A HAYA INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD

How applicable is an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form for indigenising and understanding the Christian trinitarian model?

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ABSTRACT

The dissertation details and analyses an interpretation of the Christian concept of God that emerges through the interactions between the missionaries, post-missionary Christianity and the Haya people in Tanzania. It investigates the nature, implications and possible problems encountered in the processes of interpretation. Four main issues are investigated and addressed.

Firstly, each group interacted in its own way and played a significant role in creating an arena for successful communication. The main two challenges facing the missionaries were: delivering the Christian message so that the hearers derive its meaning, and the use of the traditional but non-indigenous concept of God for identifying the Christian concept of God, according to the biblical and the classical doctrine of the Trinity.

Secondly, the Haya and the convert's reactions to the missionaries' version of God had taken place in two phases, earlier and later interactions. In the earlier phase, the Haya responded to the missionaries' version of God on the basis of their traditional understanding of God. It led them to an initial acceptance of the missionaries' version of God and conversion. The converts later reacted to the missionaries' version and some asked: what happens after a conversion to Christianity? Challenged by their earlier experience of the Christian concept of God, some converts felt the need for a second paradigm shift. On the basis of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form at a subjective level, these converts had embarked on a self-interpretation and understanding of the missionaries' version of the Trinity in traditional idiom and terms. It resulted in the construction of the Haya Christian theology of the Trinity.

Thirdly, the study also addressed the further impacts and responses to the missionaries' version of God. While the missionaries' interpretative approach laid the foundation for the converts' interpretation, in turn both set the course for the post-missionary Christianity's interpretation. At this point, post-missionary Christianity had reinterpreted the Christian concept of God on the basis of a traditional Haya concept of God. The main question faced them is an application of the *Ruhanga* model according to its frame of reference, although partially applied it paved the way for a full application in later times.

Fourthly, in response to the challenges raised by earlier interpretative approaches, missionaries, converts and post-missionary Christianity, the study embarked on interpreting the Trinity in

traditional terms. It aimed at reaching a higher stage of understanding the Trinity by all Haya converts, even the simplest ones. It demanded an investigation of the hypothesis that a Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form is a key to understanding both the Haya and the Christian concepts of God. An application of it involved addressing the question of how it could be applied at the church level to interpret and understand the Trinity in Haya idiom. It is proposed that initially this will be achieved through an interpretation and christianisation of the Haya concept of God and a re-interpretation and indigenisation of the Christian concept of God. While biblical, classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity are a referral basis for each approach, social and theological models are key methodological instruments.

Finally, the need of this study has roots in the fact that, through my pastoral ministry, I have pondered and cross-examined myself on what the Haya and Africans as a whole can contribute to the enrichment of Christian theology. An investigation of the converts' interpretation of the Trinity into their own version of a Haya theology of the Trinity is looked upon as a small part of this contribution.

DECLARATION

As required by university regulations, I hereby state that the whole dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

Signed

Sylvester Beyanga Kahakwa

DEDICATION

Thanks are due to

My parents: Abel Kanyandekwe Kahakwa Lwamulomba and Eve Nyinabahire Kalisange for parenting and nurturing me during their lifetimes. May God grant them eternal rest!

My dear sisters: Felist Mukamungu and Melensiana Bakaleba.

My dear wife: Annajoyce Komujuni.

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Some of the people who contributed to this dissertation have passed away. Their contribution will be remembered for many years. May God grant them eternal rest! There are many people worthy of my thanks but due to limited space their names are not included. In no way does this limit my gratitude, which goes beyond simply jotting down their names on paper. I want to thank all of them.

Last but not least, thanks to my family for their physical and moral support, which gave me the strength to proceed with the study.

DEFINITIONS

HAYA CONCEPTS & WORDS

Abahaya (plural) and *Omuhaya* (singular) - inhabitants of the Bukoba urban, Bukoba rural and Muleba Districts in North-Western Tanzania.

Abanyambo (plural) *Omunyambo* (singular) - inhabitants of the Western part (Karagwe District) of the Kagera Region in North-Western Tanzania.

Abashubi (plural) *Omushubi* (singular) - inhabitants in the Southern part (Biharamulo District) of the Kagera Region in North-Western Tanzania.

Abazinza (plural) *Omuzinza* (singular) - inhabitants in the South-Eastern part (Muganza-Chato-Biharamulo District) in North-Western Tanzania.

Amagara/ Oburora/Oburamu is believed to be the vital force of *Ruhanga* (God) given to the created man at his creation through his Son of (*Kazoba*). He breathed into the nostrils and thereafter the man was alive.

Kazoba - is the Son of the Deity, *Ruhanga as* well as one of his aspects. He is incorporated into invocations of the Deity in a threefold form. His name, *Kazoba*, means illumination or the one who illuminates, hence "the Illuminator" or *Kazoba* the Illuminator.

Ntangaire - is the *Amagara* (vital force) or the Spirit of the Deity, *Ntangaire* means transcendent, transparent, manifestation and surprise or be surprised.

Okubirikira omubushatu - this is an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form including his aspects (*Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire*). These are not deities existing independently, but are aspects of the Deity.

Oruhaya (singular) - refers to the language spoken by the Haya people.

Orunyambo (singular) – refers to the *Nyambo-Haya* dialect spoken by Nyambo people.

Orusubi (singular) – refers to the *Subi-Haya* dialect spoken by Subi people.

Oruzinza (singular) – refers to the *Zinza-Haya* dialect spoken by Zinza people.

Ruhanga - means God the Creator. He is incorporated into invocations of the Deity in a threefold form. Other related names are: *Wahanga, Nyamuhanga* and *Ishe Wahanga.*

ABBREVIATIONS

AT R	African traditional religion
CMS	Church Missionary Society
ELCT	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
ELCT-NWD	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania- North-Western Diocese
NWD	North Western Diocese (of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania)
PM C	Post-Missionary Christianity – The Church
TZ	Tanzania
TANU	Tanganyika Africa National Union

LIST OF MAPS

Figure 1: Map of Tanzania showing the Kagera Region, North-Western Tanzania.
Source: information Service, ELCT Headquarters: Arusha, Tanzania.

Figure 2: Map of the Kagera Region showing the location of Districts.
Source: The regional Survey, Bukoba, Tanzania.

Figure 3: Map of the Great lake Region, showing the distribution of the Lacustrine Bantu.
Source: Katoke 1971:516 & Taylor 1962:xii

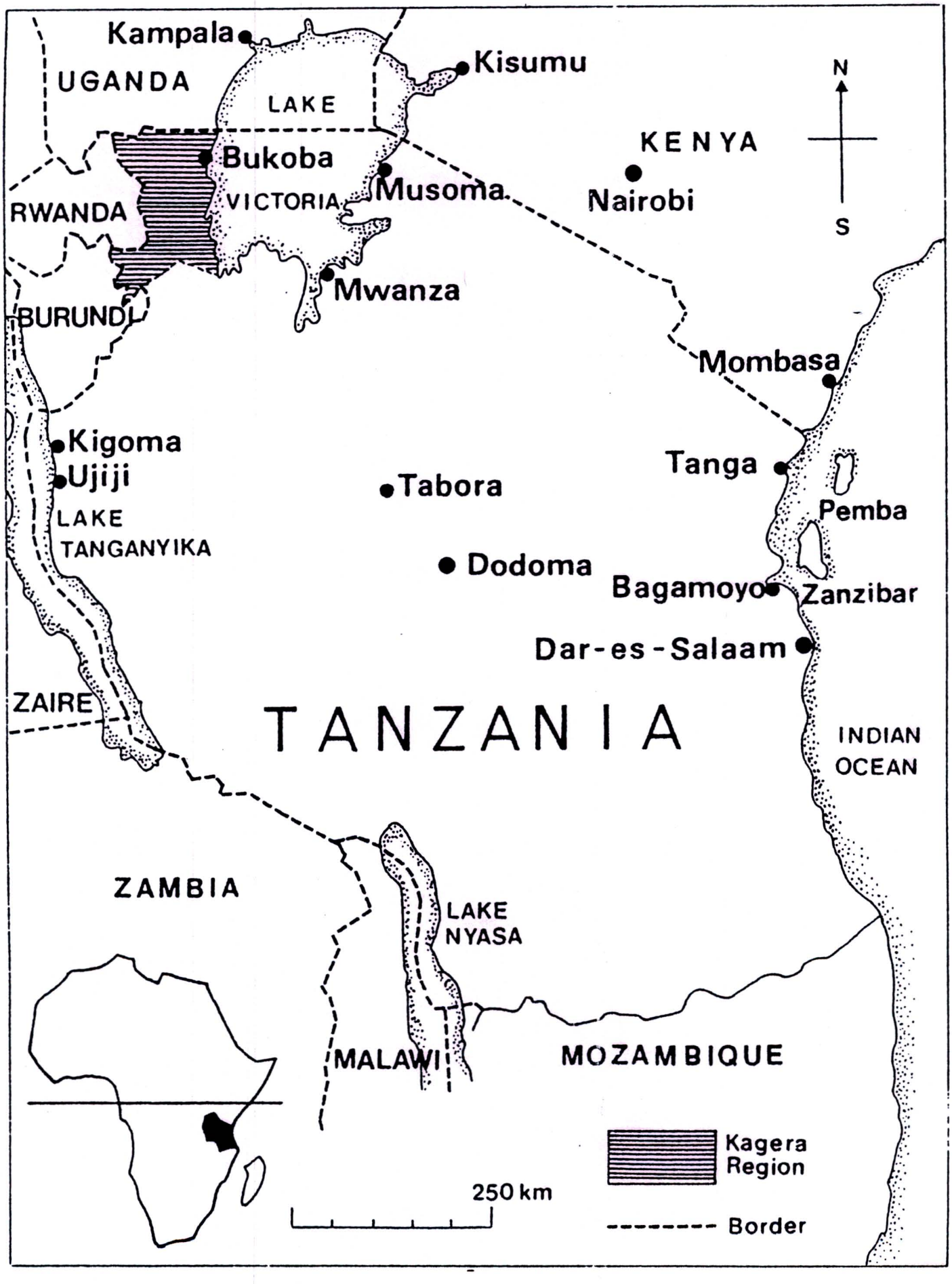


Figure 1. Map of Tanzania showing the Kagera Region (North-Western Tanzania).
Source: Information Service, ELCT Headquarters, Arusha, Tanzania.

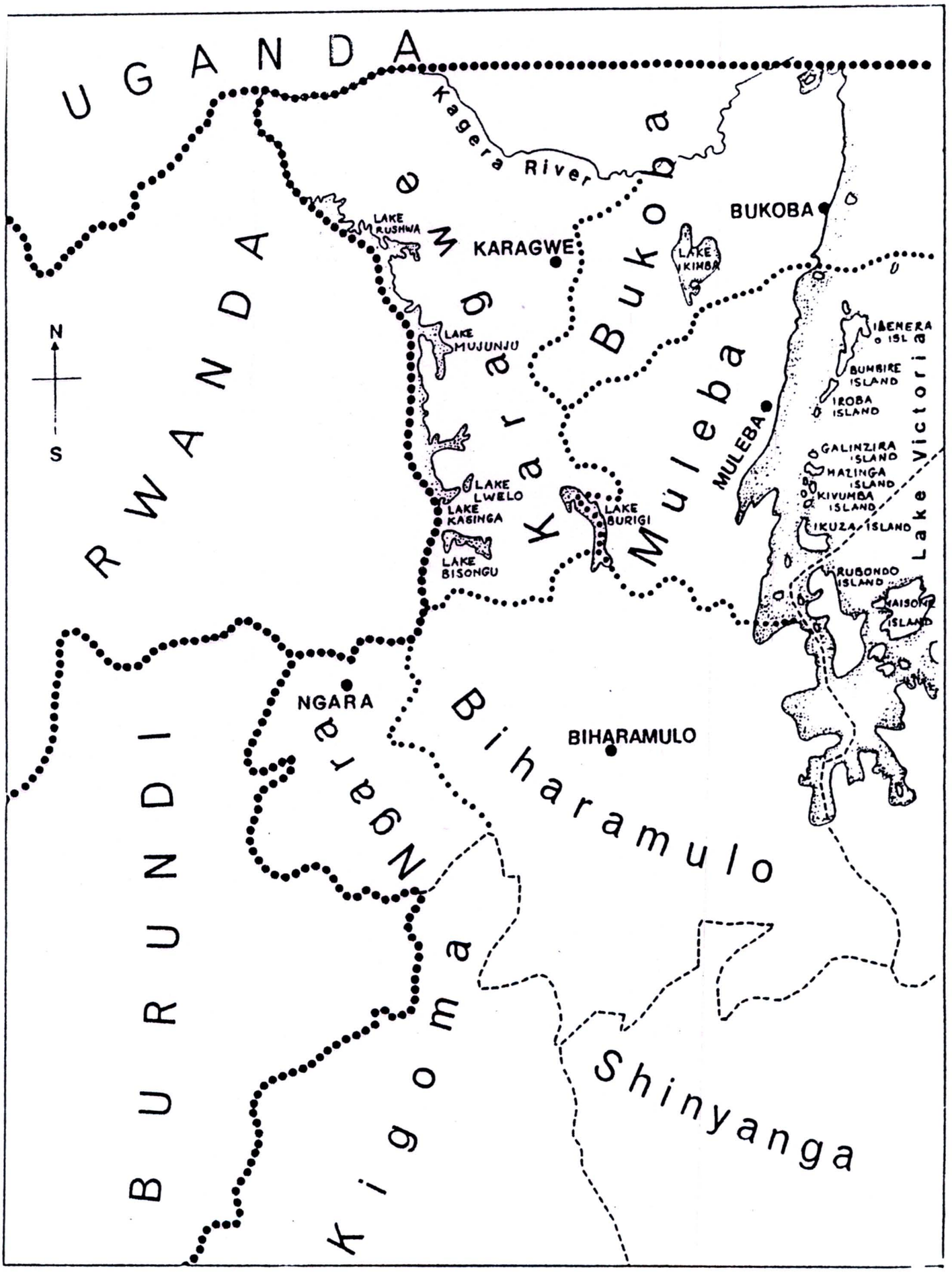


Figure 2. Map of the Kagera Region showing the location of Districts.
Source: The Regional Surveys Office, Bukoba: Tanzania.

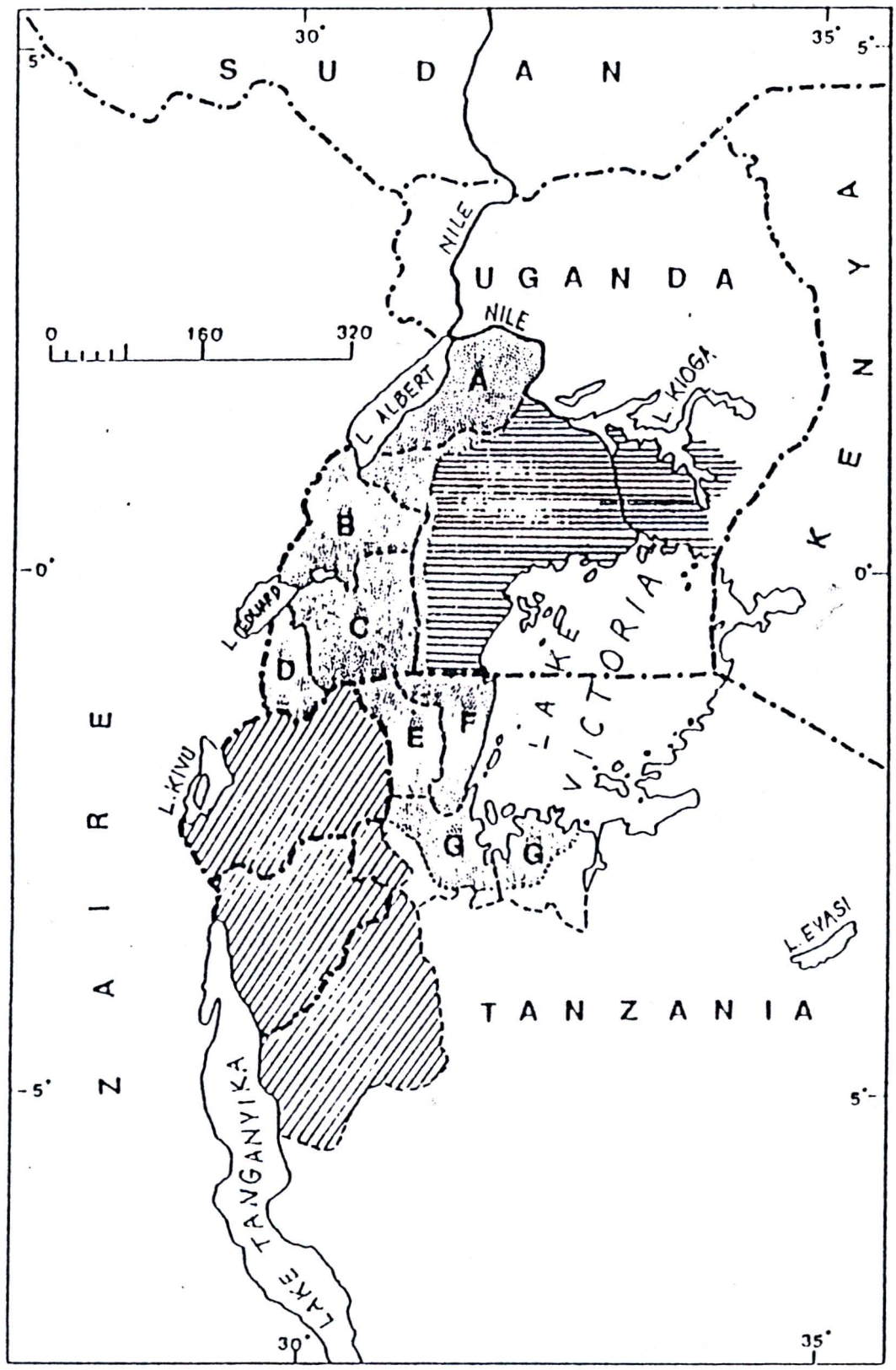


Figure 3. Map showing the distribution of the Lacustrine Bantu.

International boundaries

Eastern Lacustrine Bantu — A = Nyoro — E = Nyambo

Western Lacustrine Bantu — B = Toro — F = Haya

Southern Lacustrine Bantu — C = Nyankore — G = Zinza

D = Kiga

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION 1
BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION 1
General goal: Why this research is important 1
Implications for the converts and post-missionary Christianity and society 1
PROBLEM FORMULATION 2
THE HAYA-CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY 3
AIM OF THE STUDY 4
HYPOTHESIS 4
LITERATURE STUDY 4
AREA OF THE STUDY 9
EXPLANATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS 9
Definition of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form 9
Definition of the Haya cosmology 9
The Haya traditional religion 10
The definition of Haya history 11
STRUCTURAL ORGANISATIONS 11
Social organisation 11
Political organisation 12
Economic system 12
EARLY MISSIONARY TEACHINGS IN THE HAYA SOCIETY 13
A CLASSICAL THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY 15
A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY 17
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 18
THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK 18
SOCIAL SCIENCE METHODOLOGY- symbolic interactionism 19
THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY-Contextual and Inculturation models 21
DATA COLLECTION 27
ORAL AND WRITTEN SOURCES 27
RESEARCH TOOLS 27
DATA FROM ORAL SOURCES 27
Selection of Respondents 27
Personal interaction 28
THE INTERVIEWS 28
Interviews with non-Christian respondents 29
Interviews with Christian respondents 29
Participation and observation 29
Questionnaires 30
DATA FROM WRITTEN SOURCES 30
SOME PROBLEMS 31
DATA ANALYSIS 32
DISSERTATION OUTLINE 32
CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY 33

CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HAYA

INTRODUCTION 34
THE LAND 34
THE PEOPLE 36
Bantu-Speaking People 36
Hima/Hinda People 38
SOCIAL STRUCTURES 39
Economic Life 39
Social and Cultural Life 40
Political Life 41
Educational Life 42
RELIGIOUS LIFE 43
Religious beliefs 43
Religious affiliation 43
Haya traditional religion 44
SPIRITUAL BEINGS 46
DIVINITIES 47
MUGASHA 47
NYAKALEMBE 48
IRUNGU 48
GENERAL AND SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITS 49
GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITS 49
Communication with spirits 50
The role of benevolent spirits 52
SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITS 54
Ancestors as *abazaire abahumwire* 55
The state and role of *abazaire abahumwire* 59
Residence of *abazaire abahumwire* 61
Communication with and veneration of *abazaire abahumwire* 62
WORSHIP OF THE DEITY 67
Types of prayers 68
Special Worship 70
STRUCTURE AND POSITION OF THE HOUSE SHRINE 71
LATER ARRIVALS 73
AFRICAN AND ARAB TRADERS 73
EUROPEANS 75
TRAVELLERS 75
MISSIONARIES 76
Catholic missionaries 76
Protestant missionaries 77
ADMINISTRATORS 78
German Colonial Administration 78
British Colonial Administration 79
TANGANYIKA INDEPENDENCE AND THE BIRTH OF TANZANIA 79
CONCLUSION 80

CHAPTER THREE: THE HAYA TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND INVOCATION OF THE DEITY IN A THREEFOLD FORM

