The changing face of Christianity in Zambia: new churches of Bauleni Compound

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Since the 1990s new churches in Zambia are multiplying fast. Many speak of "mushrooming churches". The term seems to imply that new churches are coming in great numbers, as if overnight and out of nowhere, just like mushrooms in the rainy season. But also mushrooms come from somewhere, and have been waiting for the right time to come out.

This explosion of Pentecostal churches is not unique to Zambia, but to the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. To differentiate the new churches from the classical, Western mission Pentecostal churches (for example the Assemblies of God, or the Pentecostal Holiness Church), different authors have baptised them different names, calling the newer ones "charismatic churches", "Neo-Pentecostals", "newer Pentecostal oriented churches", "laissez-faire Pentecostals", "new generation churches", or "new-breed churches", while others group them together with "African Initiated Churches" (some speak of "African Initiated Pentecostal Churches"). Such terms, however, are not used by the churches themselves. Most Zambian-born churches in Bauleni refer to themselves simply as "Pentecostal" and see themselves very much in continuity with the older traditions of the same name.

Such an understanding of continuity, however, is not fully mutual. From the older Pentecostal traditions some questions are being asked, as a recent book of Rev. Madalitso Khulupirika Banda (2009) shows, warning of an emergence of a "happy go easy"- Pentecostal state of affairs in Zambia. The older Pentecostal churches saw themselves arising out of the demanding and non-complacent Holiness-movement, where the growth of churches was accompanied by visible signs of sacrifice on the side of the pastors. "Many people risked their families by leaving their professional careers, jobs and possessions to take up fulltime ministry", writes Banda.[1] In contrast, he sees in some of the new churches but personal fundraising projects of their pastors. He also regrets a general lack of Biblical formation, and the abandonment of the holiness ideals both in pastors and congregations. Rev. Opoku Onyinah (2002), rector of the Pentecost University College in Accra, warned that the popular trends of African Pentecostalism need to be challenged and engaged with, since they may in the long run *reinforce* fears in witchcraft and demon-possession, instead of bringing liberation.

If the older Pentecostal churches are expressing some irritation, one can imagine what is felt by the mainline churches. Some speak of an emerging "entertainment Gospel" or a "show-off Gospel", referring to the combination of loud music, spectacular healings and exorcisms (readily video-taped or even televised), extraordinary testimonies and bold assertions of faith. Others see the new churches feeding on fears of demons and Satanism. They warn of the danger of a charismatic Christianity to become very in-

[1] Banja 2009, 14.

ward looking and apolitical: Satans and problems are personalised and prayed away, but the wider social forces (or psychological dynamics) are overlooked and left intact. Others go further still and claim that people living in dire poverty are easily misled by promises of healing or prosperity; many even prefer to speak of "sects" rather than churches.

Whatever one's opinion about the new churches, it is no longer possible to see in them just a development at the "margins" of Christianity. Due to its shifts in "gravity" towards the South, world-Christianity is more and more marked by what is happening in Africa, South America and Asia, which all have seen an explosion of new Pentecostal churches. Mainline churches themselves have developed influential charismatic wings and become affected by the quest of Pentecostalism. (One provocative author sees the mainline churches - at least those in the North - already today on the margins of global Christianity and speaks of immanent shifts in the nature of world-Christianity; others speak of the "Pentecostalisation of world-Christianity".)[2] No doubt, new churches deserve reflection from the side of the mainline churches. Rev. Opoku Onyinah furthermore reminds us, that fighting or suppressing a trend has never been successful; he calls on African theologians to bring reflection and analysis into the quest of the new churches, whose theology may still be incomplete. The best way to do so, one may add, is a positive engagement with the new churches.

This presentation deals with the development of new churches in Bauleni Compound (since it is at our doorstep), and I would think that the Bauleni-experience is not untypical to other urban compounds in Zambia. By tracing the chronological developments of new churches within the changing religious landscape of Bauleni, I also show some "footprints" of the issues with which people struggled when founding a new church.

Terminologies: churches, fellowships and ministries

In this paper I use the word "*churches*" in the sense of regular assemblies, meeting in fixed places (in an own church building, a hired classroom of a school, or a shelter near the pastor's house) with fixed and regular times of worship, its own name, its own pastor or pastors, and usually also with ministerial functions (baptisms, funerals) for its members. I also use the word church in terms of a distinct Christian denomination (for example Catholic, UCZ, etc.) People in Bauleni understand the meaning of a church largely within these connotations.

Apart from churches, we also find a number of "*fellowships*" in Bauleni. Sometimes the words "churches" and "fellowships" are interchangeable. But usually a fellowship refers more to regular interdenominational meetings, mostly during weekdays or Saturdays late afternoon, but sometimes also overnight, at the house of a church member or a pastor, with fluent membership from various churches and different Pentecostal pastors taking turns in leading the prayers. In Bauleni, several fellowships are attended also by some members of non-Pentecostal churches (Catholics, Anglican, SDA, RCZ, etc.) who find a liking to such informal styles of prayer, yet would not really like to join a Pentecostal church. Fellowships are not "owned" by one specific church, nor do they have a name; when they attain a name, they may actually be in the process of developing into a church. Apart from such fellowships, each church usually also has its own programmes for weekday- or overnight prayers.

Apart from churches and fellowships, there are also "*ministries*", in which pastors work out their specific gifts or talents (say preaching, prophesying, or healing in another church upon invitation, or evangelising by going with a specific team from house to house, or preaching in busses or in hospitals). Since a ministry is performed often in a team, and since the team can be growing,

[2] See the discussions around the book of Philip Jenkins *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2002) in the different contributions in Yates (2005) and the interesting response of Harries (2007).

also a ministry may develop into a church. Sometimes a ministry is the occasion for a person to recognise his/her talents to be a pastor and subsequently start an own church. The terminology used in Bauleni for a church, a fellowship and a ministry can be fluid. Many churches furthermore use the term "Ministry" in their own name (for example "Jesus Harvest Outreach Ministries").

