

# **TRAUMATIC RITUAL MURDERS IN VENDLA: A CHALLENGE TO PASTORAL CARE**

BY

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis hereby submitted to the University of Pretoria for the degree in Masters in Trauma Counselling has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Finally, I would like to thank my family for supporting and sacrificing for me to travel using their finances to accomplish this work, their motivation, inspiration and encouragement I shall forever be indebted.

**DEDICATION**

**This thesis is dedicated to my late father,  
Mr. Joseph, Jowet Bidiga Waluza Munthali**

**and**

**my mother Enala Nyirenda Munthali.**

**To my lovely wife Balekeni**

**and**

**my precious boys,**

**Tiwonge Abel and Gomezga Robert.**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 General orientation

Traumatic ritual murders in Venda- a challenge to Pastoral care.

Traumatic ritual murder and its phenomenon is in fact a global problem and here in South Africa a national issue. In the countries of southern Africa, Botswana and Lesotho the phenomenon is also present. Even ancient Europe is not excluded from the old ideas living on in folk lore. Harris and Parrinder had this to say about the issue; “Sacrifice were not only made to rivers but at the foundation of buildings. When the gates of the town of Ketou in Dahomey were built, a dwarf was buried beneath them to preserve the town from capture- unsuccessfully.

Such things have been common all over the world. In the Bible we read of the man who rebuilt Jericho that laid the foundation thereof with the loss of Abiram his first born and set up the gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub,”

(1 Kings 16:34 )It was against such terrible practices, and similar sin-offerings, that the prophet thundered, Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (Micah 6:7) It is worth including some more illustrations from our own country, for the people of Africa and the East should know that in Britain our roots are grounded in Animism, and when we speak of Animist we include our own ancestors.”( Harris, W.T. & Parrinder, E.G. 1960:20)

In bringing this quotation I need to point out that the phenomenon is global and old that when the research zoom in at Ha Tshivhase in Venda, it must be understood that it is a humankind problem. Now, in bringing it closer home the following is description of the same phenomenon in another province in South Africa.

Turrel and Rob continue to say on the subject the following:

“In Natal, South Africa, ‘muti’, the ritual killing of a human, was required for acquisition of extraordinary power. And extraordinary power was required to win competitive advantages in chiefly rivalries over people and land. There fore ‘muti’ murders were closely associated with the chiefly politics. Still these murders were exceptional in pre-colonial polities and were only committed in the face of an extremely serious challenges to chiefly power. Ritual killing became more common as the evil of colonial encroachment placed arrange of social and economic pressure on Zulu chiefdoms. Between the 1900s and 1930s Natal chiefs lost their monopoly of ritual murder. By the 1920s the use of human flesh in chiefly politics had been over taken by its use in strengthening ambitious commoners. ‘*Muti*’ murder had become a widespread practice outside the realm of chiefly politics.”(South African Historical Journal; Turrel,Rob; no.44,p. 21-39,2001).

The phenomenon is conspicuously seen on our continent, probably because education is still bringing the civilizing changes. The myths and philosophies that underpins this occurrence seemingly are human and affect all races. The quest for power and control of natural forces is no respecter of persons.

### **Ritual murders in Venda.**

This thesis document shall focus on Venda at Ha Tshivhasa in order to specify the area and scope, parameters of investigation. The description of the ritual murder phenomenon will be undertaken in order to show the gravity of the heinousness. The experiences of ritual murders in Venda have been there and the whole nation heard the news from the following extract in the quotation.

‘Almost the whole population in Venda, South Africa, supported a four-day stay away in August 1988. The immediate cause was the ritual murder of a teacher. The stay away started at the teacher’s school and spread rapidly to every classroom in Venda. A cabinet minister, A.A Tshivhase, was held responsible for the murder of the teacher and several other ritual murders. The four-day stay away-paralyzed schools, factories and the government itself and led to the resignation of the minister’. This article examines why the people of Venda focused their protest on ritual murders, while having many other grievances: poverty, lack of housing, unemployment etc. The answer lies in the changing role of the chief in Venda society. Traditionally, one of the chief’s tasks was to treat the seed at planting time, supposedly with human body parts obtained through ritual murder (*mushonga*). Today, *mushonga* is said to be executed for personal economic or political gain. In the case of Tshivhase, it was believed that the body parts were used to protect his bottle stores and discotheque. Chiefs no longer care about the well-being of the people, but involve themselves in patronage and corruption.’(South African labour bulletin, vol. 13,no.7, Koch, E.; Ritchken, E. p. 48-57:foto’s 1987/1988 ISSN:0377-5429) In Kwa Zulu Natal in South Africa as quoted above, the motives for these ritual murders are the same as in Ha Tshivhase.

The above has caused the researcher to research the phenomenon in Ha-Tshivhasa. The issue of medicine for power, prosperity and protection seem to be the motivating factor that causes people to murder other people. It is interesting to note, that most of the commoners do not want the practice as it not for human progress. The problem how ever is that evil things paralyses and dis-empowers communities and individuals. The project proposal will endeavor to research and study the phenomenon and its implication and result in the community. Several questions could be asked. What is it about? How prevalent is it? The beliefs and myths that propel people to practice the phenomenon will be all part of the study. Is it linked to witchcraft and the medicine man? In the quest for the solution, the role of Pastoral care and counseling will also be studied and researched in order to establish a solid base of skill that can bring a change of mindset. Is Pastoral care and counseling capable of bringing a new paradigm in our society? Can life be important and sacred again in the eyes of the majority of people? In the holy book, man is made in the image and likeness of God and any one who kills the other, for whatever reason, is in direct violation of the Creator himself. Pastoral care and counseling are to help communities in achieving forensic legal justice, but also bringing in this sad scenario, a challenge to people and healing those who are bereaved. The main problem faced by the family of the deceased is justice. The denial of justice is to fight with the maker of human beings, and justice delayed is justice denied, especially by police officers, as well as the court of law.

Where perversion of legal justice is rampant, communities and individuals are traumatized. Resulting, in the absence of good and peaceful governance. Evil rule people by fear and they are afraid even to report these kinds of murders. In this thesis a thorough attempt shall be made to venture into the evil side of the issue that have not been articulated before in the field of study of pastoral care. In other

word the researcher will now give the motivation and there after restate the problem statement.

## **1.2 Motivation**

The researcher was barely a month old in his present pastoral charge, when a Riotous incident happened .One of the youth who was spear heading the march against ritual murders was gunned down by assassins, in order to silence the revelations on ritually murdered persons. More than 9 persons in this part of Venda land had been ritually murdered and many more uncounted for lives that are missing with no grave. The researcher was asked by his family to go and bury him. Prior to that, the youth of Ha -Tshivhasa protested by disrupting schools and by burning houses. In some instances they killed the occupants of homes suspected to be murderers or harboring the suspects. This situation was driven by mob psychology at its climax. The painful incident was exacerbated by the lady who was buried without a head. The unrest of the area lasted for more than a month. Because of fear very few pastors participated in trying to resolve the issue, as the majority opted to pray about it. The whole community was affected by this incident. The problem the researcher was facing, as clergy was how to address the phenomenon theologically and pastorally.

The situation was difficult, paralyzing, perplexing and sensitive. Only three Pastors of mainline churches, with other community leaders from all walks of life and police, were meeting every night at police station and the palace in order to break the impasse. The restoration to normality was not easy. The young people had blocked roads with rocks and old broken cars. Trauma ruled the whole community with fear. The researcher saw that there was a serious need to address the phenomenon of ritual murders in Venda , and that a pastoral care demission

need to contribute to the traumatic phenomenon. The researcher saw the inadequacies of pastoral approach in such situations and seek to have tools with which to arm pastors in similar circumstances. The researcher was in adequately prepared at the time.

The stressful moments and questions he was asking, made him end up in hospital with an Ulcer. He was bleeding internally, lost a number of pints of blood and almost died. This was his first hospitalization in his entire life. The researcher launches and undertakes this research and study in order to try and contribute a new facet to the Pastoral care as regards to the phenomenon.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Traumatic ritual murders in Venda a challenge to pastoral care. The killing of a person for the purpose of using his or her parts for medicine. The killing is mainly gruesome, the cutting of private parts, the mouth, the tongue, the eyes the hands, the head and other parts of the body. This phenomenon has been a common feature in Venda. If the victim is plotted and killed by higher powers like the chief ,it said *o miliswa tshivhindi* meaning the person has been sacrificed for cultural purposes . When cultural interest are threatened. When the tribe need rain and bumper harvest. The victim here maybe a person who is causing insurrection. No interrogation from the family concern as it is cultural. The other motive here is dignity and respect. The opponent cannot challenge the words of the authority mainly out of fear.

The other people involved are the businessmen, who believe that for them to prosper, they must have human body parts. More preferably the arm as is used to call many people to buy from them. The body parts are buried or put some where



in the threshold of their business premises. The other reason is the desire to have a bumper harvest even in adverse conditions of whether for corn, sorghum and other farming ventures like an orchard. It is strongly believed that if one puts the human head in the granary, the corn stored in there cannot be exhausted. Nowadays the phenomenon has gone underground as any open activity invites the strong arm of the law. The scale has come down, but the phenomenon is still persistent. The Venda culture is reserved; full of secrets and the phenomenon thrives in secrecy, as persons can easily disappear untraceable.

Only in fortunate circumstances can the body be found with missing parts and doctors suggesting the missing parts may have been eaten by animals. Conclusions, which perturb communities, as they know the murders, are ritually motivated. The

phenomenon is like a no go zone in the sense that people are afraid to talk about it. It is difficult, evil and persistent thus posing the serious question. The researcher risk to handle the problem in order to contribute to theology. The researcher launches this daring and dangerous research for quest for truth even in pastoral care. The question is, how can Pastoral care heal the situation? Human life is sacred and God alone can give and take, so the understanding and myths, philosophy which promotes this erroneous belief must be uprooted through pastoral care venues which encourage healing.

#### **1.4 Purpose And Necessity Of The Study**

This study is necessary, as ritual murders need an intervention from theology namely practical theology, as in pastoral care and counselling to address the phenomenon. The researcher has to probe the family members and find out first hand from those who have been traumatised by ritual murders that took place to give the support needed. It is a common occurrence in Venda, to find a dead body with missing head or limbs, private

parts, all to be used for medicine purposes. The description is on its own, a scary and traumatising thing. The main purpose of the study and research project is to show that this phenomenon is real and traumatic and need the pastoral care to address and remedy the situation. The exposure of the falseness of these philosophies that underpins the practice of the phenomenon is necessary for a paradigm shift in the Venda culture and perceptions.

Is it possible to uproot this practice from the Venda culture? The study is a necessary contribution to the whole church and the communities that find the traumatising phenomenon reoccurring.

## **1.5 Methodology**

When one embarks on a research of such a magnitude, a multiple approach of methods are useable. The qualitative method is narrative and descriptive while quantitative method is statistical in nature. The method to be employed will be qualitative. "Qualitative method studies the participant's perspective –feelings, thoughts, beliefs, ideals and actions in a natural situation". (Mc Millan &Schumacher, 1993:379). The feelings, beliefs and thoughts of the affected persons will be given attention. One way of exploring the method of healing employed by Gerkin's methodology is the use of case studies as away of analysing the problem. The focus will be on the two case studies, namely:

1. The family of the lady who is buried in the church graveyard without a head.
2. Of the youth who was murdered after leading a march against ritual murderers. The other sources will be books, relevant journals, and articles and interviews as well as recorded data. The major source about the traumatic experiences of these families is the use of ethnographic or informal interviews recorded data. Due to the fear, sensitivity and secrecy that surround the research, a family member who is a retired minister will be a co-researcher as in the case of the two families gathering the data.

The other key informants will be six old persons who are conversant with the Venda culture and issues pertaining to the phenomenon will tell stories that give contextual evil

reality of the study. They are willing to help as informants, but their names will be changed to pseudo ones in order to protect them from danger of retaliation and vengeance. Admittedly, these are open secrets that society is unwilling to talk about as it shows the evil and weak side of humans. Pseudo names will be used and participants will be informed that the information will be gathered and analysed to help future troubled souls who can learn from the experience. The researcher will visit the courts, chief's kraals and civic authorities that were involved in handling some of the cases pertaining to the phenomenon.

The pastoral care model of shepherding will be used following Gerkin's concept of caring. "This is what they meant by the care and cure of souls- the Pastor as the physician of the soul. The experience conveyed to me in a profoundly moving way the depth and richness, the pain and difficulty, and the privilege of this ministry. It is a heritage those who pastor need to cherish and to hone with humility."(Gerkin, 1997:84).

The study will be seeking realities of the traumatic instances that need a shepherding model. The pastor can help in the healing of people's traumatic experience. In this study the quest is how can this role help heal the individual families and villagers of the people who are traumatised by the phenomenon.

The evaluation of the data collected will be analysed bearing the sensitivity that surrounds the study and research. The strict confidentiality will be observed as the study hinges on the cultural heritage of the people and the dynamics that surrounds it.

## **1.6 Definitions Of Terms**

The phenomenon here means ritual murder.

Ritual murder here means the killing of a person for medicine reasons or purposes. O miliswa tshivhindi means the person has been sacrificed for tribal reasons either of disloyal behaviour of bringing insurrection or merely being the sacrificial lamb in order for the tribe to have rain.

*Mushonga* is medicine

*Muti* is medicine

*muloi* meaning witch

*ndi ndavhukho ya vha Venda* meaning this is the Venda culture.

*uviya* meaning to kill or to strangled for muti purposes

*usuka mbeu* meaning to treat the seed for planting.

*nganga* meaning Doctor/ even the one who treat those who have been bewitched

*sangoma* meaning Doctor in Zulu

*tshilombo* meaning the demon possessed /demoniac/ some body suffering from a spirit.

