religious systems. All three scholars have large followings.

Bowen (2010), an anthropologist who wrote a handbook concentrating on anthropology and religion, regards the study of religion as of one of the key issues researched in anthropology. He identifies two key characteristics concerning the study of religion as an anthropologist. He first argues that an anthropologist must try to understand religion through local perspectives. "We begin with the ideas and practices we learn about in the field. Then we follow the connections to larger institutions like government agencies, religious schools, or national banks – but we always start from local views of those institutions" (Bowen 2010:5). The

second characteristic of Bowen's view upon religion is the focus on connections across social domains. Religion exceeds the boundaries of the domain, and by looking at the connections between several domains you can get a better view of how religion works.

Bowen gives a definition of religion as well, and in this definition he combines the strongest elements of all three definitions given by Tylor, Durkheim and Geertz. "I view religious traditions as ever-changing complexes of beliefs (including those authoritative beliefs called 'doctrine'), practices (including formalized rituals), and social institutions," (Bowen 2010:2). This definition includes the religious beliefs as described by Tylor, the social institutions discussed by Durkheim and the practices and rituals as Geertz discussed. Because of this inclusive definition of religion, I will take Bowen's definition as guidance throughout my research. His focus on beliefs as well as practices will help me conduct a well-defined anthropological study regarding religion in a village. It is important to keep in mind that definitions of religion are more than just an academic matter; it is part of the social reality you study. As Bowen stresses, it is not the definition of religion that matters, but the issues and debates among practitioners of the boundaries of religion.

In the next paragraph I will concentrate on the concept of religious identities which proofs to be a reoccurring theme in my field research.

CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES

IDENTITY

Eriksen argues that "in an anthropological discourse, identity means *being the same as oneself* as well as *being different"* (Eriksen 1994:71). Identity is part of classifying people into categories; those can be ethnic categories, national categories but religious categories as well. Identity is not fixed and absolute, but is more often considered as "an evolving process of 'becoming' rather than simply 'being'" (Dillon 1999 in Peek 2005:217), and can be 'achieved' as well as 'ascribed'. Achieved identity implies a conscious choice for a part of your identity, while ascribed identity cannot be chosen or changed; for example gender is part of an ascribed identity (Kottak 2010).

A group of people sharing the same identity are known as identity groups. The instrumentalist approach argues that identity groups are fundamentally constructed, organized to develop the shared interests of a group in order to mobilize those people as a pressure group (Tambiah 1996:139). Identity groups are often associated with ethnicity, and not so much with religious identity. However religious and ethnic identity groups share many

similarities. Heilman & Kaiser (2002) discuss some of these similarities with reference to Forster et al. (2000:120). Ethnicity and religious identities are both culturally patterned and rely on the social bonds of loyalty. It is in both cases possible to change your ethnic/religious affiliation, but most people follow the tradition in which they were socialized from a young age onwards. Additionally Heilman & Kaiser (2002:693) identify the differences between ethnic and religious identity. While religious identity emphasizes religious ideology, ethnic identity does not do so. In addition, religious identity focuses on the role of faith in the creation of identity. Ammerman (2003) argues that the building up of a new identity happens gradually as another identity is being discarded. The change in identity is made as people engage in a kind of practical/rational process of testing faith claims against their everyday experience to see what makes practical sense (Ammerman 2003:109).

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Religious identity is one of the many parts of a personal identity a person can have. Religious identity nowadays is part of a personal choice, and one universal shared religious identity will never exist. Religious identity can as well both be achieved as ascribed; ascribed when it is part of the socialization into a group from a young age onwards, but people are able to change their religious affiliation if they want to as well, which makes it part of an achieved identity (Heilman & Kaiser 2002). Ammerman (2003) argues that the focus today is on the borders where religious identities clash or must be remade. In the light of the many different existing religious identities, it becomes interesting to examine how religious identities are recreated in specific circumstances.

Religion as part of your identity becomes more and more important, as Ammerman (2003) argues. Peek (2005) takes a closer look at why religion becomes a more and more important basis for identity in America and she argues that one of the reasons for this reinforced religious identity is the function of religion in society. Religious membership does not only supply in spiritual needs, but it offers many non-religious advantages as well like social benefits, community networks, economic opportunities, educational resources, and peer trust and support as well. When all these benefits increase, people are more motivated to affiliate religiously (Peek 2005:219). Religious identification can offer a strong social system, "a comforting and compelling worldview, and a unique psychological enrichment to which many people hold fast" (Ysseldyk et al. 2010:67). Ysseldyk et al. argue that the belief system inherent in any religion may be central to explaining why many individuals strongly associate

themselves with their religious group. The beliefs people have about the self and the world around them have psychological and social foundations (Ysseldyk et al. 2010:61). Peek describes the idea of identity salience, "which recognizes contributing factors and processes that make one identity of greater importance in the hierarchy of multiple identities that comprise a sense of self" (2005:381). The hierarchy of religious identity is different for each individual; the higher a certain identity is in the salience hierarchy, the greater the chance is that that identity is dominant in certain situations. Roberts (2010) argues that because of disempowerment, people will look for new uses of religious and spiritual resources. "The masking of one tradition in the guise of another can be a resistance strategy, but the mingling of multiple traditions also can be a means of affirming otherwise marginalized identities" (Roberts 2010:44).

The relation between religious identity and other identities is often unclear. Peek argues that many studies which exclude religious identities, describe religion not as an identity category but rather part of a larger identity e.g. ethnic, sexual or national identity (Peek 2005:218). Nevertheless Peek claims that at the same time various studies have explored the role of religion in maintaining group identity and solidarity.

Williams (1988:12-13 in Peek 2005:218) argues that "although religion is often a significant aspect of ethnic culture, it is difficult to establish the exact relation between the two--whether religious affiliation is essential to the ethnic community or if religious orientation is ancillary to ethnic identity".

In short, identities can be formed along many different lines, and religion is one of them. Religious identity is culturally patterned and relies on the social bonds of loyalty, just as ethnic identity. Certain feelings of identity can contribute to the support of a religious denomination. Individuals are able to change their religious affiliation, but most people stay in the tradition in which they were socialized from a young age onwards.

In the next paragraph the focus will be on Christian religious identities in Tanzania in particular. The ability to change religious affiliations, mainly within Christianity will be further discussed, this to get a better understanding of how Christianity is part of the religious identity for people in Tanzania.

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES IN TANZANIA

The Tanzanian state may be officially secular; most of inhabitants of Tanzania are affiliated to one of the many religious groups in the country. The religious landscape of Tanzania entails three large religious groups, Muslims, Christians and traditional believers. Those three religious practices have lived in peaceful coexistence for a long period of time; especially under the rule of Tanzanians first president; Julius Nyerere. In this this thesis the focus will be on Christian religious identity, and will therefor further elaborate on the propagation of Christianity and Christian religious identity in Tanzania.

The two largest church communities are the Roman Catholic Church with six million members, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania with more than one and a half million members (Rukyaa 2007:191). Both communities are slightly different from each other, "but all adhere to one belief, that is, belief in Jesus Christ as the risen Lord and the redeemer of the world" (Rukyaa 2007:191). Mukandala (2006) argues that the boundaries of religion in Tanzania are not very rigid and can be interpreted different by various actors. According to Green (1995) many people have an ambiguous identity regarding religion, in which they incorporate elements of Christian and non-Christian systems. "Formal membership of the church-defined Christian communities is viewed locally as distinct from an individual's relations with Christian divinities and sources of power" (Green 2003:61).

The equality of religious thoughts and practices was actively promoted in the 1960s in Tanzania. Not only in the top levels of the society and governance, but it was actively translated into local households as well. Omari (1984) stresses that in Tanzanian households mixed religious affiliations exist within one family or household. He argues that it is more important for them to think "in terms of family or household units rather than as members of different religious traditions" (Omari 1984:379). Omari continues with the fact that because of these differences within one family a greater sense of cooperation and unity could be created within a family. The unification of the family is more important than the differences between religious practices. With this strong emphasis on the private matter of religion within a secular state, religious organisations are free to move, and are all equal.

As Mukandala and Green argue; religious identities are not rigid, and it is common in Tanzania to change between Christian denominations during a lifetime. Personal religious identities are not strictly bounded by one specific church or traditional belief system, nor are they fixed for the rest of your life. The ambiguous religious identity is not a problem for the Christian churches because, as Gifford (1998) argues, when people *live* a as a good Christian,

that will bring about a good society, even though not everyone is a Christian. The work churches do for individual people has a direct impact on society because social transformations are inevitable when better principles diffuse widely. The result is a better "social rehabilitation" in the society. As Kirsch (2004) learned from his fieldwork in southern Zambia, members of the prophet-healing churches are willing to change their affiliation with a certain church when they are not satisfied with the performance the church provides. People prove to be very mobile in their religious affiliation, and in some cases they are even engaged in several religious practices at once (Kirsch 2004, Goody 1996). The Zambian's he spoke to in his research especially turn to a different church when they cannot find meaning in their current church. This opportunity to adjust religious affiliations makes it possible for people to use Christianity as a self-empowering resource. Kirsch stresses that the Western views upon religion focus on permanency and consistency of belief, perhaps because God is usually represented in the West as eternal and unchanging. In Kirsch's study in Zambia however, he describes the changes in religious affiliation as "willful acts which were governed by pragmatism" (Kirsch 2004:707). He stresses that their belief is not strictly bounded and that in his research people did not believe in a fixed Christian authority. Changes in religious affiliation represent willful acts and are governed by pragmatism and voluntarism. "Pragmatism and voluntarism, thus, did not mean that there was no notion of 'internalized belief'" (Kirsch 2004:707).

In the following paragraph I will elaborate on the Christian church in Tanzania. I will discuss the role of the church over the years in order to understand the current religious situation in Tanzania.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN TANZANIA

From the eighteenth century onwards Christian religion in Africa had been introduced by the missionaries. This 'civilization mission' towards Africa had a great impact on the religious landscape in Tanzania; nowadays more than half of the inhabitants of Tanzania are Christian (Mukandala 2006). In the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, Christian missionary churches in Tanzania grew exponentially. As Sanneh (1989) argues, the strength of Christianity is that is inherently translatable, so that people worldwide can understand the message. This Christian message was brought to the unknown lands of Africa, as a part of a 'salvation' and 'civilization' mission, in which colonialism and missionary walked hand in hand (Sundkler 2000, Hefner 1993). The way to lead the African people to civilization was education, according to Green (2003), in which missionary

constructions, representing Christianity, could play a crucial role to achieve this enlightenment. Without Christianity no civilization was the main thought.

There are not many missionaries left in Tanzania today, but religious institutions still play a dominant role in the lives of many Tanzanians and the influence of the Christian churches is still pronounced. The presence of Christian churches is most visible in poor and rural districts, where they are used to the support of the churches, as Green (2003) argues. The church provides some basic services that the village is still dependent on, just like they did in the colonial period when the churches' need for Christians was reciprocated by popular desire for access to services and the public policies with channeled subsidy through Christian missions (Mukandala 2006, Green 2003).

But unlike in the heydays of the mission, the monetary support coming from the mother country, or the West in general, is decreasing, (Green 1995, Green 2003, Spear 1999). However, the churches are associated with money and wealthy people by local villagers. They see church officials as people with nice clothing and with high food security, while they themselves have not much money and often suffer from food-insecurity (Green 2003).