INTRODUCTION 81
TRADITIONAL PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE DEITY 82
SOURCES OF HAYA'S PERCEPTION OF THE DEITY 82
Mythical portrayal 82
EARLY EXPERIENCE OF AN INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 84
Non-verbal and verbal invocation of the Deity 84
SINGLE NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 86
TOWARDS A DOUBLE NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 88
The father/child relationship 88
The notion of the Son of the Deity in the light of creation 90
Differences between versions of creation 90
Similarities between versions of creation 91
Authenticity of the notion of the Son of the Deity 92
A DOUBLE NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 93
The notion of the Spirit of the Deity 95
Perception of *Ruhanga* as a Spirit 98
Identification of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* 99
An invocation of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* 100
A THREEFOLD INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 102
Earlier version of an invocation of the Deity 102
Later version of an invocation of the Deity 103
Versions of an invocation of the Deity: a comparative view 104
Summary of an invocation of the Deity 105
EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION OF AN INVOCATION OF THE DEITY 106
Background: structural form and relations of an invocation 107
AN INTERPRETATION OF *RUHANGA* AND HIS ASPECTS 110
Ruhanga's relationship with *Kazoba* 111
Ruhanga's relationship with *Ntangaire* 114
SUGGESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING *NTANGAIRE* 116
CONCLUSION 117

CHAPTER FOUR: CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TRINITY

INTRODUCTION 118
THE TRINITY: DEFINITIONS, NATURE AND SCOPE 118
CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 121
THE BACKGROUND OF THE CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 121
EARLY RISING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY 121
The rising and development of the notion of the Son of God 122
Trinitarian experience of God: scriptural basis 123
EARLIER FORMULATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 126
LATER INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 130
Terms and formulas used to identify the Trinity 134
The use of "person" and "persons" 135
Background and earlier use of the term person 136
Later use of the terms person and persons 136

CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 140
MODELS FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY 141
Revelatory-Salvatory Trinity 141
Ontological-based Trinity 143
Trinity as love of God 144
Economic and immanent Trinity 146
koinonia or community Trinity 148
THE RELEVANCE OF THIS CHAPTER FOR THIS DISSERTATION 150
Interpretative approaches to the Trinity 151
Towards traditional interpretation of the Trinity 152
SUGGESTED MODELS 154
CONCLUSION 155

CHAPTER FIVE: LEVELS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN HAYA TRADITIONAL BELIEF IN THE THREEFOLD PERCEPTION OF THE DEITY AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

INTRODUCTION 157
THE MISSIONARIES' APPROACH AND CONVERTS' REACTION 158
THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MISSIONARIES AND THE CONVERTS' PARADIGM 158
Theoretical framework 159
Basis for a practical framework 160
THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF GOD THE FATHER 161
Presentation and identification 161
The denominational approach 162
CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS 164
Converts' earlier reactions 164
Converts' later reactions 166
PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT 171
THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE SON OF GOD 175
Presentation and identification 175
Interpretation of the Son of God 176
Eizoba, a christological concept 176
CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS 179
Convert's earlier reactions 179
Convert's later reactions 180
PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT 184
SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUITABLE TRADITIONAL CHRISTOLOGICAL MODEL 185
THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD 187
Presentation and identification 187
Interpretation of the Spirit of God 187
CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS 189
Converts' earlier reactions 190
Convert's later reaction 190
PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT 192
THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE TRINITY 192
Presentation and identification 193
CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS 194
Converts' earlier reactions 194
Converts' later reactions 194

PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT 196
THE MAIN FACTORS BEHIND MISSIONARIES' AND CONVERTS' INTERPRETATION 199
Traditional Religion 199
Ruhaya language 200
AUTHOR'S VIEW 201
THE HAYA POST-MISSIONARY CHRISTIANITY'S APPROACH 202
INTRODUCTION 202
THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD 203
THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE SON OF GOD 203
THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD 204
REINTERPRETATION OF GOD THE FATHER 209
A LITERAL INTERPRETATIVE APPROACH 210
The use of *Ruhaya* at oral level 210
The use of *Ruhaya* at written level 221
The use of Bible: The making of the *Ruhaya* Bible: denominational approach 211
Initial use of *Ruhanga* in the Bible 214
Converts' reaction to the use of *Ruhanga* in the Bible 215
EVALUATION OF THE USE OF *RUHANGA* IN THE BIBLE 217
AUTHOR'S VIEW 218
CONCLUSION 220

CHAPTER SIX: THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY IN TERMS OF THE HAYA TRADITIONAL THREEFOLD PERCEPTION OF THE DEITY

INTRODUCTION 224
AFRICAN THEOLOGIES OF THE TRINITY 224
TWESIGYE: A threefold invocation of the Deity 226
NYAMITI: Ancestral kinship Trinity 229
BUJO'S Proto-Ancestor/ Ancestor par excellence 233
MUGAMBI AND MAGESA: Ancestral kinship trinitarian relationship 233
MOILA: Ancestral trinitarian communion/ Superior Brother Ancestor 235
MWOLEKA AND LYIMO: Koinonia/Community Trinity 236
PERCEPTION OF THE TRINITY AMONG THE HAYA CLERGY 238
DIALOGUE OF THE DEITY 240
DIALOGUE OF HUMANS 241
Dialogue with the Deity 241
Dialogue with the Son 242
Dialogue with the Spirit 248
Dialogue with the Trinity 249
CHRISTIANISATION AND INDIGENISATION: a Full and Semi Approach 251
Full christianisation and semi-indigenisation 252
Full indigenisation and semi-christianisation 253
PERCEPTIONS OF THE TRINITY AMONG THE HAYA LAITY AND THEOLOGIANS 254
TRINITY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF REDEMPTION 255
GUIDING QUESTIONS 255
CONCLUSION 260

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A HAYA-CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

OVERVIEW 263
SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 263
SOCIAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES 264
The Church and Theology 264
The Church and Methodology 266
Social methodological approaches 266
THE HAYA-CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY 269
Defining and Identifying "aspects" and "persons" in Traditional Terms 269
Defining the Christian trinitarian model-Trinity 272
Links and relationships: interactions 273
RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS 275
Missionaries' Approach 275
Converts' Approach 276
Post- Missionary Christianity's Approach 277
FUTURE THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION 277
The Patterning of Theological Interpretation 277
The Future Interpretative Approach 279
CONCLUSION 280

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I
LIST OF RESPONDENTS 283

APPENDIX II
CORRESPONDENCE: LETTERS OF REPLY TO THE AUTHOR 286

APPENDIX III
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 287

BIBLIOGRAPHY 292

UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH WORKS: DISSERTATIONS & THESES 309

UNPUBLISHED PAPERS AND ARTICLES IN JOURNALS 312

REPORTS 316

CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

> ...human group life consists of the fitting to each other of the line of action of the participants...by indicating to one another what to do and in turn interpret such indications made by others, out of such interaction people form the objects that constitute their worlds. (Blumer 1969:49)

In the light of Blumer's ideas, this research will show how interaction between two groups of people, and interpretation of their actions, create an arena for deriving meaning.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

General Goal: why this research is important

The goal of this study is to seek the means for achieving a better understanding of the Christian concept of God. It investigates the Haya's threefold perception of God and the biblical idea of the Trinity involving an interpretation of it in the light of classical and contemporary interpretative approaches compared to the Haya concept of God and its invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. It addresses the following issues: A study of the different approaches along classical and contemporary interpretations and an attempt to interpret the Trinity in terms of the Haya milieu and world-view. This will involve addressing an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, together with the structure, the meaning and its impact on the Haya perception of the biblical and classical ideas of the Trinity. The Haya reception of Christianity and their interpretation of the missionaries' theology of the Triune God, and its relation to contemporary interpretations of the Trinity, will be analysed. Their attempts comply with Blumer's theory of symbolic interactionism. He says that "people everywhere and in all of their groups live in worlds of objects and act in terms of the meaning of these objects to them" (1969:52). It entails a capacity to hear and tell someone's message and make it one's own message. The motto of the Haya converts was, as Brown puts it,

> [A message]...must reach me on some level to which I can respond, but it must also 'stretch' me, pull me beyond where I now am, open new doors in my mind or ear, so that, wanting to explore further, I become an increasingly willing listener. (1975:166-167)

Implications for the converts and post-missionary Christianity

Implications consist of the factors that influenced the converts and post-missionary Christianity to interpret the Christian concept of God in the light of traditional concept of God. A common view is that one's earlier belief is the key to interpreting and understanding later beliefs (Ward 1977:33). However, how is this possible if the Haya concept of God has been overlooked or undermined? For

Cleage, its possibility lies in the fact that the "old concept" is still alive, thus demanding re-setting in a Christian way. He describes such an approach as a re-discovery or re-claiming of "old treasure". He argues, "The time has come for us to reclaim our God. We have depended on a single way of interpreting the Christian faith because we had no alternative" (1969:38-39). A traditional-based interpretation of God is looked upon to lead to an understanding of the Christian God.

Some theologians claim an absence of a Haya true concept of God; others strongly claim its presence. The basis for this latter claim is the fact that the Haya understanding of God was later applied to identify the Christian God. How can an untrue concept explain a true one? Their argument also raised other questions. Is the Haya Deity the same God as the Christian Deity? If so, then how can we prove this concept theologically? For Bishop Kibira, any reaction to these questions should involve the assumption that "God is one and indivisible" (1974:111).[1] It demands a comparative study between the Haya and the Christian concepts of God. He writes,

> There is ... a great need for more highly educated theologians in Africa who may do research into the things touched on and raised in Christianity...For example, in Bukoba [the area of study] the question must be dealt with seriously whether...*Ruhanga* whom our ancestors worshipped for ages before Christianity is the Allah of the Muslim faith and the triune God of Christianity. (1974: 110-111)

Some Haya theologians asserted the availability of a Haya traditional trinitarian notion of God. However, other theologians refuted this view. This raised ontological questions. If the Haya and Christians experience the same God differently, on what grounds could a trinitarian understanding of him be limited to the Christian side?

There is also a lack of research on an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. All previous research has been limited to the Haya's general understanding of God. Some of this research has mentioned the importance of an invocation of the Deity for understanding the Haya concept of God, but only generally and partially. This study focuses more strongly on a particular understanding of it.

PROBLEM FORMULATION

How does the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form influence the Haya perception of the biblical concept of the Triune God and classical idea of the Trinity?

---

1 Kibira J. The second Lutheran Bishop and the first African Bishop in the area . Also he was the first chair person of the Lutheran World Federation from the "Third World Countries" 1978-1984. See *Bishop Kibira of Bukoba*, by Per Larsson [undated].

A Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of (or my) Father *Ntangaire*), has become an indelible mark on the Haya experience and understanding of God. Its impact on their perception of biblical, classical and missionaries' theologies of the Trinity will be investigated. Thus, the biblical idea of the Trinity will be approached and analysed to see if, and how, it relates to the classical doctrine of the Trinity and manner of expression. Classical theology of the Trinity will also be reviewed on its nature, ground and implications and how it could be interpreted into Haya traditional terms. Finally, an investigation on the missionaries' interpretation of the biblical and classical versions of the Trinity and how it was responded to by converts will be questioned.

THE HAYA CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

The converts' interpretation of the missionary's biblical and classical version of the Trinity into their own terms produced a separate version of the Trinity. The way the Haya converts construct the Christian theology of the Triune God has its roots in interactions with the missionaries and traditional experience of God. Shorter says,

> Interaction can mean a mutual, beneficial influence, whereby on outlook stimulates the development of the other. It can bring to light a hidden potential in each tradition in the form of latent themes or in the growth and formulation of doctrine. (1975:17)

For Monica Wilson and Bishop Sundker, such perception and formulation imply a change in scale, consisting of people's interaction and its closeness (Wilson 1971:7; Sundkler 1980: 219). It led to the converts' formulation of the Haya theology of the Trinity, an early attempt to interpret and understand it in traditional terms (Dickson 1984:105,108). It indicated that their response to the missionaries' perception and version of the Trinity was not done blindly but intelligently and logically. As Oduyoye asks, "How were they to come to their own declaration of Christian faith if they were required to follow blindly?" (1986:42). Another question behind the converts' construction of the Haya theology of the Trinity is: What factors had, and are continuing to have impact on the Haya misunderstanding of the Trinity? Language and terms incomprehensible to converts and the lack of experience were identified as key factors. Mutembei, one of the Haya's first generation Christians and the former church general secretary, describes this problem, and its consequences to the Christian life.

> The spiritual life of many Christians in our church has become weaker than ever before. Some of them are at a crossroads, not knowing whether to go forward or backward, or even sideways! It seems that eventually many of them will prefer to go sideways and stand aloof there, so that they can respond to both worlds. (1993:120) (My translation)

The description implies adhering to both traditional beliefs and Christianity without Christianising and indigenising them into a single Haya Christian faith. Therefore, post-missionary Christianity's response was to investigate and re-interpret the biblical message, particularly the concept of God. This suggested doing research, specifically on traditional religion and its concept of God. Harjula, one of the researchers on this question, reports,

> In its General Assembly, in 1968, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania made the unanimous decision that every diocese and synod was required to establish a research committee, the task of which was to relate the light in Christ to the traditional beliefs and customs. The aim of this research was to study the communication of the Gospel [in terms of specific context] in Tanzania today and help the church in its work. (1969:6)

The researcher regards this study as a continuation of what the church has already embarked upon.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to give a theological interpretation and definition of the biblical concept of God in terms of its trinitarian model and the Haya threefold perception of the Deity. The latter involves an investigation of the assertion that had enabled converts to interpret and understand the Trinity in traditional terms. In addition, this study seeks methods of applying such an approach to enable a better understanding of the Trinity by all converts. It implies indigenising and understanding the Trinity in the Haya traditional frame of reference. Finally, it makes suggestions and recommendations that would help further investigations and research into an understanding of the Trinity in Haya traditional terms.

HYPOTHESIS

The Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form shaped, and is continuing to shape, a construction of the Haya Christian theology of the Trinity. Thus, it is not only an easy way to interpret and understand the Trinity, but it is also necessary for them.

LITERATURE STUDY

The importance of this approach has been noted by researchers. Komidar writes,

> General material has to be consulted for the necessary background knowledge of the problem to be investigated...no research project can be undertaken without knowledge of the research that has already been done in the field. (1952:103)

The title of this study - *A Haya interpretation of the concept of God: How applicable is an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form for indigenising and understanding the Christian trinitarian model?* -indicates an area that has not been researched. Most researchers in the area of study have limited their research to a general Haya understanding of God, mainly to an identification of his name *Ruhanga* and related attributes. Among the researchers are Pastor Bahendwa (1990) (who has done research in *Christian Religious Education in the Lutheran Diocese of North Western Tanzania*), Fr Mutalemwa (1979) (who has done research in the concept of God among the Bahaya) and Fr Rwehumbiza (who has done research in *The Bantu concept of God in comparative studies between the development of Yahwistic Monotheism and the concept of God among the Bantu people of Africa* (South of the Sahara). All of them mentioned the names of *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* (the Son of *Ruhanga*) without directly relating them to an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Their contribution mainly lies in commenting on the identification of *Kazoba*, as the Illuminator.

Pastors Lutashobya, Niwagila and Kabalimu went a step further. While doing research on related theological topics, they mentioned and described an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form and its importance to a Haya understanding of God. Lutashobya, as reported by Bahendwa, Bishop Sundkler and Mutembei, describes *Kazoba* and how he is incorporated and used in invoking *Ruhanga* (Bahendwa 1990:25; Sundkler 1980:53). Niwagila (1966) (who earlier had done research on the Haya God) in his later research, *From the Catacomb to A self-Governing Church: A case study of African Initiative and Participation of Foreign Mission, in History of the North-Western Diocese* had mentioned an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. He described it as important for a Haya understanding of the Deity, especially in terms of his nature role and a Haya affirmation of him. Niwagila says, "When the Haya invoke *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of (or my) Father) *Ntangaire*) they affirm that *Ruhanga* is the originator and centre of the Haya community" (1998:386).

Kabalimu, in his research on the development of a Christian mission among the Haya, explored another version of an invocation of the Deity that differed slightly from other versions. The invocation goes: *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire Omukuru agambwa mbele* (*Kazoba* of *Lububi* of *Ntangaire* who is mentioned first) (1980:8). The difference between these versions of the same invocation mainly lies in some names and words used to identify the Deity. While Niwagila uses the second version of the invocation of the Deity, which uses the name of *Ruhanga*, Kabalimu promotes the earlier version, which uses the name of *Lububi.* Although Niwagila, Kabalimu and

other researchers mentioned the significance of this invocation in understanding the Haya concept of God, they did not relate it directly to the Christian trinitarian model.

Of all earlier research done on a traditional understanding of God, as well as the stages reached between the Haya and other people in the Great Lake Regions, Professor Twesigye went an important step further. He is a member of the neighbouring Nkole/Kiga people in Uganda who, like the Haya, have almost the same history, culture, language and religion, i.e. the names for God, *Ruhanga,* and other names related to him, like *Kazoba* etc. In his famous scholarly book entitled *African Religion, Philosophy and Christianity in Logos-Christ* (1996), Twesigye describes how he accessed a particular traditional perception of the Deity and an identification of him in a threefold form. He described it as the correct model for understanding God, not only among the Nkole/Kiga, but also among other tribes in the Great Lake Regions. Although Twesigye did not explicitly use the term "invocation", as is used in this study, he nevertheless wrote a typical portrayal of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. He used different words to describe the same concept. According to his view, the name *Ruhanga* represents God the Father (similar to Haya), the name *Kazoba* represents *Ruhanga's* Brother (for the Haya, *Kazoba* is *Ruhanga's* Son), the name *Rugaba*, represents the Spirit of *Ruhanga* (for the Haya, *Ntangaire* or *Amagara ga Ruhanga* (vital force) represents the Spirit of *Ruhanga*) (Kyamulesire 1999). Twesigye describes it as a well-defined and well-expressed threefold concept of the Deity. He verifies his thesis by reporting on an old man who claimed that it is similar to the classical Christian trinitarian model. Twesigye argues,

> I became aware for the first time that in the traditional [understanding of] God (*Ruhanga*) there existed a trinitarian understanding of God that is almost the same as the Christian one… this was the first time that I had ever come across this claim, namely that the Banyankole and the Bakiga, [Haya, Nyoro and Toro] people had a trinitarian concept of God prior to the arrival of Christianity and that it had been so well and clearly stated compared to the Christian trinitarian doctrine. (1996:202-203)

Both Nkole and Haya have experienced a basic and similar invocation of the Deity with slight differences in nominal identification of the aspects of the Deity. There are differences in terms of the relational status of *Kazoba* to the Deity and similarities in terms of nominal identification of *Kazoba.* While the Haya used the name *Kazoba* to identify the "Son of *Ruhanga"*, Nkole used it to identify "the Brother of *Ruhanga"*. Irrespective of the status given to *Kazoba* (the Son or Brother of *Ruhanga*), both the Haya and the Nkole portrayed him as having a close relationship with *Ruhanga.* In addition, for both of them, *Kazoba* is identified as the Illuminator who illuminates human beings and other creatures (Twesigye 1996:203).

It is likely that the Nkole version is the earliest one where the Deity was perceived and portrayed in explicit anthropomorphic terms and hence the use of the term "Brother".The term "Son" of the Deity, according to Haya beliefs (later version) portrayed a sense of the great Deity who is above all other deities. He is the only one uncreated Deity and the Great Father. This notion is well demonstrated in the Haya version where the term "Son of the Deity" and not "Brother" (as in the case of Nkole/Kiga) is used. Although the notion of having a son also portrays *Ruhanga* in human anthropomorphic terms, he is portrayed as a unique Great Father who does not depend on having parents. Even the Haya's first version of an invocation of the Deity in which *Ruhanga* is portrayed as having two sons (*Rugaba* and *Kibumbi*) maintains a sense of him as the only father (Kyelimpa 1999). Thus it was found that the Haya version of an invocation of the Deity had gone a step further than the Nkole/Kiga version.

A further difference exists in terms of the identification of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* in the framework of the names *Rugaba* and *Ntangaire*. Both Nkole/Kiga and Haya versions used different names to identify the same notion of the Spirit of *Ruhanga*. While the Haya used the name *Amagara* (vital force) or *Ntangaire* (in earlier and later versions), Nkole used the name *Rugaba*. For the Haya, (according to earlier version of creation) *Rugaba* is the eldest son of *Ruhanga*'s two sons. However differences between versions is not a problem. What was important for the Haya was not the names used (which are only the external structure of the concept portrayed) but that the same notion was being portrayed using different names, relationships and status. Despite these differences, all three names are incorporated into the invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, in both the Nkole/Kiga version and the Haya version. Each people had their own version of experiencing the same Deity in his three aspects.

In addition to the Nkole/Kiga's invocation of the Deity, Professor Twesigye explored another way in which traditional beliefs are practised in a threefold perception of the Deity. Mostly, it is conducted through ritual sacrifices and offerings. When offering meat to the Deity (for the Nkole) or roasted coffee nuts (for the Haya), both usually invoke him by mentioning all names of his aspects. Twesigye reports,

> A man would throw up a piece [of meat for Nkole or coffee nuts for Haya by], saying: 'This is for you *Ruhanga/Nyamuhanga* (God the Creator) who created me'.Then he would take another piece [of meat or coffee nuts] and say: 'This is for *Rugaba* [for Nkole or *Ntangaire* for Haya] (the Giver) who gives life'.With the third piece of meat [or coffee nuts for Haya], he would say 'This is for *Kazoba* (Son/ Divine Light) who shows me the way' [that is the Illuminator who illuminates the universe and humanity]. Sometimes they would take the three pieces of meat [or coffee] together and throw them up [for the Haya, usually in all four directions of the earth - east, west, north and south at once], saying: 'These are yours...*Banyinabutaka* (Landlords) *Nyamuhanga, Kazoba* and *Rugaba*

> [*Ntangaire* for Haya] (Creator, Light, Giver). After the meal they would say: 'Landlords eat from there, make me see, travel and return, take away from me all my enemies.' (1996:203)

In terms of the authenticity of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form in relation to the Christian trinitarian model, Professor Twesigye insisted that the Nkole/ Kiga/Haya threefold perception of God did not detract from Christianity. Rather, it was an indigenous perception that had been experienced many years before the introduction of Christianity in Africa. In his words, "the trinitarian understanding of God existed in both Ankole and Kigezi before the arrival of Christianity in these areas and therefore could not have borrowed from it" (1996:202). He quotes an old man, Mr Bintukwanga, to verify his thesis. He reports,

> Before the European came to Uganda and before the white Christian missionaries came to our land of Nkole…we had our own religion and we knew God well…We even knew God to be some kind of externally existing triples: *Nyamuhanga* …the creator of everything, *Kazoba*…who gives light to all human beings and *Rugaba*…who gives life…You see! We had it all before the white missionaries came and all they could teach us was that *Nyamuhanga* [*Ruhanga*] is God the Father, *Kazoba* is Jesus Christ his Son…and that *Rugaba* [or *Amagara /Ntangaire* for Haya] as the Divine giver is the Holy Spirit. (Twesigye 1996:202)

However, both the Nkole/Kiga and the Haya threefold perception of God need a Christian contribution; the former needs two contributions. The first is to promote the conceptual status of the Deity, *Ruhanga* from being "a Brother" to "a Father". The second is the identification of his Son who, according to this change, would be addressed not as "junior Brother" of *Ruhanga*, but as *Kazoba Mutabani wa Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga*). The Haya had already reached that stage earlier before Christianity. As shall be elaborated on further in chapter six, the only Christian contribution to the Haya concept of God lies in what the Son of the Deity has done for humanity (redemption).