*zwilombo* meaning demons / spirits (in plural)

*vhaloi* meaning witches

## **CONCLUSION**

The reader by now would realise how this research would open wounds of trauma among individuals, families and community. The result is that the phenomenon has traumatic implications that may cause harm to those interviewed as well as those interviewing. Hence pastoral caregiver has worked with the community in burying the dead, but never explored the issue why the murders occur. This research aims at journeying with those who were traumatised, seeking solutions and cure /healing. The phenomenon has traumatic implications and the pastoral care can bring in a cure to the Venda worldview and culture. Many may have something on the subject but few in the area of searching for solution from a spiritual pastoral care dimension.

## **CHAPTER 2**

## 2.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research of this magnitude needs an elaborate and clear methodology and theory. The main theory and model will be Gerkin, s pastoral shepherding model of caring for the souls.

"The model is that of the caring leader as shepherd. Although the shepherding motif originated as a metaphor for the role of king during the monarchical periods of Israelite history. It was first appropriated within the religious life of Israel as a metaphor with which to speak of the care of Yahweh for Yahweh's people. This motif is most clearly captured in the imagery of psalm 23, here the Lord God is depicted as the good shepherd who leads the people in paths of righteousness, restores the souls of the people, and walks with the people among their enemies and even into the valley of the shadow of death"(Gerkin 1997 :27).

Yahweh cares for his people as a group, as families and individual who are traumatised by life's evil. In this particular research it is the evil of ritual murder. Since the phenomenon under scrutiny is affecting the whole Venda, it would be an impossible venture to undertake. The parameters, scope narrow down to stories of six Informants whose names remain psuedo ones, in order to protect them from revenge and vengeance. Mainly the focus will be on the two case studies that will be narrowed to specific parents, families and communities.

The co- researcher who is a distant relative to both families shall interview the parents of the two murdered persons informally. He is a retired minister and is held in high esteem. The researcher being a foreigner, it is hard for the parents to open up freely, as it is tantamount to a bad omen. As for the old persons informing the researcher they have opened up, as he relates to them in a pastoral way. In being aware of the possibility of re-traumatization of the families, the informal way of interviewing will be employed.

The narrating of painful stories of human living documents- in this case it shall be the persons directly attached and affected by these ritual murders, as given by the six old informants who are well versed in the issue pertaining the phenomenon. The traumatic ritual murders will be chronicled, for future posterity to have documented incidents that

have transpired within the area where the research will be conducted namely, Ha-Tshivhase. The stories are an example that backs up the frequency and reality of the phenomenon in question.

The methodology of Gerkin' s use of case studies will be employed. Since this study is descriptive, the qualitative method of writing will be used. As already quoted from Mc Millan and Schumacher, they encapsulate it in the following way: "Qualitative method study, the participants perspective- feelings, thoughts, beliefs, ideals and actions in a natural situation"(i. b. d 1993:379). The above statement surmises better the intentions of the research in seeking to go into the thoughts and feelings of the family members who remain, when their loved ones are ritually murdered.

The intentions are to get their perspectives, beliefs and see how help can be rendered from the theological and pastoral dimensions. The quest will be to engage the traumatic stories and analyse to show the possible ways of healing venues. The points of interest will be to get an honest opinion, of the traumatic nature of the phenomenon from persons who are directly affected, and the possible help being expected by these people in terms of care and healing. What intervention can the pastoral care and church play in order to transform the mindset that is inclined to practice the phenomenon, which is anti humanity, anti social and anti Progress.

This methodology shall carry the research to sketch the two case studies, and buttress the contextual Venda environs by narrating the events as told by the informants about the phenomenon, whose names are protected and bound by the ethical codes.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.1 TRAUMATIC NATURE OF THE PHENOMENON**

In this chapter the research will grapple with the traumatic nature of the phenomenon as it happens. It will also look at the reputation of the clan, beliefs and values and the purpose of murder. The researcher will state in detail the two case studies, the informal interview done informally by the co-researcher and the conclusions and analysis drawn from the cases with regard to the trauma and healing. The issues of which are the focus of the whole study, and narrate the painful stories that describe the phenomenon as told by the six old informants in most graphic ways. The motives that propel individuals to practice the phenomenon, what underpins the phenomenon and its links to witchcraft. Below is the picture of the issues the research is dealing with. Admittedly the research on trauma after ritual murder has occurred is a complex affair. There are factors that the family, which is affected, takes into account:

### 3.1.1 Reputation of the clan as a whole:

There is a belief that before a ritual murder occurs, the medicine man has to fortunetell which clan totem the victim belongs to. Is the victim from the elephant or crocodile clan? As already alluded to above, the medication does not work on any person. It must have blood connection for it to function.

Therefore it makes the family to think too deeply as who could be behind it. There are only two ways about it, that is either one of the family members sold out the victim or that the family as a whole has lost a valuable a member of their family. Their reputation as a family is always disadvantaged. As far as the family is concerned their name is at risk and family pride is affected by occurrence of this phenomenon. This further traumatises the family, which is in desperate need for support in a situation like this.

### 3.1.2 Beliefs and values

The question of what the family faith is comes to the fore, when a ritual murder has occurred. In the majority of cases it is during the time of crisis when it shows what the person really believes. In a state of harmony you cannot know what the person really

believes in, except in times of difficulties, then the core, of what one believes comes out. So if it is the prayers they will manifest here and if it is to ancestral spirits, the belief will express it self clearly. Watson explains the word believe in the following way. The English word "believe" has often a weak connotation. We believe in theory that something can happen, but we may not be at all sure that it will. The word believe however, comes from two saxon words; be, meaning "to be" or to exist and liafen, meaning "as if it were done". Thus to believe means to accept something as though it were already done, already true, already accomplished (Watson 1930: 126).

Every human being has some kind of belief and values which they hold in high regards. Many African people have a strong belief in their ways of doing things that bring success or bad omen.

Values are principles that are taken as virtues which one can hold on to live well with one self and others. There seems a general trend among Africans to believe strongly in what they are convinced of, that it takes only the maker to change any erroneous belief that one dearly cherishes as correct. Sacrifice will be done in order to achieve the desired need. There is a strong belief that if any other person is killed and whose totem is unknown, the charms may backfire and kill the initiator and beneficiary. Meaning if you use foreign blood the medicine will not work as envisaged.

### 3.1.3 Purpose of murdering a person

The motivation varies from personal, cultural, economic, religious and lust for power. The motives will be explained in detail as we come to the subject. The issues of hatred also play a role. Some ritual murderers also pray that they find a suitable victim for their sacrificial intention to work well as planned. In John's Gospel it is written "They will put you out of the synagogue; infact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God" (John 16:2).

It is abhorring to interpret issues of ritual murder in such away as, murder is a violation of God's intentions, life is sacred and only God the giver of it can take it away. This erroneous belief and motivation is to be challenged as to let it go, unopposed is to participate in the evil by virtue of things left undone. Man was made in the image of God



and to leave this wrong philosophy and thinking go unchallenged is to rubber stamp, ratify a phenomenon that terrorises and traumatises individuals, families and communities.

#### 3.1.4 Fear of Retaliation:

The families and individuals who are already traumatised by the ritual murder of their loved ones keep a low profile in fear. They are afraid that the phenomenon may re-occur, as the perpetrators threaten to retaliate to what they say. The family is in fear and ruled by phobia. When a talk about ritual murder arises, it is regarded as a bad omen. *Vhakotula*- meaning you are bringing a bad omen, you may lead us to experience something evil again in our extended family. These talks are not easy subjects *zwi a vhoneiwa fhedzi azwi ambiwi*. This is hidden and cannot be openly discussed.

Now the researcher will state the case studies and the interviews that were done informally by the co- researcher.

#### 3.1.5 Case Study One

In Ha-tshivhase in a village where the mission is situated was a lady who had a lecturer of some college as male friend. Little did she know this male friend is a son of a ritual murderer. One afternoon he came and asked her to go for shopping in Thohoyandou as they had a child in their relationship. She did not know that she was the victim of ritual murder being led to her death. Apparently her uncle a school teacher had already sealed the deal with powerful business people. She was way laid into the forest where she was subsequently beheaded. Her body was found and identified by the clothing she was wearing on the day she disappeared. She was murdered for muti purposes. This incident shocked the whole Ha-Tshivhase as the lady ended being buried in the church graveyard without a head.

In a shop at Ngwenani a certain old lady went to buy a packet of chicken feet, makwanda. The freezer unfortunately was not refilled with chicken feet for sale. When she went into the deep freezer to her surprise there was the human head the shop owner quickly

announced that the shop is closed for a short while .He then removed it and in the night he threw it in the mabola dam. There is something about human remains that cannot allow them to be hidden, for man was made in God's image.

Two young men went to do some fishing and as they fished, they caught what seemed like they had a big catch for the day. Surprisingly, they caught the human head that was missing from the lady. The police came and took the head and promised to bring back the forensic results after Pretoria had done the tests.

The legal courts, and the police could not bring the answers to the serious questions the community was raising. Never traditionally has a person been buried without a head. The investigators, who were blocking arrests of suspected murderers, by destroying the dockets, aggravated the situation and the young people got to know of that and Ha-Tshivhase was on fire. The young people demanded all nine cases of ritual murders be attended to, by bringing the culprits to book. This was very hard as some prominent people were going to be implicated. Mobilised by their youth leader, the youth went on rampage demanding for the answers on the head and other ritual murder cases. Unfortunately assassins who did not want him to reveal them as he threatened on radio prior to his death gunned down the youth leader.

In avenging for the death of their leader, the youth torched 10 houses, one of which was for the uncle of the lady buried without a head. The father of the suspected ritual murderer was killed by the youth mob frenzy. They took the law into their own hands. The case above will be the focus of the research. Parents will be interviewed to get the direct response from the affected people.

A co- researcher did the following interviews, as there are personal and sensitive. Since he is trusted and honoured by the families concerned. They are able to divulge their feelings on the issue freely, knowing that confidentiality will be observed.

#### 3.1.5.1 the mother of the deceased lady interviewed

The following questions where posed informally to the parent of the deceased.

Q1. How do you feel about the ritual murder of your daughter?

**Response:** The pain of this experience is excruciating, and can be likened to a bee sting.

Q2. What traumatic experiences imaged out of this incidence?

**Response:** Because of trauma, I shiver when I remember my daughter and I cry like a baby. It appears as though it happened yesterday. 5years has passed, but I still experience nightmare about my daughter's death.

Sometimes I blame myself for her death because her uncle was involved. Anyway what can I do as it is one of the vha venda beliefs- *Ndi ndavhuko yavha Venda* I feel powerless, I cannot do anything about it (The person broke down even during the interviews, shivering and crying).

Q3.What are the ways in which you have dealt with your pain?

**Response:** I resort to a witch doctor, who gives us family medicine.

We are also given libations as the witch doctor invokes the spirits of the ancestors to cause revenge on the perpetrator. The day of vengeance will come- *Lidoda Duvha*, the perpetrator will be avenged.

Q4. What happens after the medication from the witch doctor?

**Response:** After drinking the medicine, it cools me down. I feel better after *mushonga*-medicine. I depend on *mushonga* each time I remember and feel bad and shiver. You people, I feel you should not ask about trauma, instead what could be done in order to stop the ritual murders .why trauma? Instead you should investigate the cause of murders and how to stop them or prevent them.

Q5. If anything bad or negative could happen to the perpetrator, would you feel better?

**Response:** I think I need an eye for an eye. I need revenge to heal my pain. If the death of my daughter could be avenged for I would feel better.

#### 3.1.5.1.1 Analysis to responses to case one:

Between the father and the mother of the deceased, the ritual murder has affected the mother more than the father. It appears there are suspicions and allegations of the father

being linked, because of the uncle's behaviour, of being a seller-out. Apparently husbands are more prone to these temptations.

If the medicine man would say, I have thrown my bones and the indication is the child of such a totem. He may be bound to sell the child for the sake of starting a business or any profitable venture.

The responses from the respondent will now be engaged in the light of trauma, theology and pastoral care.

The theologian and pastoral care giver, Gerkin has talked about painful stories of living human documents.

**Response number one:** In this first response of feeling an excruciating pain like a bee sting indeed epitomises that the directly attached family has a lot of pain caused by this radical evil which robs people of their loved ones and traumatises them. . Their loss is great and profoundly devastating. Here the questions want to address the emotional dimension which brings out the inner feelings which must be faced if any healing would be feasible.

**Response two:** The trauma triggers the shivering and crying, the nightmares about the daughter's death. This informal interview was only possible because the retired minister is a relative and was using the Venda language. She was now in a personal terrain and she was shivering and crying. The normal reaction would be to go away and cry privately, but she could openly do so as she was sure that her confidences were held securely. The self-blame is one of the features that traumatic incidents bring in a life of a person and indeed a feeling of powerlessness. Evil dis-empowers people. This is endorsed by Monett et al (1998:117) when he says that most researchers suggest that the interviewers are more successful if they have social characteristics similar to those of their respondents.

In this case, It appears that it takes courage to face trauma, in order, for healing to take place. Even if the individual suppresses or avoids facing up, in one-way or the other, the trauma shows itself again and again. Until it can be dealt with thoroughly and properly through pastoral counselling. The one method is to tell the victim to separate the past from the present. To bury the past and move on with life and let bygones be bygones.

**Response number three and four:** In this particular case the affected looked for help from other sources namely the *sangoma*. The absence of the church is a challenge to the theologian of Africa and pastoral care. One observes that in many instances of these serious situations, the churches in Africa are failing to give solution when people are in crises or dilemmas of this nature.

In this case the church does not even feature as the affected seeks help from the medicine man/ *sangoma*. The medicine man gives what one may term tranquilliser but far from healing the traumatised individual and clan. The case also shows that ritual murder indeed is traumatic, needs intervention from pastoral care and theology to re-instate wholeness in the life of the individual and community.

**Response number five:** Revenge seem to be coming strongly as means of closing the case in order to get even. Admittedly pain and anger floods the soul of survivor. These feelings must be faced by moving them from the person's emotional system. Otherwise they will hang on, live on and hinder full closure of overcoming the loss and bereavement. When interviewed, it appears the affected is re-living the trauma again which theologians and psychologists have called re-traumatisation keeps occurring. The ritual murder was fresh again in her mind and she started to crying and shiver as though the incident has just occurred. The clan may be quiet about the issue, but the trauma has not been healed, as it has not been faced.