Nevertheless the flow of money that runs from the West to Africa to the churches is decreasing. The churches have to be self-financing and must seek local support to be able to survive. To get this local support, the church often redefines itself as a civil society organisation, in which it mediates between state and family in a bid to maintain power in rural areas. Churches have two options regarding continuing to deliver services to people; they have to start working like a business, or they have to rely on local support and consequentially change the whole nature of the organisation. This last adaption, influenced by 'liberation theology' and 'development' ideology, is what the Catholic donor organisations support. The whole organisation of the Christian Church has to become self-sustainable and churches should be able to work without the external donations from the West.

*U*JAMAA

In order to understand the Tanzanian feeling of unity and to understand Tanzania's feeling of national identity, it is important to go back to Tanzania's independence and examine *Ujamaa*; a theory based on socialism which had a great impact on the creation of national identity in Tanzania. In this paragraph the characteristics of the *Ujamaa* theory in Tanzania will be discussed.

African socialism, as presented by Nyerere, did not only have ideas about political structure, but focused on religious ideas as well. Tanzania's political system, formed in the early 1960's, still has its influence on the forming of identity in Tanzania. This is especially visible in my research data, which will be discussed in upcoming chapters. Julius Nyerere's main idea of *Ujamaa* socialism, also known as African socialism, was to create a society in which people are equal and centered on the moral qualities of the individual (Campbell 1999:106). This was reflected on the reorganization of health care and education and by introducing Kiswahili as national language. People were encouraged and educated to become agricultural self-reliant. In order to secure health care and education for all its citizens, people were forced to live close to schools, hospitals and other public services (Campbell 1999:106).

All these policies and the introduction of Kiswahili as national language in particular, contributed to the creation of a strong sense of unity amongst the country, where more than 120 different ethnic groups live (Campbell 1999:107). Nyerere's main goal was to create a country in which people feel Tanzanian before they divide in separate ethnic groups. Creating unity in his country did not only focus on education and politics; religion had a place in his vision as well. The constitution of Tanzania promotes a secular state; she does not promote a state religion, but rather provides religious freedom for all its citizens. Religion is a personal matter and should stay in the private domain. When you fulfill your responsibilities to society, religion does not play a part in this, it stays at home. Generally speaking this right is respected and protected (Forster 1997).

Heilman and Kaiser (2002) emphasis the consequences of *Ujamaa* which are still present today; there are many different forms of ethnic, racial and religious identities, but there is not one dominant category, overruling all others. The concept of the nation, deployed by Nyerere is still intact, but political, religious and ethnic conflicts do exist. Many authors (Heilman and Kaiser 2002, Kaiser 1996, Forster et al. 2000, Campbell 1999) actually stress that tensions and polarization between religious, ethnic and political groups is rising. "The assumed religious cohesion of the nation has also been called into question as the Muslim/Christian divide shows signs of widening (Kaiser 1999:233). Even though Nyrere's *Ujamaa* has a wide impact on creating multi-ethnic and multi-religious structures in Tanzania, in the last two decades the structures have proved to be fragile as the state is fading, and that takes its toll on national unity (Kaiser 1996:236). Tthe *Ujamaa* ideology aimed to create unity in the country, but started to show some cracks by the 1990s. Forster et al. (2000:135) note that: "In Tanzania there have been numerous problems rising from religious pluralism, and these have been more overt than ethnic issues". Heilman & Kaiser (2002) argue that looking

upon the conclusions of a nation-wide opinion poll taken by REDET in the mid-1990s "people objected to inter-religious marriages more strongly than to other forms of cross-identity marriages" (Heilman & Kaiser 2002:694-695). Thus even though *Ujamaa* ideology has played a major role in the creation of the Tanzanian identity, it is important to underline that the role of *Ujamaa* today is not as strong as it was in the 1960's and 1970.

CONCLUSION

The theories and concepts underlying my research in Kilangala have been examined in this theoretical framework. Here I will conclude my theoretical framework by highlighting the main concepts discussed, and operationalize the concepts so that they are useful for my study in Kilangala.

Having started with anthropology and religion, the definition of religion formulated by Tylor, Durkheim and Geertz are combined into the definition of religion formulated by Bowen, which is used as the general definition in this research, in which he defines religious traditions as ever-changing complexes of beliefs, practices and social institutions.

Religious identity is a fundamental issue in this research. Identity is formed by categorizing the world in 'us' and 'them'. Those categories can be based upon ethnicity, nationality, but religion as well. The function of religion in society determines how important religious identity is for a group of people. Focusing on Tanzania, religious identity is subordinate to the national identity; religion is something personal and religious ideas should be respected. A leading cause for the subordination of religious identity to national identity is Nyerere's *Ujamaa* ideology which stresses that the unification of the country, or the family, is more important than the difference between religious practices. However, it is important to note that *Ujamaa* is not as strong as it was in the 1980s and that religious tensions are rising in Tanzania.

Turning to Christianity in particular, the Roman Catholic Church has the most members in Tanzania. There are many different Christian denominations but most of them place the belief in Jesus Christ as the risen Lord and the redeemer of the world, as the general concept throughout their practice. Boundaries between Christian denominations are not rigid; people are able to switch religious affiliations during their lifetime. When a church does not fulfill one's expectations, he/she is free to move to a different church. This opportunity to change religious affiliations makes Christianity part of a self-empowering resource.

Together this leads to a situation in which people all have different interpretations regarding Christianity and an ambiguous religious identity towards Christianity is not rare. The boundaries of each religion are interpreted differently by people. This is applicable to Christianity in combination with traditional religious beliefs and practices, but it is possible as well regarding several Christian denominations. People are very mobile regarding their religious affiliation, and changing between churches is not sinful or uncommon. In Tanzania the boundaries between religions are interpreted otherwise by different actors and resulted in a continuation of practices which the churches would define as non-Christian. The importance of living according to the Christian values is more important than being a Christian.

FIGURE 1: SCHEMATIC MAP OF KILANGALA
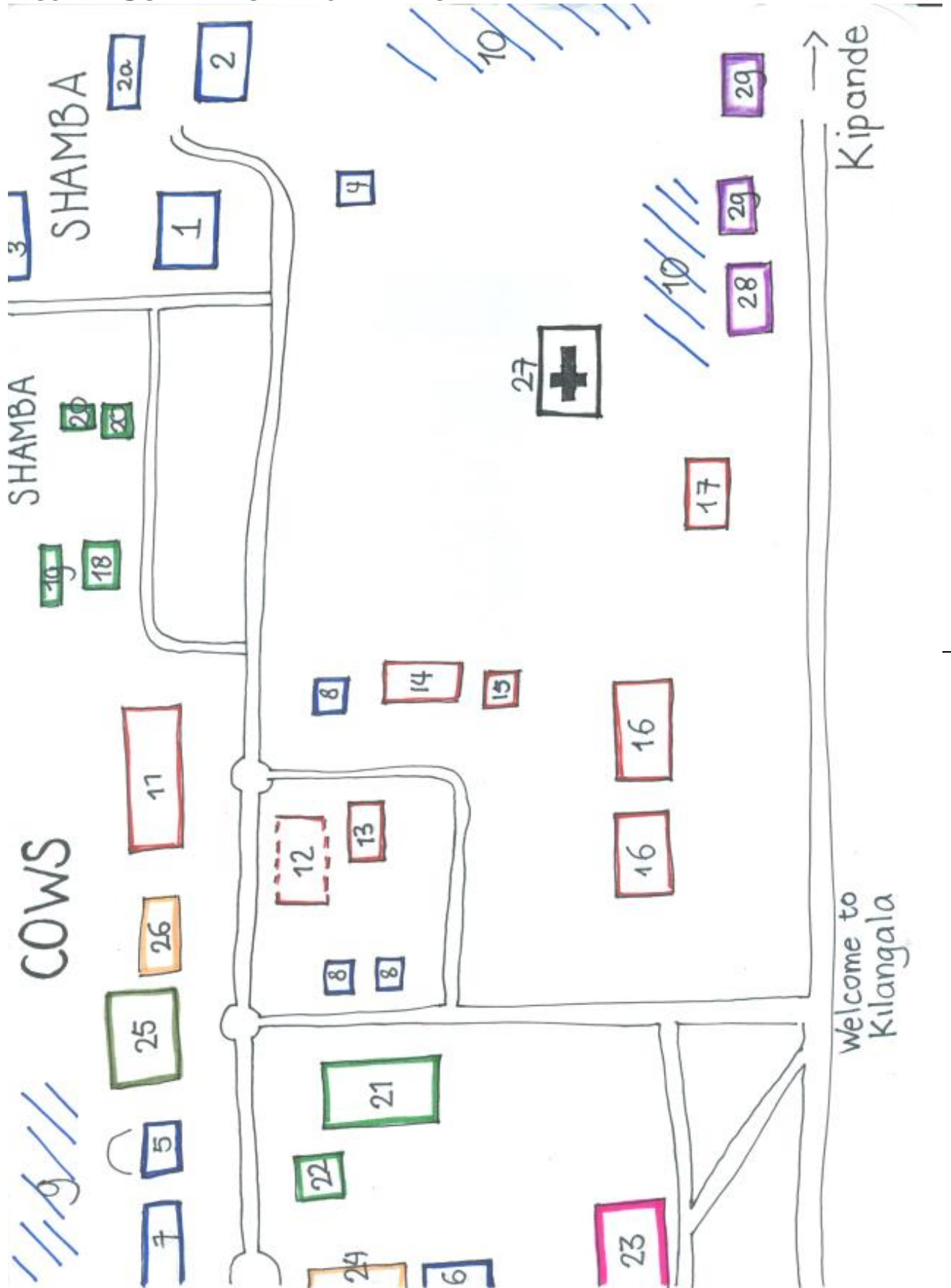
KILANGALA MISSION:

Legend

1-9: Houses and living area's
1) Moses
2) Roza
   2a) Roza's family and Eliza's house (the maid)
3) Herman
4) Pytsje – my house
5) Fortunate
6) Doctor
7) Guest houses
8) Teacher's houses: primary school and VTC
9) Nurses
10) The Village

11-17: Area of the VTC
11) Main building of the VTC, principal's office and carpenters workplace
12) Sports field
13) Girls dormitory
14) Cooking area
15) Dining room
16) Boys dormitory
17) Classroom VTC

18-22: Children
18) Nursery school
19) Toilets
20) Primary school
21) Children's home
22) Cooking area for the children's home

23) Hospital
24) Nuru office
25) Farm – garage
26) Mission office
27) Moravian Church

28) Tea room
29) Shops

Please note this is a schematically drawn map, showing the situation of several important buildings on the mission compound and a little part of the village. The scale may not be correct, but it should help create a better understanding of the placement of several buildings and institutions on the mission.