The Haya and the Nkole/Kiga understandings of God, within the framework of a threefold perception, are suitable to illuminate an interpretation and understanding of the Trinity. However, this depends on the correct interpretation and use of them. A holistic use could lead to an understanding of it in a "Sabbelian modalistic" manner (1996:203-4). A possible way to avoid this is to embark on an in-depth study involving an examination of the historical evolution of the invocation of the Deity, before any interpretation has been done. This method will be applied in chapter three.

AREA OF THE STUDY

The geographical research area of the study has been limited to that part of north-western Tanzania where the Haya dialect is spoken. The Haya, Nyambo, Subi and Zinza people were the backbone of the study. Although the social and religious problems differ to a certain extent in some parts of the study area, their impact is the same. Within this area, the mainline churches for the pilot case study were two Lutheran dioceses, two Roman Catholic dioceses and one Anglican diocese. Emphasis was on one of the Lutheran diocese, namely the North-Western Diocese. From it, five pastorates were selected of which four were previously ministered by the researcher as a pastor (Biirabo, Biharamulo, Ndolage and Ihangiro).The other is the researcher's home pastorate, Mushabago. These have been chosen as the sample case study to represent other Christians, pastorates and the church in the area of the study.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Definition of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form

Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntagaire (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of (or my) Father *Ntagaire*). This is a religious ritual affirmation of addressing and invoking the Deity. In Haya idiomatic terms, it is known as *Okubirikira, anga okweitotora Ruhanga omumishusireye* (Rugakingira 2001), *omubihera bishatu* (to address *Ruhanga* in a threefold form). It is used when calling upon the Deity at any time, especially during religious rituals and prayers on a daily or regular basis. Mainly, it is used in morning and evening prayers and mostly performed at a house-shrine altar (residence) or in front of it. It is also performed in the garden or while going to fetch water or firewood, while finding medicinal herbs or while on a journey. It is invoked informally or formally, either giving general praise and thanks or asking the Deity to intervene in certain situations (e.g. illness, journeys, planting and harvesting, hunting, ceremonies or any other situation of this nature). The Haya regard it not only as a weapon but also as the means for dialoguing with the Deity (Balambirwa 1998). An invocation model has been chosen to describe the Haya understanding of God by taking into account the fact that it is simple and common and has never been researched. As Ela-Jean puts it, for grasping people's understanding of God one must begin "with [models] that are usually considered secondary or of little importance" (1988:11).

Definition of the Haya cosmology

An understanding of Haya cosmology depends on an understanding of their philosophy of interpretation and description of the universe. For them, as for other Africans, cosmology is knowledge of, or about, the cosmos - the universe and all therein (planets, objects, humans and

creatures). Thus, they regard it as a moral cosmos of which humans are not just a part but are also at its centre (Moila 2002:79). The "consciousness of a moral universe led them to believe that there is the existence of the Deity, who is the creator of the earth, the sky and all there in" (Rwehumbiza 1983:163-165). For them, the existence of the divine essence is not in question since it is already presupposed by the existence of the cosmos. As Moltmann argues, "the divine essence is indirectly manifested in the mirror of that cosmos" (1981:11). Like Nkole and Kiga, the Haya believe that God created from *ex-nihilo* (nothing) or can create from pre-existing matter (Twesigye 1996:199). Some believe that God created "all things just by his simple word, *Ekigambo,* and things came into being" (Rwehumbiza 1983:290). Usually they describe God anthropomorphically as *Omubumbi* (the Moulder or Potter). While most of the Haya claim to have been created by God here on earth, some claim that he created their ancestors in heaven, from where they descended to earth (Katoke 1970:13). The latter version indicates the notion of heaven, which is rarely found in other African beliefs. Heaven is not only part of their cosmology but also the place of their origin and the central residence of the Deity. Hence the saying: *Owomwiguru nakubona* (God in heaven is looking at you) (Kamulari 1988). Furthermore, Haya believe that the universe and all therein had a beginning and only God has no beginning. He has always been in existence and will always continue to be. Everything begins with him.

Like other Africans, the Haya view the cosmos as a composite of divine Spirit, human, animate and inanimate elements, hierarchically arranged but directly related and interacting with each other. Some of these elements are visible, others invisible (Magesa 1997:44). Their hierarchal order is as follows: firstly, the Deity, who is above all; secondly, divinities; thirdly, benevolent and malevolent spirits and other evils. Finally, there are human beings on earth. Bishop Kibira reports on some aspects of the Haya cosmology and its significance upon interaction with Christian cosmology.

> When the foreign missionaries came to our country, they did not preach to people with heads like empty boxes. No, these people had their religion, their way of life, their social philosophy, their medicine, their traditions and their history. (Sundkler 1980:44)

The Haya tradition religion: cosmological definition

Traditional religion is the main component to Haya cosmology. All the aspects of Haya cosmology created an atmosphere of practising religious beliefs and rituals. Most of the rituals are not only related to cosmology, but also they are practised from a cosmological point of view. Thus cosmology is a ubiquitous factor of Haya religious life, which in turn determines people's daily undertakings and understanding of the cosmos and the Creator. All ritual invocations and prayers

addressed to the Deity also mention the cosmos - earth and sky - either at the beginning or at the end of an invocation or prayer. These are mentioned in a dialogical manner requesting them to join the humans in the process of invoking the Deity, thus witnessing every ritual offered to him (Ndibuye 1998). This is the main Haya characteristic of cosmological-religious philosophy whereby the earth and sky and some plants on earth, such as trees, bushes and forests, are regarded as participants in religious practices. A similar cosmological belief is reported in the Bible" "...Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth...Let the sea roar, and all that fills it,...Let the flood clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the Lord..." (Psalm 97:4-8). Alternatively, some of the Haya's cosmological aspects are directly used as a means in the entire act of invoking or worshipping the Deity. Libations given to ancestors and the Deity, or even worship in the open air, demonstrate one aspect of their religious cosmological use. This is a typically African view whereby the salvation or victory of a person or group is the salvation or victory of the entire universe (Bediako 1995:102).

The definition of Haya history

The Haya understand history in terms of their relation to the creator and the cosmos. History therefore is not a mere series of events that have taken place in the past but is rather an interpretation of how humans reacted to both the cosmos and events in a dialogical way. It includes dialogues with spiritual beings (e.g. ancestors, spirits and the Deity). It is this dialogue that determined the Haya's interpretation, evaluation and understanding of history. Invocations to the Deity, as well as names given to people and other creatures like animals or even physical matter or geographical places, portray the Haya's reaction to the universe in a dialogical manner, which includes the past and the present time. The continuous communion held with parents who died many years ago is another verification of their dialogue with the universe. Accordingly, for them history is not merely credited with being a "thing" or an event that took place in the past. Rather, it is an on-going dialogue with the universe, which has a starting point in the past and proceeds in the present and the future where it is actualised (Tinkaligayile 2000). In such a manner, history interrelates both the past and the future.

STRUCTURAL ORGANISATIONS

Social organisation

Central institutions to the Haya are marriage, family, clans, and *omukago* (blood-brother). In the Haya worldview, they are viewed as components in a single network. Each of them depends on relationships with the cosmos and the Creator. The Haya believe that humans and other creatures

live in relationship to the Deity. Thus, they are regarded as not only as part of their cosmology but also as expressions of their belief in the Deity. Accordingly, the Haya view the world as an integrated phenomenon from which humans, whether physically or intellectually, are inseparable. God, humanity and nature are ontological categories and inextricably related. Among them, God is spatially immanent but ontologically transcendent. According to this belief, animals, plants and animate things are an integral part of nature. They deserve as much attention, relation and respect as human beings. For instance, certain Haya families and clans have extraordinary relationships with some animals. In certain circumstances, the animals appear to respond directly in an unusual way to the daily life and mood of humans. "It happens that when she is pregnant, rats or lizards normally appear in quantity everywhere in the house and disappear immediately after her delivery" (Nyakabazi 1999).Their presence has been interpreted as indicating the well being of the family, demonstrating good relationships and predicting good luck. Some families have totems like leopards or special snakes, which appear in the homestead and sometimes even enter the house, mostly at the new moon. However, no one – human or animal - is in danger because they belong to the same family.

Political organisation

The Haya's political system is run through a central government system in which the King is the head of the kingdom by inheritance. He is regarded as having special spiritual power from God for the betterment of the people. His power over his subjects is demonstrated by his title Omukama (the King). It is derived from the Haya verb *okukama*, which has two meanings: the act of milking a cow and "the one who has power and authority to cause things to happen" (Kibira 1974:23). His ruling power lies in God through ancestors. Hence, it is religion that determines the King's office. He is a representative of both God and the people and as such he plays the dual role of political and religious figure. The notions of King and kingdom contributed to understanding the Haya inception of the biblical notion of the King (given to God and Jesus) and the kingdom of God.

Economic system

The Haya economic systems are determined by their understanding of cosmology in general and the Deity in particular. Crops or other foodstuffs, such as coffee, banana, beans, sorghum, cassava and sweet potato, are seen in religious perspectives. Before planting and harvesting events, rituals are performed asking God to bless the process. In some areas, ritual invocations include the female divinity, *Nyakalembe*, the mistress of planting and harvesting. She is invoked to process the main invocation of thanksgiving to the Deity (Sundkler 1980:75-76). Mostly the Haya invoke: *Nyakalembe owa Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire. Waitu bebembere eibyara eli.* Or

Waitu mbakasinge okutuha amanaganage g'elyeza ly'emyaka (Oh *Nyakalembe* of *Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga* of *Ntangaire*, guide us in this planting season. Or thanks for a plentiful harvest this year) (Nyamwiza 2000). Even before consumption, a special meal from the production should be prepared and offered to God as thanksgiving for the yearly harvest. In addition, during time of drought, people make offerings to God asking him to intervene in the situation.

EARLY MISSIONARY TEACHINGS IN THE HAYA SOCIETY

Many years before the Europeans' arrival in the area, a Haya seer prophesied their advent. "Foreign people from the sunset (west) will come in our land, carrying 'sticks' on their shoulders. Among them some will be holding the 'butterflies'. Later, the prophecy was interpreted to mean explorers and administrators (those holding "sticks" - guns), and missionaries (those holding the "butterflies" - Bibles)" (Niwagila 1966:16). Many years later, the explorer T. H. Speke, upon his arrival in the area, unknowingly seemed to repeat the prophecy. This followed his contact with the King Rumanyika of Karagwe on Christmas Eve in 1861. He said, "White missionaries were to come "to set it all to rights again". This was Speke's anticipation and interpretation of his future mission work in the area. But why "to set it all to rights again"? (Sundkler 1980:22). Most historians assert that Speke had assumed that the King and his people were the "descendants of the ancient Christian Abyssinians". Therefore, missionaries were needed to revive what was already there. However, the theory of early Christians in the area before the arrival of missionaries was proven incorrect. Later, Speke actualised his prophecy. Soon after his return to England, he had appealed to mission societies to send missionaries to the Kingdoms of Bunyoro, Karagwe and Buganda. His call was received positively. Missionaries from Roman Catholic and Protestant missionary societies entered the area via Uganda at the end of the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.

Their arrival was partially due to a response to Speke's call and also due to the biblical directive: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). From the beginning, their thinking was that of Christendom going into the non-Christian world to proclaim and inaugurate the kingdom of God by establishing churches (Yri 1978:35). The words *missio dei* were used historically to define God's missionary activity in the world. While the Father sent his only Son into the World, the Son in turn sent his followers out to make disciples of all nations. "The whole operation began with God and was carried through by God" (Bediako 1995:118).

Initially, their missionary work in the area was through Haya traders who were converted in Buganda (in Uganda) following their contact with early missionaries. Back home, the newly converted traders became missionaries to their fellow Haya. Thus, Uganda was a channel for missionaries into the whole geographical area (Kibira 1974:12). The missionaries who worked in the area under their respective missionary societies were the Roman Catholics (popularly known as the "White Fathers" (Sundkler 1980:40-41) and Protestants. The latter were the Anglicans (from England), the Wesleyans/Methodists from South Africa, the Bethel Mission (from Germany, of the Reformed and Lutheran traditions), the Augustana Mission (from the United States), the Church of Swedish Mission and the Danish Missionary Society (Lutherans) (Sundkler 1980:27-34, 40-41). Different Mission societies in the area gave birth to so many different elements that Bishop Kibira described a "confusing mixture" within the church. But in the long run they were very healthy because they led the church in general and converts in particular to a conscious ecumenical view, open for self-understanding as part of Christ's church universal (Per Larsson. [Undated]. : 28-29).

The challenge facing most of the missionaries was the fact that they had not seriously studied the context of the Haya. Consequently, they formed negative opinions about indigenous culture. They assumed that they must start the missionary work "as if they were to command the Haya to start life from a bare beginning" (Lutahoire 1974:9). However, the Haya had their own culture consisting of a religion that included a concept of God, forms of worshipping the Deity and a unique worldview. The fact that the missionaries later used the indigenous concept of God to identify the Christian God supports this hypothesis (Rwehumbiza 983:224). The Christian message was "primarily and ultimately the work of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier" (Bosch 1991:392). Hence, a trinitarian theology was regarded as a sufficiently valid foundation for the missionary work. Evangelism was the core of the mission, consisting of the proclamation of salvation in Christ to non-believers. The assumption underlying this, according to the Christian doctrine, was that those outside of Christ were perishing and that if they did not hear the gospel, they were lost forever (Kato 1975:11). In a later missionary exercise, the question of adherents of traditional religion who faithfully believed in God and died before hearing the gospel was approached differently under the unlimited grace of God to human beings (Helander & Niwagila 1996:27). Missionaries also taught that the way to salvation was through faith in Christ, repentance of sins, forgiveness and new life in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. "The ten commandments became the yardstick for measuring sin as to preach salvation" (Oduyoye 1986:40). This was due to the fact that most categories of Protestant missionaries who worked in the area belonged to the evangelical or piestic camp. Hence, the mission was later identified as the Evangelical Church of Buhaya (Mutembei 1993:111).

The main strategy for evangelisation was through contact with the King and his conversion. Making key converts was a successful ploy used in European church history where the same strategy was applied (Shorter 1978:17). People were to follow the example of the King, otherwise there was the danger of being regarded as committing a crime similar to incest (Sundkler 1980:64). An individual or a group could be commanded to join the King's religion.

> On the King's command, I give you permission; you must go to the Protestants for the King of our land is now one of their believers. To believe as the King believes (*ekishomo ky'omukama*) was the expression and the technical term used in Hayaland. (Sundkler 1980:65)

The King's conversion opened the way for a mass conversion as people entered the new faith. The weakness of this approach was that most Kings did not take the new faith seriously. Thus, they did not set a good example before their subjects.

Another key strategy for evangelisation was promoting the faith through schools and hospitals. Through them, the missionaries had contact with many people. The priority of education in missionary work could be grasped from the missionary Hinsley's words at Dar es Salaam in August 1929. "Where it is impossible for you to carry on both the immediate task of evangelisation and your educational work, neglect your churches in order to perfect your school" (Kijanga 1978:59-60). Thus both schools and hospitals served as instruments for conversion (Sundkler 1980: 17, 71).

A CLASSICAL THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

Believers in the first, second and third centuries had experienced a trinitarian concept of God. It consisted of faith in the one God, his Son and Spirit. It was a scriptural witness to God who had revealed himself to humanity in Christ and manifested in the Holy Spirit.

In the fourth and fifth centuries, the trinitarian doctrine was approached and experienced from different perspectives, from liturgical practices to controversial theological debates. The burning issue was the questions of the nature, link and relationship of the Son and Spirit to God the Father. Theologians attempted to describe the Christian doctrine of the Trinity through Greek philosophy (Mugambi 1988:5). The Deity who "discloses himself in a threefoldness of names", as Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer and Sanctifier, was experienced and described as the one Deity in three Persons or three Persons in one God. This became dogma that "cannot be denied without denying the Christian revelation itself" (Welch 1953:130).

The classical version of the Trinity was not without its problems, most of which were related to the intelligibility of the facts about "persons". It involved the need for adequate elaboration on the threeness and oneness of the Triune God. Controversial debates demonstrated that the "persons" were not clear, even to the Church Fathers. Since then, the classical doctrine of the Trinity has responded to different views (Mugambi 1989:75).

In Western Christianity, among the questions raised was how the concept of Trinity related to "evangelical faith". In such spheres "when the new understanding of salvation prevailed in the Reformation Churches, the doctrine lost its immediate significance for piety. [Thus, it] became only a speculative presupposition of faith" (Welch 1953:22). In an African context, the notion of "persons" in the Trinity has been claimed as too abstract, confusing and difficult to teach. Despite its conceptual weakness, classical interpretation of the Trinity is held as fundamental to the Christian faith and practice (Osborn 1995:187). Even today, it is regarded as having a role to play in the church. However, this does not mean taking it as a final version; rather it is seen as a challenge for further reflection and re-interpretation of the Trinity in terms of a particular context. The crucial question is its significance, place and role in the theological system. As Welch asks, is the doctrine of the Trinity "truly important and integral to the faith? If so, how is it integral? What is its relation to other central themes of theology? [Is it of] primary or only secondary importance?" (1953:46).

Taking into account these questions as well as the challenge of conceptual weakness in the classical version of the Trinity and a lack of an understanding of it by believers, the study investigates ways that could be used to re-interpret the Trinity in the Haya context. There is no reason to fear or to keep this need silent. Clues to highlight are: the doctrine of the Trinity is a fact that can be learnt and experienced by all believers, while it "is subject to change and re-interpretation". It is not something alien, superimposed on the Christian idea of God, but is an explication of it. It comes from religious ideas with roots in the scripture. Thus, it is not an isolated affirmation of God; rather, it is a continuation of the Christian faith (Welch 1953:67, 101, 130, 162).

An interpretation of classical Trinity in indigenous terms is possible since African religious thought is adequate for providing "a positive and useful theological link between Christian teaching and the African religious heritage" (Mugambi 1989:77). It is assumed that models of God, when they are not adequately describing what has been presented, should be replaced with other models. For Mugambi, Shorter and Nyamiti, such attempts should start from traditional African experiences and

proceed to Christian experiences. As Welch states, "unless we know what the doctrine means, we have no way to experience it in a meaningful manner" (1953:90).

While classical theologians used Greek thought forms to formulate and explicate the doctrine of Trinity, the Haya understanding of God, according to its framework of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, will be used here. It has been chosen because of its capacity to portray the one Deity in a unity of his aspects in a way that depicts the links and relationships between and among them. It is expected to illuminate the identification of the biblical Deity in a way that does not isolate him from his Persons, thus reducing what Mugambi describes as "conceptual incoherence" (1989:74). Both the Haya and the Christian beliefs subscribe to monotheism, which conforms to the biblical portrayal of God. Mugambi regards a traditional approach as the best and most relevant way to understand the Trinity as the "modes of God's manifestation to man. As we shall see in chapter five and six, some converts have been interpreting the Trinity subjectively. They sought new ways of understanding the classical doctrine of the Trinity in traditional terms, which involves formulating a Haya version of theology of the Trinity. Welch describes such an attempt:

> The Trinity can best be understood as a summary of the ways in which one may know God in experience…of the absolute, as self-revealing and as self-imparting. We ought not, however, to try to define inner relations in God or to describe the nature of God in him apart from our experience. (Welch 1953:28)

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

A biblical theology of the Trinity demands an understanding of the background and relation of the Bible and the doctrine of the Trinity. It involves an understanding of what each says to the other. This raises the question, according to Moltmann, "What the Bible says which can be viewed as the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity?" (1981:63). It raises the questions of what the doctrine of the Trinity says to the Bible and what each says to the other that can be grasped from the viewpoint of relation between them. Thus, the Bible and the doctrine of the Trinity both speak to each other about the same thing as God and the Trinity in different ways (Jungel 1976:15).The Bible speaks to, and about, the Trinity in revelatory language. It speaks of God, who reveals himself to man, according to the historical revelation recorded in the New Testament (Gal. 4: 4-6). It uses the language of faith – God the Father, Son and the Spirit – to identify the Trinity. From these three images it proceeds to seek and demonstrate their unity. It speaks in the language of a threefold God. It is a narrative about the relationships, fellowship and unity of God open to the world (Moltmann 1981:64, 148-149). It led to an understanding of the one God who revealed himself to humanity in

the distinct forms of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although such an attempt has been regarded as inadequate to interpret the revelation of God, it nevertheless gives both witness and coherent expression to the mystery of God as recorded in the Bible. It is an answer to the question about the nature of God who revealed himself in Christ. It is an analysis of this revelation, which is attested to in the New Testament (Welch 1953:133). This is the ground on which the doctrine of the Trinity is founded (Huyssten 1989:170). Although the Bible does not explicitly speak about, or affirm, the trinitarian nature of God, it gives testimony to his threefold form existence.