This is what Moreau writes as regards revealing some root causes to the wounds that traumatise an individual for the whole life if left unattended;

"Woundedness is a common reality in the world today. Abuse, poverty, war, disease and serious occult practices cause all kinds of spiritual and emotional problems for people. Mental health sciences have done helpful research in this area that can help the church better understand wounded people and how they react to certain situations. Research has shown that when people are traumatised during childhood, certain biological alterations occur in the way their brain processes information. This alteration can severely impact the way these people function in society, which includes the church.

Some of the following problems are examples of what the wounded people may experience.

- 1) In ability to control emotions and negative behaviours
- 2) In ability to rationalise
- 3) Server panic attacks and
- 4) Memory problems" (A. Scott Moreau:2000: 74)

In our case study number one the mother of the lady who was murdered exhibited the almost all the above-mentioned problems.

This shows beyond doubt that the trauma had occurred in her life. The wound may have been soothed, but has not been healed.

"Traumatic experiences are part of human life. We cannot expect to live life fully without being traumatised, and we depend on one another for the healing of wounds" (Means 2000:67).

When the respondent says " *ndindavhuko ya vhavenda*" meaning it is a venda culture she can do nothing to change the situation, is a sign that trauma has taken a hold. It appears she has resigned about life and feel disempowered. There is a need here to bring in Taylors explanation about his understanding on culture, although he will properly state the meaning of culture from a western point of view which is synonymous with a civilised person, like culture is equal to a person who is modern. In the research the issue of culture will keep coming up, as it touches chiefs and the phenomenon under scrutiny. The issue of ritual murder traumatises as this radical evil is done by human beings and consequently must be healed by human beings equipped with the pastoral tools. Now the lay out of the questions is recorded as follows for the second informal interview carried out by the co- researcher.

#### 3.1.5.2 case study 2

A youth leader of Ha –Tshivhase Ngwenani Ya Mapholi had information and evidence sufficient to incriminate ritual murderers. He had the names of nine ritually murdered persons. He mounted with his youth committee a protest march that put the whole Ha-Tshivhase under tension. He went on Radio to announce that he was going to reveal

perpetrators and officers of police who were standing in the way of justice and investigations. His threats of divulging the sensitive information cost him his life. The following day in the night, assassins gunned him down in cold blood, before he could come open, about who is involved. This was like adding gasoline to an already volatile situation. The youths reacted sharply by rioting violently, even going to an extent of killing the father of the suspected ritual murderer in a very gruesome way. 10 houses were torched by fire.

The youth blocked roads with broken down unused of cars, burning cars tyres, throwing rocks. The community was besieged as the police were shooting rubber bullets, on the ground and in their chopper. Terror, trauma and fear reigned and rendered the community, schools, powerless dysfunctional. Even the hospital was not spared; the staff that was on duty could not knock off, as the roads were impassable.

The family of the murdered youth asked the researcher to go and bury him. The research will explore the reaction and the direct interpretation of this Traumatic experience of the parents of this youth.

#### 3.1.5.2.1 Youth leader's Mother interviewed

Q1. How do you feel about the experience you have concerning your Son?

**Response :** In the first place I was devastated at the news of his death as he left behind a new-born infant of two weeks. But the youths who were rioting have avenged the death of my son by killing the father of the ritual murderer. I feel consoled. *Ndoluriwa muhwalo muhulu*-my heavy burden is lifted up from me.

Q2. How do you think the ritual murders can be stamped out?

**Response:** If we can have more young chiefs the practice can die out- especially if young Christian chiefs take the reigns. People hear and follow the word of the chiefs and their headmen more. The older generation of chiefs may find the phenomenon still appropriate, though we know this is anti progress in our area.

Q3. What role can the church play in stamping out ritual murders?

**Response:** In my view the sectarian churches that allow Afro- centricity to go unchecked, cannot help much, as some of the ritual murderers go and camouflage in those churches in order to hide there. It is not every thing that is called African that is necessarily progressive. If churches are just like an umbrella to cover up for the wrong doers then I do not see any way forward. If the church could be true to the gospel they preach and practice. Christianity without hypocrisy. I believe there can be some change, but not presently. Many go to church for nominal membership and they practice something different. The ritual murderers are in the church. You cannot trust any one these days.

Q4. What could you suggest as solution to this ritual murder problem?

**Response:** only water quenches fire, not throwing stones to the fire. Going to witch doctors cannot solve the evil of ritual murder. Only God 's intervention can stop this evil of ritual murder.

Q5. What can be corrected in the motivation and thinking of the perpetrators?

**Response:** The perpetrators think they are doing God's job as they kill the victim even asking religiously to fallen spirits to give them the victim.

The researcher thinks here the church and its theology should refuse categorically this interpretation of God's working, because life is important and sacred, God alone has the right over it. No one can kill and say God has helped him. This is a wrong belief and understanding, a very weird way of perceiving life.

#### 3.1.5.2.1.1 Case study number two the responses of the mother analysed

Before one unpacks these responses it is the right place to bring in Means' responses of self to trauma. Individual's even identical twins differ in their responses to traumatic events. Variables are: the nature and severity of the event, frequency and duration of trauma, genetic vulnerability, developmental level at the time of trauma, strength and flexibility of psychological defences, strength and clarity of sense of self, history of



trauma (or not) and the support available after the trauma. Generally when trauma occurs the following are the responses:

- 1) The person is startled and prone to irritability
- 2) Explosive outburst of aggression
- 3) Fixation on trauma
- 4) Regression
- 5) Dreams

The second case either the parent is being helped by the temperament and probably the action of vengeance from the youth. She seems to have overcome the trauma and freely about her feeling of pain and loss.

**Response number one:** The news of death of a person is always devastating, but in this case she found consolation in the fact that, the youths had repaid the death of her son by killing the father of the ritual murderer. A heavy load of pain and devastation has been removed from her. This simply means she is on the way to healing through acceptance that it has happened.

**Response number two:** She strongly feels that in order to eradicate the phenomenon from Venda, the involvement of Chiefs who are God fearing is important as the people obey more quickly the word of the chief. Modern governance is there in Venda, but traditional way of doing things through the chief is the acceptable way to make many things possible to happen.

The social political environment in Venda favours the chiefs. Any en road that excludes the chief will not succeed, especially in the case of this magnitude of the phenomenon.

**Response number three:** The role of the church in stamping out ritual murder.

This triggered in the respondent the feeling of mistrust as regards the role of the church as it stands. In the first place she pointed out that most African independent churches have one huge dilemma and that is the accommodation of African culture in these churches brings along the un-discarded old ways which accommodate witchcraft trends of ritual murder. The church then is used as a cover up for things unchristian and

unbiblical thus the misrepresentation. This argument does not restrict to sectarian churches only even in mainline it appears hypocrisy is the cancer of the time. The Christian gospel if put into practice can bring lasting changes in communities and individual lives. The church is the ekklesia of God. The called out community, called out to make a difference in bringing change for better in traumatised lives. Presently one need to admit that the church in these challenges of ritual murder appears to fail because the nature of the problem is overwhelmingly great. The threatened people need strength from the church to deal with the scary things in life.

**Response number four:** The witch doctor seems to be a solution to many victims of serious life issues in an African set-up, but in essence the Lord God of heaven is the ultimate solution. The removal or eradication of the phenomenon is an ambitious attempt as the problem is linked to human fallibility. So she is right in pointing out that, the maker is the one who knows the deceitfulness of the human heart, and he alone can stop the phenomenon, using the available human hearts that will accomplish for God his purposes in the world.

**Response number five:** There is a pattern of thinking that needs to be categorically challenged as it surmises that ritual murder can be done prayerfully for the Lord to provide a suitable victim. This thinking if tolerated can be and is the source of murder. There is nothing Godly about killing a human being. In fact the wrath of God is promised for all who do practice such a phenomenon.

In the Decalogue it is stated 'thou shall not kill'( Exodus 20:13 )This is so precisely because God made man in his own image or his own likeness, therefore if any people for any reason kill a person is violating the makers laws and fights the maker. Man is the crown of God's creation and the spirit of God lives in him and he has been charged to rule the earth on his behalf. Life is sacred and more so precious thus must be preserved.

These above case studies are the focus of our research in regard to the personal and direct responses from the affected family members. The quest for their healing is also part of the search.

One agrees with the other counsellor and psychologist that the response to trauma of ritual murder or any other trauma differs from person to person.

In CASE NUMBER ONE, the mother is still in tears after five years and in CASE NUMBER TWO, the mother has overcome the incidence and has moved on.

### **3.2 The Description Of The Phenomenon Of Traumatic Ritual**

#### **Murders**

First and foremost the word trauma is derived from Greek meaning wound. The wound can be on physical, emotional, psychological, relational and spiritual level. These levels are inter connected and therefore trauma affects one's entire life. Trauma can be defined as: something sudden, violent, brutal or catastrophic which touches a person's life in some intimate way.

Trauma is a state of being overwhelmed meaning more than what one can normally tolerate physically/ psychologically. Traumatization therefore involves bodily injury and psychological, emotional and spiritual reactions. With this general definition above of what trauma is, Means also alluded to it in his book on trauma and evil.(Means, 2000:65 ) The researcher is in full agreement with the definition as it has thoroughness and wholeness. In the following section the description of this traumatic phenomenon will now be given. Ritual murder is an evil that harms, kills, and maims humans in order to get body parts. The killing is done when the victim is alive and screaming as the murderers cut the person with sharp objects.

The death is inflicted in a most gruesome manner; there is a belief that the effectiveness of the charm is dependent on this way of killing. This is a brutal sadistic way of killing, which is evil, and very cruel. It is ungodly and challenges the pastoral care and its theology to attempt seriously, in bringing the solution.

#### **3.2.1 The kinship element:**

The victim normally and in most cases must be blood-related to the killer for the charms using body parts to be useful. This entails that majority of ritual murders are linked genealogically. There is an element of blood connection, which happens to be a pre requisite.

This is not restrictive in other set ups, as what is needed is a specific body part. Majority of African, *muti* killings the bloodline is important.

It is so as during the magical incantation the family totems are mentioned in order to invoke the spirits of ancestors to make body parts work. One wonders that it appears in the spirit world there is some kind of the modern equivalent of DNA. The ancestral line is needed if the *mushonga*- medicine will function effectively.

### 3.2.2 Medicine Man

The human body part to be used varies according to the instruction of the medicine man. This man is key person in the African set-up of these rituals. The quest for wealth and success is in the hands of the medicine man. If requested to bring a heart, mouth, tongue, eyes, liver, legs, arms, head, private parts or breasts the client is obliged to adhere.

These parts are then mixed with *mushonga* by medicine man. The source of the power behind is diabolic so the miracle may happen, but there is a need for blood of humans to renew the power of the medicine on an annual basis.

This then becomes another reason that encourages more ritual murders. This phenomenon is bloody and gruesome. Recently the Thulamela Mirror Edition 28 October 2005 year 16 vol:09 carried a story by Wilson Dzebu titled Murdered for *muti* "Makonde-Thohoyandou police have opened cases of ritual murder and attempted murder after the discovery of a body of a 25 year- old-man whose private parts had been removed. Next to the body was an 18-year-old woman, who was in great pain, as her lips had been removed by the unknown assailants." Subsequently four of the *sangomas* are arrested and were found in possession of the private parts, the tongue, the clothes of the murdered victim and the lips of the surviving young lady who was taken to Donald Fraser Hospital, then transferred to Baragwanath hospital. Whatever the motive, it is weird and evil and blatantly incomprehensible. It is also said that the choice for sacrificial victim is done by fortune telling by the medicine man/*sangoma*. The medicine man gives this instruction of death that is adhered to with maximum precision and accuracy, all for the quest for benefits that the medicine man promises are attached to the execution of the act.

If the instructions are missed, the penalty is death or madness of the person administering.

### 3.2.3 The stories of ritual murders

The description continues with graphic stories from the six informants in order to show that the research is grappling with real life issue and not fantasy or fiction. The land of Ha- Tshivhase has been dogged by stories of ritual murder for many years ago. Few of the stories will be mentioned and the informer's names will be hidden or psuedo names will be used as it is dangerous and risky to reveal names.

In order to buttress these stories the researcher now quotes Sello, S who writes in Drum Magazine to substantiate that the phenomenon really did occur. "Cold blooded killers of Venda who murder and mutilate people to sell their parts. Drum, Iss 188, p.24-26, Oct, 1988 ISSN: 0419-7674.

**Abstract:** States fear of death stalks every part of the tiny homeland owing to its increasing number of unresolved murders. Reports on a visit recently paid to the homeland plagued by indiscriminate ritual killings. Relates some businessmen are known to have actively participated in the killings or hired people to carry them out. Reveals several high-ranking government officials have also been implicated" This caption elaborates and give evidence of the gravity and how common the phenomenon had spread.

#### 3.2.3.1 Public spectacle of a ritual murderer

**The story as narrated by Mr and Mrs Bluegum** at their home. This happened in 1940s. At Sibasa, the then commissioner of the state found one ritual murderer with human limbs. He paraded him outside the office to show every body .The commissioner put the limbs of the dead person on the shoulders of the murderer from morning to sunset. This was proof that he was the ritual murderer. He also clogged the murderer's ears with wool in order to avoid maggots getting in, as the body parts were rotten and maggots

were moving. People came from all over Venda to witness this strange occurrence at Sibasa.

After this public show, for the whole day, the culprit was taken to Pretoria maximum prison. This was in the time of death penalty. The researcher surmises that the commissioner was sending out an awareness campaign that was to deter the practice of the phenomenon. Humans learn better by visual 80% than by listening 20%. The phenomenon did not disappear, but instead it was growing clandestinely. These efforts by the law to stop the evil only drove it to the underground and practised in secrets. Annually people would disappear, as the ritual murders have to happen for renewal of strength for those who practice them.

This is a grave and grossly perverted attitude towards human life, that need all the available spiritual, social, psychological resources to eliminate and banish from the land. Like all other evils of slavery, apartheid, racism, cannibalism, ritual murder must be stamped out.