2. KILANGALA: THE MISSION AND THE VILLAGE

It is half past 10 in the morning and it is busy in front of the children's home. Not only the children and the people who are normally working for the children's home are sitting on the veranda, but also many people working for, or living around the mission are present. Everyone is suited up; men are wearing a suit, at least two sizes too big and women are dressed in a traditional kanga. The reason why everyone came to the children's home this morning is because they expect a special visitor, namely the Tanzanian Minister of Woman- and Childcare. Everybody wants to see her and show his or her face to the minister. The minister announced her visit two days ago and should have come yesterday but she had a busy schedule, so she was forced to postpone her visit until today. I walk with Roza to the children's home in the morning and ask her whether it is the first time for a minister to visit the mission. She answers: "It does not happen too often. Not long ago, I had another minister for dinner, and a ministry representative visited the children's home last year as well". This answer surprises me, in the first place I am astonished to hear that she had a minister over for dinner and in the second place I wonder why ministers bother to visit such a small community as Kilangala in such a remote area. Roza explains me this is because Kilangala sets a good example for the rest of the country. The way Roza talks about this visit of the minister, implies that she has contact with ministers more often, as if Kilangala is really on their radar. Even this one-off visit of the minister, to this small children's home where only ten children live, shows the involvement of the government in Kilangala.

As usual, the minister takes her time so I talk to the people waiting with me. One of them is Oscar, the head-teacher of the nursery school. I ask him about the progress on the opening of the primary school. The mission decided to open the primary school in collaboration with the government which means that the mission would provide the school building and materials and the government would supply a teacher for every fifty children. The buildings for the primary school are already finished for over a year. The school is ready, materials are there but the teachers did not arrive yet. Oscar tells me, he will soon go to Namanyere, where the government district office is situated, to talk about the situation again. As we are talking he tells me that his oldest son (7 years old) is going to the primary school in Kipande since the beginning of this year. "Last week he came home complaining about the school in Kipande; he did not get any porridge for lunch, there were too many children in class and he had to walk to school every day, even when it rained!"

Kilangala is a village around a Christian missionary post in the southwest of Tanzania, the Rukwa region. The mission is founded and funded by Protestant organisations originating from the Netherlands. To be more precise; the mission was established in 1967 by a Dutch woman called Trijntje Beimers who felt that it was her calling to start this mission. When Beimers came to Kilangala, it was just a cluster of houses inhabited by a few Kenyan refugees. The Moravian church in Kilangala was founded by these refugees and all Moravian churches in the area originate from this church. From 1977 onwards the mission is run by local people, but Beimers still lived and worked on the mission until she passed away in 2005. Today Kilangala mission is supported by the Zeister Zendings Genootschap (ZZg), situated in Zeist, the Netherlands. Because this support is diminishing year after year, and will eventually stop entirely, the mission has invested in ways to provide for themselves. They have done so by setting up a husbandry farm in 2007 to increase their income. In five to ten years from now, this farm is supposed to earn enough money to support all institutions on the mission.

Roza, who was introduced in the vignette that opened this chapter, is in her late fifties, and was adopted by Trijntje Beimers when she was only a few days old. Both her parents had died and Trijntje decided to take care of her and raise her in a Dutch tradition. This is how she came to learn Dutch and went to school in the Netherlands for her college education. Roza is in charge of the children's home and the financial administration of the mission. She has earned a lot of respect from the community and still is heavily involved in the mission and the village. When the hospital grew, they asked her to open a shop in the village to provide visitors with a cup of tea and a snack. She decided not to run this shop herself, but to ask a woman in the village to run the shop for her. By doing so she helped both a family in the village, and all the people visiting sick family members in the hospital.

The village of Kilangala is situated on the foot of a hill, close to the road leading from Sumbawanga, the capital city of the region, to Namanyere, another city in the region. Kilangala is a small village with approximately 150 inhabitants and is administratively spoken part of the nearby village Kipande, 3 kilometers away. Kipande is a much larger village with roughly 3000 inhabitants. In the center of the village, there is a small market place where villagers sell the surplus of their harvest. Because the shops are built alongside the main road, this forms a central meeting place for people in the village as well as people passing the village. Kilangala is very isolated; villagers are mostly self-supporting for basic needs. In the shops basic needs are sold, e.g. rice, soap, sugar, flour, eggs, sodas, *kanga's* (traditional cloth) etc.

Most inhabitants of Kilangala are farmers with their own *shamba* (plot of land) where they grow maize, beans and sometimes potatoes or tomatoes. The *shamba* can be around the house or outside the village. For some families the *shamba* is their only source of income, while most families have also other jobs and the food grown on the *shamba* is only for their own consumption. Around the house small farm animals like chickens, goats, pigs or cows are held for some extra income.

Both the village and the mission are called Kilangala, and they work together on many occasions. The mission compound is situated parallel to the main road and is closely connected to the village. The Moravian church is built between the mission compound and the village and marks the place where people from the mission and village come together. Large trees with dark green leaves are standing alongside the entrance road of the mission, which contrasts sharply with the small bushes and grass around the village. On the mission compound the several institution buildings of the mission can be found, as well as several houses and guest houses for mission employees and their families. The mission runs several institutions where many people find work, 39 in total. This includes the nurses in the hospital, the evangelist at the Nuru office or as a teacher at the nursery school. Through these institutions the mission provides basic services for the village, such as education and medical care. Education is provided through a nursery school, a primary school and a vocational trainings center (VTC) for young adults, and medical care is offered with a hospital where people from nine districts around Kilangala come for their health care.

Not all people working for the mission originate from Kilangala village; some people come from Kipande, others come from all over the country to work for the mission. Mission employees, who are not from Kilangala itself, are able to get a house on the mission compound. There are guest houses for short stay visitors and new employees. Those guest houses contain of a bedroom and a bathroom. Cooking takes place outside in large cooking huts, which are shared with several people. The permanent staff, such as teachers and doctors, gets a house, from which the size depends on your occupation, importance and whether or not you have a family already. The doctor gets the largest house and a VTC teacher just gets a small house. The people living on the mission might not be originally from the village, but they are part of the village community. And eventually some of them move from their house on the mission compound to a house in the village.

While I sat there waiting for the minister, Oscar told me; "Even my own son is urging me to arrange the teachers for the primary school as soon as possible so he can go to school in Kilangala".[2] Not much later Fortunate, the principal of the VTC told me a similar story. His daughter had the age of passing from nursery to primary school, but he came to an agreement with the teachers of the nursery school to keep his daughter for one more year, so that she could to go primary school in Kilangala directly, and did not have to go to school in Kipande.

What Oscar and Fortunate told me about the schools in Kilangala gives an insight into the education provided by the mission for the village. Not only the parents see the difference between the school in Kipande and Kilangala (quality wise, health wise), but also the children prefer to go to school in Kilangala. In addition; many children from Kipande attend the nursery school in Kilangala. A nursery school is relatively unique in Tanzania, even though the government has ordered all primary schools to start a nursery; this did not yet happen in many places. The parents of these children acknowledge the importance of sending their child to school, and then preferably to the school in Kilangala.

Education is one of the main elements in which mission influence on the village is seen. They are setting "the right example". In nursery school the toddlers learn about personal hygiene; they are encouraged to wash their hands before their porridge and to brush their teeth. Once learned this will keep with them their entire life and they will pass their knowledge over to their own children. Second, the mission organizes awareness building activities towards the villagers through input from the Netherlands. With Dutch assistance the schools, houses and hospital were built on the mission compound. As common practice in the Netherlands big windows were built in the houses and buildings because light and openness are seen as good building practice and as improvements to learning and living circumstances. Over the years you can see how the villagers make windows in their houses in the first place and the windows are becoming bigger. The mission is their example of progress and their source of knowledge. Because villagers do not very often leave the village, the mission is their source of information about how to improve your life.

The third element offered by the mission is health care. The hospital is a very welcome institution for people from all over the area; people in Kilangala are always able to get quick medical help. In the nursery school the children are tested for malaria three times a year and the children diagnosed with malaria will receive medication. Families unable to support their

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[2] Informal conversation Oscar 06-02-13

children or children from whom the parents have died can be brought to the children's home. Today there are only nine children living in the children's home, which is a good sign; the overall health in the village is good, there are not many mothers who die during childbirth, and families are able to support such an orphan. Roza is the manager of the children's home and she takes care of the day to day business.

The mission also provides clean drinking water for both people living at the mission as well as in the village. The mission has water tanks which were donated by the Netherlands. Those water tanks are shared with the people living in the village so they have clean drinking water as well.

Through education, healthcare, water supply, labor supply and sharing knowledge on different aspects of life the mission has its influence on the villagers; the children and their parents, the youngsters etc. It is not only the content but also the quality of the education which is appreciated. Vocational training for young adults offers opportunities in life and creates employment for families. Social services as medical care and clean drinking water improve the health standard. The provision of employment by the mission offers families the opportunity to invest in their *shamba* and develop their living conditions.

Looking at the overall picture of the religious landscape in Tanzania, the Roman Catholic Church is the denomination with the most members. In Kilangala all people are Christian, divided amongst several different Christian denominations, most of them Moravian. Most families who live for generations in Kilangala already are member of the Moravian church. It is the only and original church in the village. Nonetheless in nearby Kipande eleven different Christian denominations are present; Roman Catholics, Moravians, Free Pentecostal Church of Tanzania, Pentecostal Holiness, Assemblies of God, Evangelists, Evangelists Assemblies of God, Sabbathists, Lutherans, Anglicans and Swedish Pentecostals.

Even though there is a Moravian church in Kilangala, the mission is not strictly associated with only the Moravian church; it is an overall Christian mission, and all people are welcome to work for the mission or make use of the services provided by the mission (non-Christians are welcomed as well). Nevertheless almost all people living in the village are member of the Moravian church and the main sponsor is a Protestant organisation from the Netherlands. The people who are not going to the Moravian church in Kilangala, are the people who migrated into the village to work for the mission. They come from all over the country and most of them are member of the Roman Catholic Church. Most students of the

VTC, who live on the mission compound as well, are also member of the Roman Catholic Church. There are people who attend one of the several Pentecostal churches as well.

Even though the mission was set up as a strict religious institution, today, religion is not the main focus of the mission. The Nuru office of the mission works actively on evangelization, but all other institutions of the mission do not have a missionary focus. One of the reasons for this is because they are often combined with government institutions, which promotes secularity. What sets the mission in Kilangala apart from any other non-profit organisation is the intention in which all institutions of the mission are set up. The mission was set up to help people in the area by taking the Word of God as guide. This vision comes into practice through medical care and education. Every morning the day starts with a morning prayer. Everybody living on the compound of the mission is expected to come for the day opening, even if they are not religious. In the Morning Prayer one of the evangelist leads in prayer, a song is sung, there is some reading from the Bible done and people sing together. The meaning of this Morning Prayer is very different for people working for the mission. For the students of the VTC attendance is obligatory, some people only come to listen to the announcements, while again others view the Morning Prayer as a moment to pray and to listen to the Word of God. Like Oscar says: "Religion means that a group of people agree to meet to talk about God in a certain place. They agree upon a day and a place. Because you have agreed upon this meeting, you should follow your agreement. Going to church is such an agreement, and the Morning Prayer is the same sort of agreement. Because you have agreed this with many people, you should come to the Morning Prayer".[3]

Different interpretations concerning religion co-exist. The mission can be just a place to find work or to get your water from, but it can be place to deepen your religious belief as well. In the next chapter I will further elaborate on different Christian denominations; focussing on the Moravian, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Holiness church. Different interpretations concerning religion will be elaborated.

