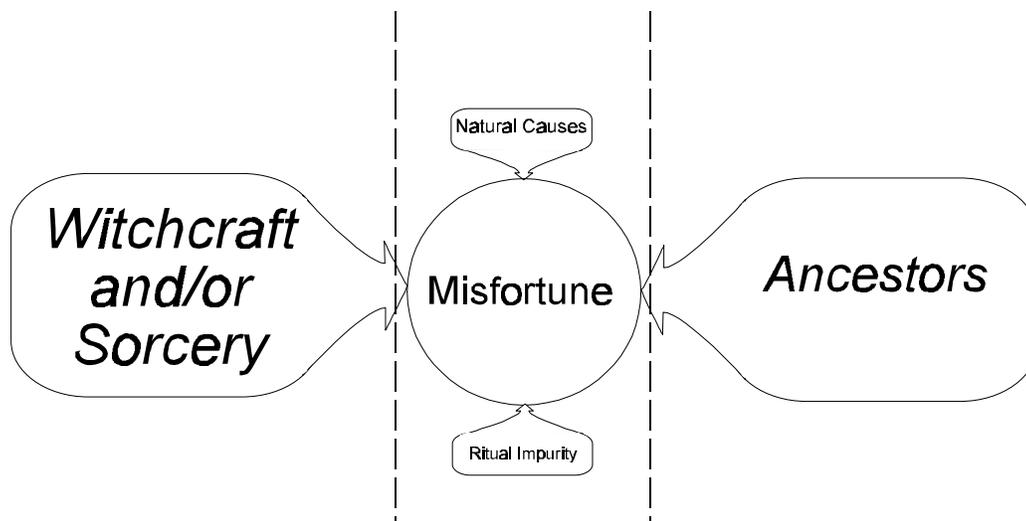


Health and Healing

With the advent of missionary medicine the Choco [of Panama] had to reorganize classification of disease. According to their mythology all illness as caused by *hai* 'evil spirits,' and the diseases were subdivided according to the kind of spirit and the type of condition under which the *hai* invaded the body. Since, however, many of the diseases responded best to medicine given at the dispensary, a new classification arose: natural diseases, i.e., those which could be treated by dispensary medicine--this included malaria, yaws, worms, etc.--and 'spiritual' diseases, i.e. those which were still viewed as being the result of evil spirit action and therefore also in need of a 'spirit' remedy.

Jacob Loewen, "Myth and Mission", p. 315

1. Causality and sickness in cross-cultural context
 - a. Causes of misfortune as seen by the Xhosa (South Africa; adapted from Pauw, Christianity and Xhosa Tradition, p. 61)



- b. In popular Islam (Musk, The Unseen Face, 105)

CAUSE	DIAGNOSIS	PRACTITIONER	REMEDY
Natural Causes	Physical symptoms	Medicine man, herbalist	Natural, charms
Breaking Taboo	Case history	Old woman	Repentance, penance
Evil Eye	Case history, divination	Midwife, medicine man	Breaking the 'look'
Sorcery	Divination	Powerful magician	Find source and counter it
Jinn	Divination, medium trance	Magician	Charms, no remedy?
<i>Qarîna</i>	Divination	Magician	Charms, no remedy?
Fate	Hindsight		No remedy
God	Hindsight		No remedy

c. Among the Shona (Gelfand, The Spiritual Beliefs of the Shona):

IMMEDIATE CAUSE	POSSIBLE PRECIPITATING CAUSE	MEANS OF DIAGNOSIS	REMEDY
Ancestral spirit attack	Violation of taboo; neglect of sacrifice	Divination, possession or mediumship	Appropriate repentance seen through sacrifice or ritual
Witch attack	Simple attack, lack of protection	Divination or mediumship	Charms, fetishes, and ritual protection ceremonies
Witch attack	Withdrawal of spirit protection	Divination or mediumship	Appropriate repentance seen through sacrifice or ritual
(Ancestral) witch spirit attack	Evil nature of the spirit, lack of protection		

2. Visualized “folk theologies” of dealing with illness through cultural powers

A western approach to illness and health:

An animistic approach to illness and health