**The story as narrated by Mrs Rabbit at her home.**

3.2.3.2 The story of zulu

In Ha-Tshivhase vondwe area lived a ritual murderer nick named Zulu. He was a bloody thirsty man. It is estimated that more than twenty souls perished in his hands. He sold body parts to a syndicate of businessmen and powerful people in society. One day an old lady went down the river to bath. She was well positioned as she bathed and could see what was happening on the banks of the river. She saw a lady with big breasts screaming for help on the other side of the riverbank. She saw Zulu with a machete striking the lady to death. The following day the body of the lady was found with body parts missing. As sole witness she ran away and could not tell her story to the police for fear of being implicated. As it appears the murderer was more protected than the witnesses.

The word went round that Zulu was the ritual murderer. The old lady only confessed later after the fear of vengeance was over and averted. In another incidence two ladies with a young lady had gone to Sibasa. On their way back they came to Tshinane river and they decided to have a bath. They told the young lady to go to the upper part of the river while

they remained down stream. Because they were older than her, they could not bath nearer her. Zulu, the killer pounced on the young lady took the mouth, tongue, eyes and the private parts. He took blood and gave the two ladies to drink as deterrent for not to be afraid and hide the truth when asked by police. He himself never drank. Indeed when asked they denied that they did not know where the young lady had disappeared to.' *Aridibi athutshela ngapi*?

That was the end of the *Tshidimbini* young lady. One night some three young killers went to Zulu's work place where he guarded the shop as a watch man/security. The shop was at Matatshe turn off in Vondwe . His killers asked him, that when you are killing people what part do you start with? He said the hand, and then, they chopped of his hand. What next, he said, the other hand and his killers chopped off the other hand. Then what next? The leg , then other leg and finally they chopped off his head.

Forensic science International vol.87, no.2, pp 117-123 1997.

**Abstract:**

"Ritual", or muti, murders are a form of human sacrifice practised by some African tribes. The murder is carried out after body parts are removed while the victim is still alive .A case report describes the methods of identification of a young child in 1994 by a traditional healer/ *sangoma* in Cape Town, South Africa."

Unfortunately even children are not excluded it appears for their innocence they are preferred as to make a better sacrifice. The motive is to kill while causing pain and victim screaming and then the *mushonga*- medicine works better .The following morning when the police came late to the scene of murder, they found limbs scattered and blood had spilled right to the tarred road. He murdered others and he ended up gruesomely murdered.

The investigation of this death was hindered and proved futile as community felt this was good riddance. The killers of Zulu only came to confess later this story. In the above story one observes that the element of causing pain seems to play an important part in ritual murders and the disregard for human life and lack of respect for human being.

These elements show beyond measure that the perpetrators are full of evil. This is radical evil as describe by Ted Peters who writes as he defines the most severe form of evil as "radical evil" and indicates that it is symbolised by Satan and is engaged in consciously, for its own sake, and in a un apologetic way. Those who work with traumatised and tortured persons support this view. The worst forms of trauma are the "human intentional type", or trauma perpetrated consciously and intentionally by one human being on another. Radical evil is the type of evil that calls out most loudly for attention, since it is so blatant and shocking that it overpowers normal defences and breaks into our awareness." (Means 2000:12).

The researcher will be focusing on this extreme evil of ritual murder. In the entire stories one notices a trend of radical evil, in that the killers are persons who have premeditated their killings. These are prime evils and the call for a prophetic thundering and declaration, which shows beyond question their heinousness' and horrendous.

The radical evil needs radical challenge to eliminate the taken for granted reality of the phenomenon. Similarly, the continuation to narrate the stories that are painful and evil follows on.

### **The story as narrated by Mr and Mrs Mountian**

#### 3.2.3.3 The story of mudzhombeni

When bad people are in power the people cry. There was a man nick named Mudzhombeni (for he took what ever he wanted, he got it from whosoever,) in Ha-Tshivhase who was in authority and he went on radio to announce publicly that ritual murder is a Venda culture and that no one would do any thing to him and nothing can stop the phenomenon in Venda. He is suspected to have ritually killed more than fifty persons. More people disappeared during his time, without graves. One day his friends who knew that he was carrying body parts, in order to go and sell to Indians at Kwa Zulu Natal, betrayed him. They tipped police but even when they found them in his car, he bribed his way through. He was evil and his last stroll came when he murdered a Zimbabwean. His people did revenge through magic, in that the ritual murderer was in



hospital in Pietersburg now Polokwane. He shocked medical science, at his death when the stomach blew up like a ball, and the nurses were scared to see this phenomenon. Others ascribe the blow -up to be the result of poison.

This person killed and caused terror in the lives of many people. When he died the people felt a relief. He was buried into the foundation of his house. The illegal usurping of the throne made it hard for him even in death to find royal burial at the royal grave. This man single-handedly was traumatising the whole Venda land. This did not mean that the practice was over in Ha-Tshivhase. It just went underground to be out of reach by law which also like any other human institution finds it's self-entangled in shade deals. The practice is gradually being replaced by the gun killings elimination which is a white mans ritual murder.

The word "culture" denotes a number of things to many people, but in this instance it means a way of life or doing things in a specific area or context. There are customs that bring identity to people and there are some customs that must be subjected to sociological scientists for review in order to bring about change and transformation for the better. There are customs that must indeed be retained and kept jealously as they help humanity. In the case of ritual murder no human being on earth for whatever reason should promote or support this culture, for it demeans life and fights against life. Believers are pro life.

### **The story as told by Mr Waterfalls.**

#### 3.2.3.4 The story of the lost man

At Vondwe lived a man who was then working in Johannesburg, came home for a vocation. A relative asked the man to accompany him into the field, because he wanted to up date him about the scenario. Since it was long he saw the forest trees. Little did the victim know that his relative had sold him to businessmen. There in the bush they made a trap for kill him. A group of men came to kill him, but prior to that the betrayer started to strike him first with a sharp object and others followed and killed him The whole village went searching for the man but never found him until after two weeks. They took from

his body parts and his killers brought his body near the village so that he could be identified. The lady who was looking for firewood came and alerted the community that dogs were sniffing at some shallow grave. The community came and found the body with missing parts and almost decomposing, they put the body in the cloth and went to bury him right away, but the police came to exhume the body for forensic tests.

The confessions revealed that two business people who were in the bus business sent the relative in question. This is a 1993 story when capital punishment was in place. The relative of ritually murdered person was sentenced to hang together with one bus owner, the other survived on the grounds of insufficient evidence.

The ritual murder always traumatises the family and community. It suffice to make mention that these killers are simply deceived by an evil aspiration of things they never attain. The sell-out died with one businessman in prison hanged for murder as capital punishment, and the remaining one subsequently suffered of stroke . Later betrayed by his wife, he also died very miserably. The riches, which were promised by the medicine man, could not be attained but life was lost for nothing, it is like chasing after wind as Solomon puts it. "Remember him before the silver cord is severed, or the golden bowl is broken; before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, or the wheel broken at the well, and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Everything is Meaningless" (Ecclesiastes 12:6-8).

Ritual murder does not pay and pastoral care can show people the fallacy that, there is no good thing in such thinking. The conception of things is an important element in changing societies and communities.

### **The story as narrated by Mrs Wood**

#### 3.2.3.5 The story of a husband who ritually murder his own wife

The husband who ritually murdered his wife: There was a husband in one of the Ha-Tshivhase villages. The builders were building the house of the eldest son and the father of the home ritually murdered his wife and took the breasts and other parts and he hang the body of his wife behind the traditional hut of the kitchen (tshitangani) door. The builders came and were looking for their tools and upon breaking the door which was locked they found a body hanging. They went and reported to the police who came to take the body, but did not arrest the husband who was at the beer place. The youth winked him to go into the sports ground and there they burnt him with petrol. The youth took once again the law into their own hands. The body of the husband was picked by police later on. This is another incident where the husband betrayed his own wife. Evil does not pay and within three weeks the man was also dead. There is no gain in murdering others, so let the practice cease. The perpetrator and victim all died and the reason, which moved these acts are elusive and unattainable. Ritual murder is a fallacy that promises big things but no returns other than trouble.

#### 3.2.3.6 Preliminary conclusion

The stories narrated above give the research a frame of reference and validated as told the presence of the phenomenon in Ha-Tshivhase. Graphically pictures the evilness and extent to which the phenomenon has entrenched its roots. The depth of corruption in the hearts of these radical evil executors is irrefutable. Evil has levels and the following are concise levels namely,

- Evil is to be found in structures of oppression
- Evil is to be found in evil people who do bad, and hurtful deeds

The potential for evil is also in us, church-going good people." When the church fails to confront evil at any level it ultimately robs those touched by evil of the faith resources for which they so desperately long"(MEANS 2000:10).

The theological and pastoral care are tools in the hands of the church to address the problem of evil in our lives, cultures, and societies. One need not take lightly the

comments of Means as the modern church and the one in Ha-Tshivhase needs to admit failure in addressing issues of ritual murder as a radical evil. Faith resource and graces are found in the gifting of Gods people. Howard Eybers writes to affirm.

"Due to feelings of inadequacy on a pastoral level many black pastors make themselves guilty of executing conflicting pastoral care approaches. In many cases this is due to desperation to render comfort and sustenance. The result is that Christians begin to view the church to which they turn as the last hope for comfort, hope, and answers to their moral, psychological, and spiritual problems as a failure. This failure is not intentional of course, but it signals the fact that pastoral care givers need to find new instruments of analysis for the problems of those who are experiencing an imbalance in the human condition. I want to suggest that one of the main reasons for the failure is due to the fact that pastors have neglected to incorporate the insights of disciplines like psychology, sociology, and theological sub-disciplines like ethics."(Howard H. Eybers 1991:3)

The congregants shall always look to the church for help. In these changing times the sharpening of the approach in addressing the challenges even that of ritual murder must be sought instead of overlooking and avoiding handling the plight. The traumatised persons and communities need these resources from the church.

### **3.3 The Motives That Propel And Underpins The Phenomenon**

Ritual murderers are motivated by different factors and philosophical thinking, in the case of Ha-Tshivhase like else where, it becomes apparent and common to tabulate the following issues. The motives that propel individuals to practice the phenomenon are many but here are the apparent ones that seem to be everywhere.

#### **3.3.1 Cultural Factor**

Culture plays a very significant role in society, as practices, beliefs and customs are kept by culture. Admittedly, culture is not static, it is dynamic.

Like language every 25 years it changes in its usage of words, so it is with culture. What was valued then may be discarded completely. Even Venda Culture might not have

remained at the same place like a century ago. Some tenants that hold culture and customs have definitely changed. One does not understand why in all this time ritual murder a skeleton in the cupboard of venda has not vanished with time. The phenomenon has persisted as no issue is just wished away, but needs to be addressed and responsibly acknowledged and faced. Issues of culture and belief die hard. Any socialisation that is culturally inculcated shall need culture and belief to undo or resolve it.

Here are the cultural motives that propel the phenomenon. When cultural interests are threatened It is possible that blood may be sought to achieve the communal stability.

In the quest for power to control people and the elements of nature, culture dictates that sacrifices be done. This is necessitated by cultural problems like drought, clans, and kingdoms in conflict sacrifice a person to bring harmony. This normally goes unquestioned even by family members, as the person has been sacrificed for communal benefit. *omiliswa tshivhindi*-strangled/ sacrificed by higher powers.

Treatment of seed: Food security for the village is important so the chief is to treat seed with body parts –*mushonga*, meaning medicine, before planting to ensure bumper harvest.

"It sometimes happens that the chief's gardens flourish while those of the commoners promise a very meagre crop, causing them to suspect that their seed has not received fair treatment at the *u suka mbeu*, to mix the seed ceremony. People will sometimes secretly visit a *nganga* with their own seed and ask him to treat it for them; in fact many people employ secret methods for ensuring the fertility of particular crops, quite apart from the national rites. The powdered bark of the *mulanga* tree is rubbed into the cut ends of the small pumpkin runner (*ulumisa*, to make bite the pumpkins) make them prolific. There are innumerable remedies and precautions of this sort, every *nganga* having a large stock-in-trade for use in the protection of gardens and crops.

Sometimes human flesh is used to aid fertility; in case of urgent necessity a man may obtain flesh from a corpse of some powerful person who has died recently and secrete it in his mealie pits, so that the power of this great man will be passed on to the mealies.

Ratshivuma, the petty chief at Tononndwa and the eldest son of the present chief

Tshivhase , was charged, together with six other important members of the tribe, with a series of murder. The crops had failed persistently and the ordinary expedients had met with success, so it was decreed ( by whom has not been divulged) that the only means by which this calamity could be remedied was by associating the seeds & c., with portions of freshly killed human beings. No ordinary man's corpse would do; the oracle decreed that the victim must be a lucky man, successful in all his undertakings; he must also be short and very black in colour (the type universally admired and envied by the BaVenda as being the true Venda stock); above all he must have been lucky in his harvest. A likely man was waylaid by Ratshivuma and his chosen band in a desolate rocky kloof near Tonondwa and killed; certain parts of his body were burnt and handed over to dzinganga, others were burnt and powdered and strewn over the lands to help the crops; the skull was buried in a niche in the wall of the mealie pits. Other murders followed, all the victims being small, dark, successful men. The whole affair was brought to light by a man who accidentally witnessed one of the murders and escaped and told the police. It is not known how many victims there were. This incident is a remarkable case of sympathetic magic"(Stayt1968:313-314).

In the venda culture this is known as *u viya* meaning you are strangled or killed for ritual purposes. In this case the people were being killed for the common good of bringing drought to an end. This is a false belief that made these venda men of industrious hands disappear from the face of the earth.