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[3] Structured interview Oscar 24-02-13

3. CHRISTIAN RELIGION: CELEBRATING EASTER

DENOMINATIONS

> *"The church is only a way to organize people, you can receive Jesus in any church, you can pray to God in any church. The belief in God is much more important than the church you are going to".[4]*

Most people in the Sumbawanga area are Christian, just like the villagers of Kilangala; practically all people are member of one of the Christian denominations in Kilangala or Kipande. In this chapter three different denominations will be discussed; the Moravian, the Roman Catholic and the Pentecostal Holiness church. Even though there are many different Christian denominations, people feel united in Christianity. Asked about differences between all those Christian denominations, people replied often that "there are no differences between all the different churches. We all pray to the same God, it does not matter in what church you pray".[5]

Descriptions of services in several churches around Easter week are leading in this chapter. I will start with the Moravian church and end with the Pentecostal Holiness church. In those three descriptions many similarities and few differences between the three denominations will be made clear. The argument made by people that there are little or no differences between different denominations will be substantiated by the description of those three services.

THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

The Moravian Church is the largest community in Kilangala. Most families living in the village are member of the Moravian church. It is the only church in Kilangala and originates from the early 1960, about the same time as the mission was established. There is a service every Sunday, where four different choirs support the service; a youth choir, a mixed choir, a women's choir and a children's choir. The church community consists of about 120 members,

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[4] In-depth interview Baraka 13-03
[5] Informal conversation Mama Jackrine 06-02-13

but not all members to church every week. Children and elderly people are overly represented in church, while young adults are missing.

On Easter Sunday, I am sitting in the Moravian church, the sphere is festive and jubilant. The church in Kilangala is packed on this service on Easter Sunday. During the past week the church was decorated with Palm-branches but this is being replaced by colorful kanga's which are hanging all around the church. A big white cloth with the Lamb of God in yellow in front of the church, replaces the rainbow flag which normally has its place there. Colorful pieces of fabric, fake flowers and candles decorate the table in front of the church. Altogether, lot of effort is put into decorating the church and creating a festive sphere.

The four choirs of the Moravian church are all dressed up in special uniforms for the Easter service to enforce the festivity. The mixed choir is wearing a dark red, ankle long gown, the members of the youth choir are wearing a colorful blouse, and the members of the women's choir are wearing a yellow kanga with a pattern of the Lamb of God. The Children's choir is the only choir not in a uniform; the children wear their normal Sunday clothes.

I am sitting in church in my newly made Easter-dress, alongside with other women. I am not the only one in church with a new dress; many others have bought new kanga's or made new blouses and new skirts for Easter. Parents and children all dressed up; I see sisters all wearing a dress made of the same fabric and a mother with clothes made out of the same fabric as her child. In short, everybody is suited up for the celebration of the resurrection of Christ. When the service starts, the evangelist in the front of the church welcomes everybody and after finishing his opening prayer he asks just a person to say a prayer out loud, to thank God for sending his son to earth to help his people, then after this opening ritual the service can fully start with singing, dancing and praying.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church is not present in Kilangala, so Catholics from Kilangala have to go to church in Kipande. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest church in Kipande with more than 500 members. Every Sunday there is a service in church which not only people from Kipande attend, but many people from Kilangala as well. The age distribution in church is very balanced, there are many children, but there are youngsters, adults, middle-aged people and elderly people as well. In contrast to both the Moravian and the Pentecostal Holiness church.

When I arrive around three in the afternoon in the Roman Catholic Church in Kipande on Good Friday, it is not very full yet. I expected it to be packed, since Good Friday is almost as important as Easter Sunday in the Christian tradition. But I noticed before that the starting time

of the service is flexible and most probably the church will be filled after one hour. I take my seat in the back of the church, enabling me to oversee the whole church without people staring at the *mzungu* in church.

Around half past three a few people are sitting in the church and service has not started yet. Ten minutes later a man walks in, murmurs something to the people in church and everybody stands up, crosses themselves and the man who started says a prayer. Every person repeats this out loud, first standing, but after a few minutes kneeling. When people are saying this prayer, they are not especially focused on themselves; they often look outside, to other people or to their children. After about ten minutes the prayer stops as abrupt as it started. A man up in the front walks to the altar. He is wearing a long, grey gown with a black rope tied around his waist. He sings a prayer, which sounds like a European style gospel, and when he is finished, the churchgoers sing one sentence together, and all sit down.

Today the church looks different than on a normal Sunday. The big cross in front of the church is covered with a purple cloth and different pictures symbolizing the Passion of the Christ are taken away. After about thirty minutes the church is populated, but not as full as on a normal Sunday. Around 300 people are in church this Good Friday.

THE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH

The Pentecostal Holiness church is the odd one in the group of the three churches. The Pentecostal Church is not situated in Kilangala, but in Kipande. The members of the Pentecostal church come together in church three times a week where they sing, pray and praise the Lord; on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. It is a relatively new church, it was set up in 2005, and does not have many members yet. Around 20 people are member of the Pentecostal Holiness church, and most of these members are under the age of 25 years. Compared to the Roman Catholic Church, with over 500 members and a very equal distribution of age groups, and the Moravian church with around 120 members, with many children and old people, but hardly any young adults, this is a very small church with many young members.

On Tuesday, two days after Easter Sunday I am sitting in the small church Pentecostal Holiness church in Kipande at 4 in the afternoon. It is not busy today; only five members of the Pentecostal holiness church are present when I walk in. It will get slightly busier during the service and eventually 9 people are present at the service. It becomes very clear that the people have got new energy and inspiration during Easter; people shout 'Praise the Lord!' and 'Amen!' and make wild hand gestures during the songs and prayers. I did attend more services in the Pentecostal Holiness church, but people were not as loud, devoted and intense as they are today. The service starts with a few songs from the liturgy book, and is followed by a prayer. The

curtains are drawn, the door is closed and people close their eyes or stand in a corner. People start murmuring their prayers and gradually it becomes louder and louder. Eventually people are shouting their prayers and making wild hand gestures. All at the same time, people stop their prayers and the service continues. During the whole service people are loud, they dance around or stamp with their feet like there is no tomorrow.

The pastor ends the service with a story about fighting off the devil which he illustrates with karate gestures with his hands and all members follow his lead and copy his actions. Eventually all people go back to their seat, calm down and the service ends.

SIMILARITIES

Examining the description of the three services, similarities and differences become apparent. I will start with the similarities between services and practices in all three denominations to create a better understanding of how Christianity can be interpreted in three different denominations. Even though the theme of all three services was completely different, on Good Friday people were mourning the life of Jesus Christ, on Easter Sunday people were celebrating his resurrection, and on Tuesday it was an 'ordinary' service, differences and similarities between the three denominations become apparent. I will start with the similarities after which some differences will follow.

The Bible is taken as leitmotiv in all three denominations and therefore the services in the Moravian, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal church are at the heart the same, as many different informants stressed. The themes covered each week may differ, but eventually they are all part of the teachings of the Bible. In several interviews was emphasized that for all Christians the word of the Bible is the most important element in life. Oscar, who attends the Moravian church, gives a clear view of why people read the Bible: "The Bible is the law of God, which you can use to talk about God. But it is not only the law, in the Bible you can find stories from which you can learn from God as well. The challenge is to read those stories and think about how you can learn from the Word of God today".[6] His opinion about the Bible is exemplifying for most people in Kilangala.

Praising the Lord, praying to ask for help and guidance and giving thanks to God are important elements in every service. This is due to the fact that one of the main aims of the Bible is to show that God is real and if you do not believe in God, you cannot be a Christian. Praising the Lord should be done in a festive way, including singing, and dancing in the

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[6] Structured interview Oscar 24-02

Moravian and Pentecostal church. In all three churches the choir takes up an important role in the service, and most songs sung are part of the Christian liturgy and are the same in all three churches.

There are two issues which are stressed in all three denominations alike. The first issue is what it means to be religious. According to the Roman Catholic Charles, being religious means "that you believe that God is present and that after this life you will resurrect and go to God. We all live because God is present. When God created the whole world and the humans in it, he put a little bit of himself in everything he created. God is living in all of us".[7] The evangelist, of the Pentecostal Holiness church stressed that "everybody should believe in God to receive an everlasting life. God loves the world and the people who are living in the world".[8] Next to believing in God, the main message coming from Christianity is to love each other. "God preaches love, for your family, for your neighbor, for God himself. But it is not easy to love other people, as you can see in all those conflicts and wars around the world".[9] as Jenny, member of the Moravian church said.

The Word of God is for many people the most important thing in life. People believed that the only way to be able to go to God is to follow His Word. 'If you love your fellow and your friends you can love God', is something I heard in many interviews. Fortunate, member of the Roman Catholic Church stressed that one of his motivations to go to church was to "make peace with people around me. This can be done at home, but in church as well. When I have a problem I can go to my neighbor to ask for help, and you hope he will do the same when he is in trouble. When you go to your neighbor, God is present in that person. So you don't especially go to your neighbor, but actually you go to God to ask for help".[10] Even though he is a member of the Roman Catholic Church, his statement concerning the love for your neighbor is for all church denominations alike. Eventually it is not about the differences between different denominations, but about the strongest message from the Bible, which is that God is love.

The similarities between those three churches can mainly be found by taking the Bible as central source of belief and the idea that God is present in this life and the afterlife. Because the Bible is taken as a central element, the themes and stories are similar in those three churches. As we shall see in the next paragraph, where the differences between the

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[7] Semi-structured interview Charles 09-03-13
[8] Semi-structured interview Wazee 04-02-13
[9] Unstructured interview Jenny 18-03-13
[10] In depth interview Fortunate 20-03-13

churches will be discussed, the differences between denominations are concentrated on the interpretation of several practices, but not on the overall structure.

Differences

People argued that all Christian denominations are the same at heart, but apparently there are enough differences for eleven separate churches in Kipande to exist. The explanation I heard the most often concerning why so many different denominations exist was because of different interpretations of the Bible; if people interpret some things in the Bible differently, they can feel the need to start a new church. "There are different churches because of misunderstandings of readers from the Bible. All read something different, and when one really thinks the Bible is telling them a different story, they will separate from the existing church and start their own, but their aim stays the same. If you listen closely to the words that are being said in the different churches, you can see that they all use the same words in their prayers. All the churches are separate roads of going the heaven; all have the same general goal and aim",[11] as one informant explained. Another informant mentioned the role of power in the emergence of different churches. He argued that "if you want a high position within a church organisation that can be difficult, because others want the same thing as you, and there are so many members in church. But if you start your own church you can put yourself in an important position".[12]

The differences between the three denominations can be found in the interpretations of Christian practices, not in the implementation of religious thoughts and practices. For one thing prayers are different for the three denominations. People in the Moravian and Roman Catholic Church close their eyes; a few people cover their eyes with their hands or bend their head while praying. In the Pentecostal church however all people close their eyes and many face the wall or go and stand in a dark corner during a prayer. Moreover the overall sphere during the service differs per denomination. In the Moravian church a joyful, informal sphere, with rhythmic singing and dancing can be felt, this in sharp contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, where standard procedures predominate. In the Roman Catholic Church there is only one choir which sings European style songs, prayers are pre-formulated and formal. The sphere in the Pentecostal church finally can be best described as intense. This is partly

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[11] In-Depth interview Oscar 08-03-13
[12] Structured interview Fortunate 26-06-13

because there are so few people in church, but partly because it is their way of praying. The service is very intense; much more intense than a service in the Moravian or Roman Catholic Church. Most people, who are going to church here, do this by considerate choice, not because their parents went there as well, moreover all members are very devoted and serious about God and religion. The church focuses on getting young people into their church; they have the future and are not yet bounded by any church. "When those young adults grow older, they will bring their families here to church, and our church will become bigger. But eventually it is not about how many members are here in church, witnessing people about the Word of God and the salvation of Jesus is much more important, you don't have to go to the Pentecostal church to believe in the salvation of Jesus, you can believe in Jesus in any church".[13]

In this chapter three different denominations were further discussed, focussing on the differences and similarities between the three church practices. Striking is the fact that people of the different churches stress the similarities between all, and focuses less on differences.