Different theologies of being church

Apart from its common usage, the word "church" has quite different theological meanings, depending on the self-understanding of a church. The difference in theology translates into the development of new churches. Catholic theology knows only of one church, understood as the mystical body of Christ, which cannot be divided. The creed speaks of the "*one* holy catholic and apostolic church" – catholic meaning universal, and apostolic referring to a continuous line of succession that unites the bishops of today with the apostles of the past (principle of continuity). The definition of a local church starts with its participation in the one and universal church. Though all baptised Christians participate in the mystical body of Christ, the fullness of the church "subsists" in the Catholic Church,[3] which is seen as historically, institutionally and doctrinally grounded. To found another church outside of visible and structural communion with "the Successor of Peter" is not acceptable in Roman Catholic theology. Rather few churches split from the Catholic church. Those that did (in Zambia for example the Mutima church of Emilyo Mulolani) were maybe likely to have a rather elaborate doctrine in regards to the differences to the Roman Catholic church.

Protestant theology puts more emphasis on "the Word rightly preached" than on the right structures, when defining what is a church. Room is given for different structural expressions of churches to exist side by side, and still be united by the Word and by baptism. Pentecostal churches have roots in Protestantism (through their early connection with Wesleyan Methodism and the Holiness movement), but developed largely as grass roots movements. With new movements arising constantly across the globe, one would not expect to find a systematic theology of "what makes a church" that is common to all. But a definition would basically start - not with the characteristics of "the one universal church" - but "from below", from a concrete fellowship of believers who are baptised in the spirit (born-again). The local and concrete charismatic fellowship has precedence over structural or historical elements of what makes "church". Charismatic leadership is stressed over institutionalised leadership, and a criteria for the best way to be church is the free flow and concrete expressions of the Holy Spirit "who blows where he wants", and "who makes all things new".[4] In this understanding it can be seen to be very appropriate to found a new church, if it is legitimised by concrete expressions of the Holy Spirit and if it allows people to witness the living God in their own life-situations. The many churches that are emerging in this way, see themselves often in continuity (not in opposition) with their Pentecostal mother churches.

Churches in Bauleni Compound in the 1970s

Bauleni is situated at the outskirts of Lusaka and developed only in the 1970s into a "high-density"- or "low-income" -compound. The earliest churches were the Central Africa Committed Church and the Central Africa

[3] "The fullness of the church subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him" (*Lumen Gentium*, No 8, of the documents of Vatican Council II).

[4] For an interesting comparison of key-questions in ecclesiology between Catholic and Pentecostal churches, see Karkkainen (2001) or Tennikoff (2010). The *International Review of Mission* devoted a whole issue (2001, vol 90, issue 359) on the ecclesiologies of different groups of churches in regards to the understanding of mission. For a presentation of the understanding of Catholic ecclesiology after Vatican II on the participation of other ecclesial communities in the "one church", see the article of Sajda in the same issue.

Christian Church. Both came to Bauleni in 1966, both had developed as off-shoots of the Dutch Reformed Church, and both are members of the Christian Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ).[5] During the 1970s, six other churches joined the Christian landscape of Bauleni: the African Methodist Episcopal Church (1970), the Anglicans (1970), RCZ (Reformed Churches in Zambia, formally Dutch Reformed – 1970), Catholics (1972), Jehovah Witnesses (1978), and the UCZ (United Church of Zambia – 1978). Additionally, also a small Zion church developed in the 1970s in Bauleni. Like in many Zion, *Mizimu* or *Mutumwa*- churches in Zambia, the founder of Bauleni Zion church had had a serious sickness that was not treatable in hospital. He was finally diagnosed in a Zion church to be with a *mzimu* spirit; his sickness was the start of a personal vocation and seen as a sign of a developing relationship with a God-given *mzimu* who had chosen him. Due to the treatment in the Zion church, he recovered from his sickness and learnt how to live and work with his *mzimu* spirit. He started his own Zion church in Bauleni in a shelter at his house, making use of his *mizimu* spirits (he acquired several different *mizimu* during the course of his long ministry) to help or heal other patients. Bauleni Zion Church had a small but steady congregation, but also many visitors, coming sometimes from far, seeking healing or prophesies for concrete situations. When he died in the 1990s, the congregation scattered, some joining other Zion churches that had arrived by then (see later).

The 1980s

During the 1980s, the population of Bauleni was growing substantially, and so were the different churches that were established by then.[6] Some other churches that have a long presence in Zambia arrived on the scene: the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), the New Apostolic Church, the Church of Central African Presbyterians (CCAP), the Christian Mission to Many Lands (CMML), and also others.[7]

The 1980s also saw the first Pentecostal churches to enter Bauleni compound, churches whose ways of praying came to change the Christian face of Bauleni in the coming decades. The early Pentecostal churches in Bauleni were at first under foreign leadership: the Pentecostal Holiness Church with ties to the USA and Canada, ZAOGA (Zimbabwe Assemblies of God in Africa) with ties to Zimbabwe, and the Christian Community Centre with ties to Germany. The late 1980s saw the emergence of largely advertised Pentecostal crusades (Reinhard Bonnke on the Copperbelt), that were attended by Christians across the divides of churches and boundaries. Nevers Mumba ran the "Zambia shall be saved" programmes on TV. In towns, attractive Pentecostal evening programmes (with well prepared choirs) became popular. Influential Pentecostal Bible colleges were opened during the 1980s (e.g. of the Assemblies of God in Kitwe), giving rise to a Zambian Pentecostal leadership. Testimonies of born-again Christians were becoming an own genre in Zambia, in which people narrated their conversion, how they had "met the Lord" and what "the Lord had done for them"; many listeners found themselves in such testimonies and were prompted "to give their lives to Jesus".

People in Bauleni were becoming exposed to Pentecostal ways of prayer that were spontaneous, free, involving everybody, and that were naming and exposing spiritual realities which people struggled with, like witchcraft

[5] According to Bishop Sawuti, the Central Africa Committed Church split off the Dutch Reformed Church in Rhodesia, when its congregation felt that the leadership of the church was too tightly connected with white rule and not committed enough to the independence struggle.

[6] Exceptions are the very first two churches of Bauleni, whose membership decreased steadily and who struggle to find new members.

[7] We have put on our website a more or less complete chronological list of churches in Bauleni (January 2010) on www.fenza.org/documents/churches_in_bauleni_compound.pdf.

or possession by *ngulu* or *mashawe*-spirits (nowadays called demon-possession). Many people in Bauleni came to a Pentecostal faith through such experiences of exposure with Pentecostal ways of prayer. Though they were coming from a Christian background that had shown itself *outwardly* in dedication and sacrifices in their respective churches, many "born-again" Pentecostals described their past "mainstream" Christian *interior* lives in entirely negative terms, as if they had never "met the Lord" – not even once – in their standard rituals, prayers and life-commitments in their former churches. One person also mentioned that he was looking with awe to the fact, that the Spirit of God was directly speaking to Zambians, to Africans.