Belief that the dead are more powerful. The belief of the dead person being more powerful than the living. Adds to mystical attraction to encourage the phenomenon. In Africa the dead are respected for they affect the destiny of the living. They can guide, provide, protect, and can do things for the living. The mediums or spiritists are consulted when they want messages from the ancestors. Sacrifices of goats, sheep chicken or cow are slaughtered, while the old man of family acting as a family priest will be speaking words. The sacrifice is done in order to please the ancestors and thus bring peace to a troubled soul. The grave becomes like a shrine where prayers are made to the dead who are treated as very much part of the life of these tribal people.

Sunday writes about tribal world view that " life is mysterious rooted in and can be traced back to the supernatural world which is apart of the cosmic order." Therefore,

Sunday argues that "the ability to commune with the spirit world, will determine how much, one can acquire to be able to control one's own destiny, events, and nature. The implication of this, he further argues, is a fervent devotion to rituals, prayers and religious shrines."(Sunday 1991: 167). The African culture, sometimes forbid western methods of doing things saying, that the western ways disturb the union with ancestors, as their ways are foreign. This hatred for modern things may make African people to be more spiritually oriented and inclined, than western materialistic approach to life. Western materialistic approach creates a split personality in an individual, who may not know how to react to the tension, where in, the confusion of cultures does transpire. In an African culture the dead can send messages to the living. In some African cultures the dead communicate with the living through dreams or spiritual visions as they dance and sing. Those who do not want misfortunes, follow these messages more seriously than the Bible. So the killing of persons adds to the power the person wields over others. In some African cultures they even honour the corpse of the dead man, the practice may still be believed in

by some older chiefs who still pay allegiance to old traditions. It is very clear that since the dawn of new young and God fearing chiefs and kings the phenomenon may fade away. The younger generation of chiefs seems to fight the practice as they see that this is anti development, anti social and anti humanity. The issue above is intertwined with the following factor of motivation as to promote the erroneous phenomenon.

### 3.3.2 Religious Factor

African traditional religion sometimes attests to the belief among Africans of the powerful dead or the living dead. When ritual murder occurs the perpetrators have a strong belief that in the act of shedding blood their intentions and needs will be fulfilled or achieved. It is a world of dos and don'ts and secrecy and scheming (Moreau:2002:166).

"The place of sacrifice and those taking part in the sacrifice depend on the reason for the sacrifice. No family will on its own approach the ancestors for rain, or in connection with epidemics. Such national causes are approached communally through the communal ancestors, those of the chief. A family approaches its own ancestors concerning its own personal desires, which affect it alone. The lineage approaches the ancestors of its superior male member in all matters which affect lineage as such. The superior male member of each group concerned acts as officiator and intercedes for the members of his group in its approach to his ancestors, who are the guardians of that group. The national rites are mostly concerned with agriculture, and will be described when relevant.

The nature of sacrifice depends largely on the circumstances. Beer is nearly always the medium of sacrifice, and may be accompanied by goats, sheep or cattle, and occasionally by game and even vegetable matter. Usually, however, beer is considered sufficient by itself. When other things are sacrificed they are nearly always accompanied by beer. In the family rites, beer is used most often. If some additional sacrifice is necessary, it will usually be either a goat or a sheep. Only in extreme cases will cattle be slaughtered and sacrificed together with beer. In family, and even lineage sacrifices to give thanks, the officiator on whose initiative the rite takes place will decide on the nature of sacrifice, which will be beer only. In all other rites the advice of diviner is called in, and the nature of the sacrifice is decided on his interpretation of his divination set. He may, for example, for national rites prescribe a black ox and two goats. There is never any question of not accepting his decision. There is, even to this day, some evidence of use of human sacrifice. Certainly human flesh was formerly used for magical purposes.....but there are strong indications that some tribes still use human ingredients in the traditional rain-medicine which is used in the ancestral rites for rain" ( Monnig 1967:61).

In the quest to please the ancestors the African person can do even ritual murder to appease them. There have been incidents where the human bodies are used for cultic practices to please strange spirits. The spirits and ghost play a role in the mystery of the religion. No wonder some of these magical rituals are grave related. The motivation contravenes orthodox religion, which teaches that human sacrifice is outlawed as God values humans as they are created in his image. In the holy book it is recorded that he made them male and female in his likeness. Since a human being is a bearer of God's



image, the crown of God's creation, then any person who destroys a human being destroys and violates the image of God in man.

There are men and women who do not see any thing wrong in having a person ritually killed so long it is not them, they do not bother. Others defend it in the name of culture- *Ndi ndaVhuko ya Vhavenda* meaning it is a Venda culture so no one can challenge it. The researcher has noticed that among most of the African people these sacrifices are clandestinely tolerated and condoned as long as it remains secret. The secrecy of this phenomenon makes people to think of it as too traumatic, hence they avoid questioning it. In short the culture has become a process to cover up very serious human failures of ritual murders. Unfortunately even the police are not keen to bring to book the perpetrators of this phenomenon. Most murderers are never brought to book.

They believe in washing themselves clean of the case through medicines given by *sangoma*. It is rare to have a ritual murderer apprehended.

### 3.3.3 Economic Factor

This category of business and economics has been one of the serious and common motivations. The scriptures put it' more succinctly when it states.

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.".(1 Timothy 6:10).

Here it is not money per say, which is evil but the love that send many mammon seekers to go out of their way, and orchestrate ritual murder.

Any person who wants to have a stable business, ancestral spirits and human body parts are ingredients to a successful business .The threshold of business premises are protected and attract many customers to make business place busy by using body parts. This is an erroneous belief that leads to ritual murder perpetuation. One need ask, is it possible for one to have successful business without indulging in these wrong motivations of acquiring wealth through bloody sacrifices of other humans? If ever there is success in the evil of killing another man, then that is not from God but from other powers, which may be directly opposite to Godliness and the sanctity of life.

The general conception of success is attributed to wrong perceptions and beliefs of ritual murders. One can conclude that for business to be a success, hard work, proper planning and proper decision making are needed. "Majority of businesses are afraid of mysterious natural catastrophic happenings that renders them out of control thus resort to economic motivation that promises more returns"(Moreau 2002:166) if a human body part is used in their business practice. The story quoted in the introduction supports these claims. In the world of economics money ties up with power. Money speaks, therefore we will now deal with personal power to be one of the motivating factor in ritual murder.

#### 3.3.4 Personal Power

In Africa many ordinary people also long for such power and those who have gone deeper in their consultation with *sangomas* they end up winning by scaring other people through magic power. This is dangerous as others have ended bound to evil spirits and being slaves of darkness.

Yusuf Turaki had this to say about power " The dominance of the impersonal, the unseen and unpredictable spirit powers make people search for power which can help in this dangerous world, where fate, evil and death abound. "Steine note that " the search for and acquisition of power supersedes any commitment to ethics or morality. What ever is empowering is right.(Yusuf Turaki contributed in the book 'deliver us from evil') edited by;(Moreau 2002: 166)." People do this mind-boggling thing like the phenomenon under discussion because they want power and admiration of others. Unfortunately many find it for a little while and in the end it destroys them and all they have worked and lived for. The cost of acquiring this power is very colossal and many fail to attain it in this life and they lose even what they had valued the most. In Africa power is sought in more ways than one, but the most common one is through witchcraft.

Moreau writes on how it is done in Africa;

" Many terms are used to describe power, such as life force, vital force, life essence and dynamism. Power can be obtained by rituals, charms, fetishes,

ceremonies, witchcraft and sorcery or directly from powerful people or the spirits. And it is transferable. This all-consuming concept of power is critical in our understanding of how traditional Africans assess the potency or the efficacy of any new religion.

Christianity must develop a theology of power that addresses the traditional theological conception of power and recognizes how this law of power operates in traditional Africa" (Moreau 2002:169).

The problem of ritual murder is associated with witchcraft and many killers draw their power from witchcraft so any person who links himself/ herself to ritual murder admits to diabolic powers.

The researcher feels that theology and pastoral care should empower believers to discover their power storehouse in looking to Christ and his Lordship. In Christianity the lordship of Christ is supposed to cover the need for power in the Greek dynamos from where we derive the term dynamite. The scripture attests for a believer "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."(1 John4:4).

Evil and all the dark powers are conquered in Jesus Christ on the cross. The individuals and communities are ruled by fear and are looking in wrong places for power. God has not given to us the spirit of fear but of power and of a sound mind. (1 Timothy 1:7) In the new identity found in Christ people can live a life free of fear as God is bigger than all powers of evil. The evil forces exhibit their powers in communities and the church must show that they serve a sovereign God. In rural area people are looking for a God who works and proves himself. The gospel needs to reclaim the New Testament power or the church will be rendered dysfunctional and out of business.

The church must develop a theology that addresses this power issue, in order to help people. The danger of not articulating this issue properly will lead to people living the law of the jungle, the survival of the fittest and the weak disappears.

When people live by threatening and being threatened then the law of the jungle is applying.

### **3.4 The Phenomenon Of Ritual Murder And Links To Witchcraft**

There is interrelatedness between witchcraft and ritual murder. The motive of witches is to destroy human life, so witches are ritual murderers who are consulted to kill innocent victims. Moreau in his book, defines the phenomenon of witchcraft in the following way: "Witchcraft is an evil manipulation of evil spirits to work for the good of the invoker's wishes. A distinction is often made between witchcraft and sorcery. Although this distinction is useful as a starting point. It is necessary to recognise that in many simple societies no such simple separation can be made. Among some African peoples, witchcraft is seen as the cause of most misfortunes including sickness, accidents, crop failures, hunting failures, and any general lack of success. The notion of coincidence or probability does not provide a sufficient reason for these types of failures. There must be an answer as to why they happen to this individual and, for some, witchcraft is the obvious answer" ( Moreau 2000: I66). The above writer brings in difference between sorcery and witchcraft, but to an ordinary person every thing that is associated with magical powers is evil, in that it is negative and destroys human life. In writing about witchcraft among the Venda and BaThonga, Stayt has this to say:

*"Vhaloi.* Closely allied to disease and its treatment is the much-discussed phenomenon of the *Vhaloi*. The Venda conception of these anti- social beings closely resembles that of Ba Thonga, so admirably described by Junod.

The word *Vhaloi* (single *Muloi*) comes from the verb *u loya*, to bewitch, and is applied to those people who through sheer malignancy, either consciously or subconsciously, employ magical means to encompass all manner of evil to the detriment of their fellow-creatures. They destroy property, bring disease and misfortune and cause death, often

entirely without provocation, to satisfy their inherent craving for evil-doing. The *vhaloi* may be of either sex, but are generally women. They carry on their nefarious practices by night, sometimes travelling long distances on the back of a hyena or some other animal, and sending snakes, owls, and particularly the *turi* (stoat) into the hut of the object of their spite, to bite the unfortunate person or to enter his body in order to cause disease or death."( Stayt 1931:273-4) The western mind cannot conceive this understanding about witches but traditional person live with this reality. Education has failed to remove this conception of life from an African mind. The fears about witchcraft are belittled by western mind but unless a serious attention is given, true liberty for Africa will remain a nightmare. Stayt continues quoting his colleague, Jound, when he describes how the witches do it." Various creatures, particularly those to whom the average person has a psychological reaction of dread or disgust, are the special agents of the *vhaloi*. These are the hyena, crocodile, owl, all snakes (except the python), and the *turi*. The unconscious *muloi* nearly always acts during sleep. It is supposed that the evil spirit of the seemingly innocuous individual leaves the body and goes out into the world to carry on its evil mission. A hideous monster, one of the instruments of *muloi*, is left in her place. During this metamorphosis the other inmates of the hut are put into a heavy sleep, so that no ordinary person ever sees the disgusting creature that is his bedfellow. The diviners have seen them, however, and when consulted on the subject describe in vivid detail the unpleasant creature in its grotesque horror. Powerful medicine-men have often seen them engaged in wierd happenings which they describe to clients, thereby increasing their prestige. Several *vhaloi* may meet together for a feast, beat drums, eat human flesh and dance; they may wage war on one another, one group trying to steal the corn of another group....

The *muloi* appears as a shadowy human form, always stark naked having left her clothes behind in the hut to cover her metamorphosed body, her eyes are bright and shinning like burning lumps of coal,"(Stayt 1931:274).The main aim of these night errand is to do evil and bring death. This is a deeply spiritual affair with forces of evil. The value of human life is not upheld by these witches. The belief in the mystery of witchcraft has strong links with ritual murder, as those who are in the craft are normally required to give human sacrifice from their bloodline. The above quotation shows that witchcraft has links

to evil that happens among people. The phenomenon of ritual murder has evil links and the practice destroy the image of God in people. When others progress in doing well, the witch wishes them to fail and retrogression seems to be the witch's motive. Isaiah warned by saying 'Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter'(Isaiah 5:20).This means that the corruption and the perversion is gross. In Ha-Tshivhase the phenomenon cannot flourish without a magic man being in the equation. People are killed ritually at the instruction of the medicine man. The desire to have power over people and manipulate them is the cause of ritual murder thus being related to witchcraft.

Burnett says that witchcraft is a phenomenon that seems to be universal in all societies, and yet the secrecy which covers the subject seems only produce a strange mixture of fear

and fascination. He asserts that there is much loose discussion about witchcraft and sorcery (Burnett 1988:133-4). In this case, our purpose in this research will focus on the evil of witchcraft and its links to ritual murder. This strange mix of fear and fascination as

Burnett puts it will always make people uneasy when confronted with witchcraft phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the researcher shall look at pastoral care in relation to counselling in a traumatic community. The pastoral care dimension in grappling with ritual murder, subtitle counselling, deliverance, healing, preaching, prayer, exorcism, approaches to the myths, philosophies of Ha-Tshivhase and the role of young chiefs in changing mindset of the communities. This chapter carries the main solution to the problem as regard to the role of the pastor and church in addressing the ritual murder issue.

#### **4.1 The Role Of Pastoral Care And Counselling In Atraumatised Community.**

In a community which is traumatised like the researcher has documented from the painful stories, individuals, families and community need pastoral care and to be counselled. The two case studies and stories from the old six informants show that in such a community the need for counselling and pastoral care is profound. As already stated in the introduction of this research, when the incident occurred, terror had gripped the community through riots and the Pastors went into hiding. The situation was tense and hard to confront. They opted to pray about it. This is not despising prayer, but there are issues after prayers that need practical involvement of the pastors in doing pastoral care and counselling.