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[13] Informal conversation Baraka 19-02-13

4. RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES: WHERE TO FIND GOD

In the previous chapter the differences and similarities between the interpretation of the Bible and religious practices of the three different denominations were discussed. People in Kilangala concentrate on the similarities between peoples and their beliefs rather than the differences. This raises the question whether the differences between churches are large enough for people to create different religious identities. In this chapter I will elaborate on the people in the church, with a specific focus on religious identities, if existing, within each denomination. The focus will be first on an informant of the church, followed by a more general picture of different religious identities of people within that denomination. I will start with the Moravian church, followed by the Roman Catholic and Pentecostal church. This chapter will end with a general conclusion considering the possibility of separate religious identities per denomination.

MOSES: THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

Dark, rectangular glasses frame the face of a middle aged man, his brown eyes barely visible through his glasses. His glasses rest on a small nose under which a broad smile is noticeable. The name of this man is Moses and he is the manager of the mission and in his late forties. Moses does not only laugh with his mouth, when he laughs or even smiles, you can see the twinkle in his eyes through those dark-tinted glasses. His mouth is lined by a thin ring beard, which shows some grew hairs through the thick black curly hairs.

Moses is the manager of the mission and is often called the informal mayor of the mission. He is important, powerful and well respected in the community of Kilangala and its broad surroundings. People respect him and they know what he can mean to them. He uses his power to help all the people in 'his' community, so that all can have the best life possible. Moses grew up on the mission and started off as an employee of the Nuru office where he operated the printing press, gradually climbing the ladder of the mission organization, and since 2007 he made it as the general manager.

The most important task for him is to keep people happy and solve tensions and small conflicts between all people in the community. Moreover he is responsible for the well-being of all members of the Kilangalan community, and more importantly, that power is equally distributed and everybody has the feeling he/she is important. He explains that it can be hard to solve or smooth out all the small tensions between people every day, in a village where people gossip and complain a lot. But it is important to work together as a team in order to keep the mission running.

Laughing and joking are part of Moses' first nature. He is warm and open towards visitors as well as people from the community and far beyond. Because of the long relation between the mission and the Netherlands, he has picked up some Dutch words, which he throws out in a serious, and sometimes less serious conversation. 'Potverdikkeme'[14], you hear him shout in the middle of a conversation. By looking at his mouth you can see in which context this should be placed; serious, or not so serious.

I have spoken to nine members of the Moravian church, and many of them stressed the fact that they did not necessarily go to church every week or pray every day. As Moses argued the church is where people come together to pray but he said: "It has become a habit for many people, going to church is not a conscious practice anymore".[15] The general idea is that not going to church does not mean you are a bad Christian. That is the same with giving thanks to God, for example before a meal. According to Moses this too became a habit, and thereby lost its meaning. "It doesn't mean anything anymore; it is not connected with faith".[16] People argued that you should only pray when you mean it and go to church when you feel like it and not out of habit. You do not have to force it by going to church every single week. People are free to choose when to pray and what to pray, and are able for form their own religious ideas. People have a personal relation with God; nobody has to tell them how to believe and people have the opportunities to deviate from the norm. The Moravian church community in Kilangala is small and social control is high; people will notice who attends the service every week, and who does not. However, people are not judged on their actions, at least so it is said.

This freedom is not only visible through prayers, but it is evident in the church choirs as well. In the Moravian church singing is very important and four different choirs provide a musical accompaniment. Those choirs sing, dance, clap and cheer during the service in a very festive way. Jenny, a member of the Moravian church, was raised in the Roman Catholic Church, but when she married, she decided to join the Moravian church instead. She stressed that "in the Catholic Church people are more anonymous, they are able ignore the Word of God, and other people will not notice. In the Moravian church, you are free to believe in your own way, but when you do not live according to the Word of God, the community will notice you, and they will kick you out of the church".[17] In short, the social control within the

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[14] Innocent Dutch swearword
[15] Structured interview Moses 13-02-13
[16] Structured interview Oscar 13-02-13
[17] Unstructured interview Jenny 18-03-13

community is high concerning living like a good Christian, but the social control is not specifically high when church attendance or the way people pray to God is concerned.

Almost all informants of the Moravian church stressed that being religious means that you have to live a good way in society and live according to the rules of God. The guidance of God you get in return is the advantage of being religious.

FORUTUNATE: THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fortunate is a short, round-faced man in his late thirties, and he often shows off his broad smile. Fortunate is the principal of the Vocational Trainings Center; he started working in Kilangala as teacher masonry at the VTC, and was asked to be the principal in 2007, which he happily accepted.

Fortunate and his family are not originally from Kilangala; he was born in a small village along the coast of Lake Tanganyika and left there because of work at the VTC. He and his wife Vero have three children, between the age of six and nine years old, who all attend the Roman Catholic Church. His oldest son will receive his First Communion in June, which makes the family very proud. As often as possible Fortunate and Vero go to church, but Vero works in the Children's home and is often obliged to take care of the children on Sunday, which makes it impossible for her to go to church every week. In that case Fortunate will represent her in church instead. His oldest son goes to school in Sumbawanga and lives with relatives there, but his other two children still live at home and go to school in Kilangala.

God takes in a central place in Fortunate's life, but he is very practical in his church attendance; he tries to go every week, but when it rains outside or when he is too busy, he will skip church and pray at home instead. When he does not go to church, he will listen to Christian programs on the radio. Fortunate is very conscious about the nature of people to commit sins, and one of the reasons for him to go to church, is to ask for forgiveness for his own sins: "People will always do things wrong, even when they follow the Word of God. You can hide these wrong doings from others, but you can't hide it from God. When God is in your heart, he will know what you are doing".[18]

In order to stay the principal of the VTC he believes he should keep educating himself, and he is ambitious enough to achieve this goal. He is well read, and eager for new information. His most important goal in life is to send his children to school, and provide the means for them to live a good life, just as he has.

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[18] In depth interview Fortunate 20-03-13

Going to church to ask for forgiveness is common in the Roman Catholic Church, and is a distinguish characteristic of this church, just as Fortunate described in the previous paragraph. However, people do not only go to church to ask forgiveness. "In church, but at home as well you pray to God; for forgiveness, guidance or love. You can confess in church as well, it is called '*kungama*' in Kiswahili, but not many people do so".[19]

Next to praying, many people go to church to read from the Bible. For many informants reading the Bible is the main way to get to know God and learn from God. "The main lesson from the Bible is that it teaches you how to know God. You can know God better by reading the Bible and going to church"[20], as Peter described. These lessons in the Bible teach you how to live a good life, which eventually enables you to meet God when you die. One believes in God and follows his rules to be sure of a place in heaven.

Bible groups are very important in the Roman Catholic community. In every local Catholic community people meet on a village level once a week to discuss, read, and learn from the Bible. This was initiated by Pope John Paul II in the late 1990s. He suggested that people organize these sort of groups at home, in order to get to know God in a private sphere, and pray for others at home and not only in church. In Kipande, those Bible groups are represented in church on Sunday during the collection. A representative for each of the 12 communities stands in the front with a basket where people can donate money or material goods in case they do not have any money. The church members are free to choose which community they want to support.

When I asked Fortunate if he could describe his relation to God, he answered the following: "There are two very important things in which I describe my relation to God. The first is that I acknowledge that God is present and the second one is that I will live according to His rules. When you die, only God knows how you have lived your life. We all eventually live according to the Word of God to be able to have a good life after this; in heaven, with God".[21] God is the only one you have to account to, and if you follow his rules, set in the Bible, He will send you his love in and protection in return, people believe. Fortunate's explanation on his relation to God, is characterizing for all Christians, not only for Roman Catholics, in Kilangala. This exemplifies the similarities between the denominations. However, the differences can be found in the way people give meaning to their relation with God. Going to

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[19] Semi structured interview Peter 06-03-13
[20] Semi-structured interview Peter 06-03-13
[21] In depth interview Fortunate 20-03-13

church is more important and more rules have to be followed in the Roman Catholic Church compared to the Moravian church. Prayers are standard, singing is sober and going to church for forgiveness is important. There are fewer possibilities to create a personal relation with God; Catholics follow standardized practices, imposed by the Catholic Church.

But on the other hand, because of the large community, there is less social control concerning living according to the Word of God. Social control is weak in the Roman Catholic community, most likely because of the large amount of church members. Moreover the control of the church on religious practices and prayers is very high. Prayers are pre-formulated and standard, and all people follow the strict procedures during the service. Where in the Moravian church many people choose not to pray every day; the members of the Roman Catholic Church I spoke with, all stressed that they prayed every morning, every evening before dinner and before going to bed, and that they aimed to go to church every week.

BARAKA: THE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

A tall, rather skinny boy is introduced to me during an interview with a Dutch woman, Noelle, who visits Kilangala every year to support the nursery school. She tells me the boy is called Baraka and that she supports him so he is able to go to school. Baraka is an ambitious, twenty-year-old masonry student at the VTC. He is the eleventh born from a poor family of twelve in a living in Kipande. When he finished primary school, his parents did not have the means to send him to school, so he worked on the *shamba* instead. One day he was working on the *shamba* of the nursery school in Kilangala because his brothers' child was going to school there. Noelle saw the young boy working on the *shamba* instead of going to school, and she asked him why he did not go to school. When he told her his family was too poor to send him to school, she decided to pay his school fees so he was able to get his education. Today Noelle still financially supports him and he is in his first year of the VTC. Baraka got a blessing from God when he met Noelle, as he describes himself, because now he is able to go to school and provide for his own future when his family is not.

Baraka does not go to the same church as his parents, but he chose to join the Pentecostal Holiness church in Kipande, when his parents decided to leave to a different church. First he went to the Moravian church with his parents and when they left for the Pentecostal church and he decided to come with them. His parents however, decided not to stay with the Pentecostal Holiness church, but switch again to a different denomination. Baraka however felt that God wanted him in the Pentecostal church, so he decided to stay.

God takes in a central place in Baraka's life. He prays every morning, evening and before bed. After school he hangs out on the street to tell people about the Word of God and the message of Jesus; how one should live according to the Bible, and how one can reach salvation in his heart by Jesus. Additionally he goes to church three times a week. Baraka feels a strong connection with God; he asks God for guidance and receives messages from God through his prayers.