Pastor Zulu, a trained member and leader in the Baptist church, can be given as an example of early Pentecostalism in Bauleni: having been exposed to new ways of prayer, he started to introduce them also within the Baptist church towards the end of the 1980s.

> "When we prayed in the new way, things just started to happen. Demons manifested themselves; they spoke out and left the persons. Sick people were healed. People started to offer their lives to Jesus. The Holy Spirit gave the gifts of tongues and the gifts of prophesy. The power of the living God was manifested when we prayed."[8]

However, it did not take long for these new ways of prayer to bring confusion and divisions within the Baptist church. Pastor Zulu left the Baptist church, "but we could not stop praying". In 1988 he founded in Bauleni a branch of the Firebrand Christian Fellowship, from whom he received support for his new church. Pentecostal churches founded in the 1980s in Bauleni were mainly new branches of existing churches; the pastors attached their new congregations to an existing Pentecostal body, from whom they could obtain help and also formal training for their ministries. The founding of new churches was also made easier in the 1980s, due to changes in laws concerning registering churches and societies.

In the meantime some of the mainstream churches also obtained charismatic "wings" (for example the charismatic renewal within the Catholic church), where people witnessed in Pentecostal/charismatic fashion extraordinary experiences and manifestations, which could however also bring divisions and a sense of elitism to the groups. The charismatic renewal within the Catholic church at that time was considered to be rather marginal to the church.

From 1990 to 2010: the Pentecostal explosion

By 1990 there were 21 churches in Bauleni Compound; five of them were Pentecostal. But during the 1990s the number of churches in Bauleni was to double. The experience of Pastor Zulu repeated itself also in other churches. In the Catholic church of Bauleni, Anderson Charles Phiri, a leader of the altar boys, was expelled from the church after a clash with the Parish priest due to his charismatic style of intercession, and joined with 41 other Catholics the Pentecostal Holiness Church of Bauleni. 21 of them eventually came back into the Catholic church. After six months, most of the others were expelled also from the Pentecostal Holiness; they founded their own Pentecostal church: the Word of God Ministries. Other founders of Pentecostal churches in Bauleni left the Jehovah Witnesses, the RCZ and the African Episcopal Methodist church due to new experiences in prayer and with God. They felt obliged (like pastor Zulu) to continue their ministries and founded new churches.

What was happening in Bauleni, happened all over Zambia. The UCZ went through a crisis in 1994, when the Pentecostal Grace Ministries split off countrywide.[9] From the CMML an influential charismatic group split off,

[8] Interview with Pastor Zulu, 16.02.2010.

[9] http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=8&id=1107387021.

which was to attach itself to the UK based "Harvest Ministries". Also the Evangelic Church in Zambia went through a crisis when several Pentecostal churches split off.[10] In urban Zambia, Pentecostal churches were finding much resonance among many youths, eager to look towards a different but promising future, eager also to break with the past and to challenge both secular and religious leaders. With the coming of the Third Republic in 1991, headed by born-again president Chiluba, liberalisation of the economy, an opening of the public media, an engagement of many Pentecostal pastors in politics, and the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation, Pentecostal churches came to enter very visibly the public forum. Pentecostal presence in the mass media, televised deliverance services, evangelisation in public places (bus stations), open Christian worship and deliverance sessions in schools and hospitals, printed slogans on buses and billboards, and Gospel music accompanying people more or less everywhere (sometimes even in the bars) came to mark public life.

Pentecostal churches are very missionary in character, since the Holy Spirit obliges one to preach (in the words of St. Paul: "Woe to me, if I do not proclaim the good news"), and thus it seemed a rather natural development that new energetic pastors were either founding their own churches or that they took the initiative to look for suitable (international) churches with whom to align and from whom to obtain help and theological training. By the end of 1999, the number of churches in Bauleni had come to 45, out of which 21 were Pentecostal.

While a Pentecostal wave was certainly sweeping through Bauleni, it is interesting to notice that Pentecostal churches were not the only new churches to emerge by engaging in a ministry of healing and spiritual manifestations. Another development also took place in Bauleni – more quietly and far from the public forum: the arrival of a number of small Zion, *Mutumwa* and *Mizimu* churches. During the first years of the 1990s, the New Zion Apostolic church, the Paradise Spirit Church, the Central African Spirit church, and the United Holy Spirit arrived in Bauleni; their leaders also worked as traditional healers (*ng'anga*), and most of them were registered with the Traditional Health Practitioners Association of Zambia (THPAZ). The founding stories were similar to the first Zion church in Bauleni: a person became sick; in a Zion church they were diagnosed to be afflicted with *mizimu* spirits and subsequently cured. Such spirits are demonised and exorcised in the Pentecostal churches, but treasured in the Zion churches.

> "There are good spirits and there are bad spirits. The bad ones need to be cast out. But the mizimu are sent by God. At first they make you sick, but when you learn how to live with them, they become a blessing. Some help you to detect witches and charms, others give prophesies, others heal or show you medicines, others interpret the Bible, others help you to shepherd the people who come."[11]

The newly healed persons took on the name of their *mizimu* (mostly Biblical names) and started Zion churches in Bauleni, most of them by affiliating to existing churches. Some leaders of the *mizimu* churches have a low level of formal education and theological formation. Other churches in Bauleni often laugh at them. Christian doctrines (or the person of Jesus Christ) are taken for granted implicitly (at least not denied), while the modes of worship (like no shoes in church, or kneeling towards the East, or a staff and the dress code of the prophets) are greatly stressed. *Mizimu* churches of Bauleni are small, and more are headed by women than by men (in striking contrast to the Pentecostal churches of Bauleni). But what looks small when looking at regular church attendance, turns out to be larger, if one looks at the patients coming from different walks of life or at the occasional healing-gatherings. Mama

[10] Lumbe (2008) interviewed a number of ministers who were involved in the disputes, and gives a lively description of the issues involved.

[11] Interview with Busa Chiwele, 10.02.2010.