"Evil creates and builds on brokenness in the world by threatening, attacking, destroying, and desecrating the integrity of the relational nature of life. Furthering and exploiting the naturally occurring divisions within and between persons, evil leads to increased fragmentation, alienation, and polarisation and turns people against themselves, others, their natural environments, and their God. Evil works against reconciliation and healing and is the chief obstacle and threat to the wholeness and interconnectedness of God's creation"(MEANS 2000:98). The researcher agrees strongly that fragmentation, and alienation becomes that order of the day when harmony is disturbed by trauma and pain caused by ritual murder.

The traumatic experience shatters relationships and trouble and terror reigns. In such instances pastoral care is summoned to come and reconcile, heal, sustain and guide the individual or community.

Gerkin quotes the dictionary of pastoral care and counselling as he defines pastoral care of the congregation as:

"The ministry of oversight and nurture offered by a religious community to its members, including acts of discipline, support, comfort, and celebration"(Gerkin 1997:126).

In a community that has been ridden with these traumatic ritual murders though the situation is tough and rough, the pastoral care has a significant role to play. Apart from giving support and comfort after the aftermath, there is a role of conscientizing the masses on the importance and sacredness of life. Some have called the proactive intervention, as prevention is always better than cure. Here there is a need to broaden the sphere, as some of those needing counselling may not be adherent of the Christian faith . The humans in distress, beaten by evil need help and the pastoral care.

Counselling is also a two prone issue as you do before and after the phenomenon has taken place. The proactive nature of pastoral care is that the initiative begins with the church to reach the traumatised and broken. There is always a risk that is taken as help may be received or it can be denied. The power to create has been given the pastoral care and in the words of Gerkin states that "A primary function of the Christian community is that of creating and maintaining a climate of relationship within which all members of the community are understood and cared for. To experience such a community is to overcome the loneliness that pervades contemporary culture" (Gerkin 1997:126).



He writes from a western set up but his words are true even in Ha- Tshivhase where family ties are strong and dynamic, but yet when it comes to ritual murder they leave the traumatised lonely, partly because the situation is tough and demands knowledge on how to handle. Also that the talk about the phenomenon is taboo, like you bringing another bad omen to the affected. This exacerbates the loneliness to person needing help and healing. Even the faith communities wonder on how to go about it, as it is a unacceptable phenomenon. The idea of the community of faith creating an enabling environs where the traumatised can find help and healing is an indispensable role the church has to play.

The ability to create has been given to man when the atmosphere is charged with negativity and lethargy the church in the name of her risen saviour must create an environment that protects life and empowers the vulnerable to fight the phenomenon. Gerkin continues to explain how modern life brings alienation when individualism is elevated as he writes;

"Much of modern life tends toward alienation rather than mutual support. Competition rules much of the market-place of human relationships, prejudice, stereotyping, and indifference abound in human relationships, even among family members and co-workers, to say nothing of the Christian community itself. Countering these alienating tendencies in human relationships is an important aspect of the work of the church as a community. The pastor nourishes and engenders a climate of mutual care in the community for which she or he must seek to provide interpretative leadership. By his or her manner of relating within the community, others are encouraged to create and participate in a community" (Gerkin 199:127).

One cannot over look the importance of community in issues pertaining to needs for interpretative leadership from the pastor in community building. More so in issues of traumatic ritual murder it is when the individual and family, desperately need support and counselling from the church.

According to the researcher's observation the pastor cannot stand aloof, he/she is automatically involved by virtue of his/her office and calling.

"One of the few places evil has been consistently mentioned has been within communities of faith. At the same time, the church and religiously committed individuals

have tended to leave evil unacknowledged as part of their own worlds and to ignore and deny the depth of evil's impact on people. When evil has been acknowledged, it too frequently is pushed outside.

Peter Gomes(1996 :253-254) states, "one of the greatest acts of transference in modern times is the transference of responsibility for evil and sin from individual to institutions and society at larger". The responsibility to confront evil begins better when individuals take responsibility and even the evil which traumatises like ritual murder can only be undone by individuals taking responsibility. Ted Peters (1994: 2), choosing instead to focus their attention on political and economic structures of oppression and systemic forces of evil as seen in various forms of discrimination. In Peters' words: "The evils of our world have been consigned to social forces beyond the scope of our own personal responsibility. Deep down, however, it seems to me that each of us is at least dimly aware of our own responsibility. ( Means 2000:10) has suggested that the mainline theologians have lost interest in the internal workings of the human soul" Empowered by the Lord these complex phenomenon must be faced squarely in attempting to bring healing to the traumatised .

This research thesis will in here bring the most needed intervention from pastoral care by the community.

#### 4.1.1 Providing the needed leadership

In every difficult challenge there must be leadership that is prepared to make things happen. Risk takers can rally people to fight the phenomenon. The time to postpone what must be done is over.

The church and all the pastoral instruments must courageously take responsibility in that the silence and lack of courage to face the fearful ritual murder issue must be a thing of the past. The courage to be of Paul Tilich must be portrayed now. There are times when history when moments were very trying, when the church stood for righteousness and truth and over came, even so this persistent clandestine phenomenon can be overcome. The issue of creating an environment which is free of the phenomenon under study will

allow life to be valued. It is not just being over simplistic but taking courage and giving the community and families the leadership to address the phenomenon.

#### 4.1.2 Being actively involved in the trauma counselling centres

The trauma centres are being formed and the pastoral expertise must be employed here to help the traumatised. In our times there is a multidisciplinary approach, the psychologist, pastors, sociologist, anthropologist can help in combating the problem. The magnitude of the problem at times makes people avoid the need for proper counselling skills.

Traumatised individuals and communities need to be helped through counselling and pastoral care. The pastors are to avail themselves in helping in these centres of trauma.

#### 4.1.3 Creating a mass awareness of the problem

In a very prophetic way, the pastoral care giver must effectively make the people to value life and like in the past mobilise against the evil of ritual murder. The opportunities of mass mobilisation against the phenomenon be done in gatherings of people weddings, funeral memorial services, schools, church seminars, workshops and in political gatherings. The message is to value life and therefore advocate for pro-life. The stress sources be identified and be given the necessary attention to rid our society from ritual murder. The sensitivity that this issue carries brings difficulties of whether the mobilisation could be misconstrued for promotion instead of awareness.

#### 4.1.4 Inter denominational services:

The king and some chiefs have called for gatherings at the chiefs kraal for prayer and the churches in unity have responded well to tell the society that the church shall oppose ritual murder. The tool of unity for a cause as churches and pastors is a significant one in stamping out the phenomenon.

#### 4.1.5 The Book

The Bible is the book of instruction which the Lord has given Pastors to use effectively in fighting evil in the world. The bible despite some not being Christian has some principles which help mankind to say courageously that the owner made them to live and care for his earth and creation He alone has power over life. Promotion of bible studies that will bring life change in appreciating what God has done in creating man.

After attempting to explain the role of pastoral care in the traumatic situation now the other dimension of healing shall be discussed.

### **4.2 Different pastoral care dimension in dealing with this phenomenon**

#### 4.2.1 Counselling

In addressing this part that handles pastoral care and all its dimensions in dealing with this phenomenon it warrants to borrow from Collins when he differentiates and defines in abroad way, what Pastoral care and pastoral counselling are, he writes, as follows;

"Some have found it useful to make a distinction between pastoral care, pastoral counselling and pastoral psychotherapy. Of the three terms, pastoral care is the broadest. It refers to the churches over all ministries of healing, sustaining and reconciling people to God and to one another. Sometimes called 'the care of souls' this includes the ministries of preaching, teaching, discipline, administering the sacraments, nurturing people and caring in times of need (Gary R. Collins 1998:16).

The major concern of this research is to enhance the care of souls. The research narrows it down to the specific individuals who are directly affected by the ritual murders.

The reliance on pastoral care theology to engage it in healing, supporting, and allowing the concerned person to face up with what has happened to them. There are other African theologians who have also effectively explored this facet of the need for a multidisciplinary approach.

"All along this tedious journey of life, we need other persons just as they too have need of us. The whole profession of counselling responds to the fact human beings need each other and look for physical, emotional and spiritual support from one another, beginning with those whom we consider most significant and helpful in our own lives. Counselling is the art and skill of helping individuals and groups to understand themselves better and relate to fellow human beings in a mature and healthy manner. As a profession, counselling facilitates the healthy and meaningful survival of individuals and groups. It involves the art and skill of enabling others to live hopefully, considering that none of us can rely entirely on ourselves and survive without the support from other persons. From a pastoral perspective, the challenge is to discern the kind of help that would be effective and helpful to those that need it."(Waruta 2000:1). This indeed is the reflection of African theologians on the art of counselling .

The researcher agrees with both description which complement each other and in this thesis counselling will be explored as part of the solution to the problem of ritual murder. Clinebell says counselling can allow us to discover fresh dimensions of our humanity. It can release our potentialities for authenticity and aliveness. It can help to release our trapped creativity- the potential creativity present in every person. By renewing us as persons, counselling helps empower us to become renewal agents in a church and in a society that desperately need renewing. Pastoral counselling and care can be instruments of healing and growth by helping us develop what is most difficult to achieve in our period of history- depth of relationships.

(Clinebell 1984:15) The following definitions help to give the broader view of this subject on counselling as means of healing the situation.

Another facet to the solution is Pastoral counselling, Collins continues to say what it is about;

"This is a more specialised part of pastoral care that involves helping the individuals, families, or groups as they cope with the pressures and crises of life. Pastoral counselling

uses a variety of healing methods to help people deal with problems in ways that are consistent with biblical teaching. The ultimate goal is to help counselee's experience healing, learning and personal spiritual growth. As defined traditionally,

Pastoral counselling is the work of an ordained Pastor. In view of the scriptural teaching that all believers are to bear the burdens of one another, pastoral counselling can and should be a ministry of sensitive and caring Christians, whether or not they are ordained as clergy. (Gary R. Collins 1998:16).

In dealing with ritual murder trauma, there is a need to be sensitive, as the family and community all know that this is a very secretive and sensitive problem. It is given that when one is in such a situation it is a moment of crises and a lot of negative pressure, thus the need for counselling is greater than ever before. We know the priest-hood of believers allows every body to exercise their gifts but in this particular case, let those that are called for the job do it. In most jobs every one needs the people who know how to do the job to do it. No wise person can assign a quake doctor to operate on his eye, only specialist does that. The pastoral care will focus on, helping the victims heal from abuse and violence that have torn their lives apart and often lead to acts of self-harm.

Healing the division within persons that lead to abuse and violence directed at others.

The African person has some strange resilience to stand the most devastating traumatic encounters that are not noticeable outwardly, but bring inner illness to the soul. For many generations without any professional psychologist, the African person has survived the most demeaning torture and atrocities subjected to him. May be the pain is vented through violent behaviour, that is too common nowadays.

Even in Ha-Tshivhase the traumatised find it is of no value to go to an official counsellor they would rather console each other in an informal African way of counselling, but on the other hand they deprive themselves professional attention in handling these underlying traumatic symptoms.

The other problem is that the issues at stake are personal, deep, and a family sensitive issue and demand great confidentiality. So seeking help is like exposing oneself to the public terrain where as, one must be as far away as possible. In this way a traditional African counsellor can find more acceptance than a professional counsellor, even in the

event of the ritual murder none of the affected consulted the professional care-givers. In the case of the traumatised mother she shivers even today in that, she has not faced the issue, so it keeps reoccurring.

#### 4.2.2 Deliverance

In the Lord's Prayer, the phrase 'delivers us from evil' as found in the scripture (Matt. 6:13) is a reminder that evil in all its forms is around within and without, but we need deliverance as a part of remedy to our ritual murder situation. Setting people free from bondage is deliverance, especially from deadly murderous demons that are bloody thirsty always wanting to damage human beings. The mainline churches appear to have problems with the issue of exorcism. Majority have a logical western theology which needs a lot of adjustment if it will be relevant to Africa, or a contextual African theology be developed to address these serious spiritual issues which are trivialised by some western academics ,and theologians. The word deliverance is linked to salvation .The Greek word 'soter' meaning saviour from which 'Soteriology' is derived mean salvation – making complete whole or deliverance .Restoring the dimension of healing the total being.

One of the missions of Jesus was to deliver the captives. The person who is traumatised has been beaten down and robbed of life's vitality needs deliverance. The inner chains that have fettered the person needs to be broken. The person must be helped to pick up from where trauma has damaged and move on. The dilemma is only how to find methods of having mass deliverance is almost difficult, but the following are here mentioned:

The tools that can pastorally engage people and their communities to bring deliverance.

##### 4.2.2.1 the gospel preaching

Keller observes as he writes;

In my own lifetime we were told the following false hoods in each decade hereby are:

In the 1920s "Education has all the answers"

In the 1930s "Economics has all the answers"

In the 1940s "Politics and peace have all the answers"

In the 1950s "Science has all the answers"

In the 1960s "sociology has all the answers"

In the 1970s "Hedonism has all the answers" (Keller 1984 :78)

In the 1980 and 1990s "the computer has all the answers" (These are my own words) The truth is the proper communication of the gospel of the Lord Jesus is the solution to our sinful and murderous world that like Cain's lurking for the blood of his brother. Malan Neil believes in the comprehensive interwovenness of the ministries, the integration and co-ordination of ministries in building up the local church. He seem to put the kerugma/ preaching on centre. He writes; through kerugma as the central mode of preaching in which God comes to the congregation, and in a differentiated and focused way to the youth. The youth must feature in preaching. After all, the youth features in the biblical text as well as in the context as the second text of preaching"(Malan 2000;89) The researcher strongly acknowledges that true preaching that aims at declaring Godly messages can be a tool of transformation of society especially when the youth are included in the sermons. The prophet of old thundered in their preaching against all manner of corruption and moral deprivation ,thus says the Lord. Preaching , when properly handled can bring in the desired societal transformation.

The gospel is the answer to all these falsehood and the falsehood of ritual murder can also be answered through gospel preaching.