Even though he is only 20 years old, he already preaches in church and he is a teacher in Bible studies. He feels like God has gifted him with a mission in life; to tell the world about the Word of God. When I ask Baraka what his plans for the future are, as he is a bright young and ambitious students, he told me the following: "I do not want to stay in Kipande; I want to preach the Word of God all around the world. I would like to travel around Africa first, but I like to go to Europe to tell people about the Word of God as well. If I want to do so, it is important to be able to speak English very well, so that is why I have bought an English Bible and a dictionary, to improve my English. God has planned great things for me, and I trust His guidance. He blessed me with Mama Noelle and for me it is a miracle from God".[22]

For people attending the Pentecostal church, receiving Jesus in their heart is the most important goal in life, because to receive Jesus means to reach salvation. In the Bible it is written how to reach salvation and how you can save yourself from sins. As the pastor and the evangelist from the Pentecostal Holiness church told me there are many wise lessons written in the Bible, but living according to the Word of God and salvation are the two most important messages. "God wants us to live according to His Word, to live without a sin. You have to try and live without anything but the Word of God. If you are able to only live with the Word of God, you can become holy".[23] In this interview with the pastor and the evangelist, many answers were given in the form of Bible citations. On my question what the most important message from the Bible was, they quoted Hebrews 2:3[24], and asked me to read it along in the English Bible.

Pentecostals believe in the Word of God, and they follow the Ten Commandments, just like the people in the Moravian or Roman Catholic Church. However, for the people attending the Pentecostal church, this is only the first and basic step. There are four basic rules to be followed, in order to receive Jesus in your heart and for God to be merciful. First you have to believe in Jesus, next to following the Ten Commandments given by God. Second you

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[22] In-Depth interview Baraka 13-03-13
[23] Semi-structured interview Wazee 02-04
[24] "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him". (Hebrews 2:3)

have to love Gods' ways more than others. Before doing anything, you should pray to God. Furthermore you should be near God by witnessing people in the name of God, which means going out on the streets and tell people about the Word of God. And finally you have to obey everything God wants from you.

The relation people have with God is a strictly personal relation. Prayers are individually said out loud, with hand palms towards the sky: ready to receive the message God sends you. In the Pentecostal church people pray for guidance, just like in other churches, but praying to receive messages and courage from God is more important than only praying for help, protection and guidance. Furthermore going to church to praise the Lord is very important. "We praise Him because He created this world, gave us our lives, and gives us many opportunities in this life. When God created man, He made him as his equal, God lives in all of us. We are the image of God, and we have to praise Him for this".[25]

The personal relation Pentecostals have with God is exemplified by the fact that they cannot choose themselves to become a pastor or religious official; God has to choose them personally. He will choose you to let people know about His Word, and he will let you know what your destiny is.

This chapter gave an insight of the personal relations people have with God and their church. Even though all three denominations discussed fall under the umbrella of Christianity, people give different meanings to Christianity. The members of the Moravian church often develop a personal relation with God in which going to church is not central per se. Their own relation with God is more important than the relation the church would impose. The Roman Catholic Church is far stricter in their rules, the services are less cheerful than in the Moravian church, and the forgiveness of sins is central in the lives of people of the Catholic faith. The Moravian and Catholic Church however, are in many cases very similar, especially when you closely examine the two services more closely. The Pentecostal church on the other hand, follows the Word of the Bible as well, but puts more emphasis on the teachings of Jesus next to the teachings of God. Devotion is central the Pentecostal church and services are very intense. Receiving Jesus and getting his salvation is seen as the main purpose of life, and this is an individual matter. God is witnessed in the streets and praised in church. The three descriptions of the dominant belief within each church could be part of one's religious identity. In the

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[25] Semi-structured interview Wazee 02-04

Analysis & Conclusion chapter I will connect the situation in Kilangala with the literature described in the theoretical framework, but first I will elaborate on the *Ujamaa* theory in the next chapter.

5. UJAMAA: UNITY AND PEACE

On a morning before school starts, I meet Oscar sitting on the steps in front of the nursery school. I sit down next to him in the sun, and Oscar starts telling me the history of the village and how Tanzania has become like it is now. Oscar talks about the former president Nyerere and explains how much change he has brought to the country, what the influence is of the government today in Kilangala and explains the philosophy of *Ujamaa* to me.

Oscar explainins that *Ujamaa* is most visible in land policy. All the land people live on, is in the first place owned by the government. This means that small paths between two homes or shamba's are land of the government, so everybody is allowed to walk there. People's house is a private area, but the land around the house is for all. There are no fences around people's homes to define one's property, mainly because it is not theirs. You can buy land off the government if you have enough money, then it is off course your own property. However not many people are able, or feel the need to do so.

The nursery has a small shamba where twice a year the parents are asked to work on, to grow the food for their children. Working together on several projects to create a band of unity is also one of the characteristics of *Ujamaa*. This way people know they can count on people when they are in need as well. Oscar continues about the people living in the village: "Tribes are not important anymore, at least not in this area", he explains. It started with Nyerere encouraging people in small villages to move to larger villages in order to be closer to education and healthcare. This has caused many different people, from different tribes to live together in one village. Nyerere's main aim to create a unified Tanzanian identity, people had to feel Tanzanian before they divided amongst ethnic lines. Today this is still influential as the government encourages people to marry whoever they like, and not only the people from their own tribe, so that the distinction of people in tribes becomes less important. And as Oscar argues: "This has not brought any hard feelings towards each other here at all. Tanzanians are a very peaceful and unite people".[26]

Ujamaa theory is not only applicable on the general politics and land reform in Tanzania, as Oscar describes above, but was an ideology implemented in the society as a whole. Religious equality was one of its focus points, in which the state is secular and all religious traditions are respected equally. In this paragraph I will concentrate on elements which show how people, perhaps unconsciously, apply *Ujamaa* on their personal belief and opinion concerning Christianity.

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[26] Structured interview Oscar 24-02-13

Government politics in Tanzania include the creation of a Tanzanian identity by stressing the feelings of unity. This idea of a unified identity can also be seen within a Christian identity. Oscar described very accurately that: "We are all born, we all come from a mother, and that is what makes all people equal".[27] People are free to start their own church or join a different church if that particular church fits them better. People stressed that: "Eventually the only difference is the name of the church, because in the eyes of God all people are equal". All informants I interviewed claimed that the belief in God is more important than the church you attend. Baraka formulated it by saying: "Going to church is something you do from you heart, so you have to make sure you join the church closest to your heart. You obey to yourself and to God in church. For me it does not matter to what church I go, I want to let people know about the Word of God, and that can be in any church".[28]

Furthermore, children are not especially raised into one specific church, but rather into Christianity. Moses has raised his six children into the Moravian tradition, but not to become a Moravian. "It is important to show the children the path of how to be a good Christian. What church fits best for you is a personal choice, and you should have the freedom to choose which church is best for you".[29] Moses stressed that eventually they will find God in the place his children feel at home the best.

Ujamaa has envisioned people to unite as Tanzanians where differences between tribes are not mentioned and people from all over the country are treated equally. Moreover, people from all different denominations stress that people are the same, and people should not be judged on the church they are attending. In these opinions the *Ujamaa* ideology shines through; personal identities should not be debated in society. Everybody is free to believe whatever he/she prefers. All people are Tanzanians and free to believe whatever they want, just as *Ujamaa* had envisioned.

However, talking to people I noticed that the people in Kilangala do not consciously relate their religious openness towards each other with the *Ujamaa* philosophy. *Ujamaa*, in which the equality between religions is stressed, is in the village applied to land ownership and government control, and not so much to religious freedom. Even when they themselves do not link it consciously, *Ujamaa* can explain why religion is seen as a concept that bounds people rather than drives them apart.

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[27] Structured interview Oscar 24-02-13
[28] In depth interview Baraka 13-03-13
[29] Structured interview Moses 13-02-13

Even when Ujamaa seems to have worked in Kilangala, in the literature is often argued that *Ujamaa* is out-dated and has lost its power and religious tensions are actually rising (Heilman and Kaiser 2002, Kaiser 1996, Forster et al. 2000, Campbell 1999). There is an increase in the tension between Muslims and Christians relations, especially in the East of Tanzania, where the most Muslims live, and peaceful religious relations are in the past. The national unity as advocated by Nyerere through Ujamaa is lost and people are actually divided through religious lines.

The Rukwa region, in which Kilangala is situated, however, is sparsely populated and most people are Christian. In Kilangala in particular, people still refer to *Ujamaa* and Nyerere very often, even when he stepped down as president already in 1985. In Kilangala the consequences of *Ujamaa* are still visible today; mainly in the presence of different ethnic, racial and religious identities, without one of them being dominant or overruling the others. This shows how the concept of a nation as a whole, initiated by Nyerere, in Kilangala at least, is still intact and does not only apply to the land reforms, but to religious equality as well.

There are several possible explanations of why *Ujamaa* is still this successful in Kilangala even though *Ujamaa* is labeled as outdated and religious tensions are rising in Tanzania. In the first place the mission origins from the early 1960s, which is about the same time as when the *Ujamaa* philosophy by Nyerere was introduced. The *Ujamaa* theory fitted very well with the vision the Christian church had for her followers, namely to promote equality and peace amongst the members of the community. *Ujamaa* did so by promoting religious equality and this has been reflected on the church as well; Christianity in general is more important than the difference between the various denominations.

Second, Kilangala is a relatively small, isolated community, where the influence from the outside world is small. Partly because of its isolated situation it was possible for *Ujamaa* to flourish in Kilangala, even when it has lost its power in the majority of the country. The people, who come to live in Kilangala, know where they choose for, namely a missionary village. As a result like-minded people live in Kilangala, and because of the open-minded attitude of the people living in the village, people with different opinions easily assimilate into Kilangala. Equality and connectedness are successfully propagated in Kilangala, and the village does not have to deal with issues around religious tensions the rest of the country experiences, such as religious quarrels between Muslims and Christians concerning religious slaughter.

It is important to note that only Christians live in Kilangala, no Muslims or other religious groups are present. This makes it easier for people to bond as Christians, because there are no people present who adhere to a completely different belief. Their core principals are all the same, coming from a Christian background, which unites people and makes them religiously tolerant towards other religious affiliations.

By the combination of above described circumstances, it was possible in Kilangala to create a peaceful society in which religious differences did not create tensions, and unlike Tanzania as a whole, *Ujamaa* is still the ideal.

Theory and literature study are essential in understanding the field in which your research is done. Literature however brings you only to a certain point. Arriving in the field, the theory turns into reality or the real world might not correspond with the literature. Literature indicates possible concepts in the field, and the anthropologist is there to examine the discrepancy between the field and the literature but he/she may also turn reality into theory. In this thesis I examined the theory of religious identity in the reality of Kilangala. I aimed to answer the question of how different Christian denominations peacefully exist next to each other by focusing on three different denominations, namely the Moravian, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Holiness church. Hereby, light is shed on the religious identities that people have concerning Christianity, and more importantly, how these different religious identities are related to each other. Several conclusions can be drawn looking at the central research question.