The doctrine of the Trinity speaks about the Trinity in terms of formulas. While the Bible speaks about God as the Trinity, the doctrine of the Trinity speaks about the manner of such understanding in different language and terms. The doctrine of the Trinity is thus not an answer to the question about the relation of the monotheistic Deity, but is an interpretation of biblical understanding of God as Trinity into the language of the day. Therefore, it is not a piece of speculation, but an attempt to interpret God's revelation according to people's language (Migliore 1991:59). In both what the bible says (of and to the Trinity and not the doctrine of it) and what the doctrine of the Trinity interprets, (the full historicity of God's self-revelation and his continuing presence with mankind) (Ward 1974: 229-230) is preserved. On this basis, this study aims at interpreting the Trinity by applying the approaches of biblical revelatory language and classical formula language. Both languages will be interpreted into Haya traditional terms and idiom.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Two categories of research methods are used in this study, namely, a literature review to inform the theoretical framework and data collection in the field.

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Three theoretical frameworks have been chosen for this study: symbolic interactionism of social science methodology and two theological models, namely the contextual and inculturation models. Barbour speaks of a model as "an organizing image that gives a particular emphasis and enables one to notice and interpret certain aspects of experience" (Bevans 2003:30).

SOCIAL SCIENCE METHODOLOGY

Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism has been chosen as a key methodological approach for this study because of its conceptual capability to illuminate people's interaction and interpretations of their actions. Burrel and Morgan define it in terms of its scope:

> [Symbolic interaction] focuses upon social contexts in which interacting individuals employ a variety of practices to create and sustain particular definitions of the world. They demonstrate how "reality" and "facts" are essentially social creations, negotiating through the interaction of various competing themes and definitions of reality. (1979:271)

Blumer views interaction as a "direct examination of the empirical social world" (1969:47). He "develops a view of society which constitutes a process of symbolic interaction, in which individual selves interpret their situations as a basis for action" (Burrell & Morgan 1979:80). He defines "symbolic interactionism" as a down-to-earth approach to the scientific study of human interaction of which the empirical world is the natural world. Symbolic interactions, by their nature of dealing with the human group (life and conduct), respect the empirical world (Blumer 1969: 47-48). The natural world is regarded as a place where problems are lodged, studies are conducted and interpretations are derived. If it is used to analyse a religious cult, the user should go to actual meetings and observe participants carefully as they carry on their lives. Thus, symbolic interactions offer both the ground and the framework for an interpretation of what arises from interactions. Hence, it has been termed "the micro theoretical perspective" that examines elements of social phenomena, communication processes, interaction patterns and subjective meanings of social phenomena.

An approach to symbolic interactions has to conform to methodological principles involving the fundamental requirements of empirical science and methodological positions (Blumer 1969:21). In applying this theory, Blumer's classification of central issues of symbolic interactions, or what has been described as "reasonable methodological statement", will be followed. For classifying and understanding symbolic interactionism in terms of meaning, George Herbert Mead's identification of two forms of social interaction in human society, "the conversation of gestures" and "the use of significant symbols", will be followed. While the former refers to non-symbolic interaction, the latter refers to symbolic interaction. For defining them, Mead and Blumer's definitive theory will be applied. The term "non-symbolic interaction" will be used to describe an action that takes place when one responds directly to the action of another without interpreting that action (Blumer 1969:8). The term "symbolic interaction" will be used to describe human groups' interpretation of each other's gesture or actions. The implementation of this approach will follow Blumer's key

catchphrase, "meaning engaged should be disengaged". That is, "meaning inherent" or "intrinsic in the thing" needs to be derived (Blumer 1969:3-4). The concept of "meaning" in the light of Blumer's three premises will be used.

The following issue is borne in mind. The assumption is that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them. These meanings are central in their own right. Therefore, "to ignore the meaning of the things toward which people act is seen as falsifying the behaviour under study" (Blumer 1969:2-3). The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellow human beings. According to this view, human reaction is not made directly to the actions of another but through meaning attached or derived from these actions. In Blumer's words, "the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the way in which other persons act towards the person with regard to the thing" (1969:4). He regards a "human being as an organism that not only responds to others on a non-symbolic level but as one that makes indications to others and interprets their indications" (1969:12). Meanings attained or derived "are handled in, and modified through, the interpretative process a person uses in dealing with the things he encounters" (Blumer 1969:2). Schutz describes it as a "process of typification", whereby one applies an interpretative approach to further apprehend the meanings derived (Barrel & Morgan 1979:245). It involves an interpretation of an object event in a dual interpretative process of distinct steps. Firstly, "the actor indicates to himself the things toward which he is acting, whereby in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action he disengages its meaning". Secondly, the meaning disengaged is responded to, interpreted and thus disengaged for further understanding (Blumer 1969:5). For Bevans, such an approach leads to an understanding of a reality. He says: "Reality is not just 'out there', reality is 'mediated by meaning' a meaning that we give it in the context of our culture or our historical period, interpreted from our own particular horizon and in our particular thought forms". (2003:4)

It was found that disengaging "the meaning engaged" was an on-going process and not a one-sided activity, whereby one group acts and the other group remains as onlooker. Rather, both groups interact, each in its own way. Assuming that social reality is meaningfully constructed and ordered from the point of view of the people directly involved, the communicator of the message (missionaries) and the message receptors (the Haya people) each have a chance to react to the other group because "meaning is attributed to the environment and not derived from and imposed upon one group" (Burrell & Morgan 1979:251). In symbolic terms, the message is derived from an interaction between the message bringers and message hearers. In such a process, the receptor also becomes the author of the message.

Ignoring this reality was the root source of misunderstanding of the message delivered (missionaries' version) and the meaning derived (converts' version), as it is only understood when recipients themselves disengaged it. The study investigates the meaning that the Haya converts derived from interacting with the Christian message and understanding it in their own terms.

However, there are some weaknesses identified in symbolic interactions. Interactions have been said to suffer from dealing with many facets, which redefine concepts and thus defy the nature of the process of the interactions perspective per se. The process of interpretation, from the point of view of the actors, often fails to do justice to its theoretical framework. In some cases, the interpreter's views influence the meaning interpreted and applied (Burrell & Morgan 1979:82). These weaknesses will be taken into account in this study.

THEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

Contextual model

The contextual model was chosen because it complies with the nature of the research (a theological study) and conforms to the methodological approach used in the study, which depends on a context (Raphesu 1999:120). On the one hand, the contextual model is regarded as a contextualised text or theology in a given context. Its intent is "to show how lived experience alters and shapes the phenomenon being studied" (Denzin 1989:61). On the other hand, the term contextualisation, which was introduced in 1972, "includes all that is implied in the older terms [of] indigenisation and inculturation…Contextualisation broadens the understanding of culture, involving addressing social, political and economic questions. Nicholls and Hesselgrave define contextualisation as the state of dealing with the "unchanging content of the gospel of the Kingdom into verbal forms, meaningful to peoples in their separate cultures and with their particular existential situations" (Bevans 2003:26, 46). For Denzin, "contextualization occurs when [a theologian] locates the phenomena back in the world of lived experience" (1989:31).

> Contextualization takes what has been learned about the phenomenon, through bracketing, and fits that knowledge to the social world where it occurs. It brings phenomenon alive in the world of interacting individuals. Contextualizing locates the phenomenon in the personal biographies and social environments of the persons being studied. It isolates its meaning for them. It presents it in their terms, in their language, and in their emotions. It reveals how ordinary people experience the phenomenon. (Denzin 1989:60)

A definitive nature of contextualisation can be grasped from Professor Moila's recently formulated phrase *getting the message heard.* It is also the title of one of his recently published books. It describes the commonly used term "context", and the goal of bringing the message to the local

context. In his words he says, "contextualization is essential to enable theology to communicate the gospel message in and through the context...getting the [theological] message heard is therefore regarded...as the major task of contextual theology" (Moila 2002:1). For Moila, "contextualization takes place only where there is a need to get the gospel message heard in people's own society or village. [That enables it] to reach or touch the heart of humans in every new generation" (2002:10). Contextualisation therefore attempts to interpret those structures in which the message is contained and to give them meaning by locating them in a local context. That is, it presents the message in people's terms, language and emotions (Denzin 1989:60). Moila defines the context as an arena for encounters between God and human beings or between his Word and the means of translating it in a given context. He regards contextual theology as a product of the context. He writes:

> Contextual theology performs its task in such a way that the hearers of the gospel are instructed and enabled to contextualise the message. It does not impose on others a hidden context, which is alien to them. It is concerned with the way people in different situations perceive the gospel message and the existence and the activities of God in their midst. It assumes that God is not only active in human societies, but he communicates with them in their language and in terms of their culture and social conditions. (2002:7)

Contextual models start with an awareness of context on the assumption that rather than trying, in the first instance, to apply a received theology to a local context, the local context could be sought to offer the means for a local theology. It could start with an awareness of the need to examine the local context, which shapes reflection on theology. As Schreiter argues, it initiates a dialogue within Christian traditional thought whereby that tradition can address questions genuinely posed by local circumstances" (1995:14). In such manner, "contextual theology is done when the experience of the past engages the present context" (Bevans 2003:xvii). In this way, it becomes an arena for constructing and exerting Christianity according to traditional theologies, resulting in a better understanding of the Christian message. Thus, it is an early step for formulating a local, if not a new, theology.

The methodological approach of the contextual model assumes that " contextualisation is a method of doing theology by taking both the Word of God and the people's context seriously. [This means] "discovering how God transforms the African worldview by facilitating Christian transformation of his worldview" (Moila 2002:2,12). As such, it shares elements with the methodological approach of symbolic interactionism. In both cases, an encounter between two groups of people and an interpretation of their actions take place in a context. The strength of the contextual model lies in its use of a local conceptual framework from which it constructs a local theology. It has the capacity to apply and use received theology or text in a local context, without demoting either

Christian or traditional theology. According to Bevans, a real weakness in contextualisation "is that one could mix Christianity and culture in a way that does not enhance but compromises and betrays Christianity" (2003:22). For instance, in some cases, more emphasis is placed on contextual theology than on biblical theology. One could ask what the context (and not the Bible) says on a certain controversial theology. One could overlook the fact that the Bible is also a contextually conditioned book, which "expresses God's revelation in culturally and socially conditioned language and patterns of thought" (Moila 2002:4). To reconcile these two approaches, credit should be given to the Bible and the context as a place for its application and demonstration.

Application of the contextual model

An application of the contextual model in this study aims at using it as a methodological approach with which to present the Christian message in terms of the local context. The following question must be addressed. Can people from different traditions and contexts interpret the Christian message without distorting its original meaning? For some theologians, the Christian gospel cannot be interpreted suitably within what has been termed "the Third World" tradition (Cone 1995:106). However, some African theologians strongly recommend a theological interpretation of Christian messages in a traditional context. Therefore "anyone who rejects theological constructions coming out of the Third World context as inadequate is rejecting something which was frequently done in Europe for centuries" (Reichle 1987:32). From them comes a call to search for this latent treasure. The Haya religious paradigms, which have so far been either untouched or only partially exploited seem to fit this description. Initial attempts have been made in different African contexts. Bediako reports:

> Since 1960, the church has been greatly concerned with the theological interpretation and rehabilitation of the pre-Christian traditional heritage. It can be said to have been quarrying amid the spiritual treasure of the African past. (1995:177)

Who is engaged in developing local theology? One school assigns the right to be involved in contextualisation to the entire believing community - in this case, the Haya converts. For Haleblian and Bevans, the believing community, which consists of professional and non-professional theologians in each culture "must take ultimate responsibility for contextualizing the gospel" (Bevans 2003:18). Their view is based on two factors. One is an assertion that any theoretical and practical talk about religious experience always takes place within the religious community (Nicolson 1990:77). As Ward says, "one's interpretation must always be one's own experience of transcendence within a particular community" (1974:110). A second assertion is that believers have had insights and have seen the power, which arises from the reflections on the scriptures through

experience (Schreiter 1985:17). They are capable of making "their own responses to [the Christian message] in terms of their own needs and categories of meaning" (Bediako 1995:203). One's earlier experience of God provides the background for such an interpretation according to local frames of reference and perspective. As Oosthuizen puts it, "the African will interpret the gospel in terms of his own symbols and with his own poetry and song" (1968:224). At this stage, the convert not only understands the message delivered (Moila 2002:1-3) but also becomes the moulder and painter of it. Proponents of the transcendental model assert that "any Christian who authentically tries to appropriate his or her faith is participating in the theologising process and is doing genuine contextual theology" (Bevans 2003:106). Such an approach includes the ordinary Christian believer who is regarded as a theologian of primary importance. Therefore, "we need to face the fact that the best interpreter of the African experience of God is the African [believer himself equipped] with a disciplinarian mind and the requisite technical tools" (Idowu 1973:98). The approach demands knowledge of how people interpret their experiences in terms of their beliefs and their systems of understanding and how they evaluate meaning, their thought forms and their norms. Without addressing these issues, it is not possible to talk about African Christianity because they give it an African character (Moila 2002:1). In Bishop Kiwovele's words, as quoted by Reichle, "we must work our theology within the living culture and African way of living if we wish to avoid dismissing a wealth of experiences of God" (1987:30).

Do we need theological expertise for a contextual interpretation? As in any other academic discipline, expertise is definitely needed because any sound interpretation depends on various and different sources (Jenkson 1991:237). On this basis, Mercado describes the people as the best contextualisers; and the theologian as a competent midwife to the people as they give birth to a theology that is truly rooted in a culture and moment of history. In Haleblian's words, "professional theologians act as 'brokers' in this difficult and ongoing task" (Bevans 2003:18). This does not mean holding a rigid position of a final word interpretation but only a provisional one. Schreiter says:

> In the development of local theologies, the professional theologian serves as an important resource, helping the community to clarify its own experience and to relate it to the experience of other communities past and present. (1985:18)

The Haya-African contextual based interpretation needs universal recognition. Will the global church accept a Haya/African interpretation of the biblical God in terms of the Haya perception of God, as a true interpretation? Mwombeki, a Haya theologian quoting Oduyoye, states that the African and the Haya converts, with their interpretation of the biblical message, do not need to "justify themselves before the courts of European and American judges" (1997:47). What matters

is an interpretation that reveals and maintains the original meaning of the Christian message. All over the world, it has been interpreted differently. Jenkson, quoting Mbiti, reports:

> In particular, I would like to ask our brothers and sisters in Europe and America to allow us to make what, in their opinion, may be considered to be errors; allow us to make a muddle of Christianity, just as you did in Europe and America...When we write on specific subjects, [like the Trinity] we must not be expected to employ a vocabulary and style adopted in Europe and America. Allow us to say the thing [to produce a version] in our own way, wrong or not. Our main concern here is to hand on, as best as we can, the gospel message which does not change. (1991:150-151)

Inculturation models

An inculturation model has been applied in this study because its cultural perspective fits the study. In addition, it relates to the other theoretical frameworks applied in this study (symbolic interactionism and contextual models). All of them are interdependent. After an interaction has been taken place (in a given context) and an action or message has been delivered and derived, it follows the process of inculturation. This is the means of transmitting a message into a context and having it understood in terms of the culture of that context. Thus, inculturation has been defined as a process of transferring faith from one culture to another; that is, into a new context. It entails the fact that "the message of Christianity is always inculturated. [Therefore], rather than finding an essential core, one must find a way of discerning cultural patterns that incarnate or can incarnate Christian existence and meaning"(Bevans 2003:45). Inculturation is compared to incarnation (or revelation), which Doyle describes as the process that starts from the top down (Bevans 2003: 50). Accordingly, "the term inculturation is often described as well-fitting to express the importance of culture in the construction of a true contextual theology" (Bevans 2003:55). Shorter describes this process as the insertion of the Christian message into a given culture. Thus, he regards the inculturation or intercultulation of theology as an on-going dialogue between faith and culture or cultures. For him, "interculturation" is a better word to describe this process on the assertion that "in order to express the process of inculturation it must be lived in partnership and mutuality" (Shorter 1975:13). This means that in a real sense, the inculturation process is not a one-sided process. Rather, it is a two-sided process, involving an encounter of people from both sides, in this case the missionaries and the Haya. It also means a degree of cultural sensitivity on each side resulting in what Mbiti describes as "the process of acculturation". Oduyoye describes acculturation as Africans' efforts "to use things African in their practice of Christianity" (Young 1993:2-3). For Shorter, "acculturation, or the encounter of one culture with another, is happening all the time, ...despite efforts of some societies to seal a culture off" (Bevans 2003:60). It has been described as a more serious element in the search for religious accommodation in Africa. An understanding of the nature and scope of inculturation therefore depends on an understanding of acculturation. Thus both models will be applied together in this study.

An application of these models will take into account their nature, capacity and relationships between them and to other related theoretical models (symbolic interactions and contextual models), which all depend on culture. Idowu and Oduyoye described the relation between them as "the artificial wall". Like Idowu, another model will be applied to remove this obstacle. While Idowu used "indigenisation" (Oduyoye 1986:73-74), in this regard both "indigenisation and contextualisation" will be used in this study to reach the same goal. The former serves as the means for clothing the message in an indigenous frame of reference. The latter serves as the means for making it fit into a given context. Hence, "inculturation presupposes acculturation [in our case] because the gospel cannot exist without a contingent cultural expression" (Shorter 1988:56). The importance of the relationship between them and dependence on each other can be grasped from the statement: "Without inculturation, African theology is not African; without acculturation, Christian theology is not African" (Young 1993:2-3). It benefits all sides involved.

Such an approach raises questions, which Shorter frames: "What can we do to help inculturation make progress in the church? (1998:261-262). What specifically can be done at the grass roots level? Fostering cultural awareness and which stimulates community action" has been regarded as the right way. This involves encouraging converts to study it as well as give cultural expression of their understanding to the changes while realising their implications. Culture is needed because any theological model applied in a given context depends on people's culture. Anthropologically speaking, culture shapes the way Christianity is articulated. Culture, therefore, is an inclusive entity of people's perceptions. Professor Moila rightly maintains:

> ...culture has impact on people's perception of reality...Humans may thus be referred to as culture-shaped and culture-transmitting beings. Further, they also influence it and contribute to its reshaping. In other words, humans are capable of producing, bearing and transmitting culture... Our culture shapes both our acting and our thinking. Culture provides models of reality that govern our perception. (2002:74-75)

Culture is the ground where the strength of the inculturation model lies. Its applicability in this study will be through a two-sided process. Such an approach differs from the mission or evangelisation process, which was essentially a one-way process. Shorter describes it as "the ordinary historical interaction of cultures" (1988:13). The focus on a two-sided process approach will comprise transmitting the Christian message into the Haya context on the one hand and an interpretation of it into traditional terms on the other. Such an approach raises the question of how the Haya/African social structures and religious practices are incorporated into Christianity. The acculturation model will be applied as the means for fostering the process to achieve this goal. It

involves referring to the efforts of Africans in this case, the Haya converts to use African artefacts to practice Christianity. A question faced here is: How can one be African and Christian at the same time? "Inculturation, which also serves as the manifestation of changes that have come along this way, sheds light on this question. That is, how the convert can give witness to the Christian faith without betraying his African identity" (Oduyoye 1986:69, 73).

In other parts of Africa, such a process involved a "transition period from the traditional mission to the new mission of the future, [known as] the period of inculturation" (Shorter 1988:13). This period also involved the Haya converts' reaction to the missionaries' version when interpreting the Christian message into their own terms and version. This implies that the propagation of the Christian message did not land on empty ground. It found people deeply immersed in their own traditions and culture. The weakness of the inculturation model lies in the fact that in some cases an encounter between these two sides (the gospel and culture) resulted in the process of acculturation, producing what Sengor calls "half caste cultures". It results in what Mbiti describes as "the process of partial giving and partial receiving, partial withholding and partial rejection (Mbiti 1969:264-2650. He regards this state as unofficial "baptising" of African cultural traditions into the Christian way of life. It is only when inculturation and acculturation are appropriately applied that there can be an arena for converts' full interpretation of the Christian message.

DATA COLLECTION

ORAL AND WRITTEN SOURCES

Data has been collected from two main sources; oral and written sources, field work being the source of primary data.

RESEARCH TOOLS

Observation and interviews, observation and participation, questionnaires and extensive reading of the relevant literature were the primary tools used.

DATA FROM ORAL SOURCES

Selection of Respondents

This section consists of the selection of respondents or sample, according to categories, the interview schedule and the nature of the interview.

Respondents were selected were both non-Christians and Christians. For both categories, the majority were elderly people of different genders, ages and religious affiliations. Most of them

were between the ages of 45 and 75. Some of the respondents were leaders in their respective areas, including leaders of traditional religion and traditional specialists. Among them, there were workers in the church, government and other organisations. The majority of respondents were farmers in rural areas. All respondents were organised and divided into groups and sub-groups, according to their categories and the nature of the question/s to be investigated. In total, there were six groups. Theologians, (pastors/padres, seminarians, evangelists and missionaries), lay Christians from respective denominations, first- and second-generation Christians, church elders, non-Christian (Traditionalists, Muslims) and traditional specialists. Each group consisted of 15-35 respondents. Altogether there were 160 respondents, which is regarded as the correct sample size to represent the Haya. Contact with the respondents was mainly through interviews, conversations and discussions.

