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The religious dimension of African medicine

guest lecture, postgraduate course on public health, [**check**],
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1. introduction

1.1. introducing myself
1.2. what are we going to do

2. definitions

2.1. medicine

2.2. religion

2.3. Africa (sub-Saharan, contemporary)

2.4. limiting Africa down to a number of specific situations:

rural Zambia

rural Guinea Bissau

urban Botswana

3. introductory descriptions of

rural Zambia

rural Guinea Bissau

urban Botswana

4. cosmology, life force, and the person

classification

causation

interpretation

myth

taboo

aetiology: specific or general

bodily, social, political as interwoven and as actively reinforcing each other
 the identification and invention of medicine: specific or general
 the interrelatedness of all aspects of African life

5. ritual

the flow and punctuation of time in African religion: the life cycles of
 individuals, and groups, and the rhythm of ritual
 divination (knowledge by supernatural means) and diagnosis as minimal ritual
 healing and cults, cults of affliction
 whence the therapeutic efficacy of ritual?
 the creation of authority through the momentaneous praxeology of the ritual

6. power

authority underpinned by religious beliefs and sanctions
 intra-familial therapy, authority, and power
 specialist authority and religion
 the confirmation of religious and therapeutic authorities in Northern Botswana
 by the Mwali cult
 the confrontation between rival religious systems as a struggle of therapy
 the confrontation between rival therapeutic systems as a struggle over
 religion

7. organisation

kinship
 church
 professional organisations
 modern formal organisations
 economic aspects of the religious dimension of African medicine

8. additional observations: The extent to which African medicine does not
 coincide with religion

9. conclusions