In the theoretical framework I identified three distinct definitions of religion provided by Tylor, Durkheim and Geertz. Eventually Bowen was able to combine the main elements of those three definitions and formulated his definition of religion as follows: "I view religious traditions as ever-changing complexes of beliefs (including those authoritative beliefs called 'doctrine'), practices (including formalized rituals), and social institutions," (Bowen 2010:2). Applying this definition to Kilangala, the Christian religious *tradition* is formed around the belief that God is present. People show their love for God by going to church, reading the Bible, and praying in church and at home, which are the *practices* Bowen describes. The *social institutions* are institutions such as the mission or the church-organisation itself. This clearly shows how Christianity can be classified as a religious tradition in Kilangala.

The theoretical framework also introduced the concept of religious identity which is the central concept of this thesis. In general identity is not fixed and absolute, but is more often considered an evolving process of "becoming" rather than simply "being" (Dillon 1999 in Peek 2005:217). Separate religious identities are rising, and often cause religious tensions. As Ammerman (2003) argues, there are so many different religious identities nowadays, that the clashes between these identities become interesting. However, this does not correspond with the situation in Kilangala, where many people live together in a peaceful way. The concept of identity is defined by Eriksen (1994) as classifying the self as well as others into categories of 'us' and 'them'. Taking this into account while looking at the situation in

Kilangala, it can be seen that the distance between the Roman Catholic Church and the Moravian church, is very small; members of these two denominations do visit each other's churches and tolerate each other's practices and actively join them. The distance between the Moravian/Roman Catholic and the Pentecostal church is larger. Even though people are tolerant towards each other, they do not actively visit each other's church. This could be explained by the fact that the Pentecostal church is more individualistic, while the other two are more based on collectivity. People do not actively promote separate religious identities; they tolerate each other's religious beliefs, but in practice you do not see active church visits to different churches. Most importantly however, is that in the end they all call themselves Christian, and not so much Moravian, Pentecostal or Catholic. Therefore I question the existence of separate religious identities in Kilangala. Whereas the existence of different Christian denominations would imply many different religious identities, actually there seems to be only one religious identity present; namely Christian identity.

Examining Kilangala more closely, several indicators point towards one Christian identity rather than many separate identities. First, all denominations in Kilangala are part of Christianity, all are founded on the belief in and love for God and as long as people agree upon this characteristic, no distinctions are made upon different denominations. This confirms Rukyaa's (2007) observation that the two largest denominations in Tanzania, the Roman Catholic Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania both "adhere to one belief, that is, the belief in Jesus Christ as the risen Lord and the redeemer of the World (Rukyaa 2007:191). Taken the different interpretations of traditions and Bible stories aside, the main message from the Bible comes down to the belief that God is present, and this joins people together.

Christianity serves as a method of peaceful coexistence in Kilangala; it creates a cohesive society and a common peaceful lifestyle in which 'doing good' is central. Moses exemplified that he raises his children in a Moravian tradition, but not to become a Moravian. The fact that everybody lives like a Christian will bring about a good society. This confirms Gifford's (1998) argument that *living* like a Christian is more important than actually *being* a Christian and endorses the argument of only a Christian religious identity in Kilangala. People in Tanzania have a long tradition in accepting new religious traditions and focusing on the similarities instead of the differences between those religious traditions. This is still visible in Kilangala today; similarities between religious practices are higher valued than differences between religious practices, even though it is all within Christianity.

In Kilangala all churches offer spiritual support, but none of them is able to provide any material advantages. The mission is able to provide material- and social support, but she is open for all people, member of any church or religion. Moreover, the spiritual support the different denominations provide is all based upon the same values and standards. Christianity as a whole is able to provide for spiritual support and is able to fulfill in the function of religion in society. Therefore people are mobilized on their Christian identity, rather than focusing on separate Christian denominations, which make smaller identities redundant. This is all supported by Peek (2005), who argues that the more advantages religious membership provides you, the more people are motivated to affiliate religiously. She stresses that the enforcement of religious identities is often caused by the function of religion in society. Tambiah (1996:139) adds that identity groups, a group of people sharing the same identity, are organized to develop the shared interests of a group in order to mobilize those people as a pressure group.

Finally people turn to a different church when they do not feel at home in a certain church in Kilangala. We have seen that religious identities are not strictly bounded by one specific church or belief, nor are they fixed for the rest of your life. Heilman & Kaiser (2002) argue that religious identities are part of the socialization into a group from a young age onwards. However it is possible for people to change religious affiliation later in life. Baraka for example, chose a different church then his parents because he felt more at home at the Pentecostal church than at the Moravian. Even when none of his family members are member of the same church as he is, his choice is respected and accepted within the family. However most people feel at home in the church in which they were socialized, and they only change to a different church out of practical reasons, marriage and children, or by conscious choice.

This all supports a Christian identity in Kilangala rather than separate religious identities formed around different denominations.

Returning to the question how different Christian denominations exist peacefully next to each other, it is interesting to examine Kirsch's (2004) argument in the light of Kilangala. Kirsch argues that because all denominations are at the heart the same, people have the opportunity to adjust religious affiliations, which enables people to use Christianity as a self-empowering resource. In the story of Baraka the self-empowering resource of the possibility to adjust religious affiliations becomes visible. With his choice to join the Pentecostal church, he found a way to improve his life situation in Kilangala. The small Pentecostal Holiness church he joined gave him opportunities to stand out in the crowd, take part in the organization of the

church, and broaden his horizon by stepping outside Kilangala into a larger religious community. His personal choice to stay with the Pentecostal church, and not follow his parents enabled him to choose a church in which he could follow his dreams best and empower himself. Even though his practice may not differ from any other denomination in Kilangala, the opportunity to adjust his religious affiliation enabled him to take matters into his own hands, just as Kirsch argued.

Next to religious affiliation as self-empowering resource, Ysseldyk et al. (2010) argue that church membership can offer security and offers a part in a strong social system. Especially in a remote area like Kilangala the mission and church communities are able to offer social security when the government is not. Moreover Kirsch states that in his study in Zambia changes in religious affiliation were used as "willful acts governed by pragmatism and voluntarism" (Kirsch 2004:707). The picture outlined by Kirsch corresponds to the situation in Kilangala; people can be pragmatic in their religious belief, for example when two different Christian denominations are united through marriage. The woman will often join her husband's church to make church attendance more practical for all family members. Voluntarism is not only shown in the case of changing church because of marriage, but in Baraka's case to stay with the Pentecostal church when his parents were not, as well. As Green (1995) and Spear (1999) argue, people give meaning to religious forms by using elements of different religious forms that support their life in the best way possible. In Kilangala it is not specifically religious elements which are used to support their lifestyle, but with the ability to switch denominations people are able to join the denomination that supports their life in the best way possible.

Generally the literature argues that religious identities are divided among several religious lines. Tanzania however tried to overcome these rigid categorizations by *Ujamaa* philosophy. *Ujamaa* was introduced by Nyerere in the 1960s to create a united Tanzania, and focused on to the creation of a national identity. Nyerere's attempt to create social unity in his multi-ethnic and multi-religious country is considered a failure by many authors (Heilman and Kaiser 2002, Campbell 1999, Kaiser 1996). Even though *Ujamaa* had a great impact on Tanzania, its powers have lost their meaning and religious tensions are rising in the country. Comparing the situation in Tanzania as a whole to the situation as experienced in Kilangala, where *Ujamaa* was often mentioned as an ideal, both standpoints do not correspond. It can be argued that the strong feeling of *Ujamaa* in Kilangala has stimulated the creation of a Christian religious identity instead of many religious identities divided amongst

denominational lines. The main point of *Ujamaa*, to create unity and equality, particularly fits with the vision of the mission, namely to work together to create a better life for all people in the village. *Ujamaa* stresses that people are all alike; in the first place Tanzanian, before dividing in ethnic, religious or regional groups. In Kilangala this is particularly reflected in a strong sense of religious unity and did not lose its meaning.

The fact that Kilangala is so isolated, and because the community is small and focused on one sort of people, namely practicing Christians, created the perfect opportunities for *Ujamaa* to find its way into the community, and keep its place in the community. However, it is important to note that there are only Christians in the Kilangala area; which makes it easier to promote religious equality, peace and unity because there are no people with a radical different view.

Examining Kilangala as a whole, with regard to the central research question, Christianity is a unifying rather than a dividing basis between people. Christian denominations live peacefully next to each other because they are all founded on the belief in and love for God in the first place. The church itself does not give any meaning; it is the Word of God that gives meaning to life, and it does not matter to what church you go to receive the Word of God. Because of those corresponding values people are able to use Christianity as a self-empowering resource. Moreover Christian denominations exist peacefully next to each other because the religion has no important function on a society level. Religious boundaries are not very rigid and people are able to change between different denominations during a lifetime. Because people in Kilangala do not place themselves or others into rigid groups, but are rather flexible in their own and tolerable towards others' belief, it is possible to create a community in which several Christian denominations live peacefully next to each other.

Looking at Kilangala only this short period of time, there seems to be only one religious identity in Kilangala, namely Christianity. Of course three months of research are not sufficient to examine all elements of religion in the village or cover the deeper meaning of religion on a personal level. However, in this thesis I have tried to outline the religious landscape and the meaning of Christianity for people within this landscape in Kilangala. Further research could indicate whether this is the case in more functions of society. Moreover further research could examine the role of people immigrating in Kilangala; whether they have enforced the Christian identity in Kilangala, in search of a collective

identity. It is important to keep in mind that this thesis is just a snapshot of life in Kilangala and can best be viewed as such.

Today, we see a world where religious identity is becoming more and more important, and the differences between people and between religious practices often lead to tensions and conflict. In Kilangala however we see quite the opposite. People are not looking for differences between each other, but are focused on the similarities between and among themselves. Even when *Ujamaa* has lost most of its powers, and religious tensions are rising in Tanzania, because of its isolated situation and protection of the mission, *Ujamaa* in Kilangala can still prosper.

Kilangala reveals that active communities where people stress the similarities between each other people can overcome differences and build a strong and united society. Further research could show how the values of people in Kilangala can be translated in a broader context, where religious identity does not has to be seen as a source of tension and conflict, but as a source of unity, community and love.

APPENDIX I: METHODOLOGY

To collect the data in order to answer my research question I used many different methods and techniques. Interviews, daily conversations, participant observation, observational participation and mapping are just a few of them. In this methodology section I will further elaborate on the most important methods and techniques used during my research.

DeWalt and DeWalt (2011:1) describe participant observation as "a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture". During my research period I participated in many services, participated in religious, and non-religious related activities, I was present at choir practice, participated in Easter lunch, gave computer lessons to students and assisted the teachers of the nursery school.

Observation is defined by DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) as the process in which the researcher tries to remove him/herself from the actions and behaviors of people in the particular situation observed, in order not to influence the situation. Observation during the research started with 'hanging out' in the village followed by observations at the mission compound and the village, and observations at special occasions like a wedding or a feast. I experienced difficulties when the aim was only observing; people tried to involve me in their daily lives. However, in those cases I used participant observation as a research method. At the start of the research my data consisted of many observations, but after this first period observation gradually turned more and more to participant observation. In the final stage my role as observer diminished while my role as participant increased.

My observations were written down in several different forms of field notes, different for each piece of information. Small jot notes were written down during an informal conversation or observation. Expanded notes were used during an interview and methodological notes were written down to order data and to try and find the core concepts of the data. Moreover I used a logbook to write down all the research activities and I kept a journal to reflect on my role as a researcher and on my experiences in the field.