Personal interaction

The researcher's concern and influence in the research was a very important asset. His attitude created an atmosphere that enabled respondents to express their views openly and freely thus promoting an unbiased, critical study. As Denzin puts it, "unless ordinary people speak, their experiences cannot be interpreted" (1968:63). The researcher grew up in a traditional family before and after conversion to Christianity. He is thus familiar with the local culture, religion and language. As Shorter puts it, field research "must be carried out by people fully conversant with the language" (1975:41-42). The researcher was also a church minister in various pastorates in different places in the area of the study. He was readily and easily accepted and thus trusted by most respondents. As Harjula, quoting Honko, says, "familiarity with the area of the study allows a researcher to win the confidence of the informants which is the most decisive factor for successful recording of material" (1969:16). These attributes created a free and open environment for collecting data and gave clues on where and how to start, what to ask and what to avoid asking. However, the researcher was also aware that, in some cases, a foreign researcher was better accepted than a local one (Shorter 1975:41). Therefore, care was exercised with this approach, especially in interviewing techniques, knowing that it has limitations.

THE INTERVIEWS

Various groups of respondents important for the study were interviewed. The interview focused on the salient issues in the study, securing a comparative assessment and getting the data essential for analysing the hypothesis. Probing techniques were used in order to enable the respondents to impart sufficient information. Sample questions were arranged and occasionally the same question was framed differently. This enabled an assessment of people's reactions to a researched question

from different perspectives. At the end of each interview, there were evaluating questions. Did the respondents respond positively to the information requested? Did they illuminate the phenomenon as a lived experience? Did they encapsulate what was known about the phenomenon? Did either the respondent or the researcher generalise the information given? If so, in which area were they most generalised or specialised? Through interview procedures, the information needed was gained, working on the assumption that the material collected expressed people's genuine understanding. The interviews were carried out between 1998 and 2000.

Interviews with non-Christian Respondents

The non-Christian respondents comprised adherents of the traditional religion and Islam. These were divided into two groups: ordinary people (mostly aged ones) and those who performed special social duties, especially in cultural and religious leadership. The latter group included priests, diviners, rainmakers, healers and seers. Most of them were believed to preserve traditional religious beliefs and practices. The nature of the questions asked took into account the specialised tasks of the respondents. For the question on how the notion of the Deity was perceived, the older people were consulted, especially those actively involved in religious matters. To find out how the notion of the Deity related to beliefs in spiritual powers, divinities, spirits or ancestors, priests, diviners, seers and older people, who have had close contact with spiritual beings, were consulted. For the question of how the notion of the Deity was applied to all areas of human lives, specialists of various societal services, physicians, healers and rainmakers were contacted.

Interviews with Christian Respondents

A limited number of 100 respondents were selected from Christian denominations in the area of study. These comprised Christians mainly of the first and second generation. Among them were lay Christians, theologians, church leaders, (bishops, missionaries, pastors, padres, sisters, evangelists and church elders). The focus was on their traditional and Christian perception of God. Some of them held only a single perception of God, which was either traditional or Christian. This was through renunciation of their earlier (traditional) or later (Christian) experience of God.

Participation and Observation

The bulk of the oral data was collected during the researcher's pastoral work and residence in five different pastorates. During this time, notes from different sources were taken, mainly through observation and participation in visitations, services, meetings, seminars, conferences and ceremonies at family, office and church level. Through a close interaction with the community, the

researcher was able to watch the life of the community as it flowed along. Thus, the actual situations of people were viewed, their problems noted and observations made on how they handled them. The collection of data was greatly facilitated, however, since the researcher remained aware of the potential disadvantages of the observation and participatory approaches. Goode comments on the relationship between the observation and participatory approaches. He says:

> ...The observation is always a variable to be taken into account...controls can be applied to the observer by controlling the situation itself, by restricting or defining carefully the participation of the observer, by the use of precise categories and by utilising schedules and other tools for observation and the keeping record. (1952:130)

Questionnaires

In addition to the collection of oral data, questionnaires were used for gathering information. A questionnaire of 12 questions was worked out and given to some respondents in their respective groups, namely lay Christians, seminarians and theologians of various denominations, who were asked to react to them. In addition, questions were prepared and sent to selected people, mostly theologians and church leaders, who responded and expressed their views in writing.

DATA FROM WRITTEN SOURCES

At the start, the question in mind was, "Is it possible to get information in a society in which oral communication dominates?" Primary written data were collected from selected documents and archives. These were limited in terms of quantity but helpful in terms of quality. Most were obtained from unpublished missionary and church records. The unpublished missionary records were written during the earlier interaction between the Haya and the missionaries. Church records were written during the later phases of propagation in the area. This data comprised archives and other documents, minutes, notes, reports, records and letters. Other materials were collected from published church literature, namely, the New Testament, the draft of the potential new *Ruhaya* Bible, a complete *Ruhaya* Bible, church hymns, the liturgy and the catechism. Most of the materials were collected from the Lutheran Church. Others were collected from other Christian denominations in the area of study.

Much primary data were collected from the libraries of Makumira University College, Ruhija Theological College and Ntungamo Major Seminary. Other primary and secondary data were collected from the library of the University of Natal and its cluster libraries. Both categories of data

were collected through an extensive reading of selected relevant literature, books, articles, journals, periodicals and papers.

SOME PROBLEMS

According to Bergen, "each research programme has its own specific methodological problems [which may] have a technical character" (1981:70). The research was circumscribed by a number of problems. Most of them arose from interviewing respondents and from the collection of data from various sources. Some of the respondents consulted had an inappropriate interest in the questions asked. For instance, some of adherents of traditional religion queried questions posed because of shyness or fear due to social, cultural and religious reasons. They did not want to respond to some questions because the revelation of one's conviction is regarded as abominable. Some of the Christian respondents thought that giving the information requested was contrary to denominational beliefs, especially when they were different to the researcher's belief. Respondents in this category followed a less informative or silent stance, giving neutral or negative responses to some of the questions asked. Those who took a less informative stance offered a partial or limited knowledge of their beliefs and practices.

Another problem faced was related to the collection of data from documents. Some of the office bearers were suspicious about letting files be viewed, fearing that confidential issues would be exposed. Like Bergen, these problems were regarded as usual and normal research phenomenon (1981:72).

Language was also a factor in problems faced. Although the interviews were largely conducted in the Haya vernacular, some respondents, especially those middle-aged, did not understand some words and religious vocabularies. The researcher tried to interpret both the questions posed and the answers received.

Other categories of problems related to the collection of data from the multiplicity of indigenous sources. It was problematic selecting what to include and what to exclude. However, with the guidance of a research design, the most relevant sources were selected. There was a lack of adequate written material and detailed pre-knowledge about the topic researched. The researcher thus created his own system of getting the information he needed from the few sources available. There was no systematic classification of archives, which normally guides a researcher. The technique of a systematic hunt here and there was employed in order to have access to the most relevant data. In some of the offices contacted there were no detailed records kept and it was

difficult to obtain the full information needed, especially during the early years of propagating Christianity.

DATA ANALYSIS

Due to an overwhelming amount of data, the researcher employed Goode's methodology. Half of the data from each category was selected from the extensive ethnological database collected. This information was regarded as the most relevant to the questions asked. Instead of spending many hours over the analysis of a mass of material from a single point of view, a small amount of material was examined from many points of view. Goode describes this method as "doing a more intensive analysis of fewer cases" (1952:209). For determining the representation of each group, the findings gained from the answers of the respective respondents were compared and spot checks were made. This approach enabled an evaluation of all the research materials thus gaining a clearer understanding of the research topic.

DISSERTATION OUTLINE

Seven chapters form the framework of this dissertation. Chapter one consists of the motivation for the study, the goal of the study, the formulation of the problem, aim of the study, hypothesis, literature study, area of the study, an explanation of terms and concepts used, Haya cosmology, early missionary teachings in Haya society, a classical theology of the Trinity, a biblical theology of the Trinity and research methodology.

Chapter two provides background information on the Haya, specifically in a socio-cultural and religious context. The main emphasis is on religious beliefs in divinities, spirits or ancestors and the worship of the Deity. These beliefs are looked upon as providing a basis for searching and interpreting the Haya concept of God, the central focus of chapter three.

Chapter three investigates and interprets the Haya traditional experience and invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, working on the assumption that both are the locus of the Haya perception and experience of God.

Chapter four discusses the classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. Its focus is on the attempt to interpret the trinitarian doctrine using different approaches and in different contexts. In addition, it deals with the consequences of such approaches and how some of the models used

could be applied to illuminate an interpretation of the Trinity in Haya traditional terms.

Chapter five incorporates the central theme of the dissertation. It investigates the encounters and interactions between missionaries and the Haya people and how each side influenced the other sides' belief system. Part one deals with the missionaries' interpretation and identification of biblical God and the converts' reactions. Part two of the chapter discusses the post-missionary Christianity attempts to re-interpret and re-identify the Christian concept of God by using indigenous models.

Chapter six deals with the practical applicability of the theology of the Trinity (whose roots lie in chapter five) in Haya traditional terms. The main emphasis is on African theologies of the Trinity, which provide the background, and the perception of the Trinity among the Haya clergy, laity and theologians. All together create an arena for christianisation and indigenisation of a threefold model and a trinitarian model.

Chapter seven focuses on the main goal of the study, namely, towards a Haya theology of the Trinity. It involves the following: a brief review and summary of each chapter and a challenge for the methodological approach for interpreting the Christian concept of God-Trinity into the Haya traditional context. The chapter also reviews, defines and summarises the use of the Haya theology of the Trinity consisting of christianisation of a threefold perception of the Deity, and indigenisation of the persons of the Trinity. It also involves illuminating the link and relations among the persons of the Trinity. Finally, the chapter gives suggestions and recommendations for present and future interpretations of the Christian concept of God as well as a conclusive summary of the chapter.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the methodological approach to be used in the study. It focuses on an understanding of the background of the study conceptually and geographically. It also deals with theoretical frameworks, particularly social and theological frameworks, the former focussing on symbolic interactionism and the latter on contextual and inculturation models. These are looked upon as offering the map and key to the study. The chapter also deals with field research for collecting primary data. The question addressed is how these methodological approaches were used to conduct the research, of which a central theme is an interpretation of the Christian concept of God in the Haya traditional milieu.

CHAPTER TWO
BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE HAYA

INTRODUCTION

Chapter two provides contextual information of the Haya, conducive to interpreting the Haya and Christian concepts of God. As Kato says, " it is not easy to interpret the concept of God, [of and for a given] people without adequate knowledge of their context" (1975:71). On the assertion that "[as] our cultural and historical context plays a part in the construction of the reality in which we live, so our context influences the understanding of God and the expression of our faith" (Bevans 2003:4). A lack of faith is among the factors caused problems in propagating Christianity among the Haya because contextual values were not applied to illuminate representation of the Christian message (Sundkler 1960:111). The study focuses on the knowledge of context of the Haya in order to gain access to the their concept of God and related beliefs. It is also expected to illuminate the current interpretation and understanding of the Christian concept of God.

This chapter is divided into eight parts. Part one is an introduction to the chapter. Part two deals with the land, with emphasis on population and geographic factors. Part three discusses the people-inhabitants of north-western Tanzania. Part four deals with structures, namely social, cultural, economic, educational, and political structures. Part five focuses on religious life consisting of religious concepts – the spiritual powers, divinities, spirits, ancestors and the Haya worship of the Deity. Part six deals with later arrivals in the area, traders, explorers, missionaries and administrators. Part seven discusses Tanzania's independence. Part eight is a conclusive summary of the chapter.

THE LAND

The land, or what is termed "natural geography", plays an important role in determining the life style of people. It influences their economic situation and socio-religious life in the perception and belief in the Deity and course of history (Katoke 1975:2). A knowledge of the geography is therefore crucial for understanding the Haya concepts and way of life. In the study, emphasis will be placed on the land, population, topography, geography, rainfall, climate and vegetation in north-western Tanzania.

The Kagera Region, located in the north-western area, is part of the United Republic of Tanzania. Administratively, it comprises the districts of Bukoba Urban, Bukoba Rural, Muleba, Karagwe,

Biharamulo and Ngara. Together, the districts cover an area of 2851 square kilometres and have a population of 1,326,183 (Mutembei 1993:22). The population figures are as follows:

POPULATION IN THE KAGERA REGION: 1988

Bukoba Urban	343,956
Bukoba Rural	47,009
Muleba	274,589
Karagwe	292,589
Biharamulo	209,524
Ngara	158,685
TOTAL	**1,326,352**

It is assumed, however, that since the last census in 1988, the population in the region would have increased by approximately 50%. If this is accurate, the population has increased to 1,989, 274 or more.

The Kagera region is between 30.75 and 32 degrees longitude east, and between 1 and 2.5 degrees latitude south of the Equator. It has high plateaus, valleys, steep cliffs and ridges. Further west it has an impressive range of pre-Cambrian rocks stretching from the south northwards to Uganda (Kilaini 1990: 1-3). In the east, along the shore of Lake Victoria, the land rises to a height of 3,720 feet above sea level. While in the west, the land rises to 6,000 feet above sea level and in the south and south-west it rises to a height of 5,000 feet above sea level. In the valleys, along the rivers, it rises to 4,000 feet above sea level (Mutembei 1993:15). The region contains great and minor lakes. The former is known as Lake Victoria (69,490 square kilometre, the world's second largest fresh-water lake after Lake Superior). Locally, the lake is known as *Rweru* (in the western area region) and *Nyanza* (in the eastern region). The Arab traders knew it as *Ukerewe.* The traveller T. H. Speke named it Victoria in the year 1862 (Cory [Undated].:105). Other lakes in the region are Ikimba and Burigi. The former is located to the west and the latter to the south-west of Lake Victoria. The region also contains the rivers Kagera, Ngono, Mwisa and Mwiruzi (west, south-west and north-west of Lake Victoria). The region obtained its present name Kagera in 1981 from the Kagera River, following the victorious war of 1978-1981 against fascist dictator Idi Amin of Uganda. The Kagera river basin was an essential strategic point. Previously, the region was known as the West Lake Region.

The Kagera region has two rainy seasons. The annual rains *omuhanguko* fall during the months of September and December and the spring rains fall between the months of March and May. The heaviest rains of the year normally fall during April. The region gets a maximum rainfall of about 80 inches a year, especially in the north and some parts of the south along Lake Victoria. In the far south and west from the lakeshore, only about 30-40 inches fall annually. The region also has short and long dry seasons. The former is known as *akanda* (little summer) and usually occurs in the beginning or middle of February. The latter is known as *ekyanda* (great summer) and usually occurs between the months of May and June or August and September. The highest temperatures are reached between the months of January and February. The cooler season lies between the months of June and August (Mutembei 1993:16).

Neighbouring regions of the Kagera region within the Republic of Tanzania are the Mwanza, Shinyanga and Kigoma regions. Neighbouring countries are the Republic of Rwanda in the west, the Republic of Burundi in the south-west and the Republic of Uganda in the north.

THE PEOPLE

The inhabitants of the Kagera region in north-western Tanzania are among the 124 tribes of mainland Tanzania. All people in the region share the same culture, religion and language with some slight differences in cultural and religious practices and vernacular pronunciations. Most of the people are identified under the umbrella of Haya dialect speaking. While the people occupying the Bukoba rural and urban districts together with the Muleba district and some parts of northern Biharamulo prefer to be identified as *Haya,* people living in Karagwe prefer to be identified as *Nyambo*. Others, in parts of the Biharamulo and Ngara districts, want to be identified as *Subi, Zinza* and *Hangaza* (Lwengongo 1999). Studies on these groups of people are mainly based on their historical, anthropological, cultural and political systems.

Bantu-speaking People

Bantu speakers are one of the two ethinic groups of people living in the Kagera region. An understanding of them at a regional level involves their history and relation with other Bantu at a continental level. The Bantu are a huge family, which comprise major and minor ethnic groups of the entire continent (Van Pelt 1971:14-150). Their origins in sub-Saharan Africa in general and in north-western Tanzania in particular is still an unsolved problem. Historians seem to agree on convincing historical, archaeological and linguistic evidence, which shed light on the early inhabitants of the area. Greenberg and his associates regard language as an essential factor indicating the early origins of the Bantu. According to this language theory, Bantu speakers are

said either to be the earliest inhabitants in the area or to have lived there from the very beginning of their existence.

According to these views, it is likely that the Bantu came to the area during the first phase of foreign invasion. Their influx is estimated to have taken place either at 2500 BC (Farelius 1992:3-4) or between the fifth and tenth century AD (Katoke 1975:11). They are assumed to have originated in the Niger and Cameroon highlands along the Niger-Congo Rivers (Greenberg 1972:189-216). In agreement with Greenberg, Guthrie has developed a more convincing theory about the origins of Bantu. It is based on a comparison of about 22,000 common roots in the Bantu languages or what has been called "general roots" (1962:273-282). Van Pelt describes them as the nucleus of the proto-Bantu languages, the origins of which are said to be somewhere in the Zambezi-Congo watershed (1971:14-15).

Despite minor differences between Greenberg's and Guthrie's theories, both are similar in relating the origins of Bantu languages to their root sources in the original home of the people, who came earlier to the intercustrine zone. If this theory is true, the origin of Bantu-speaking languages, presumably, would then lie somewhere in the south-west or west of the region (Katoke 1975:11). Based on their historical origins, Bantu-speakers in the intercustrine region have been roughly divided into three main linguistic and cultural groups: the Easterners, who include the Ganda, Soga, Gumere and the Westerners or central Bantu, who include the Nyoro, Toro, Nyankore, Kiga (in Uganda), Haya, and Zinza (in Tanzania). All these groups have been identified by anthropologists as "Western Lacustrine Bantu" (Kibira 1974:11). The Haya are believed to be the descendants of the first Bantu inhabitants who arrived and settled in the area, possibly near the shores of Lake Rweru, before any major influx. The last group are the Southerners, who include the Nyarwanda (in Rwanda), Rundi (in Burundi) and Ha (in Tanzania) (Taylor 1969:13).

The arrival of Bantu immigrants in the area is said to have had significant geographical, social, cultural and economic repercussions both for the immigrants and for other people in the area. The majority of Bantu were primarily cultivators who also kept short-horned cattle (Ogot 1974:172-73). In addition to cattle rearing, these immigrants introduced better agricultural methods and new subsistence crops, some of which were sorghum, millet, yams and possibly sweet potatoes (Katoke 1975:14). The rest were occupied in fishing and industrial activities, such as metalsmithing. Those who were fishermen were called *Bahaya* (Niwagila 1988:32), which was later used to identify the whole Haya tribe. Industrial technology was a privilege of the agricultural sector, resulting in higher production. This led to an increase in the number of people and the formation of stable

families and homesteads. Small villages sprang up around the settlements where cultivation and fishing were the backbone. Small villages, in turn, gave rise to the development of large-scale villages and a well-organised social and political structure.

Hima/Hinda People

The other group of inhabitants in the Kagera Region of non-Bantu origin are known as Hima/Hinda. Their influx into the area took place many years after the Bantu immigrants. The double name identifies two tribal sub-groups within the Hamitic-Nilotic pastoral group. The larger group has been identified as the Hima, commonly known as "fairly light-skinned cattle breeders". These herdsmen are also believed to maintain and preserve the history and philosophy of the entire Hima/Hinda group. The other group has been identified as the Hinda, who form a minority of the rulers (Katoke 1975:4). Mostly they are concerned with the legacy of the royal ruling Chwezi clan in the area (Sundkler 1980:12). The theory about their origins and arrival is based on more evidence than the origins of the Bantu speakers.

According to oral tradition, a Bantu state already existed in the area before the arrival of the Hima/Hinda immigrants from the north, possibly from Ankore, Toro, Bunyoro (of present day Uganda), Sudan and Ethiopia (Katoke 1970:11-12). The actual date of their influx is unknown. The most convincing evidence about their arrival, among the various systems of recording used in those days, is based on astronomy. "From astronomical oral traditions, it is believed that the Hima/Hinda invasion took place some time before the series of the eclipses of the moon which occurred between 1492 and 1520 A.D. On this basis, some historians assert that the Hima/Hinda kingdom was already in existence by 1400" (Katoke 1975:xi).

The main reason for Hima/Hinda invasion was to gain political power (Taylor 1969:14). To support this goal, they introduced a religious-political system of mythology, which deified their ancestors. In this mythology, their Kings were believed to hold spiritual power inherited from former Kings of the Chwezi dynasty, identified as *Abachwezi* (Farelius 1992: 5). The ruling power of the King lay in the "Chwezi royal insignia of drum and spear", which was adopted as the new policy (Ogot 1974:179). With this policy, the Chwezi dynasty ruled the Bantu-speakers in the area, who were in the majority. Under this system, the Bantu speakers were allowed to organise themselves according to the existing clan and sub-clan system at local level. This policy enabled the Hinda/Hima to establish administrative control over them, which later developed into a well-organised and centralised great monarchy (Ogot 1974:180). Under the emperor Ruhinda, the Hinda/Hima kingdom developed into a powerful empire covering most areas in north-western

Tanzania as well as in Mwanza (eastern), Tabora (central), Kigoma (western) and some areas in Uganda (Katoke 1975:24-25).

Both the Hinda/Hima group and the Bantu-speaking group claim to believe in a Deity, *Ruhanga* the Creator of the earth and heaven and all therein (Mutembei 1993:29). Religious similarities were among the factors that paved the way for an easy acceptance of the religious-political Chwezi dynasty by the indigenous Bantu speakers. Agriculturally, technically and economically, the arrival of the Hima/Hinda immigrants, like that of the Bantu, brought about a socio-economic revolution. Mainly this was through the introduction of a new type of long-horned cattle, the *Engaju* (commonly known as *Ankole* or *Sanga*). They also introduced technology for making milk vessels and better spears for defence (Katoke 1975:36-37).

Socially, with the arrival of Hima/Hinda immigrants, a class system was established in which people were classified and identified according to one's role and status in society. The Hima/Hinda, being skilled in animal husbandry and technology, claimed the right of forming a higher class than the Bantu speakers. Some of the classes that emerged were *Abalangira* (princes), *Abalamata* (advisors or courtiers) and *Abashongore* (aristocratic or wealthy persons) (Katoke 1975:31).