Josephe of the Paradise Spirit Church put it this way (maybe with a hint of exaggeration):

> "Other churches laugh at us. They say that we cure with the help of demons. But when they are sick, they all come to us. Even their pastors come to be treated by us. But they come at night…"

The first Bauleni-born church to become international was in fact a Zion church. *Busa* Chiwele formed in 1991 his own independent church in Bauleni, the New Zion Apostolic church.[12] From Bauleni he opened branches in George- and Mtendere- compounds of Lusaka, in Petauke and in Zimbabwe. He has plans to expand.

By 2000, there were 45 churches operative in Bauleni, most of them with their own church structures or buildings, others hiring classrooms in one of the schools. Bauleni's population then was estimated to be around 19,000. Until then, Bauleni had constantly increased in population size (and would still continue to grow), but due to its geographical location, it was becoming more and more difficult to expand. Nevertheless, the number of different churches within Bauleni was again to double within the next ten years. In 2002, the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) published a survey of churches in urban Zambia that showed similar developments in other compounds. They counted 44 churches in Georges Compound, 56 in Chawama, 61 in Mtendere, 70 in Kanyama, and 81 churches in Matero.

Christian plurality in 2010

In January 2010, we counted 82 different churches/denominations in Bauleni (though they may be more). 7 out of the total number are affiliated with the Christian Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ, the mother-body of Protestant churches in Zambia), 18 are affiliated with the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), and at least one is affiliated with ICOZ (Independent Churches of Zambia). Some estimate that Bauleni today has a population of 25,000 people (though nobody really knows).

No classification is perfect. 16 out of the 82 different churches could be classified as "mainline" non-Pentecostal.[13] 53 others are Pentecostal.[14] 8 churches of Bauleni belong to different Zion traditions. The remaining 5 denominations are not fitting any of the above categories.[15] Additionally, many Bauleni residents pray in other churches outside the compound.

Looking at the 53 Pentecostal assemblies in Bauleni, there are great differences in terms of affiliations. Pentecostal churches stress the local assembly as focal point, and local assemblies are by nature rather independent. A new church may remain completely autonomous, answerable to no-one but to its own local leadership, and still regard itself as firmly rooted within the Pentecostal tradition. The church then is marked especially by its leading pastors and their teams, around

[12] He actually started first in Woodlands. He moved his church into Bauleni in 1991 upon shifting domicile into the compound.

[13] In order of chronological appearance in Bauleni: Central Africa Christian Church, Central Africa Committed Church, Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ), Anglicans, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Catholics, United Church of Zambia (UCZ), Presbyterian Church in Zambia (PCZ), Salvation Army, Church of Central African Presbyterians (CCAP), Church of the Nazarene, Christian Mission to Many Lands (CMML), Evangelical Church in Zambia (ECZ), Church of Christ, Baptists (with two different branches in Bauleni), and the Bible Gospel Church in Africa (BiGoCa).

[14] This includes the Apostolic Faith Mission and the Apostolic Faith Mission in Zambia, which see themselves as related but also as distinct from other Pentecostal churches.

[15] These are the Seven Days Adventists (SDA) with four different branches in Bauleni, the Jehovah Witnesses, the New Apostolic Church, the African Convert Cipangano Church (an offshoot of the African National Church which was itself an offshoot of the CCAP) and the Zambian-born Mutima Church of Emilyo Mulolani.

whom the church basically evolves. Altogether 16 Pentecostal churches are Bauleni-born, meaning founded in Bauleni by Bauleni residents and distinct from other churches; 11 of them have remained completely autonomous and independent, while 5 eventually became affiliated to larger Pentecostal groups of churches or to one of the Zambian mother-bodies (EFZ and ICOZ). Affiliations bring the advantage of mutual support, and sometimes also of further theological training, in Zambia or abroad. Apart from the 16 Bauleni-born Pentecostal churches, another 19 Pentecostal churches are Zambian-born, meaning they were founded elsewhere in Zambia and opened branches in Bauleni. This means that out of the 53 Pentecostal churches in Bauleni, altogether 35 are Zambian-born. The other Pentecostal churches in Bauleni maintain affiliations to the United States, to Germany, to the U.K., to Nigeria, to Tanzania, to South Africa and to Korea. 16 out of the 53 Pentecostal churches in Bauleni are affiliated to the EFZ, and one to ICOZ. Only three Pentecostal churches in Bauleni are headed by women pastors (all three are Bauleni-born).

Looking at the affiliations of Zion churches in Bauleni, seven are affiliated to other groups of Zion churches. One Bauleni-born Zion church founded itself many branches and developed into its own group of churches. Most of the Zion churches in Bauleni make explicit references to specific *mizimu* spirits, while two rely solely on the Holy Spirit, and still see themselves rooted in the (Zambian-style) Zion tradition, which they practice during their prayers (praying without shoes, kneeling towards the East, etc.) Sometimes several Zion churches combine for specific events, for example for fasting on a mountain, for baptism or for healing sessions. In Bauleni, the terms for Zion, *Mizimu* and *Mutumwa* churches are largely interchangeable. The distinction between Zion and Pentecostal churches in Bauleni is not always neat and tight. Some pastors also swapped from one to the other. Bishop Katobemo and pastor Bengu, who had been influential members of the Central African Spirit Church (a widespread Zion church which they tried to reform), embraced a Pentecostal faith, were expelled from their Zion church (in a dramatic gesture, whereby they were refused entry into the Bauleni church), and founded their own Pentecostal churches in Bauleni.

Looking at the mainline churches, one could think that their size has diminished due to the explosion of Pentecostal churches. But this is not the case – in general. Though all churches have lost members to the Pentecostals, they have gained others. Some, however, have to struggle today in Bauleni to keep their congregation going. Others never stopped growing. The Catholic church remains the largest single denomination in Bauleni. The RCZ, UCZ and Baptist churches are equally growing, not diminishing in size. Bauleni's population has continued to grow, and many Pentecostal churches are of a small size. Pentecostal churches tend to have a young congregation, most worshippers being under 40 years of age. At the same time, also the mainline churches have been strongly affected by a Pentecostal worldview, and members have taken much on board, that came from their encounter with popular Pentecostalism. The charismatic wing of the Catholic church, once on the margin, has moved much more towards the centre.