Next to (participant) observation I conducted many interviews ranging from informal conversations to structured interviews. DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) identify a continuum of control and uniformity for different types of interviews. On the far left side of the continuum,

with the lowest level of uniformity is a conversation, followed by unstructured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are in the middle of this five point scale. Structured interviews already have relatively high level of uniformity, and self-administered questionnaires have the highest level of uniformity. I conducted the several forms of interviews on twenty informants and conducted more than one interview with most of them. I wrote down extensive notes during the interview, and wrote down extensive notes as soon as possible after the interview to remember as much details as possible.

Conversations were used throughout the whole research: They were useful to obtain small pieces of information, additional explanation and as inspiration for further questions. I took jot-notes during these (informal) conversations which were expanded later that day. Semi-structured and structured interviews proved to be useful to gather similar data from different people. I used topic lists as a guideline for many interviews. In the second half of the fieldwork period, unstructured interviews were used more often to open up new fields of study and to gather a diverse set of data. I conducted in-depth interviews which enabled me to focus on one specific topic in an interview. This was done when I had built up enough rapport with my informants, and took place in one of the last stages of the fieldwork. This diversity of data gathered enabled me to stay focused and gave me more reference points for further questions.

The missionary post in Kilangala was taken as a starting point to find the first informants but when times passed different informants were found. Still most informants were linked to the mission, this because the mission takes a central position in the village. Most of the time informants were chosen because they were easy to locate, they were introduced to me, or their knowledge of English was moderate to good. This did not mean I limited myself to English speakers only, in the case the interviewee did not speak English an interpreter was used.

Learning Swahili was used as a way of getting into contact with my research population; soon I learned that writing down words, greetings, expressions and short sentences in a small note book, enabled me to start conversations with people and gain their trust. In addition people were interested in my writings and by seeing me making an effort to learn their language. This opportunity was used to ask general questions and gradually introduce my field of interest.

The choice to focus my research on the Moravian, Roman Catholic and Pentecostal Holiness church was mainly made out of practical reasons. The Moravian church is the only church in

Kilangala, and most villagers are members of this church. The Roman Catholic Church in Kipande is the largest church in Kipande, and many people who migrated into Kilangala go to church here. The Pentecostal Holiness is a small denomination, but I was introduced by one of the members of this church, and he was happy talk about his church and to introduce me to his fellow members. Moreover its distinct difference from the Moravian and Roman Catholic Church seemed an interesting addition for my research.

I drew maps to become familiar with the field. Moreover the drawing of maps gave a visual insight into how the village was structured and it helped in the understanding of the social relations. In addition it was a good method to practice your memory and to develop giving detailed descriptions. By walking around in the community, I became visible as a researcher, which made it easier for people to get used to me as a researcher. In this way I was easily approachable for the people in the village, and for me it was an easy way to come into contact with informants. Mapping, counting and writing extensive notes enabled me to grasp an overview of the situation which enabled me to understand the context in which my informants lived better.

APPENDIX II: REFLECTION

After living in several countries in West-Africa from my birth until my seventh birthday, I could not think of any other place to conduct my Bachelor research than somewhere in Africa. I asked my parents' advice and used their contacts in Africa to find a suitable location for my research; this brought me to the missionary village Kilangala, which I decided would be the perfect location for my research.

I left for Tanzania with a theoretical framework, but soon enough in the field I realized things were not as ordered and straightforward as I projected them to be. In my theoretical framework I emphasized the role of syncretism and expected to find many forms of traditional religion combined with Christianity in the village. Already in my first week however, I realized that elements of traditional religion were not as visible as I expected them to be, and I would not be able to focus my research on the combination of traditional religion and Christianity. Of course you cannot say there is no syncretism at all, but the situation I encountered in Kilangala, the picture I read in the literature, and my expectations of the situation, did not match. Additionally, the short period in the field disabled me to build enough rapport with the community to reach a deeper insight in religious practices and therefore it was better to leave my theoretical framework behind, and focus on the actual situation instead. Back home I concentrated on concepts which were better represented in the field and in my data to build a new theoretical framework.

Being an anthropologist in the field can cause a lot of stress, especially when it concerns your first research. In this paragraph I will discuss some elements which caused researcher stress.

Most 'white' people, who visit Kilangala, go there with a specific task; to organize the farm, to help with the school etc., but I did not 'visit' Kilangala, nor did I have a specific task in Kilangala. Introducing myself as a student, to learn from people in Kilangala was a good way for me to explain people, but to myself as well, why I was there. I frequently asked myself: 'Am I a researcher now? Am I doing research when I talk to somebody?' At first it felt odd to be a researcher but after a few weeks I became comfortable in my researchers role and saw opportunities to 'do research' everywhere around me. With this getting comfortable in my role as researcher, I overcame my first feeling of stress. An important realization for me was that this is a learning project; you cannot do everything right the first time round. This

research will not be perfect and does not have to be so; making mistakes are needed to learn, to progress and to know how to do it better the next time.

My role as researcher however, proved to be a reoccurring theme for me. Mainly the first few days people asked me what I was going to do in Kilangala, and I realized: 'What is it that I am going to do here?!' I had a hard time to find justification for, and meaning of my research. Even in the preparations of my field research I was struggling with the meaning of anthropological research. I did not feel at ease with the idea that I would produce information for 'the library'. But throughout my time in the field, I was able to let go of the feeling of being useful and concentrate more on the field here and now, which enabled me to find meaning in my research. I tried to be useful for the community by helping on the nursery school, giving computer lessons to students of the VTC and helping with the preparation of the Easter feast. All these things enabled me to build rapport with individual people as well as the village as a whole. Moreover it helped me to justify my time in Kilangala and fully concentrate on my research.

Another element which caused stress was of me being 'white'. In Kilangala the people were used to white visitors, so walking around the village was fine. Many children came and ran towards me, to touch me or say hello and overall there were not many people who were staring or yelling at me being white. Outside of Kilangala however, where white people are very uncommon, I often felt bad for being white. Especially when I visited the monthly market in Kipande, where many people from all over the area come, I felt very white. Everybody was staring at me, following me, or yelling 'Mzungu [30]!' at me. I felt so uncomfortable being white and left the market as soon as I could. This made me realize that how much I felt at home there, I would always be different and always stand out in the crowd. For approximately a week I could not wave at all the children, or make a witty comment towards people calling me *mzungu*. I just wanted to be black, just like all other people.

The evening before I would take the bus in Sumbawanga to leave Kilangala, Moses organized a surprise party for me. He had asked several employees of the mission for tea and they sang me a goodbye song in Kiswahili. This made me realize how grateful I am to have met those people, and how generous they were for having me and treating me like an old friend, even though I did not know them, or was able to offer them any material goods or money.

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[30] White person in Kiswahili

The strong point of anthropology, and at the same time its weakness, is that you as a researcher are dependent on your informants. People can give you a great insight in their personal lives, and eventually you will not only learn more about those specific people, but more about yourself as well. But on the other hand, if you are not able to get access to your informants, or build up a good rapport, you are nowhere. Knowing this, I am very grateful towards all people I have met, spoken to and lived with, who were able to give me an insight in their lives. Without her informants an anthropologist is nowhere.

In the Christian missionary post in Kilangala, Tanzania I have conducted a three-month ethnographic research strongly focusing on how different Christian denominations exist next to each other in a rural area in Tanzania. Kilangala with its 150 inhabitants is a district of the nearby village Kipande, which has 3000 inhabitants. In Kilangala most people are member of the Moravian church, the only church in the village. In Kipande however, 11 different denominations are present. In my research I have taken a closer look at three different denominations; the Moravian church in Kilangala, the Roman Catholic and the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Kipande.

Religion in anthropology is defined by Bowen (2010:2) as: ever-changing complexes of beliefs (including those authorative beliefs called 'doctrine'), practices (including formalized rituals), and social institutions. In Kilangala Christian religious tradition formed around the belief that God is present. The love for God is shown by going to church, reading the Bible, and praying in church and at home. The social institutions are institutions such as the mission or the church organisation itself. So according to Bowen's definition Christianity in Kilangala can be viewed as a religion.

The literature discusses on the many forms of identity, with religious identities in particular. Identity is not fixed and absolute, but more often considered as an evolving process of "becoming" rather than simply "being". The differences between religious identities are often stressed, and often cause religious tensions. By focusing on three separate Christian denominations, namely the Roman Catholic, Moravian and Pentecostal Holiness church, differences and similarities become apparent between the denominations. The differences mainly focus on the details concerning interpretation of the Bible and not so much in the meaning of religion. People in Kilangala stressed the similarities rather than the differences, and a picture of a peaceful relation between denominations was drawn; many people live together in a peaceful way, even though there are many different Christian denominations in a close area around the village.

This raises the question whether these different denominations result in different religious identities in Kilangala. Looking upon the situation in Kilangala, I would like to suggest that only one religious identity is present, namely a Christian identity. The following indicators point towards this suggestion. First, all denominations in Kilangala are part of Christianity, all are founded on the belief in and love for God and as long as people agree between this

characteristic, no distinctions are made upon different denominations. Next, Christianity serves as a method of peaceful coexistence in Kilangala; it creates a cohesive society and a common peaceful lifestyle in which 'doing good' is central. Moreover, the more advantages religious membership provides you, the more people are motivated to affiliate religiously. In Kilangala however, all churches offer spiritual support, but none of them is able to provide any material advantages. All denominations can offer the same advantages, so it has no further meaning to stress a different religious identity. Finally the religious boundaries are not very rigid in Kilangala and people are able to change between Christian denominations during a lifetime. People turn to a different church when they do not feel at home in a certain church.

Turning back to the question of how different Christian denominations exist peacefully next to each other, Christianity can be used as a self-empowering resource because of the possibility of adjusting religious affiliations. People pragmatically and voluntarily choose to join the church which fits their family situation, dreams and expectations best. Moreover church membership can offer a place in a strong social system, for example the mission community in Kilangala, within a social community.

Generally the literature argues that religious identities are divided amongst several religious lines. Tanzania however tried to overcome these rigid categorizations by *Ujamaa* philosophy. Unifying people is one of the characteristics of *Ujamaa* philosophy, introduced by Nyerere in the early 1960s. In Kilangala *Ujamaa* is still often mentioned, even though it is labeled as outdated and considered a failure by many authors (Heilman and Kaiser 2002, Campbell 1999, Kaiser 1996). Religion is a binding force in Kilangala rather than a separating force and *ujamaa* could be one of the reasons why people are so unified in their religious belief. Because of its remote location, Kilangala is not so much connected to the outside world. This in combination with the presence of many like-minded people in and around the mission has enabled Kilangala as a whole to experience the positive elements of *Ujamaa*, and therefore keep these alive in the community.

Examining Kilangala as a whole, different denominations exist peacefully next to each other despite their mutual differences. Moreover people do not place themselves or others into rigid groups, but are rather flexible in their own belief as well as in others'. Examining the world today, we see an emerging importance of religious identities, the differences between people and between religions often lead to tensions and conflict. In Kilangala however we see quite the opposite. People are not looking for differences between each other, but are focused on the similarities between and among themselves. Further research should examine how the values

of the people in Kilangala can be translated into a broader context, where religious identity does not have to be seen as a source of tension and conflict, but as a source of unity, community and love.

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