SOCIAL STRUCTURES

Societal structures are the matrix for understanding the lifestyle and religious concepts of a people, as religious beliefs and practices are developed and expressed within a social-cultural setting (Omari 1991:47-48). In looking at them, emphasis will be placed on economic, social, cultural, political, educational and religious concepts.

Economic Life

A brief description of the economy of the people in the north-western part of Tanzania shows how economics is related to their entire life - socially, religiously, culturally and politically. The backbone of their economy is land. The Kagera region has a large area of arable land conducive to this people's type of agriculture. Most Haya are small-scale hoe-cultivators working independently at a family level. More than 90% of people in the region depend on subsistence and cash-crop agriculture, which are the backbone of the regional and national economy.

Subsistence crops are: beans, maize, cassava, millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes, yams, vegetables, fruits and banana plants. Banana varieties can be grouped into two groups. The "bitter bananas" (when they are still green) are eaten as fruit and their juice is used for various purposes, such as brewing. The "sweet bananas" are usually cooked and eaten when they are green, after being mixed with beans, meat or fish. Therefore, banana (*ebitoke*) is the main staple food. In addition, banana is a cash crop of a high demand. Being a multi-purpose crop, banana touches most, if not all, aspects of the Haya economic cycle, as cattle do for the Hima. From bananas, a Haya obtains almost everything essential for existence. They produce clothes, firewood, binders, small and large plates for serving food, mats, carpets, containers for keeping water, shelter from rain and sunshine, fertilizers, animal feed (for cattle and goats) and other necessities. A Haya builds his house with materials from it and when he dies, he is buried in his plantation (Kilaini 1990:19).

Other cash crops are coffee, tobacco, tea and cotton of which coffee sustains the regional and national economy. There are two types of coffee, *Robusta* (*ekihaya*), which is believed to have been introduced into the area about three or four hundred years ago by the Hima, either from Ethiopia via Bunyoro (Uganda) or from the Congo forest, where it was growing wild (Niwagila 1988:49). The other type is *Arabica*; known as *ekijungu* (of European origin), which is a foreign crop. *Robusta* is used extensively at local level. *Arabica* is mostly exported.

Social and cultural Life

The Haya way of life can be grasped from its relation with social and cultural concepts and their manner of interdependence. A parallel might lie in the philosophy of the egg, which cannot be separated from its shell unless one intends to destroy it (Niwagila 1998:34). The Haya community is built on family units under a family/clan system. At family level, the *Nyinenju* (father) is normally the head and leader of the family. The clan system comprises all household units organised along patrilineal lines (Taylor 1969:137). Each clan numbers approximately 250 members, led by *Omukuru w'oluganda* (the head of the clan) (Katoke 1970:9). Each clan has its own taboos and totem, which function as a means of discipline and ethics. They provide historical identification and also involve moral behaviour, solidarity, social, cultural and religious ends.

The Haya philosophy, at both family and clan level, lies in their love, solidarity, fellowship and a spirit of service (Lutahoire 1974:16). It demonstrates their high regard for humanity and is inseparable from their community. Only within the community can one acquire a mature and a true personality and identity. This is a typical African philosophy as Nyirongo, quoting Mbiti, writes:

> According to the African, man's individuality is fulfilled through his participation in the tribe. In other words, the individual is not a person until the community has accepted him. In traditional life, the individual does not and cannot exist except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of the past generations and his contemporaries. (1997:110)

The core of the Haya attitude to humanity and community is culture, since it touches on all aspects of their life. Hence, to be human is to be immersed in a culture. It is an African way of life, binding them together and giving them identity (Regan & Torrance 1993:140). Although Haya culture was subject to foreign influence in all spheres of indigenous life - cultural, religious, political and economic, it is still alive as it holds their vernacular language and traditional religious conceptions.

Political Life

For a long time before the establishment of foreign administrations, first the Hima/Hinda and later the German and British, the Haya already had their own stable political structure. Under Hima/Hinda rule, there were ten kingdoms in the area - Karagwe, Ihangiro, Kianja and Maruku (under Bahinda dynasties), Kyamutwara and Bugabo (under the Bankango dynasties) and Missenyi and Kiziba (under Balabeki and Babito dynasties) (Taylor 1969:140). Other kingdoms in the area were Rusubi and Bugufi. Despite their strong cultural unity, these kingdoms were never unified politically as each remained independent (Kilaini 1990:2).

The King was the centre of authority according to the philosophy of "the royal drum" being identified in personal terms as *Rugaju* (bull). It is a figurative, symbolic expression of the power and authority of the King, who is the giant bull and *Ishengoma* (Father of the kingdom). *Rugaju* was a huge drum made of a tree trunk that, at its completion, is made into a personal identification by having a "heart" inserted and a cow-skin cover. The "heart" is the hard seed of a certain wild tree, about two inches in length and one inch in width, which is secretly put inside the drum by the drum-maker. Hence the saying, *akomunda y'engoma kamanyw' omubambi* (no one knows what is inside the drum except the drum-maker) (Kakiziba 2000). Seitel describes this philosophy in personal terms as "the thing that cries inside the drum is known [only] to the drum-maker" (1972:187). *Rugaju*, as the royal drum, determines the ruling power and image of the King. Niwagila says:

> The King's title was known as *Omukama* and his kingdom was known as *Engoma* [*Rugaju*]. A King could not rule without a drum [*Rugaju,* which] was sounded every morning and every

> evening to let people understand that the King was alive and in power. If the King died, then the drum could not give the sound until a new King was enthroned. (1988:43)

Eventually, the Hinda/Hima Empire and its subordinate kingdoms underwent major political change and a decline of their empire followed, after the establishment of foreign rule in the country, first under the German and later under the British.

Educational Life

The Haya regard education highly and a primary goal is to transmit the knowledge and values of society to present and future generations. Great emphasis was placed on children and the youth as they were regarded as the "assets" of the community. Goal implementation was through the educational system, which involved all community members. As Bishop Kilaini contends, "the whole community felt responsible for the education of all children" (1990:12-15). This is echoed in a Haya saying, *Omwana taba womo* (a child never belongs to one person). The educational system was intertwined with everyday community life and had a formal and informal component. While the former offered general knowledge, the latter offered more non-specific training. Under informal education, "a young girl learned to draw water...by going with her older sister... [or mother]. A young boy learned to tend calves and goats by accompanying his older brother [or father] to the grasslands" (Bahendwa 1990:31).

Formal education consisted of the age-set system, known as *Omuteeko* school "league" or "association". This was a group of people bound together by similar goals and activities and was a highly organised cultural heritage. Initially, it was introduced by the Hinda/ Hima aristocrats for teaching boys of the same age group in the kingdom. The place of instruction was mostly at the residence of the King. At this place, "groups of boys from the entire kingdom were divided into age groups, learnt various skills and ways of life" (Seitel 1972:111).Under formal education young people were taught highly specialised and advanced skills and values (Bahendwa 1990:31). Its curriculum comprised the music, marching and royal sports, known as *amakondere n'entimbo,* as well as good behaviour towards one's equals and elders. In addition, it demanded love, service and a spirit of devotion to the King and country (Katoke 1975:37-38). Morris, who pursued research in this area, comments:

> In Bukoba country, there existed an education system called the *omuteeko* which had existed before the arrival of the Europeans and which was intended to educate the boys and fit them for the life they were to lead...The *omuteeko* system served not only as a school for general education, but as a qualifying examination for those boys whose ability showed them superior to other boys, especially as warriors. (1969: 85-86)

RELIGIOUS LIFE

A study of Haya religious life includes religious beliefs, religious affiliations, Haya traditional religion (with emphasis on spiritual beings, divinities, ordinary spirits and special spirits or ancestral spirits) and the worship of the Deity.

Religious beliefs

"Historical studies have revealed the numerous ways in which lived experiences and practices, which have developed over years, give birth to people's beliefs" (Shorter 1975:51). The question arises as to what extent people are motivated by what they believe. "In what way do traditional beliefs help African people to understand the truth of God and in what ways do they lead people away from the truth of God?" (O'Donovan 1992:219). A later section investigates an answer to this question.

Religious affiliation

For a long time, the Kagera region has been home to different religions. The majority population follow traditional religion, Christianity and Islam. This section will focus on Haya traditional religion. According to the national census of 1967 and 1988, as reported by the Bureau of Statistics in Dar es Salaam, the number of adherents are as shown below. [2]

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN THE KAGERA REGION: 1967-1988

Religion	Census of 1967	Census of 1988	INCREASE	%
CHRISTIANITY	338,480	505931	167,451	47%
TRAD. RELIGION	174,327	-	-	-
ISLAM	54,156			
	566963	**505931**	**61,032**	**10%**

The numbers of A.T. R. and Islam were not available in the Census of 1988

The number of adherents to Christianity has increased since the last census of 1967 from 338,480 to 505, 931, an increase of 167,451. However, since the census of 1988, the number of Christians is said to have increased by approximately 47%.

2 Source: 1967: Population census, Vol. 3251. statistics recorded by National Bureau, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in Bergen 1981: 200. Source:1988 by Mutembei in *Kristo Au Wamara* 1993:22

Haya traditional religion

Religion is the life and soul of the Haya. It raises issues such as what traditional Haya religion is and what makes it a religion. Scholars have described it similarly but differently. It has been described as a perception of the reality of life in relation to divine powers, namely spiritual beings, particularly the Deity. Wach, in the *Comparative Study of Religion,* defines the Haya traditional religion as "a response to what man experiences as ultimate reality" (1958: 31).

Dr Johanssen, one of the first German missionaries in the area, viewed the Haya traditional religion in what he described as "the mystery of faith" (Sundkler 1980:39). His hypothesis holds that faith is a basic characteristic of religion. Therefore, a belief system should be approached as a religious phenomenon of which even after being studied or believed, it remains a mystery. Bishop Sundkler has redefined the Haya traditional religion as a "faith of men". His definition has been regarded as the best way of defining and understanding Haya religious life and belief on the assumption that it views a belief according to its nature in relation to people's response and practice of it. Accordingly, Haya religion is neither speculative and abstract nor exclusive but is concretely and inclusively practised. In Sundkler's words, "religion is not so much thought out as danced out" (1980:44-47) as it is believed, experienced and practised simply and freely and by all members of the community. Shorter observes a similar notion. He says, "the African dances out his ideas" through symbolic action in an inclusive manner (1975:7). Even the unborn and dead are not excluded but have a space in the Haya religious framework. This is possible because "all people are born in a religious clan with all rituals and mores" (Kibira 1974:110). Sundkler, quoting Tinkaligayile, reports:

> In our country, tradition, philosophy, custom and all kinds of sciences were marked by religion. Every child is born into the religion of its ancestors. It is difficult to define the time when a person first participated in the fellowship of our religion, for it happened early, even before birth. Everything was related to religion. (1980:46)

Moreover, religion practised as "faith of men" is a communal and lived religion. As such, it is not bound or limited to a certain sphere of life but rather includes all aspects (Lutahoire 1974:12). There is no sharp distinction between the sacred and the profane, the material and the spiritual, the living and the dead or the political and the religious. All phases of life from birth to death involving social activities are regarded as a single religious entity (Kilaini 1990:27-28). Hence, traditional religion "absorbs the whole man" as Sundkler reports:

> For the Haya, existence consisted not of religion and other activities, the one separated from the other, but religion was the totality of life with one dimension, ritual, dominating all else. Hunting in the Savannah, sowing and harvesting in the field, preparing beer in the *shamba* (garden), fishing on the lakes, rain and sun, fertility of women and transition through death to another form of life - all these activities and stages were encompassed by ritual and received their characteristic rhythms from it. Here God was not a problem, but the sum and total of life. (1980:46-47)

A further approach to Haya traditional religion comprises an investigation on the lack of a particular name for identifying the Haya religion. In the absence of the term religion, a *Swahili* word *dini* (religion), of Arabic origin, was applied by missionaries and other expatriate scholars to identify "religion" but its application was limited to Christianity and Islam. The Haya, who adhered to traditional religion, were neither Christians nor Muslims and were said to have no *dini* (Kikoito 1999). It led to a regard for traditional religion as being unworthy and idolatrous and its adherents as *bakafiri,* "an Arabic derogatory word meaning an infidel or pagan (*abatakansi*) (Twesigye 1996:194).

This attitude is demonstrated in some of the church and governmental institutions where the official religious affiliation of a person is limited to the world religions of Christianity and Islam. At Ndolage Mission Hospital, for example, the patient's religious affiliation was recorded as "Prot." for Protestants, "RC" for Roman Catholics, "Muslim" for Moslems and "Neg'" (negative) for Traditionalists (Sundkler 1980:46). The classification indicates how the Haya traditional religion was not recognised as a religion.

However, Haya have a different understanding of what is called religion. For them, what has been termed "religion" is an experience as a participant in the entire religious system of beliefs and practices in a "danced out" manner. Religion, therefore, is not determined by nominal identification but life and experience. It is better understood by observing rituals, prayers and invocations than a verbal description of it. Thus, the absence of the name "religion" indicated neither the absence of "religion" nor a lack of religious practice (Van Pelt 1971:21). For them religion, is not a system or a name, but rather a unity, fellowship and solidarity of the entire community. Instead of a particular name, terms like *Obumo bwo'bwehonge* (the solidarity or submission to communal unity) and *enteeko* (congregation) have been applied (Bahendwa 1990:295). These terms better identify and describe the Haya religion. A use of these terms demonstrates that the Haya, as with other Africans, had their own philosophy and way of perceiving and identifying what we call "religion".

A further weakness identified in Haya traditional religion is related to the claim about the absence of scriptures, formalised creeds and religious founders, as is the case with world religions. Bishop Sundker, quoting Pastor Tinkaligayile, states:

> Tinkaligayile wanted to defend his people by disproving a disparaging remark which foreigners sometimes thought they could throw at the Africans: that they had no *dini*. By *dini* they meant the two 'book and culture' religions coming from the outside, namely Islam and Christianity, for they believed that the Haya, like other African peoples, lacked a religion. (1980:46)

However, for the Haya, as for other Africans, "religion" or "faith" is not expressed through "[fixed] creedal formulations or theological statements, but [simply] through day-to-day [utterances] and encounters with the daily challenges of life" (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:45). It involves daily practices of their beliefs. As Ranger and Kimambo maintain, the Europeans articulated their beliefs on paper while African society articulated their beliefs in practice (1972:47). In the absence of scripture, oral literature in the form of myths, stories, riddles, proverbs, invocations, affirmations and symbols has been used as an instrument for preserving and passing on Haya religious beliefs from one generation to another (Rwehumbiza 1983:123).

The Haya traditional religion was not defined or founded by an individual, as it is the case with the world religions, as echoed in Twesigye words, "African religion has no founder nor reformers" (1996:191). Therefore, no one is claimed to be its founder. Rather religion emanated from society, where the religious perception of reality was experienced and practised by different people in different places through the ages (Kibira 1964:70-74).

SPIRITUAL BEINGS

It has been asserted that Africans are profoundly aware of the reality of the spiritual world, which they relate to the physical world (O'Donovan 1992:4). Accordingly, the spiritual world is given the status of an "ontological religious reality", hence the claim that "Africans live in a religious universe" (Adeyemo 1979: 49). The nature of spiritual beings has raised several questions, as Mbiti suggests:

> In Africa, personalised spiritualised beings characterize the spiritual worlds of traditional religions. This has caused related questions: What is the shape and nature of these spiritual beings and the living dead? What forms do the relationships take? What differences are there between man's experience of the spiritual world in his ordinary life and his attempts to establish formal contact with them? (1969:36)

The Haya believe that *Ruhanga* (God) created most spiritual beings. Some of them are said to be the spirits of departed people. Spiritual beings encompass divinities, spirits or ancestors. They are believed to have a close relationship and association with the Deity, to the extent that some of them are regarded as personifications of his activities. In terms of their categories and status, the Haya ranks divinities first then spirits or ancestors.

DIVINITIES

The Haya believe that divinities have been created by God and thus belong to the category of spiritual beings similar to, but different from, spirits or ancestors. Some Haya theologians disagree with the idea of the existence of a separate category of divinities whom they regard as ordinary spirits. Their claim has a basis in Spencer's theory, where the ghosts of superior persons or remote ancestors later became divinities (Harjula 1969:66). Some of these divinities had lived a human life on earth, which involved marital life (Mutembei 1993:29-31). According to this view, even the terms "divinity" or "divinities" are misleading, causing confusion about the nature and role of spirits (Rwehumbiza 1983:17-18, 192-193).

Those who hold the belief in the existence of a separate category of divinities identify them with local names. In Haya religious terms, they are mostly identified as *Abakuru b'amataka* (great people in charge of land). This is also the case in other African societies. Idowu observes:

> The divinity therefore has a local name, which linguistically appears to limit its scope to the locality. Divinities are ministers, each with their own definite portfolio in the Deity's monarchical government. Each is in his sphere an administrative head of a department. (1973:170-171)

As their name *Abakuru b'amataka* indicates, each divinity is in charge of a given ministry or department on behalf of God, namely land, weather, water, animals, planting and harvesting. Thus his ministers and representatives on earth function as intermediaries and intercessors between God and human beings. Having been empowered by God, divinities are believed to bring good fortune to earth, as well as harmful events such as heavy rain, wind, thunder, disease and death. In some families or clans, divinities had been given shrines (Lubatana 1998). Their role has led some theologians to compare them to "the heavenly angels in Jewish and Christian cosmologies" (Paris 1995:28). Some of the chief divinities are *Mugasha, Nyakalembe* and *Irungu*.

MUGASHA

According to one myth, *Mugasha* is reported to be a male divinity who once lived an earthly life. Later, in his old age, he was badly injured during a political rivalry in an incident that resulted in the

amputation of his right leg (Kyanda 1998). According to another myth, *Mugasha* is not a human being, but a divinity created by God from the beginning. Despite these differences, both myths agree on *Mugasha's* nominal identification, the departments allocated to him (mostly land, sky, lakes, rivers and the weather) and the knowledge and power given by God to him to control them. People believe that when *Mugasha* is angry, he may cause destructive torrential rain, wind, lightning or thunder. Some people claim to have seen him physically, particularly during heavy rain, whereby they see *okuguru kwa Mugasha* (M*ugasha's* leg) hanging in a black heavy cloud over Lake Victoria. Upon seeing him, people normally whistle on pipes or horns to instil calm (Mpolera 1999).

NYAKALEMBE

Nyakalembe is the only female divinity among the Haya. Two myths about her origin have been encountered. According to one myth, *Nyakalembe* once lived an earthly life as a wife of *Mugasha* (a male divinity) (Mutembei 1993:30). According to the second myth, *Nyakalembe* was not a human being, but a feminine divinity created by God in the beginning (Mutiganzi 1998). In both myths, *Nyakalembe* is reported to have been given knowledge and power by God over human beings and other creatures in the universe. Her role is mainly to control all planting, harvesting, love and peace-making affairs (hence, her name *Nyakalembe* - one who has peace). A similar belief in a female divinity has been recorded in other African societies, where she is identified as the "earth mother", "female earth deity" and "mother goddess" (Knappert 1990: 79). The concept of a female divinity is regarded as shedding light on the understanding of the Haya African concept of God from a female perspective, especially in a patriarchal society (Shorter 1973:58).

IRUNGU

Irungu is a male divinity in the Haya cosmology, whose name means jungle. It also expresses his role. He is believed to have been created by God as a divinity, being given knowledge and power to master and control all wild lands (deserts, wilderness and forests) and all wild animals and other creatures. Thus he is regarded as God's minister of wild life and animals (Bahendwa 1990:24). By virtue of this position, he is also a guardian of hunters and travellers through and within these areas. He is believed to live among the wild animals, mostly in the wild woodland areas, from where he controls the daily animal movements. Hunters have many stories about seeing and hearing him. Some of them claim to have seen him in a human or in animal form, either walking or sitting somewhere on a stone in the midst or beside animals. Sometimes he is reported to have been seen wearing animal skins and holding a bow and arrow in his hand. Belief about the nature and role of this divinity has been reported in other Bantu societies of East and Central Africa, with different

names but the same characteristics and role. The Kimbu of Tanzania identified him as *Idimungala* (Shorter 1975:38). Shorter reports:

> In societies, where hunting is a specialization ...the master of the animals ... is a fantastic animal or giant, often belching fire and having many heads. It plays tricks on hunters. It appears and disappears mysteriously and it is associated with wind, whirl winds, dust-whirls...It is a capricious and dangerous animal but possesses great wealth and knows many secrets. (1973:58-59)

People communicate with *Irungu* in different ways, mainly through ritual invocations and through mediums. Before a hunting expedition, hunters normally observe prohibitions consisting of a strict performance of rituals at home, namely love towards people, abstinence from all immoral behaviour, the eating of certain foods, participation in social activities and abstinence from sexual relationships (Rwamushonge 1999). On the way to the hunting area, hunters normally perform verbal rituals in the form of a song known as *okutera amahigi* (invoking the divinity verbally and ritually). The purpose is to invoke *Irungu* to intervene positively in the hunting expedition. In the hunting ritual shrine, *Irungu,* through a medium, mentions the names, history, profiles and characteristics of all the hunters assembled. Also, he mentions the names of the animals to be offered to selected hunters by himself (Martin 1998).

GENERAL AND SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITS

For understanding Haya beliefs in the spirits, two sub-categories are deemed useful: general and special spirits (or ancestral spirits). The division is an attempt to understand the phenomenon of spirits from different perspectives, rather than only under the term ancestral spirits (Mbiti 1969:85). The aim is to describe the Haya paradigm in experiencing and understanding the spirits through their continuous communion and relationship perspective.

GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITS

The Haya, along with other Africans, believe that the universe is inhabited with many spirits of various kinds with different names and roles. In Ruhaya the name for a spirit is *muchwezi* or o*muchwezi* (singular) and *abachwezi* (plural) or *omuzimu* (singular) and *abazimu* (plural) (Lubatana 1998). According to one myth, which has developed into two versions, there are two categories of spirits: those who are said to have been created by the Deity in the spiritual world and those who are believed to be the souls of people who lived a human life on earth and who are in the majority. While spirits created by the Deity are said to belong to the category of benevolent spirits, spirits that lived a human life on earth can belong to either the benevolent or malevolent spirit category (Gati

1999). The terms malevolent and benevolent indicate that spirits retain their earthly status and personality. The existence of two categories of spirits (even in some areas of Africa) was overlooked by missionaries and scholars. Consequently, all spirits were identified as belonging to the category of malevolent spirits (Jean Ela 1988:18). For the Haya, as for other Africans, malevolent spirits are believed to be people who lived immoral lives in the material world, namely wizards, sorcerers and killers (Moila 1989: 143). This category also includes people who have died abnormal deaths through violence, suicide or bewitchment or those given unsatisfactory funeral ceremonies. These spirits are said to be deadly, fierce, cruel and unfriendly to living people, especially their earthly enemies. It is believed that "because of being accursed, they strike terror in every body they happen to meet" (Moila 1989:142). Because of their immoral characters, the Haya call them *abalaigura* (black, impure or defiled spirits). The name also expresses the continuity of their immoral state into the invisible world (Buntuntu 1984:5).

Benevolent spirits are believed to consist of those created by God in the beginning and the souls of the people who have lived a moral life on earth. These are described similarly in the Great Lake region as "ancestral spirits" (Twesigye 1996:305). Spirits of this category are further grouped into two sub-categories: ordinary spirits and great spirits. Ordinary spirits are believed to be the spirits of people who lived an ordinary and common life on earth and did not play a major societal role beyond the family level. Great spirits are said to be the souls of the people who played a special role in society. Some of them are priests, diviners, physicians, rainmakers and prophets together with social and religious leaders, traditional leaders and Kings. Some spirits of this category belong to people whose deaths are unknown. They are believed either to have disappeared or to have been directly transferred into the spiritual world without dying (Hellberg 1965:332). An understanding of spirits in all categories will involve an understanding of the manner of communication.

Communication with spirits

The Haya concept of communication with spirits originated in the belief that a person only dies physically. Communication can be with malevolent spirits or benevolent spirits. For both sides, communication is through two channels: ritual invocation through the informal channel of possession or the formal channel of divination.

Communication through ritual invocations at shrines is known as *okwetongeza* (self-expression). The shrine (residence house of the spirit) where the spirit is invoked is called *endaro* (singular) or *amalaro* (plural) (Ndibuye 1999). Communication through mediums and self-possession takes place where the spirit uses an individual as a medium for communicating with a particular family or

community. This can be done informally or formally. Informally, in rare cases, spirits manifest themselves in certain people that they have chosen through possession. In the Ruhaya language, spirit possession is commonly known as *okutungamirwa* (in a normal possession) or *okukwatwa enchweke* (in a radical possession). Usually the spirit speaks through the person possessed by identifying itself in its earthly voice.

Formally, communication with spirits is done through a ritual of *okuragura* (divination) or *okuchunda enyimba* (to shake gourds). This can be done in a friendly or confrontational manner, the former for benevolent spirits and the latter for malevolent spirits. For communicating with a benevolent spirit, a priest invokes and asks his spirit of divination or other spirits to mount him and speak through his mouth. Upon mounting, the spirit identifies itself by mentioning its earthly names or names, history, profile, role, power and other personal details. Later, even without being asked, the spirit diagnoses the problem or illness in the family or clan or beyond. As in self-possession, the spirit speaks in its earthly incarnation voice (Farelius 1992:57). The spirit of the former King, Wamara, was heard speaking and identifying himself through a medium. Niwagila reports:

> *Ninye Wamara eya Bitoma, Ninye Biguto eya Mushonga, Nkaruga Mpororo nagya Isheshe Omubizinga bya Etete. Natwara ensi na mahanga goona. Olamanya ntakunogola. (1966:38)*
>
> I am Wamara of Bitoma, I am Biguto of Mushonga, I came from Mpororo and went to Sese Islands, which have good and comfortable grass. I ruled the world and nations. Be careful that I should not kill you.

Usually communication with malevolent spirits is done in a confrontational manner of a dramatic, war-like atmosphere. Normally, a great priest with a powerful benevolent spirit is necessary to confront malevolent spirits (Bavakule 1999). The aim is to cast them out from the human victim (Twesigye 1996:232). Through first-hand observation, a malevolent spirit was heard speaking through a medium, identifying itself by mentioning its earthly geographical residence, history and other personal details. It mentioned its intention for attacking the human victim. It spoke in a fierce, stubborn and arrogant voice. *Inye ndi Lutare eya Bigunda bya Ngundo, natumwa kukunogola kwehora enzigu ebyo bankozile kubi* (I am Lutare of Bigunda, in Ngundo. I have been sent to kill you in revenge for what they did to me) (Kahakwa 1998). Elderly Haya people of that particular clan said that the earthly incarnation of that spirit was a wizard who was killed a very long time ago but regards earthly enmity as grounds for revenge (Ndibuye 1999). For reducing the threat and exorcising the victim, the spirit mentioned conditions to be fulfilled. It demanded to be given the objects it once used while living on earth. It said, *mumpe ebyange* (give me my possessions). This allows an understanding of the spirit and its intention. It also implies that even

in the world of the dead, spirits still have a connection to human beings and a love for their earthly possessions (Moila 1989:142). It also indicates that although people have died physically, they are still alive in terms of their personality communication and interests.

In return for casting-out the spirit, the priest complied with most of the spirit's demands. On behalf of the relatives of the victim, he gave the spirit the required materials - a shrine (constructed outside in the homestead), a spear, tobacco, beer, clothes and goat. In addition to the earthly materials offered to the spirit, words in a tricky, commanding and confrontative manner were used, urging the spirit to leave the victim. Even in other African people, this strategy has been described as a developed and "complicated ritual systems designed to protect life against the menace represented by the spirits" (Bujo 1992:27).

Mbiti reports on a similar ritual performance, "You, spirit, (mentioning its name) you must leave this person (a victim). Come, I will take you to your body, [indicating an animal, or even a robot) and your place/house [indicating a shrine or a certain tree in the garden, place at a crossroads or a wild area]. Go and do not return" (1975:10-11). However, the spirit returns to the same victim or to another person in the same family (Kampuli 1999). Again, the procedure of casting-out is repeated, sometimes with additions.

The role of benevolent spirits

Most people assert that benevolent spirits have been appointed by God as ministers to perform special tasks or duties in the universe, particularly among the living. They have given knowledge and power by God, as they are his agents sent to deal with various people's needs on his behalf, without interfering with God's powers. Fr. Rwehumbiza argues:

> ...the *Bachwezi* are guardians of *Nyamuhanga*'s orders...are messengers, *Ntumwa* "agents", or "ministers" of God *Ruhanga*...Their exercise of powers given by God does not in any way deprive or diminish God's dignity and power. (1983:200)

Because of their nature, benevolent spirits are believed to be closer to God than human beings, thus are believed to have had at least a glimpse of his knowledge because "the rays of the divine light shone on them" (Sundkler 1980:46). Their tasks include caring for human offspring, caring for the sick, caring for women giving birth, making people richer and so on. In rare cases, they also bring death, if God demands it (Rwehumbiza 1983:194). They are also responsible for seeing that God's orders are obeyed, normally through warning and reminding people of how to comply with his will. This includes blessing them when they behave positively according to God's orders and punishing

them for transgressions. Benevolent spirits are the guardians of the community, a necessary force for maintaining union with God, order and harmony among people (Rugakingira 1980:8). By virtue of their role, they are regarded as intermediaries between God and human beings. Therefore, although they have died, they still help their living relatives (Lutahoire 1974:10). Among the benevolent spirits, known as *bachwezi*, ninenteen are regarded as playing a leading role, each in its allocated department.

> *Wamara* - ruler of the underworld, and sovereign of the souls of the dead or world affairs, *Hangi* - of sky, moon, and stars, *Kasi* - agriculture, crops and fertility, *Lyangombe* - the Hima cattle, *Kaihurankuba* - Son of *Mugasha* - thunder and light, *Mushoke* - *Mugasha*'son, the wind, *Muhaya* - women's concerns (especially lack of love with their husbands), daughters of Ruhinda - *Nyabulezi, Ishengoga*, *Kakwa* (of Karagwe) deal with cases of theft, *Kimuli, Kagoro*, *Lwebembera* deal with rain, son of *Mugasha* - *Luboha* guardian of the hunters, *Ilimamabuye* and *Kashasira*, *Msula* the son of Ruhinda the Great and *Igaba* chief Muchwezi - chief minister in charge of rain, storm and fishermen. (Bahendwa 1990:23-24; Rwehumbiza 1983:197-199)

Knowledge of the spirits raises questions. Do the Haya relate only to spirits or ancestors or to the Deity? This is a factual ethnographical question. Is belief in the Spirit acceptable from a Christian point of view? This is an evaluative question. For most scholars, missionaries and theologians, especially in the past, all spirits are agents of Satan (Sundkler 1980:46) and therefore should be eradicated as quickly as possible. However, it is strongly asserted that in no way do the Haya worship spirits. When Haya adherents of traditional religion were asked whether the Haya worship the spirits and God together they replied, " We worship only *Ruhanga* (God the Creator) who is powerful and provides for our needs" (Rwechungura 1999). Beliefs in spirits has also been observed in other monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but they too do not worship them (Lutahoire 1974:42). Spirits' impact on traditional religion and Christianity is evident even in early propagation among the Haya. In some cases, spirits' utterances (through mediums) were among the factors that contributed to a greater understanding of God in Haya and Christian terms. Thus, they were among the factors supporting a positive response to Christian conversion. Pastor Bahendwa, one of the converts along this channel, reports:

> I remember when the spirit of Wamara possessed my uncle Kaibanda, my father asked him to prevent the occurrence of death in our clan. He replied: 'I am not God the Creator of heaven and earth. I was a human being, now I am dead therefore I am not able to prevent the occurrence of death. The decision over life and death belongs to God alone.' I was surprised and from that time on I started to further perceive, seek and experience Almighty God. (1990: 23-24)

A similar incident is also recorded in the New Testament where the utterances of spirits were among the divine signs for identifying Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and the Son of God. Luke reports, "When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice,

'What have you to do with me Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I beseech you, do not torment me'" (Luke 8:18). The spirit's statement has been regarded as doctrinal affirmation of the nature and role of Jesus. One wonders why this knowledge was not employed to identify the Christian concept of God to the Haya and other Africans as well. Since human beings are incapable of direct contact with God, a knowledge of a direct communication with him through a benevolent spirit is useful. Pastor Lutahoire asserts:

> Man is so small that it is difficult for him to approach the Almighty directly. But man can do so by way of those who are already close to Him and capable of seeing Him...Because God is the Spirit and because the spirits can be contacted by specialists (diviners, medicine persons, doctors and others who have the spiritual virtues in them or who are trained in demonology), communication with the spirits is important. (1974:9)

The next section deals with the Haya's special understanding and communication with spirits from an ancestral perspective.

SPECIAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITS

In the previous section, the focus was on the Haya general understanding of and communication with the spirits. This section investigates the Haya special understanding of ancestors, with an emphasis being placed on the relationship between them and God and between them and the Haya. This raises a question. Why should a special understanding of ancestral spirits be needed? It is needed because of their close and peculiarly continuous relationship with their descendants living on earth (Idowu 1973:179). Thus, they are to be addressed more closely.

For the Haya, as for other Africans, the title ancestor is a description of their understanding of the state and position of their departed relatives. However, the use of it does not imply that ancestors have ceased to be spirits. They are always approached as spirits but in a special and different way because they have attained power and status from God and a recognition from their descendants, hence they have been "promoted" (Tinkaligayile 2000). This is due to their earthly roles and continuous communication and communion with their descendants. Nyamiti regards such status as acquiring what he calls "a higher state of ancestorship" (1984: 81). The question of the relationship between people living on earth and their departed relatives has important theological ramifications, not least of which is the contribution to traditional religion, assuming that it is impossible to grasp the meaning of the religious foundation of Africa without going "through the area occupied by ancestors" (Parrinder 1954:51-52). It indicates the need of a theology of ancestors, which involves an interpretation of one's later experience of God from a primal perspective. Bediako states:

> The real task of a theology of ancestors is not about the fate of the departed who were not Christians, or who were not sacramentally linked with the church...Rather, a theology of ancestor is about the interpretation of the past in a way which shows the present experience and knowledge of the grace of God in the Gospel of Jesus Christ...as these have been reflected in the lives of African people. (1995:225)

Thus, ancestors will be approached not as an illusion but as a reality. For Triebel, ancestral reality can be described in a single statement: "Living together with the ancestors".This implies a closer relationship between ancestors and living people (Triebel [undated]. a:1).From this perspective, an understanding of the Haya relationship with their ancestors lies in what Shorter describes as "a stream of life" coming from God to ancestors and later to descendants (1979:136). It indicates their originality and relationship with God and their descendants, a basis for Haya past and present experience of God. This implies that the ancestors' experience of God is transmitted to later generations. Such experiences have been regarded as highly valuable instruments for understanding the Haya and Christian experiences of God. As Bediako says, "if the God of African pre-Christian tradition has turned out to be the God of the Christians, then it is to be expected that he has not left himself without testimony in the past" (1995:221). Understanding this experience requires an understanding of the language and terms used to further describe communication with ancestors.

Ancestors as *abazaire abahumwire*

The Haya understanding of ongoing relationships with their departed relatives has gone a step further. From a special understanding of the spirits under the term "ancestors", it has evolved to a double reference term: *abazaire abahumwire* (parents who are resting). It involves an interpretation and description of the relationship with them in a parental role.[3] The central idea behind the usage of this term is that ancestors are approached from both present and past positions. The first word *abazaire* (parents) names and identifies ancestors from an "immediate" perspective (Katainamwaya 1999). It indicates that members of the family are "still alive" as they are remembered by descendants in a filial manner typical to most African societies. Oduyoye describes it as a communion between departed and living relatives (1993:56). The second word, *abahumwire*, describes the state of departed parents from the past perspective (Ndaluhera 1999). While the word *abazaire* mainly stands for the present time, the word *abahumwire* stands for both past and present tense. The word *abahumwire* replaces the word *okufa* (to die or died), which connotates a sharp sense of the past whereby departed relatives are separated from the living people. Thus, like the term: "ancestor", *abazaire abahumwire* only indirectly describes departed relatives. While other theologians apply the term "dead" or dead living to describe the death and state of the departed

3 The term "parents" here is used in a broad Bantu or African sense. Thus, "parent" here can mean also paternal and maternal uncles and aunts and other members of the [Haya-African] extended family" (Rwehumbiza 1983:218).

relatives (Mbiti 1969:25), the Haya term *abahumwire* better describes the same reality from a continuous point of view. Thus, it describes the descendants' communication with departed relatives as a continuous relationship. The root of this belief lies in the Haya understanding of the death of a relative. Most of them they do not say that a person has died; rather that "one has departed," "one has left us," "one is no longer" or "one has passed away" (Bujulu 1998). Accordingly, a Haya departed parent is not identified with the term *Rufa* (the one who has died or the deceased) but the term *omuzaire ahumwire.* Its usage is demonstrated by related terms, *Ish'abato* (the departed father) and *Nyin'abato* the departed mother).

Descendants remember the former status and roles of departed relatives. They regard them as having a role to play with more power (spiritually) than while on earth. In Rwehumbiza's words, departed parents are still "parents or leaders of the family...just as they did while they lived on earth". They still bear titles such as grandfather or grandmother, father, mother, uncle or aunt (1983:204, 218). Trompf used a different term to describe the state of departed relatives. He says, "our ancestors...are not dead. They are asleep literally, we made them asleep" (1987:67). While the Haya used a more active phrase *abazaire abahumwire* (parents who are resting), Trompf uses a less active phrase "ancestors who are sleeping". The difference is clear – "resting while sleeping" and "resting while awakening". Most Haya claim that their departed parents never sleep as they are watching over them all the time (Bugazi 1998). Rwehumbiza has applied the terms "paternal and maternal" to describe the Haya understanding of departed relatives. From the *abazaire abahumwire* perspective, he says:

> I would define ancestors as 'those deceased members of both the paternal and maternal side who ontologically exercised either a vertical or a horizontal vital influence while living on earth and still maintain the same vital influence, though now spiritual, on the living offspring, regardless whether they had children or not'. (1983:205)

Accordingly, the Haya understanding of ancestors from a parental perspective identifies a bond existing between departed relatives and living descendants who, all together, form one community comprising of both invisible and visible members (Rwehumbiza 1983:204). The term *abazaire abahumwire* does not only mean a mere parental resting, but active continuous communion between the departed relatives and their descendants still living on earth (Kyelimpa 1999). It describes the nature of the relationship between the living (descendants) and the departed (ancestors) better than the term "ancestor" as it serves as a logical depiction and justification of ongoing continuous communion. Conceptually, it denotes the Haya paradigm shift away from the general to a special understanding of the departed relatives.

The Haya understanding of ancestors as *abazaire abahumwire* is similar to Temple's phrase, Mulago's phrase (Father of men) (Mulago 1969:137-158), Nyamiti's (the one who has joined the company of the living dead) (1984:26) and Mbiti's (the living dead) (1969:25). All these phrases connotate the idea of parenthood from a past and present point of view. Mbiti defends his view by asserting that the terms ancestor and ancestral spirit "are misleading ...since they imply only one category of spirits, that is, the ancestors." He suggests that these should be replaced by the terms "spirits" or "the living dead" (Mbiti 1969:85). However, the Haya term *abazaire abahumwire* seems to be superior as it not only identifies Mbiti's term "the living dead" but also identifies both ancestor and ancestral spirit (each in its frame of reference) without abandoning them or causing contradiction.

Moreover, *abazaire abahumwire* (parents who are resting) and "the living dead" both describe departed relatives from past and present perspectives. Therefore, ancestors as *abazaire abahumwire* are seen as active and not passive. They can be further involved in the affairs of their descendants' living on earth. Niwagila contends:

> The ancestors are the people who have died...and who are remembered by their families. They belong to the invisible...They expect the family to honour God and obey whatever the ancestors tell them to do to live a good moral life. (1966:81-89)

Another related question to be addressed in this argument is the assertion that the Haya's term *abazaire abahumwire* does not indicate the departed relative's age or years. The term is all-inclusive, even for those who have gone without being adults or parents. It includes children who are accorded the title *abana abahumwire* (children who are resting) (Mutiganzi 1988). Thus, the Haya do not view parenthood or age as a necessary factor for being an ancestor. What matters most for them is the state of the departed relatives while on earth and a continuous communication with them, regardless of age or being known or unknown. According to this view, those who died long ago in childhood or in infancy and even those not known by living descendants are invoked together (Nyinawe 2000), in Idowu's words, "those remembered and unremembered, those known and unknown" (1973:188). Rwehumbiza reports on a similar invocation, which includes all departed relatives. "We cannot remember all of you by name, nevertheless we invoke you all" (1983:204-205). Invocations of this nature include even those who had died in early infancy before being given names. In the Haya language, a child who has died unnamed is called *Kiburaibara* (a person without a name) (Mushoke 1999). The author observed a Haya woman who was invoking most of her departed relatives in an inclusive manner by saying:

Abazaire nywena muboneke enkorogi egi. Tata ,na ba tata enkuru na ba tata enkazi, mawe na ba mawe'nkuru, ba mawe'nto, abazaire boona abahumwire hamo naiwe kibura ibara. Boneka-Muboneke omugaju, etabe, enyama (*emigashe*), hamo no'*mwendo. Kandi boneka-Muboneke omuganuzo gwo' mwaka-ebyakulya(ebikoro) hamo na'malwa* (*amatumairaru/amayange*). (Mushozi 1998)

My father and grandfathers, and ants. My mother and grandmothers, nieces, all parents who are resting and you *Kiburaibara.* We offer to you these tokens: incense, tobacco, meat and the cloth. Also we offer you fresh product of the harvest of year: beer and food.

An invocation to all ancestors, regardless of age, contradicts Mbiti, who insists that only relatives who have died as recently as the fourth and fifth generation are ancestors (1969:102-118).

The Haya term *abazaire abahumwire,* although inclusive in nature, does not include all departed relatives or categorise them under one rank or status. Rather, they are grouped into different ranks, which depend on one's behaviour and role while on earth. People who have lived immoral lives (such as killers, sorcerers or wizards) and those whose death is not related to the welfare of the entire community (such as those killed in war) are not qualified to be either benevolent spirits or ancestors. For the Haya to qualify as *omuzaire ahumwire,* one's morally good life on earth, particularly by playing a role that the community benefited from, is a prerequisite. Moila has observed a similar belief among the Pedi. He writes:

The qualities, ranks and status of ancestors include parenthood, old age, military status and heroism. Those who die of old age and leave behind many descendants are regarded as ancestors of high rank and as such are highly respected and appeased or venerated more often. Those who die at young age are regarded as ancestors of less importance. (2002:69)

All this depends on an evaluation of the credentials of one's descendants. This raises a question about the status of children in this regard. However, by virtue of their state of innocence, they are deemed to be ancestors, at least of less ancestral status. This is supported by the fact that certain tasks are traditionally taboo to be done by a female or male adult. For example, *omukazi okujunga omubwato* (females pressing yellow bananas in a wooden boat, mostly with their feet, for juice production). Females are only allowed to do this during childhood and early youth. Such promotion in terms of status and roles continues even after their death. Children qualify for this category because they are regarded as having displayed latent exemplary moral behaviour.

Finally, a continuous communion with descendants on earth through invocations, tokens, dreams and the routine use of their earthly name are also necessary for each category of benevolent spirit. This communion consists of being recognised and identified by peers by being given the title of *omuzaire /omwana ahumwire* (ancestors who are resting) (Lubatana 1998).