The pastoral counsellors are called to speak out against the forces in culture that are the underlying cause for violence and abuse, i.e. confronting evil prophetically. The cause of power imbalance in cultural and corporate life; social injustice.

Cultural Critique, naming evil where it is encountered, resist evil, work for transformation, Hold the community and individuals accountable for right behaviour, justice, mercy, shared responsibility for others, be grounded in faith resources (God with us), crucifixion (reminding us of the horror and power of human evil- the power to kill God and the resurrection

(God's triumph over evil) of Christ (Means 2000) The communication of the powerful gospel has so many healing and remedial effects on people. Pieterse has this to say as regard to practical theology.



As noted already, practical theology studies practical reality or praxis (praxis means reflecting on what one does while doing It) It studies the praxis of communicative acts in the service of the gospel in the church, in Christianity and in society(Vander Ven 1998:37). When studying communicative evangelical praxis- that is, people's everyday practice in words, deeds, writings and the like- the obvious method to use is an empirical one. One needs to be able to measure the real things that one observes, to determine people's views, feelings, experiences, e.t.c and reflect on them theologically. That's why practical theology has opted for an interdisciplinary approach(Vander Ven 1998: 49; Pieterse1993:39) In this way the gospel can have impact and assist in bringing the desired change as regards to the phenomenon. When the daily basis is affected by the gospel one can affect people to transform for the better as the whole person is touched through the communicative praxis of the gospel.

Ritual and liturgy remind us of our propensity for evil and our hope in faith.

Confession, the willingness to reveal one's own weakness is; the key to reconciliation/transformation.

What is forgotten cannot be healed and that which cannot be healed easily becomes the cause of greater evil"(Nouwen 1981:17) Before one describes what it is? Here is an excerpt from K.P Yohannan who writes:

“The battle against hunger and poverty is really a spiritual battle, not a physical or social one as secularists would have us believe. The only weapon that will ever effectively win the war against disease, hunger, injustice and poverty in Asia (and Africa) is the gospel of Jesus Christ. To look into the sad eyes of a hungry child or see the wasted life of a drug addict is to see only the evidence of Satan's hold on the world. All bad things are his handiwork. He is the ultimate enemy of mankind, and he will do every thing within his considerable power to kill and destroy human beings. Fighting this powerful enemy with physical weapons is like fighting an armoured tank with stones.” When the gospel is well presented, it can have great influence on people in healing and changing weird thought life that may gravitate toward ritual murder. Even Jesus said you have been sanctified by the word which you have heard. The word of God properly handled can bring the change of viewing the ritual murder as an evil to be fought and stamped out from the world.

#### 4.2.2.2 Exorcism

The driving of demons out from a possessed person through prayer is known as exorcism. In depicting this Christian practice Yohannah and his friends had the following experience. “While we were praising and interceding, we heard a sudden scream.

The young man lying on the ground, tongue lolling out of his mouth, his eyes rolled back. As Christians in a pagan land, we knew immediately he was demon possessed. We gathered around and began taking authority over the forces of hell as they spoke through his mouth. “We are 74 of us. For the past seven years we have made him walk bare foot all over India...He is ours” They spoke on, blaspheming and cursing, challenging our authority and us. But as the three of us prayed the demons could not keep their hold on the young man. They came out when we commanded them to leave in the name of Jesus. Sundar John was delivered, he gave his life to Jesus and was baptised.”

(K. P Yohannan 1986: 29-ff). The above story is an encounter with demonic spirits and how the Christian believers exercise deliverance by prayer they exorcise the evil powers. The modern mind may theologise against this way of healing, but people are being delivered from these powers. Even in the event of the phenomenon the perpetrators need deliverance from such an evil.

The empowering gospel message has something to offer.

The power of the word of God can make many find deliverance. In narrating this victory of Jesus Christ over demons and Satan, the cultural ways of exorcism must be depicted though inadequate as Stayt writes;

“The spirit, *tshilombo*(*pl. zwilombo*), which is supposed to enter the host, is usually the spirit of some offended ancestor, sometimes absurdly remote. This spirit cause its victims illness and subsequent death if it is not pacified. Occasionally this *tshilombo* will have no genealogical connection with the person into whom it enters; it may be an exorcised spirit, who by the help of a *nganga* has been completely divorced from further contact and communication with its own descendants. Banished spirits of this order wander about full of mischievous intention, in search of any host in whom they can find temporary refuge. Such spirits may enter anybody and generally hide in crevices of trees making weird unnatural noises; a MuVenda, who hears a strange creaking noise

emanating from a tree top, and, on looking back at the tree sees an we crack in its trunk, knows that a homeless *tshilombo* has left its hiding place and enter him; this explains why every *Muvenda* is afraid to look back when he hears an unusual noise. The Bavenda conception differs slightly from that of the *Bathonga*, who think that all *zwilombo* belong to foreigners. The Ba Karanga, among whom the cult is found in a very advanced stage, consider the *zwilombo* may be the spirits of all manner of creatures, human or animals. I came across one MuVenda, recently arrived in Vendaland from southern Rhodesia, who was said to be possessed by the spirit of a python, from the Karanga country"

(Stayt1931:302-3)

The exorcism here is done by the *nganga* hiring a well known *zwilombo* drum beater, who after diagnosing the problem gives medicine then make the patient dance for her healing, either dance wildly, then taken into a hut to be treated or she runs away into the bush into a pointed direction .When she comes back from the bush she is healed.

The Christian exorcism is done by the authority of the name of Jesus Christ and the demonic spirit comes out never to come back again as the believer commands. The gift of exorcism must be recaptured by the church as majority of the killers are possessed by evil, need to set free at all levels spirit, emotional, intellectual, psychological. The following solution is also linked to exorcism.

#### 4.2.2.3 Prayer

Prayer of deliverance works in diverse ways and can also be used pastorally for fighting in supplanting the phenomenon. Prayer is dependence on God to do what is humanly undoable. When pastoral care uses prayer effectively and appropriately the evil in people and in society is disarmed. The modern man is self-sufficient and is prone to despise prayer but it is a tool that can deter ritual murder and also heal the traumatised. If the Lord of Life can pray with loud cries to the one who could be able to save him, how much more shall the church employ the power of prayer to conquer evil.

The strongest tool given to believer is prayer because God only does the impossible. In fact the researcher met a lot of hindrances in attempting this research as the majority felt the problem must not be researched, because it is one of the unsolved ones. Three

computer drives in which the research thesis was kept were damaged ,many are discs destroyed, many copies reprinted again and again .It was difficult ,through and through. In other words it was because it is the sacred grounds being researched by a foreigner, could not find easy co-operation as it reveals other peoples cultural secrets. Also that it is dangerous grounds and risky. However, the gravity and overwhelming nature of the phenomenon need supplication and intercession as the battle is not canal, but against spiritual forces that militate against all who would expose their diabolic deeds. The Apostle Paul put it more succinctly when he wrote to the Ephesians church “for our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12). The courageous prayer is the one that can be part of the solution here. The courage to expose evil of the phenomenon and prophetically to stand against the tide and thunder with the ancient prophet and say it is wrong, sinful and blatantly wicked to ritually murder someone.

#### 4.2.2.4 Healing

In closure the researcher will be looking at healing in the light of the phenomenon. One needs to take the plight of humans in the area of brokenness trauma, sickness and pain to be able to admit that our world need healing now than never before. There are a number of biblical Hebrew words pertaining to illness and disease. These tend to be imprecise in meaning. Very common is the verb *chalah*, 'to be weak, sick', from which are derived the nominative *machaleh*, *machalah* and *choli* (weakness, illness) Another family of words is derived from the verb *dawah*,

to be unwell from which are formed the nominatives *madweh* and *dewaj* ( faintness, sickness), as well as the adjective *daweh*, faint. The noun *deber* is most often translated plaque and seems to refer to an epidemic disease or pestilence. The most commonly mentioned contagious disease is *tsara'at*, some form of skin disease, often translated leprosy. Words for healing are derived from the verbal roots *chajah* (most often meaning to live, here in the sense of to revive) *shub*(meaning to return, here in the sense of restore) and *rafa* (to heal, from which is derived the noun translated healer/ physician

(Dube,2003:26). In understanding the root words for illness and healing it brings a bigger picture that the main focus of the research is also to try and equip pastors for the healing and restoring that which ritual murder has destroyed. The grappling with this issues of healing is a challenge were tools must be devised to empower the clergy. For any approach to healing to be meaningful all facets of life must be included in the quest for healing. The dilemma of life is that we are hurt by other people, and we depend on others for healing." The process is a process of relationship" (Means 1988:211). Healing relationships:

Reduces anxiety, increases faith, lessen isolation, Fosters a sense of belonging, offer unconditional acceptance, Encourages people to be who they are before God.

The process of healing according to Clinbell has following facets:

**Mind growth:** the person must be helped to grow in thinking, analysing, creating.

**Physical wholeness:** a healthy body houses a healthy soul.

**Relational wholeness:** with those that are intimate to one.

**Societal institutional relation:** If the individual is in tune with other people, groups, church, work.

**Bio nature connection:** how does one relate to natural environment and ecology?

**Spiritual- divine connection:** Relationship with God gives a person spiritual health.

(Clinebell, 1984: 31) If healing is looked at in these facets it becomes complete wholeness/ healing. The healing ministry has been reduced and neglected by majority of the main line churches The congregants want healing and the major quest is healing especially the African initiated churches. Their growth is ascribed to emphasis on healing.

The issues of trauma counselling are about healing the traumatised person other wise it is a problematic intervention. The wide view of areas that need healing may help the counsellor to explore the healing in more than one ways and will try to understand that humans are more complex than one may think so in trying to help them an inter disciplinary approach should be employed. When engaged in the business of helping and care giving to people one need to understand the following about humans and how they fathom things.

There are certain things we need to know about people in order to help them:

- 1) People are complex. They cannot be easily explained in one dimension, such as spiritual or psychological.
- 2) People are impacted by heredity, culture, environment, geography and new birth.
- 3) People are not always aware of the processes at work in them. Therefore, denial of certain realities could be due to unawareness, instead of pure denial or resistance.

People are more than what we can see and touch. There is an element of spiritual essence that science cannot put a finger on. Reducing our understanding of people and the world to only what can be seen only diminishes our ability to reach people who are open to the reality of the unseen. A comprehensive understanding of people and the world they live in can only enhance whatever type of ministry or secular work one does.

The church should be no exception. It needs to develop an awareness of different people and their different worlds" (Scott Moreau, 2000:75) In the light of this argument about people, it is proper to make sure that the trauma or wound of the person be clarified as you may be diagnosing a completely different problem and trying to heal it in a completely different way. Dangers of misdiagnosis leads to misapplication of the needed help and makes healing to be far- fetched. You find wrong methods being applied inappropriately, therefore the trauma lingers on in the patient or client into adulthood unresolved.

One can not belabour the point that the help giver must always remember people are different and at times do not present the case as it really is so the helper must figure out with sensitivity on how best to help the client. Even in the ministerial courses psychology and psychoanalysis disciplines must be taken to enhance the spiritual resources. There is a school of thought that does advocate taking strange ways as the disciplines of humanities have no godly but humanistic tendencies of approach to life that at times are in direct conflict with religion more so the Christian faith.

#### **4.3 Pastoral Care And Counselling And Its Approach To The Myths And Philosophies Of Ha-Tshivhase.**

In the previous part of the study Pastoral care and Pastoral counselling have been mentioned and now the study will dwell on the myths and philosophies that under-gird the ritual murder phenomenon and perpetuates it. Every tribe on earth has the way of thinking and how to approach life; in other words, a philosophy that guides them. Myth is some belief in something that has no factual confirmation, while the philosophy is the way of life that carries people as they think and perceive life. Every people are coached in a particular way the values that are hidden but binding to a specific people. Some of these practices must be protected as they enhance life, but others must be transformed for they do not add value to life but they fight good things.

One ethos that needs radical confrontation is the secrecy and non confrontational way is subtle sabotage of the other person. Silent, but dangerous nature of dealing with the opponent and seeing a wrong thing and never challenging directly. The attitude of seeing and overlooking things makes the ritual murder thrive as it does better in secrecy.

"Culture is the development of the person, intellectually, aesthetically, and socially, to the full use of his powers, in compatibility with the recognised standards of excellence of his society. To be more specific: It is likely that all would agree that to be recognised as the cultured within any homogeneous social or ethnic unit, a person would be marked by at least six characteristics:

A cultured mind. This is the intellectual dimension.

Cultivated speech and voice this is the communicative dimension.

Cultivated manners. This is the interpersonal dimension

A cultivated social sense. This is the community dimension.

Cultivated tastes. This is the aesthetic dimension

Cultivated abilities and skills. This is the vocational dimension."(Taylor1975:16,18, 19)

With the above description of culture one does not warrant to call ritual murder a culture because it falls short of the culture, as it violates all the six characteristics.

#### **4.4 The Role Of Young Chiefs In Changing Mind Set**

The role of chiefs in Vendaleland is very critical in that people believe and respect the word of the chief. So if ritual murder is to be banished from the land, the pastoral care

needs to engage the young chiefs who also are fighting the phenomenon. The people act as they think, so good thinking must be cultivated which has to bring in sacredness of life and pre-empts the desire to commit these ritual murders.

Good governance encourages people's behaviour. In the palace when issues are tabled that bring development and in the same breath the vices of ritual must be discouraged and be abolished from the land. People learn better by example like in the story told by Yohannan as he writes:

"A high caste Hindu, he said, had, had fainted one day from the summer heat while sitting on a train in a railway station. A train employee ran to a water faucet, filled a cup with water and brought it to the man in attempt to revive him. But in spite of his condition he refused. He would rather die than accept water in the cup of some one from another caste. Then some one else noticed that the high caste passenger had left own cup on the seat besides him. So he grabbed it, filled it with water and returned to offer it to the panting heat victim who immediately accepted the water with gratitude.