Looking at the variety of doctrines, one can find quite a collection in "Christian" Bauleni, if one compares for example the Catholics, SDA, New Apostolic, Jehovah Witnesses, the different Zion churches, or the Zambian-born Mutima church (which venerates a Quintity within the Trinity). Most of the new Pentecostal churches do not distinguish themselves with new doctrines, but confess the doctrinal basis of the early Pentecostal movements. Still, some doctrinal differences exist also among the Pentecostals: The "Oneness Apostolic Ministries" and the "United Pentecostal Church" in Bauleni are firmly anchored in the *Oneness*-tradition, baptising only in the name of Jesus and rejecting a spelled-out doctrine of the Trinity. The "Jesus Ministries" of Bauleni acknowledge the Trinity, but the founder claimed the revelation from God, that all three persons in God share the name of Jesus, "since a name is inherited from father to son." Also some other Bauleni-born churches give importance

to personal revelations of God to the different founders, prophets and members, but they remain largely within the (Trinitarian) Pentecostal doctrinal position. Pastors rather easily preach in one-another's churches. It seems that it are rarely the doctrines that account for the success of a church in Bauleni. Many people swap churches easily, and there are families in Bauleni where all the children pray in different churches.

Christianity has been pluralistic in Zambia from its beginning, since it unfolded within severe competition among the different missionary churches. One could say with Byamungu (and many others) that "Africa was forced to accept a divided God, because the messenger of this God was a missionary divided at home".[16] Yet for Bauleni I would prefer to say it the other way round: Zambia has shown a remarkable tolerance towards different Christian doctrines and traditions, since people actually never believed in a divided God. For most Zambians, God is not divided ("*Lesa aba fye umo!"; "Mulungu ndi mmodzi cabe!"*), and therefore transcends any individual church. People unite with each other and support each other far beyond the boundaries of any church, which is demonstrated in nearly each and every funeral. Membership in a given church is not necessarily seen as a life-commitment, and probably much less so for Pentecostal churches than for others. Churches can play an important part in people's lives in Bauleni, but apart from church membership there are also many other sets of social relations that shape people's lives, values and outlooks.

Starting a new church

Zambian pastors, who feel called by God to engage in the task of evangelisation in an original and personal way, are among the main actors in the process of starting new churches. Their ideals and aspirations may develop within their theological training or through active involvement in their mother-churches. But equally important is the background of the members of the new church, and the resonance with the people to whom they minister. In fact, a number of Bauleni pastors stated, that they discovered their vocation and calling through manifestations of God in the people they ministered to: they saw sick people getting better upon prayer, or demons leaving, or people coming with questions and looking towards them for answers. Some went to Bible college with the plan of founding a new church (or a branch of an existing church). For many others, however, to found a new church did not come from a concrete plan; it was something that *happened* due to given circumstances, sometimes as the consequence of the way people reacted to a ministry or to prayers of a gifted person,
sometimes as the consequence of a split.

Splits in fact are quite common. In Bauleni, the "Turning to Jesus Ministries" split from the "Jesus Ministries"; the "Turning to God Ministries" split from the "Jesus Harvest Outreach Ministries", which itself had split from the "Word of God Ministries", which in turn had split from the Pentecostal Holiness Church of Bauleni. Such splits are usually experienced as painful for the remnant and the pastor, who may feel betrayed.

Some pastors took over an existing congregation and changed its name (sometimes in a time of confusion or crisis), so as to give it a new impetus.[17] Most pastors, however, started to build up an own congregation completely from scratch, either as branches (meaning with some form of support from a mother-church somewhere else) or just by themselves and a few co-workers.

Whatever the starting point, most pastors look for a congregation that grows. From where are pastors recruiting? When asked, many pastors replied that they were recruiting from "non-believers", from people who were not praying anywhere. This may be

[16] Byamungu (2001), 345.

[17] Examples in Bauleni are the "True Worshippers" (formerly called "True Believers"), or the "Hope in Christ", which was re-baptised "Christ Gospel Church" when the founder left and a new pastor took over.

true for some people who join. We did not make a study (yet) on the congregations of Bauleni, but one fact is evident: while the number of different churches has been doubling roughly every ten years, the number of people who don't pray anywhere (or who meet on Sundays in a beer-hall rather than in church), is surely not diminishing in Bauleni. This makes one think that most members of the new churches had received their Christian foundations in another church (though many may have lapsed there or been "idle"). Under "push-factors" one may enlist the reasons why people left (or did not go back to) their old churches: personal clashes, neglect in times of sickness or a funeral, feeling rejected (for example due to a marital situation), finding it difficult to participate, not finding one's own spiritual experiences or needs addressed, or just because of feeling out of place. Under the pull-factors one may enlist the attractions of the new church: for example active participation in prayer, healing, and leadership, answers to a specific problem, or maybe because of following friends, or a husband, or a choir, or simply because the new church just happened to be in the neighbourhood. Whatever the reason for one's coming, new members usually are given much respect by the pastor and the congregation: they are welcomed, applauded, sometimes made to sit in front, or asked to give a speech.

The size of a new congregation varies greatly. A few churches in Bauleni have on Sundays only 20 people, or even less - some may even drop prayers occasionally for lack of people. Other new churches have weekly congregations of more than 150 or even more than 200 people. Many have a weekly congregation somewhere in between 30 and 50 adult people. What concerns the offerings in church: People in Bauleni, generally speaking, give little. Bauleni is a high-density, poverty-stricken compound. We did not make a study on offerings, but what I saw in the offertory plates was mostly little. There are many churches in Lusaka where weekly offerings make up easily a few million Kwacha. But they are not found in Bauleni! Many Bauleni pastors are engaged in different jobs: a few work in full-time formal employment and run their churches in the evenings and on weekends. Others are involved in shop-keeping (family businesses), at least two pastors are taxi-drivers, one is a night-watchman, many have occasional jobs, and one stated that he and his family live from the salary of his wife. Most pastors of new churches in Bauleni make a living mainly from their working professions, which is, however, not always stable. The support of their congregation may sometimes help out a bit, or "diversify" the chances of an income. But it also limits the opportunities for full employment. Some pastors have been urged by their families to give up their churches and seek employment, which shows that being a pastor can be a financial sacrifice.

