

fits Mary Douglas' profile of a high grid/high group culture whose tight social structure is manifested in body symbols. The symbols reinforce societal roles and the rules of social interaction.

Cosmology

In Natural Symbols (1970), Douglas explains how a society's grid/group orientation also predicts its cosmology. Where grid and group is weak, expect the society to think the cosmos is dominated by impersonal powers and forces described with very few anthropomorphisms and manipulated through private magic. Where group is strong, the powers of the cosmos are usually thought to be personal ones, modelled after humans. These entities typically include the disembodied spirits of the dead and the Creator Deity who, among some groups, is considered to be the "Great Ancestor" and progenitor of the tribe. In high grid/high group societies, social control is built into the cosmos. The players in the unseen world are activated by moral or immoral behavior in the community of embodied spirits in the visible world below (Douglas 1970, 141-3). All of the above is true of Kalenjin cosmology in keeping with their high grid/high group nature.

When all of the preceding puzzle pieces of the traditional Kalenjin world view are assembled, the significance of the two key terms mentioned previously--well-being and respect--is apparent again. *Sobondo* (well-being or

harmony in society) is highly prized. Thus, avoidance of disruption and the maintenance of *sobondo* is the highest goal of Kalenjin society. Maintenance means adherence to the culture's code of conduct which is summarized by the term *teegisto* (respect). Sin is whatever violates those rules of order. Sin causes disruption not only in the immediate situation in the society, but the disruption reaches into the cosmic order of things and brings severe consequences. To avoid that prospect, Kalenjin standards of *teegisto* are taught explicitly from infancy, affirmed implicitly in rituals, and modeled throughout life.

It is accurate to say, therefore, that Douglas' grid and group or order and pressure corresponds to *sobondo* and *teegisto*--well-being and respect--in traditional Kalenjin society. "Well-being" summarizes the Kalenjin world view in a single word. The social order as it should be is well-being, just as Douglas argues that order is society. Violations of the code of "respect" disrupt the order and bring calamities of all shapes and sizes. It is the fear of these reprisals that supplies the "pressure" that inspires people to obey the rules of the group.

How does Deity fit into the picture? Asis is the Creator, Sustainer and final arbiter of the visible and invisible order. Asis usually leaves the day-to-day policing of human behavior to ancestral spirits who keep watch over their respective clans to insure conformity to *teegisto*.

on. As culture brokers Christians can help people separate the good from the bad and adjust to modernity.

Second, the church can help preserve truths inherent in the traditional world view even as it preaches the fullness of truth as seen in Christ. This would involve affirming the high value placed on "respect" that governs all social interaction, but grounding it in Scripture and in selfless devotion to Christ rather than in fear of reprisals. Kalenjin Christians must also extend the circle of "respect" to include non-Kalenjin people. The church must present a biblical view of suffering which teaches that suffering is not always divine or spiritual punishment, but that God can and does use it to discipline us. Above all, traditional Kalenjin people need to know that God is much more than just Sustainer and Judge over the cosmic order of things. He is an imminent, loving Father who does not change and who can, therefore, hold societies together as everything changes around them.

Conclusion

Mary Douglas raises questions about how cultures classify the world around them. Her insights can serve as tools of analysis for missionaries learning new cultures. The comparison of different cultures with Douglas' grid/group paradigm can enhance the missionary's understanding and sensitivity to the changes cultures like the Kalenjin are experiencing.