Then Sunder Singh would say to his hearers:

"This is what I have been trying to say to missionaries from abroad. You have been offering the water of life to the people of India in a foreign cup, and we have been slow to receive it If you will offer it in our own cup- in an indigenous form- then we can much more likely accept it"

(Yohannan,1986:144).

The African mind is just as hard as this high caste man who refused even willing to die for his convictions to his principles. The change of heart came only when somebody noticed the cup, which made a difference between life and death.

There are small convictions that are like a key to the African heart. One of it is the position the chief holds in the hearts of his people. It can unlock a lot of possibilities for change.

The Vendas will readily accept any thing that comes from the chief out of respect. Even in the confrontation of this gruesome phenomenon the involvement of the chief in foiling the phenomenon will happen with the help of the chief. The changing of people is one of the most difficult things but in the cultural set up the chief can and has always played a very significant role. The indigenous chief will always be accepted by the indigenous



people. The person who is at the fore front of the mind set changing in the life of a tribe has patience and deep understanding of the people and into which direction he is leading the shift to. Guevara once said, "If our revolution is not aimed at changing people, then I am not interested. Revolutions are aptly named: they revolve. They turn one lot of sinners out, and put another lot of sinners in. The trouble with virtually all forms of revolutions is that they can change everything- except the human heart. And until that is changed, nothing is significantly different in the long run .However, by the inward power of the spirit, Christ offers a revolution of love that can transform the innermost nature and desires of every single one of us."(Watson1930:17).

The researcher agrees with the above quotation and further affirms that transformation of mind, heart and soul is the solution to this persistent problem.

The true change that can make ritual murder a thing of the past is the change of heart for the whole Ha-Tshivhase. The people are filled with the transforming spirit of Jesus Christ. The Preaching that men can become followers of Christ. The revolution of the heart is what we are looking to as solution to this phenomenon. The power of the Gospel has made kings and queens conquer lands.

This challenge is a wake up call to all in Ha-Tshivhase to fight the phenomenon where ever it resurfaces.

There has been hard core criminals who have bowed to Christ gospel and have become agents of change, progress and communities which they once terrorised have been amazed at the remarkable change over which the prisons could not do. In our time faith issues are trivialised. The transformation of communities for the better must be encouraged instead of being ruled by fear and evil. The negative effects of evil are the break down of relation ship. Disconnection is one of the proofs of the presence of the destruction of evil. Means as quoted earlier confirms this.

There is also power in confession when perpetrators change their ways by confessing and breaking with the past. Taking a new course and a new direction can heal our land all those one notices that this route can have the possibility of vengeance by the relative as the perpetrator wants to make peace. The chief can give the leadership to calm down the anger of the community that comes as a result of confession to being part of ritual murderers. Also the community anger and punitive measure may end up like a kangaroo

court. This route is emotionally costly, demanding and instead of bringing healing may cause untold misery to the community.

There is the power of liturgy that prayer and song can also be part of the solution to this problem of ritual murder and the stamping out there off. These means appear weak to the world but it appears the church has used them for ages when the going is rough.

The battle to change mind by the chief brings us to a point where church liturgy of song and prayer can incorporate the chiefly tunes that touch the souls of the Vhavenda and put in there a godly music because song touches the depth of a people. The message for the fight against ritual murder can penetrate by using song and liturgy that are Africa friendly.

When the western missionary came the drum and traditional dress were outlawed in the church. The use of the drum for godly liturgical song will help heal communities through song." Music, dancing, and song are an integral part of nearly all the social activities of the Ba Venda. A traveller seldom journeys far through their country without hearing the sound of drums, flutes, or the xylophone emerging from one or the other of the kraals in his vicinity, at any time in the afternoon or evening, and especially at night when the moon is full. The small informal dances which often begin spontaneously toward the end of a beer-drink are generally accompanied by singing, but the important tribal dances are invariably associated with the beat of one or more of drums and playing of flutes."(Stayt1931:316) If an effect is to stare the Muvenda to action you must use song and dance.

Music is medicine to the soul and it sinks deep into the conscious level of the person and messages remain embedded. The church can Christianise the songs of profane words to honour our Lord and God. The messages of anti murder coined into the lyrics. The community will get the message as they drum beat , dance and song at play in communal gatherings. When the chief like all progressive people can support transformation of cultures by fighting all that are anti progress and wrong practices like ritual murder then peace will reign.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.1 HEALING TOWARDS ANEW PARADIGM SHIFT IN PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELLING FROM AN AFRICAN VIEW**

First and foremost, one needs to broaden the understanding of worldviews that are at loggerheads in regard with the supernatural, paranormal phenomenon, which includes

witchcraft. One prominent theologian Ruldolf Bultman of the past century has influenced majority of western civilisation in removing miracles and the supernatural working of God by demythologising the bible. The belief in angels and demons is denied. The supernatural miraculous happening and any paranormal phenomenon are relegated to be myths of bygone medieval times.

One however needs not lean on such a western, straight-jacket, boxed worldview to understand the African mind and ethos. The third world countries do not live on false construct of a worldview, where things are straight and empirically proven in the laboratory. Life is larger than empirical laboratory experiments of scientific precision. There is more to life than science of laboratory precision. In his book, *Unearthly Powers*, David Burnett says that "Western worldview denies the existence of any divine or supernatural forces in the universe.. but this materialistic philosophy, he agues, has never been intellectually satisfying world view.....It fails to answers basic human question of life." (Burnett 1988:15-17).The researcher agrees with the analysis of Burnett's understanding of the western worldview.

The word worldview has many meanings, but in here it means the following.

"Worldview simply means the way a person or a group of persons view the world around them. It expresses the view point of what they think and believe the material and immaterial world in and around them look alike.

It includes the unexamined suppositions people hold, most of which are passed on from one generation to another "(Sunday Aigbe 1991:166).

The members of the group hold these assumptions to heart and any one seemingly diverting is held with contempt. These assumptions are not written down anywhere but every member of the tribe knows them by heart and they are applied appropriately as need arises. These are the under-girding beliefs and philosophies that hold the tribe together. If it is for good then it must be persevered and if it is for bad it must be purged. Thus this research wants to bring to surfaces the need for Africa as a people to self critique, even when the evil is perpetuated by our own people who hold the same tribal and Africaness like our selves.

In Africa and the east, and the Bible context, life is seen in a holistic sense and nature. All facets namely spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, psychological, economical are looked at as one entity.

Therefore there is room for belief in angels, demons, witchcraft and other paranormal are accommodated.

Sunday writes:

"The African traditional society is holistic in two ways, firstly the religious, political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions are interrelated.

Secondly the ruling order of kings and chiefs are intertwined with the religious order in functions, although in theory the purpose of analytical understanding they are usually separated. (Sunday 1991:169)"

The viewing of life in a holistic way does not allow a fragmentation which is common in the western world" It appears there is a thin line drawn between sacred and heathen. The way life is lived in Africa is communal just like the homes are round whole and the bush, nature and the people are interlinked. So it is even in the spiritual arena. Man is both material and spirit and is linked to the cosmological view which explains many mysteries of life.

Sunday continues to write:

"A tribal worldview consists of those basic assumptions which tribal people hold and take for granted about things, events, behaviours, actions and other people. We can say that their actions and values systems are guided directly or indirectly by these unproven, but strongly held to be 'true' assumptions.

These basic assumptions generally include the following'

- 1) Human beings are deeply religious: Spirituality= power
- 2) Human Beings are deeply political: Power=control
- 3) There are two worlds: natural and supernatural
- 4) The two worlds co-exist eternally
- 5) Causality in the natural world traces back to the supernatural world: Spirit over matter.
- 6) Two worlds commune: prayer= communication

The last two assumptions are the keys to understanding the other assumptions (1-4) and actions of people who hold them. For example a tribal person assumes cosmological explanatory system that every immediate natural cause and or life mystery is rooted in and can be traced back to the supernatural world, which is part of the cosmic order. Therefore the ability to commune with the spirit world will determine how much power one can acquire to be able to control one's own destiny, events, and nature. The implication of this is a fervent devotion to rituals ,prayers, and religious shrines, from this perspective prayer which includes dance, sacrifice, worship, songs and other rituals is the key to understanding the inner most being of the tribal person" ( Sunday Aigbe 1991;167) This quotation from Sunday holds the African philosophy that moves majority of the African way of understanding. The problem with African ways ,is that when one critiques his own culture, he is labelled a white man in a black skin and many other terms that boarder along sarcasm.

The researcher feels that if Africa will move for progress it must have enough stamina to self critique and then banish from the land any evil even if it is perpetuated by our own people. In this case it is the phenomenon under scrutiny ritual murder.

The continent of Africa has been the source of much of the so-called western theology from Alexander in Egypt which is Africa. The North African theologians like Oriegn and Turtellian have contributed significantly to theology. In the case of the phenomenon which the researcher is grappling with, African theologians can never turn a blind eye, the issue need to be squarely addressed. The approach to the cosmological change in perception in Ha- Tshivhase is necessary to address the phenomenon.

The African mind accommodates the spirit world and when theology misses this point it becomes out of touch with the issues at an African heart. Old Venda persons, who are informants to this research, indicate without hesitation that the victim of ritual murder is chosen through divination of a medium. He gives specific instruction of what type of clan or totem the sacrifice victim will come from. For example, is his /her clan totem the sacrifice Ndou-elephant, or crocodile then the victim is given according to the needs for medicine either for prosperity to work or success. Ancestral linkages are necessary to effect the execution of the ritual murder plans.

The previous chapters have tabulated and narrated issues and chronicled stories that are painful and analysed the findings as it relates to pastoral care and counselling looking and focusing on ritual murder. Now in this final chapter we usher a subject that is in keeping and part of the envisaged solution to the phenomenon. A new paradigm change is needed to make a shift in pastoral care and counselling from an African view.

The person, family and community need care and healing in different ways. In this particular case the illness or ailment has to do with a specific problem which has been perpetuated unconsciously by mindset that is unwilling to confront this cultural and social evil namely ritual murder. Transforming one view on a particular way is cumbersome and overwhelmingly tough. Shifting the thinking of a tribe is a mammoth of a challenge.

The professor Hans Kung has used the term paradigm many times. It has been used in shifting from older ways to newer ways and better ways of understanding and doing things. A paradigm shift is a change for the better. When the conception has changed for the eminent challenges, it can be conclusively said a paradigm has taken place. The paradigm in pastoral care and counselling must take place in order to address the current challenges.

Many issues in our African context need a revisit as for too long we are caged in western garb. Old habits die-hard goes the English adage. So it is with the mind set, perceptions that are held by the tribe. One should understand that people by nature do not and cannot confront issues that touch them directly.

The issue of ritual murder in Venda is a known phenomenon but for it to be challenged directly and openly is deemed as inviting big trouble so better avoid it. Even churches and pastoral care and counselling methods are no exception, as they have failed to confront in a prophetic way and to put instrument for use.

The church and its theology are the conscious of society in setting moral and ethical standards. When the trauma has transpired in a given situation of an individual, family and society as mentor in areas of life and living, the church must proclaim profile and sanctity of life to be up held in programs of Christian education. Healing has to do with bringing wholeness, restoration and completeness, bringing to perfect health. For years if

not centuries life has been fragmented into compartments of west and east and third world and the affluent first world.

Most Africans are religious, few with a taint of western influence would claim being atheist or agnostic, but majority recognise the Supreme Being. African religion is polytheist, syncretistic in nature. Many other spirits of gods are acknowledged though the Supreme Being is above all other gods. The issue of appeasing the ancestor brings in the need for sacrifices and mainly fears of retribution or punishment from ancestors. The blood of animals, and sometimes when it is serious the blood of humans.

Paradigm shift is a word about change movement for the better, transformation. The milieu, epoch, era, the way it happened then allows new approach to do things and understanding them is paradigm.

Nick pollard writes:

"It is bound to take people time, sometimes very long time, to perceive the inadequacies of a particular worldview.....In the same way, we must give non- Christians the time and space they require. Indeed, they need this even more than we do, since, for them this is not a purely theoretical or academic question we are inviting them to consider. For we are asking them, to rethink some fundamental, underlying beliefs and assumptions upon which they have based their lives until now. This is a disturbing experience for them, and if we try to push them too fast it can be traumatic.

If our positive deconstruction is to be truly positive, we must give people the time they need so that they can take it at a pace with which they are comfortable."(Pollard 1997:73)

In the renovations of a house, people are temporary housed else where for the job to go ahead. In this case of transforming societal values and purge the unwanted practices , time and space must be given to people and specify the issue from which they must refrain, other wise the process can be self defeating.

On the other hand life must continue, as people are always on the move and dynamic. Admittedly, Pollard is right in insisting to give people space and time for the process of change to occur smoothly. He reasons with the person until the person is convinced to make change of mind.



The process of talking to people about what they hold dearly and after that give them to renounce their bad ways at a voluntary level is big success of deconstruction. The process of deconstruction must be given chance, but some how be controlled, as some may for ever be begging for space and time to decide.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

The thesis has tried to expose the falseness and show how the traumatic ritual murders in Venda posing a challenge to pastoral care and counselling can bring healing and help the individuals, families and communities, traumatised by the phenomenon. The issue is introduced as being a global phenomenon with a focus at Ha- Tshivhase. The researcher gives his motivation in trying to tackle the problem and show how the study is necessary. Highlights painful stories told by informants that buttress the study and a focus on the reaction of two families who are directly affected by the phenomenon as regards the trauma. The road map and methods are tabulated and the motives that push the perpetrators are also indicated namely cultural, religious, economical and quest for personal power. The other question being raised is the links of the phenomenon to witch craft. The study also shows the role of pastoral care and counselling in a traumatised community, and other dimensions, like counselling, deliverance and healing. The tribal myths and philosophical thinking that underpin these communities as regards with the phenomenon. The role of the chief in fighting the phenomenon, that affects and traumatises communities. How pastoral care can help have new paradigm within it self to enable appropriate counselling to address these African issues, matching with paradigm change. The researcher hopes that there shall be other brave men and women who would venture into this subject that used to be a secret, in order to reveal more undisclosed issues about the phenomenon.

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