Some regard their pastor-hood as a life-commitment. But others see in it as a temporal episode of their lives. One pastor in Bauleni (a former Catholic, who founded several churches on the Copperbelt and in Bauleni), put it this way: "There is a time for everything. God gave me time for preaching and for founding churches. But one day I will come back into the Catholic church."[18] Another pastor, a founding member of one Zion and one Pentecostal church in Bauleni, left pastor-hood and entered the Presbyterian church in Zambia as an ordinary member.

The message

A new church needs not only members - it also needs a message. To understand the message, however, is not only a question about the *meaning* of a teaching but also about the *power* of the teaching (Harris, 2007, 290). The preaching style can invoke this power: spotlessly dressed in a suit and polished shoes, preaching with a loud voice, (one pastor in Bauleni jumps up and down a table in the classroom while he preaches), and sweat pouring down. When listening, I doubted occasionally whether people in the congregation really believed what the pastor said. And maybe this was not the point. The point sometimes can be the power behind

[18] Interview with pastor Sakoni, founder of the "Changing Life Mount Sinai Mircacle Centre" and of the "Way of Life" in Bauleni.

the words, the power that is to be channelled into healing after the preaching, that is to change people's lives. How important this concept of "spiritual power" is, I believe shows itself in the genesis of many churches in Bauleni: when pastors left a mainline church, it was often a search for God's power to a specific situation rather than a question of a specific meaning. Starting a new church was often invoked as a testimony to God's power and the rejection of a "dead (or impotent) faith". Prayer experiences of repeating again and again the name of Jesus, the laying on of hands, falling into trance and loosing control over oneself can express an expectation of being touched by God's power.[19]

New churches present a way to experience this power in fellowship. Hence the importance of active *participation*. Members in the new churches of Bauleni widely participate in prayers, thanksgiving, intercession, in testifying, (and sometimes also in teaching). In many of the churches people pray with the whole body, sometimes also with a loud voice, or under tears. People pray in very different and personalised styles, yet the fact of praying together and voicing out loudly the prayer concerns, evokes a common situation, a common spiritual fight ("warfare"), and also a common destiny. People enjoy the time spent together, but worship is also a transformative ritual.

The churches in Bauleni are certainly more than some naked display of God's power. They present a certain way of life, a spirituality, a way of placing oneself in relation to the changing world, to one's own history, to others, and to God and the spiritual world. They can create a sense of belonging that gives their members new purpose in life, which makes them enthusiastic and proud of their church. Since this depends much on interpersonal relationships, one can hardly describe it in a general way, and one would need to study individual churches in depth and bring out the experiences of the members.

The message is inspired by various strands of Pentecostalism - including the "miracle-Gospel", the "Prosperity-Gospel", but also the "Holiness-Gospel". But also each pastor puts the message together in his own way. Many new churches do not spell out their message systematically. Here I try to present some elements that could be seen as part of the message and spirituality of many new churches. Not all of them apply to all the churches, but – I believe – most apply somehow in different combinations to many of the new Pentecostal churches in Bauleni.

1. *Belief in the immediacy of God's presence.* God speaks directly. The point here is that God can speak to anyone: nobody is excluded by nature of his state, his being, or his status in society, as long as one has set out on the path of repentance and new birth. Expectancy of God's direct intervention in one's life is a sign of faith, not a weakness.

2. *A quest for wholeness.* Many new churches have taken on board the vocabulary of "Godly prosperity", and speak of "blessings" and the "fullness of life". God is not a poor God. Health and success, material and spiritual wellbeing, body and soul, good relationships and happiness in marriage, blessing and completeness, are seen to belong together. One does not need to be ashamed to ask God for these concrete blessings, because it is part of the life that God himself intends for us. Body and soul, the material world and the spiritual, belong together. To be blessed shows itself in all dimensions of life.[20]

[19] Where the question of meaning is totally eclipsed, however, the preaching of the newer churches has come under scrutiny of the older Pentecostal churches. When the Bible is a source of authority rather than a source of teaching, a source of power without being a source of meaning, older Pentecostal churches speak of an abuse. For Madalitso Khulupirika Banda the question is not, whether a pastor has a Bible in his hand, but whether he opens it and submits himself under the word (Banda, 2009).

[20] Onyinah (2002) shows that this quest for wholeness in not just rooted in some "import" of popular Pentecostal preaching of the "Third-wave

3. Blessings take time to unfold, like a plant, but there are constant threats around, that can destroy the young plant or take away the fruits of the blessing. God provides protection. God is the shepherd.

4. God's protection and interventions show itself in a special way in *healing* and *deliverance*. Healing is understood in a much broader context than what a Western paradigm may suggest, since illness is not reduced to physical ailment, but connected to all spheres of life. The healing which many people seek (for themselves and for others) has to do also with being freed from misfortune, from unemployment, from accidents, from a lack of success in business or in marriage. Illness also has a moral dimension; the sick has a different status in family and society, that cannot be reduced to the number of microbes in the body. Western science or medicine can only cure the symptoms; faith can go to the roots.

5. Stumbling blocks come especially in form of *spiritual agents*. Such spiritual agents are given priority over Western secular concepts. Pentecostal churches can have a strong rhetoric against Zambian traditions, which they easily associate with witchcraft. African tradition, witchcraft and demons are responsible for most of the woes befalling the African continent. At the same time the new churches take seriously - up to the point of reinforcing or transforming – the Zambian spiritual realities with which people are struggling: witchcraft (re-baptised now largely Satanism), spirits (now called demons or principalities), the negative effects of unresolved issues in the families or with the ancestors (re-baptised now family-curses that need to be removed or "bound" by healing the family tree) or the acknowledgement that new forms of consumerism have spiritual consequences ("contamination" by demon-infested consumer goods). The spiritual realities are often seen to determine material realities. In some new churches the HIV-virus is seen as a demon manifesting itself in the form of a virus. But there are also demons of fear, of fornication, of confusion, of gossip, etc. The point of the message is that "the blood of Jesus" is stronger and more powerful than other spiritual realities. People are "covered with the blood of Jesus" by the prayers of the pastors, "anointed", and thus receive a powerful and potent medicine of protection, that bars all witchcraft and demons from the homes of the believers. The name "Jesus" itself has power, that manifests itself when used in prayer. [21]

evangelism" or the "Latter Rain ministers" (Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Reinhard Bonnke, or – later - Benny Hinn.) The reasons for the success of this sort of preaching can be seen as being rooted in the old quest of African Traditional Religion itself. Note, that this point does not necessarily eclipse the possibility of a positive meaning of suffering in the pastors' preaching: being blessed can show itself also in the strength to bear necessary sufferings, of which only God knows the purpose, or in peace of mind and heart. Nor does it imply an *entirely* "this-worldly" meaning of what it means to be blessed – such an understanding is in fact often rejected – though it may not have been worked out systematically.

[21] Many see Pentecostal pastors to stand in continuity with the old quest of African witchcraft eradication. This accounts for the attractiveness of Pentecostalism. Since pastors engage with people's own categories, they stand very close to people's own experiences of the forces in their bodies and their families. This picture, however, is incomplete if one fails also to see the rupture brought by Pentecostalism. Traditional healers, who give means of protection against evil forces, stand often accused to be themselves part and parcel of the ambivalent occult world, which can be abused for anti-social and greedy benefits. The pastor also fights witchcraft, but he has more distance to this world: not only brings he something radically new (stress on breaking with tradition by being born-again), but also since the Christian message itself is presented as the opposite of witchcraft. The moment a pastor abuses his 'powers' of dealing with the occult (defying humility, other-centeredness, etc.), his whole integrity as bearer of the Christian message is at stake. The

6. New churches present not only a way of dealing with spiritual forces that interfere in people's lives; they present a *modern* way. Pentecostal faith is forward looking and future oriented. Also, Pentecostalism is *global*. Many new churches like to put the attribute "international" into their name, even if they are entirely Zambian. Some authors argue that Pentecostal churches provide a powerful way to appropriate modern aspirations. In Bauleni, people live both with grim poverty, but also with great aspirations of modern life at their fingertips. New churches present themselves to people as linking the local scene - with its poverty - to a powerful global reality.[22]

7. Many churches present not only a modern way, but also a *concrete way*, with steps (like of a ladder), at the end of which is the promise of change in all aspects of life. A new level, or a "breakthrough", is achieved by overcoming specific blockages of God's power, that come in predictable stages and can be named (like beer-drinking, smoking, gossip, fornication, lies, "ancestor-worship", etc.) To be born-again is not a once-for-all, but a gradual event. Spiritual progress is accompanied by progress in other fields of life (inner and outer) that can be measured, at least for oneself. This can give hope and an ideal to strife for, and sometimes also the necessary discipline for rising out of poverty. One of the concrete steps can be the rule of tithing (understood as "sowing a seed"), which is proposed as a step to take initiative for one's own life, a concrete exercise in budgeting, and a step that can bring a sense of self-worth and worth in the eyes of God: "I am somebody, I am counted on by God, who dares to accept my gift".[23] They also give spiritual means (deliverance, intercession and spiritual warfare) to control the inherent dangers of living in the modern world.[24]

8. One of the key-symbols that unifies many of the above elements is the power of *anointing*: Once people know to be blessed, they are encouraged – whatever their position in Bauleni compound (unemployment, poverty, abuse…) to believe in themselves: anointing gives them not only protection, but also "power" and "authority" from above. Their lives attains a new meaning and purpose, which they are called to live and to proclaim.

Some pastors see themselves in connection with the early apostles, who were sent out by the risen Jesus to proclaim the Gospel, which was to be accompanied by extraordinary signs. Some media-stars of large Pentecostal "Mega-churches" with emphasis on the extraordinary manifestations of God's interventions in miracles and in prophecies (for example T.B. Joshua or Philip Banda) have influence on the self-understanding of some Bauleni-churches, who try to bring a "localised version" (but never a mere copy) to the compound. The Sunday-services of the "Book of Life Ministries" in Bauleni usually end with a healing and deliverance service, after which the pastor reveals in his prophesies very personal incidents or situations of different members of the congregation, and some of their dreams – be this vague or specific – , and then gives a spiritual interpretations. He does the same with some of the visitors, telling them (like a Christian *ng'anga*) why they have come, what they want from God, why

special powers that he radiates are also held in check by the Christian message itself, that he embodies. The Bible and the Pentecostal Christian message furthermore restructure the world of witchcraft and place it in a different worldview, which shows itself also in the new terminology.

[22] Mainline Western churches, of course, are also global and can attain the same function. Especially in rural areas, mainline churches are often seen in continuity with what is understood by "development" and "progress". One difference is, however, that the many new African churches address the tensions brought by modern life very much in continuity with the old forces of witchcraft and affliction by spirits.

[23] Garner (2000), Banja (2009).

[24] Meyer (1998).

they have not received it, and what they should do. A number of churches have dramatic deliverance services, where pastors use hands, sticks, their jackets and other tools for healing, and where many people fall down upon being prayed over and enter in trance. In some churches olive-oil is used for anointing. Others give holy water, ashes, or mixtures of milk, olive-oil and salt to drink to the sick, sometimes inducing vomiting and a "cleansing of the intestines and the whole body by the Holy Spirit".

In other churches, however, the services are much calmer, marked rather by much singing, prayers, and by simple gestures like the laying on of hands - in a light and sometimes humorous atmosphere. Indeed, one does not do justice to the small churches in Bauleni, if one looks at them as imitations of the Mega-churches and Pentecostal media-stars. In most churches the pastors do not pretend to have a special telephone-line up to heaven. Bauleni pastors themselves are - roughly speaking - of the same economic class and educational status as the members of their churches; therefore there is less of a barrier between the minister and the congregation, as one would find in the mainline churches that provide a high standard of training. This brings for Bauleni-pastors the difficulty to present something "new", and several pastors mentioned that it is easier to preach "far away from home" than to preach in Bauleni itself. ("A prophet has difficulties in his own home-town.") But at the same time it gives the advantage of a cultural closeness with the congregation, and here one finds that Bauleni churches are unique and original.

- The Bible study of the "Christ Believers" often starts with the life-situation or problem of one of the members, and each member in turn tries to give advise, basing it on concrete Bible verses. Also the teaching is done by different young people in turn. "A church is not just about miracles or preaching. A church is about holiness. I founded the church, so we can help each other to lead holy lives", explained the founder Evangelist Memory Simutanda.
- In the "New Hope Bible Church" dreams are interpreted. The founder is gifted, but all the members (it is a small church of largely women) take part in the interpretation. "Dreams need a spirit of repentance, of thanksgiving and of praise, to find their true meaning." The pastor also narrates her own dreams, and she is given herself advise from members of the congregation. The whole procedure is embedded by a call to repentance at the beginning (with a public confession of sins, taken in turns), and by thanksgiving and praise.

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- In one church the pastor was open with a personal struggle: people were falling when other pastors prayed over people, but in his own church nobody fell when he stretched out his hands. He felt like being a failure (though he had studied in South Africa!) Upon reflecting on his experience, he had a dream: He saw himself preaching in his church before a large congregation, and he heard himself asking a question "is it better for people to fall, or for people to believe in the Word?" When he woke up, he gave the answer to himself. Since then, he said, he places much more emphasis on his preaching, and does not care so much, whether people fall or not.

Such examples show that there is no blueprint for new churches. The struggles of the small churches give them real flesh and blood, and members sometimes realise that they are part of a common adventure that is open-ended.

Dialogue between old and young churches?

Given the limited formal training of many pastors in the new churches, their theology can be by nature imperfect and ambivalent. The reading of the Bible is sometimes limited to a very literal understanding of the biblical texts (sometimes actually only very few

texts). Theology also can be limited to very few issues. Yet it are sometimes "the little ones" who have much to teach about life, as a Bemba proverb affirms: "*Amano yafuma mwi fwasa, yaya mu culu*".[25] At least, the new churches can point out what people feel lacking in the older churches.

If one thinks of the sheer numbers of churches (maybe doubling again in the coming ten years?) and the lack of organisation and representation, one may doubt the feasibility of dialogue. Yet dialogue has in fact long started at grassroots within the charismatic wings of the mainline churches, which are often quite porous towards the new churches. For the Catholic church, a serious engagement with its own prayer groups of the Charismatic Renewal promises to "keep touch" (to some degree) also to the new churches.

Also the United Evangelical Mission (UEM, 2004) called for such an engagement. "Instead of discrediting and ignoring the charismatic movements, UEM member churches are encouraged to begin a dialogue with them that leads to mutual respect, understanding, sharing, learning and cooperation." (Recommendations, no. 10). Benefits may show themselves especially in regards to the healing ministry. The charismatic churches/movements have brought the challenge of moving the healing ministry from the margins to the centre – realising that healing is an integral part of the Gospel and of mission. The document stresses that a healing ministry needs to be firmly rooted in the person of Jesus and the mysteries of the kingdom (no. 3), and be holistic by recognising the connections between the spiritual and the biological, mental, cultural, economical, political, and social dimensions of healing (no. 6-7). At the same time, the healing ministry needs to be meaningful to the people it serves. "Every congregation is encouraged to find its own contextualized ways of effectively developing, offering, and implementing healing ministries, including that of a faith-healing ministry to the people in church and society." (No. 12) Charismatic movements have helped to make this healing ministry relevant, by remaining close to people's own experiences of illness.

The UEM document in fact throws in a big challenge to its churches when it speaks of sufferings "*that only the sick can rightly describe*". (Introduction, no. 4). Thereby the document implicitly acknowledges that the sick are not only the owners of their experiences, but also the one's invested with the moral right to determine which sort of language *rightly* describes their experiences. Doctors, priests or pastors bring in (by nature) their own interpretations and conclusions, and often also a great deal of objectivity, but this can never invalidate the language used by the sick themselves. The new churches have come with the challenge of faithfulness to the sick person's experiences by engaging with their own concepts and words; the stories of the sick persons in fact have often become foundation stones and markers of identity for the new religious communities, where people found back something of their own lives in the stories narrated by the sick.

All churches somehow answer by nature to a quest for wholeness. Mainline churches, in response to this quest, have a strong commitment to education, health-care and development programmes. Yet in practice, these commitments follow often a very secular agenda and worldview: people are cured through antibiotics, while God and the spiritual world remain (causatively speaking) absent, compartmentalised or somehow irrelevant. This can be felt by many as a fragmented life. Jim Harries, a Baptist minister who worked many years in Zambia (and now in Kenya), proposed that an engagement with the small churches could help the mainline churches to recognise, how much they themselves have been shaped by *Western secular culture*. There is an implicit tendency to drive religion and other spheres of life apart (religion is one thing, but technology or medicine is another thing) and to take

[25] roughly translated: "also a mountain has something to learn from a small ant-hill."

this division for granted.[26] Incidentally it are precisely the "secular" places in Zambia (bus-stations, markets, hospitals, schools, the public media) that are prime areas of evangelism for the new churches. Can this not be seen to be part of an implicit denial of the Western boundaries between the religious and the secular? To declare Zambia a "Christian nation" – pushed by Pentecostal churches – was partly another way to question the reality of a secular world.

At stake are issues of very different worldviews, with which the Christian message engages. The boundaries between the "religious" and the "secular" had been drawn and redrawn during a long European and Western history; they are fundamental to many modern institutions and disciplines (including Zambian institutions). The principles of science, for example, presuppose autonomy from the religious sphere.

Zambia has been shaped by a different history, and also by different ways of drawing boundaries between the world of the living and the world of the spirits. Looking at the success of so many young churches, there can be little doubt, that they are tapping into the spiritual needs, hopes and fears of many people, which had been rendered invisible to Western churches. Zambian Christians have often stood accused to be living in two worlds: a Christian world, and a traditional world, to which one falls back in times of crisis. The traditional world has its place especially in reference to the family, but it is here, that the tensions and contradictions of modern life are mostly felt.

New Zambian churches - building on Pentecostal traditions – easily acknowledge Zambian spiritual realities and their influence on humans. They also name them and engage with them, using a Christian and Biblical paradigm, through deliverance and exorcisms. While Western churches have a problem with the Zambian *spiritual* world, new churches have a problem with an independence of a *secular* world. Even science is subject to the world of the spirits; it is a world of symptoms, not a world of causes. So are the worlds of politics and economics. For them, the mainline churches stand accused of living in *two* worlds: Christian and secular, in syncretism.

Dialogue between old and new churches therefore touches not only Christian doctrine. At stake are two different worldviews, and required is for both the possibility to engage with one another.

[26] See for example De Witte (2003). Harris (2007) sees in Western secularism a disguised religion with which Christianity only forms a poor sort of syncretism.

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