Departed people who lack these qualifications do not qualify for the title *omuzaire ahumwire* and remain either "ordinary" or "bad" spirits. The latter are called *omuzimu gubi* (malevolent spirits). In such situations, the term *rufa,* derived from the verb *okufa* (to die), is applied to identify the departed relative (Kanono 2000). While the prefix "ru" stands for the person who died, the stem "fa" stands for the state of dying. The whole word *rufa* means a departed relative who died and whose death is rarely mentioned. Thus, it indicates a state of complete death in the minds of the descendants. The term *rufa* is the opposite of the term *Rutafa* (immortal), which is only applied to *Ruhanga.* The Lutheran liturgy on Good Friday names and addresses the Christian God as *Rutafa* six times in single statement: *Alikwera Rutafa, batuganyile* (the Holy Immortal have mercy on us) (NW Diocese1992:210-211).

The state and role of *abazaire abahumwire*

The belief in the ongoing relationship between the Haya and their departed relatives raises a question about the latter's actual state in the invisible world after physical life on earth. The question has a basis in Haya belief about their departed relatives who, although they have died physically, still live. They are believed to have lost their physical bodies and acquired spiritual bodies while still preserving their earthly personality. Thus, their lives have been extended into the realm beyond death and they have achieved immortality. In this type of existence, *abazaire abahumwire* , like ordinary spirits, are said to have been endowed with supernatural powers, dynamic authority, knowledge and responsibility from God the Creator (Moila 1989: 69,141). This indicates that Haya-African ancestors occupy "the ontological state between God and men" (Kirwen 1987:218) and are believed to be nearer to God (Nyamiti 1984:26).

For Placide Temple, as quoted by Nsibu, the ancestors' power as a God given reality has roots in earlier powers given to human beings earlier in creation. He reports:

> Above all force is God, Spirit and Creator... it is he who has force, power, in himself. He gives existence, power of survival and of increase to other forces. After him come the first fathers of men, founders of the different clans. These patriarchs were the first to whom God communicated his vital force... They constitute the most important chains binding men to God. (1966:44)

Being in spiritual form, Haya-African ancestors are no longer limited to physical embodiment, place or time and "they could travel to the world and appear to the living through dreams or in visionary ways" (Lutahoire 1974:179), implying that they can visit the living in visible form (Pauw

1975:151). This included "a wider understanding of laws of nature and more enlightened outlook on the course of life" (Moila 2002:70). Hence they are regarded as existing on a higher plane of existence, immune from error (Moila 1989:141). Thus ancestors are believed to have power over life and death, over sickness and health and over poverty and prosperity. Their powers include the capacity to know secrets, cure or cause illness, see the past and anticipate the future. Shorter has observed a similar belief. He writes:

> Ancestors are credited with more human powers of knowledge. They know the secret thoughts of the living. They know the hidden causes of events as well as their future course. They can possess people and reveal such secrets to them and they can send sickness or misfortune, as well as cure them or take them away. (1975:126)

Having been given supernatural powers, Haya-African ancestors are able to engage in the tasks allocated to them without constraint. They receive power from God who commands them to use it for the service of him and for the benefit of the living offspring-descendants (Moila 2002:13, 69), performing various functions for their well-being. Thus, ancestors are "are perceived as telepathic in the lives of humans" (Lutahoire 1974:9), who "uniquely know the problems of life and how to solve them" (Mc Veigh 1974:30). Accordingly, the Haya seek to benefit from ancestral power and knowledge by all possible means. Normally they are invoked for solicitation and advice for the welfare of living relatives. In this atmosphere, like ordinary spirits, the Haya regard ancestors as God's *Ntumwa* (agents or messengers) and therefore his friends. Rwehumbiza writes:

> Ancestors are arch patriarchs of societies and because of having been closer to God,...having received vital force...for the well-being of the living descendants...They are regarded or called "ministers" or "agents" or "delegates" or "Ntumwa", that is "messengers" of God. (1983:285)

Thus, Haya believe that ancestors are God's messengers and are there for God's use. They are concern with and involved in social matters, societal figures and guardians of morality (Magesa 1977:51-52), taking part in the maintenance and control of the universe. Hence, they are still regarded as "founders and leaders of society and heads of Haya families" (Rwehumbiza 1983:293). As such, they are intermediaries between man and God and between man and divinities (Awolalu 1979:71). Because of this position, Haya and other Africans believe that ancestors are in a position to ask things for their descendants because they are nearer to God (Pauw 1975:218). In Twesigye's words:

> ancestral spirits, being concerned for the well-being of their offspring, were instituted as a category in this chain of mediators, as they were capable of understanding human concerns as they had previously lives themselves and were now in direct communication with God, unlike the Abantu, who still need mediation. (1996:206)

The ancestors' role demonstrates their ongoing interest in the day-to-day running of the affairs of the Haya families to which they belonged while still alive. Through such involvement, they are believed to maintain their earthly social personality and role. It involves keeping their families from dangers and sending blessings or misfortunes to express their annoyance and spitefulness about certain behaviour. As Moila quotes Morning: "if they are forgotten or disregarded, they may withdraw their protection and bring ill-heath, drought and disease among the crops and bereave their descendants of their possessions" (2002:70).

Residence of *abazaire abahumwire*

The Haya, as for other Africans, believe that there is a place or "a world of the dead" allocated to ancestors where they go and live permanently. It is believed that in this place they are happy as they are near to God's own presence (Moila 2000:68). In addition, they "have unending reunions with their folk who are waiting for them" (Idowu 1973:188). There are two Haya traditions about this special places for departed people: ordinary and special places. In the former, which is typical African, ancestors are believed to remain closely associated with the earthly residences, particularly where relatives of the family have been buried (Pauw 1975:130). For the latter, there are two versions about their residence. According to one version, a special place of residence has been allocated for all souls or spirits of departed people to have a permanent rest. This place is believed to be located at Bitoma in Rubare (in the area of study) (Lutahoire 1974:84). A similar belief is held by the neighbouring Rwandise, who believe that departed people or spirits are located a special place of permanent residence at the top of the volcanic Mufumbiro Mountain, locally known as *Ibirunga bya ngendo* (peaks of the Ibirunga mountains) (Twesigye 1996:194). According to this belief, most spirits or ancestors residing at their descendants' homesteads in the Great Lakes region or at other homesteads on the continent are required to visit or pay homage to the ancestors' central residence at Mufumbiro Mountain. The homage is done each year between July and September known as *omukyanda* (summer season). The preference for this season lies in the fact that during their earthly life, the summer was a special time for engaging in special activities mainly those related to religious rituals and festivals. In such a manner, they communicate and participate with their living descendants in yearly summer religious activities (Lubatana 1998). During this time, the spirits involved are said to undergo "a period of temporary absence". Therefore, they cannot be communicated with until they get back again (Rwabukwisi 2000). Such absence indicates a certain

limitation of these spiritual beings showing them to be not wholly omniscient and unlimited in their actions. Through a medium, the spirit *Ruboha* spoke shortly after his homage:

> *Mbaile ntumbagire omubirunga by'angendo, mbali abarongo bataraba. Omumahanga goona amakiro nigabi, taliyo milembe! Omuyaga niguhirira, kandi abanyaruguru nibatengeta nokuyumba-yumba. Enshengo n'amashasi bilabaho kandi abantu bengi tibahonoke! Mulamanya, mwelinde amatumairaru. (Ndibuye 1999)*
>
> I was on journey at *Ibirunga bya ngendo*, where twins do not pass. Everywhere in the world the situation is critical! The wind is raging (various catastrophe incidents) and *abanyaruguru* (living people on earth) are shaken by it; difficulties are inevitable and many people will not survive! Be careful with *amatumairaru* (local beer). [4]

According to the spirit definition, the word *amatumairaru* means an element, in this case beer, which causes drunkenness or "madness" (Mutembei 1993:33). Thus, he urged living people to be aware and careful about current and forthcoming incidents and forces, figuratively described as "beer and raging wind".

According to another version reported by Mutembei, ancestors were allocated a permanent place called *omwimara* (a place of completeness) (1993:41). The word, *omwimara* is derived from the verb *mara* (to finish, complete or come to an end). The word, therefore, means a place where everything eventually comes to an end after one's life on earth. It also indicates the state of the ancestors (Lutahoire 1974:72). Being in *omwimara,* the departed relatives are regarded as having completed their life on earth. The Haya's optimism about entering that place is buttressed through the words of an elderly Haya person, speaking in Swahili, shortly before his death. Mutembei reports:

> *Ninaamini nitakaa na baba zangu waliko, kunakoitwa Omwimara. Mara kwa mara huwa namwona baba katika ndoto. Nadhani anaishi. Nimejenga hii nyumba nimwekee pombe, kahawa na tumbaku. Katika nyumba hiyo najitahadhari pawe safi. (1993:41)*
>
> I definitely believe that after earthly life I will stay with my ancestors at the place called *omwimara.* Very often, I used to see my father in a dream. I think he is still alive. I have built a house (a shrine) for him, in which I will give him beer, coffee, tobacco. Strictly, I have to make sure that all the time the house is clean. (My translation)

Communication and veneration of *abazaire abahumwire*

Another important point about the Haya belief in *abazaire abahumwire* is the relationship between the living and the departed. In the previous section, emphasis was placed on general communication with all categories of spirits. This section will focus on special communication

4 Kahakwa, S. 1998. Observation of spirit possession during field work research at Kamushenya, Muleba-Tanzania

within one category of spirits, those termed "ancestors" or holding "ancestral status". The best way to understand the Haya's relationship with their descendants is via "ancestral roles" in continuous communication (Kampuli 1999). This logic, even to other Africans, is the belief that "deep communion established among the members of the family is not broken by death, [rather it is] maintained despite and beyond death" (Jean -Ela 1988:20). This implies a continuity of life after death. Normally, such state is maintained through building shrines, invocations, offerings and libations. The state is also maintained through a name giving culture, whereby the names of their departed relatives, mostly descendants, are given. Thus it cements and maintains harmony with the departed in an unbroken manner (Kempanju 1975:25-27).

Because of their important role, people respect their ancestors and hold them in high esteem. As a result, people are afraid of behaving incorrectly, especially at the ancestor's shrine or grave, as they are convinced that the ancestors are observing and can react angrily against inappropriate behaviour. An ancestor's grave is highly respected; a visit is regarded as meeting the invisible presence of one's ancestor (Kalemera 1999).

The Haya's close and intimate communication and relationships with *abazaire abahumwire* have raised questions. Are they venerated or worshipped? Or, as Oduyoye contends, can we say that ancestors are only intermediaries, called upon to join the living in praying to God who alone is above everything? (1996: 56). If ancestors are not worshipped, then what is their actual role and relationship to God and the Haya?

Some assert that the Haya worship their ancestors. The basis for their claim is the "fear of ancestors". According to this view, invocations and offerings are used to appease the ancestors. Fear, as a factor for worshipping ancestors, has been raised by the anthropologist Herbert Spencer (1885) in his theory of "ancestor worship" [5] (Smith 1928:55). Similar to Herbert, Roscoe has also asserted that the Haya worship their ancestors, but this theory has generally been refuted by Haya and other Africans. Fear as a factor for ancestor worship has faced challenges from most Haya theologians of who base their views on various factors:

The Haya understand worship as a state of adoring and honouring God in a loving and respectful manner and cannot understand where fear alone fits in. For them fear of God is accompanied by love of him. Fear, therefore, is an expression of their loving and respectful attitude to God, and it

5 According to the anthropologist Herbert Spencer (1885), fear is the root cause of what he calls "ancestor worship" (Smith 1928:55).

leads to worshipping him. Fear alone leads to hatred and hypocrisy and not to love and worship. Their hypothesis has roots in this question: How can one communicate in a loving way with someone whom one does not love but only fears? In the light of this, the Haya assert that the ground for continuous communion with departed parents as well as the worship of God is love, remembrance and respect, not fear (Bategereza 2000). It is therefore surprising to note the view that the force of the Haya religion is "fear in all its forms, especially fear to lose life" (Rwehumbiza 1983:177). At the continental level, the theory of ancestor worship has also been strongly refuted by some theologians. Mbiti writes:

> It cannot be denied that the departed occupy an important place in African religiosity, but it is wrong to interpret traditional religions simply in terms of worshipping ancestors. Worship is the wrong word to apply to this practice, and Africans themselves know very well that they are not worshipping the departed members of the family. (1969:8-9)

The claim of "Haya ancestral worship" is due to the misunderstanding of the relationship between the Haya and their departed relatives. A solution to this problem lies in the formulation of the language and terms conducive to depict the actual relationship between the living and the departed relatives. Among them are: Driberg's, Shorter's, Smith's and Kenyatta's terms "pietas" and "reverence" (Smith 1929:63-64) and "communion" (Driberg 1936:1). While Driberg and Shorter describe the ritual given to ancestors as "pietas", Smith calls it "reverence". Similarly, Kenyatta defines the relation with ancestors as a "communion" (1953:35-36). Rwehumbiza extends and applies Kenyatta's term, "communion" in a continuity perspective, hence a "continuous communion". His term has been recommended as the most suitable for describing the nature of the relationship with ancestors (Rwehumbiza 1983:211) on the grounds that it describes the real state of the relationship between the Haya and their ancestors better than the terms "pietas", "reverence" or "veneration", which depict only one aspect of this relationship. Rwehumbiza has observes:

> Communion' here means mutual participation or intimate fellowship in which both the ancestral "parental" presence invisibly fulfils its role and the descendants express their filial relationship through external acts of offering and requests which show respect, love, trust, obedience and dependence...I would suggest that it be called "continuous communion"... an intimate fellowship which exists from day to day just as a child remains united to his living parents. (1983:213)

The term "ancestral veneration" as the main factor for the refutation of ancestral worship has been approved by most Haya-African theologians as the best term. For them, communication and communion with ancestors is only a social practice, aimed at showing respect to departed relatives (Katabaro 2000). As Pauw observes among Xhosa-speaking people, this has a biblical ground whereby the teaching of "honour your father and mother... means that even [when they have died] should be honoured and remembered" (1975:211; Ex.20:12).

For the Haya, as for other Africans, "ancestor veneration is not a religious act but just an expression of social behaviour [and] respect shown to the parents and grandparents during their lifetimes [that has been] extended beyond death" (Triebel. [undated]. a:6).

Thus, the Haya do not regard their ancestors as divinities or gods, but only as human beings in a continuous parental relationship (Lutahoire 1974:10). Although ancestors are believed to have been endowed with power and knowledge by God and are regarded as superior beings in the social order and live in an invisible world, they still remain at a parental level and not beyond (Moila 2002:70). Accordingly, the Haya continue to respect them as human beings and not as divinities. In Idowu's words, "Africans do not put their ancestors on the same footing as deities or divinities" (1973:186). Similarly, Rwehumbiza says:

> I should strongly state that neither the Banyoro nor the Bahaya regard the Bachwezi [ancestral spirits] as divine...They are regarded or called "ministers"...or delegates of God but they are neither conceived as deities...nor is worship rendered to them. (1983:285)

The difference between the worship of God and communion with ancestors is another factor in the refutation of ancestral worship. For the Haya, relations to and communication with ancestors is an unavoidable reality and part of their perception of God. "Apart from this reality, they would no longer be Africans" (Triebel [undated]. a:8). An understanding of the communion with ancestors demands "cultural understanding and correct interpretation" (Rwehumbiza 1983:209). It also demands an understanding of the difference between communion and worship.

The Haya are perfectly aware of this difference. Accordingly, they strongly assert that they know the limits in communicating with the ancestors and God. While the former remains at the level of respect, the latter goes up to the level of worship (Niwagila 1988:46). Therefore, in their view, communication with the ancestors does not replace the worship of God. Because this factor was not taken into account, it led to the claims that the Haya worship their ancestors, or both God and ancestors. Even the Bible, in which ancestors' state in the invisible world is described (Matthew 24:31), was not consulted.

In Bishop Sundkler's words, "missionaries did not encourage the belief or tell them that the Bible itself says that the deceased are not dead but are living or resting" (1962:11). A misunderstanding on the nature of the relationship with ancestors even at a continent level has led to a misunderstanding of their position and role. Ela Jean observes:

> Ancestors have not yet found a secure place within the life of African Christians because missionaries have tended to confuse the ancestors with 'spirits'...As a result, the 'cult of the ancestors' has been seen as a variation of the 'cult of the spirits', a general phrase that includes different forms of animism. (1988:18)

Invocations and tokens offered to the departed relatives are another key factor related to the claim that the Haya worship their ancestors. This raises the question: Do the Haya worship ancestors by offering them tokens and other materials? This question can be answered in the light of the Haya understanding of family law and order. These are the foundations for any ritual activity carried out by living descendants. Thus, invocations and tokens are the means of symbolising and expressing their reverence and love for the departed relatives. It involves maintaining the order within the living and the departed. In other words, tokens remain a symbol of fellowship and a recognition that the departed are still members of their human families (Ela-Jean 1988:29). As Moila puts it, "libation and sacrifices are done in order to keep them in their place" (2002:70). Therefore, these are not signs of ancestor worship. Rather, they are the means of maintaining a continuing communion between descendants and ancestors. In Mahilane's words, "the family rites of libation and food offerings to the departed are tokens of fellowship, hospitality and respect to the departed members of the family.[They are] symbols of family continuity in fellowship" (1980:14). They remain only the means for worshipping God and revering ancestors. Therefore, the use of these rites does not constitute ancestor worship for Haya or other Africans, "even if these acts may seem [different] to the outsiders who do not understand the situation" (Kirwen 1987:218). Mbiti observes the same thing. He writes:

> ... the act of pouring out libation (of beer, milk or water), or giving portions of food to the living dead, does not imply an ancestral cult or worship...These tokens are only symbols of communion, fellowship and remembrance. These are only symbolical ties between the living and the departed. (1969: 26)

Without cultural understanding and the correct interpretation of Haya-African on-going communication and communion between the living and the departed relatives, one could easily misunderstood ritual formula accompanied by a libation (Wilson 1959:32). This indicates a need to understand the language used, which is another factor behind the theory of ancestor worship.

The language used in prayers, invocations and offerings supports the fact that ancestors are not worshipped. The common word used in invocations to ancestors is *okwetongeza* (self-expression) and not the terms *okuhabukya* or *Okulamya* (to glorify). As Mahilane argues, "the performance of the family rites of libation and food offered is simply called *okwetongeza* (verbal utterance or

expression) not *okuraguza* or *okuhabukya* (to praise or adore), the terms used for worshipping God" (1980:14).

This demonstrates that the invocations and objects offered to ancestors are only given to *Ruhanga* (God) through the ancestors. This can be seen in a Haya's invocation, in prayer form, to ancestors in whom *Ruhanga* and his aspects are also mentioned:

> *Abazaire boona abakuru nabato, tata na batatenkuru kandi abakuru b'eka. Abazaire boona abahumwire. Habuka muhulire omwetongezo gwange. Gubagobege kandi gugobe Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga. Abana nabakuru chwena tugume, emilembe eteke omumalembo ganyu. Boneka omuganuzo gwomwaka. Mushube mugabe ebishagileho. Tubahangire amaisho okwo nainywe mugahangire Ruhanga olwahangire ensi n'eiguuru hamo nebilimu byona, abazaire bona, abalikulora nabahumwire. Waitu bahulire Omwiru wawe* (Bitaro 1999)
>
> All *abazaire* (ancestors), adults and children, my father and my grandfathers who are the leaders of this homestead, all those who are resting. Intervene and hear my invocation. Let it reach you and *Kazoba,* Son of *Ruhanga* . Children and adults, all of us have good healthy and peace in your homestead. Receive the first food and drink of the harvest of this year. Let us have more than these. Our eyes are on you as yours are on *Ruhanga* who created the earth, sky and all therein, parents, on earth and those who are resting. Oh hear your servant. (My translation)

The central theme of this prayer is *Ruhanga,* who is approached and addressed through the *abazaire abahumwire,* who are asked to join the living in prayer. It starts with an invocation to them later to *Ruhanga* through *Kazoba* (his Son) on the assumption that if God heard their prayer he would also hear the prayer of their descendants. Haya know that "it is ultimately *Ruhanga* who receives the prayers presented through the *abazaire abahumwire"* (Rwehumbiza 1983:218-219). Thus they are only participants in the worship of God and not the objects of worship. The prayer ends by praising and invoking *Ruhanga* and his Son. Niwagila contends:

> People ...reject the notion that the ancestors are worshipped. They are honoured but not worshipped. The ancestors and the living families both join to pray to or worship God because the ancestors are regarded as part of the living families. A foreigner listening to the prayers...will always get confused, because the prayers are addressed to God, but with a mention of several ancestors' names...God is always mentioned at the end. (1988:46)

WORSHIP OF THE DEITY

An understanding of the nature and manner of worshipping the Deity is a way of understanding him. Technically, to worship means "to pay reverence to God or to adore [him] as divine" (Trompf 1987:120). It assumes his superior status. Hence, it is the submission of oneself to a divine power (Ward 1974:25). For the Haya, the worship of God is unquestionable, as it is at the centre of their life. Therefore, the question is not about whether

or not they worship God, but rather why they do and how do they worship him. This view contradicts Roscoe's theory of the *deus otiosus* , which claims that although the Haya, Nyoro, Nyankore and Bakiga (the latter three are neighbouring tribes in Uganda) perceived the Deity (whom they identify as *Ruhanga*), they worship him rarely on the assumption that he is too transcendent, too remote, too majestic, too unconcerned and too far away to be reached by human beings. Roscoe writes:

> The god *Ruhanga* was said to be the creator of all things. All people held him in esteem, but he had neither temple nor priest. The people did not call upon him for assistance, because he had done his work and there was no need to ask further favours of him. Other gods could assist in multiplying men, cattle, and crops; they could also heal sickness and stay plagues. Hence the Creator was not troubled about these matters, nor indeed was he thought of except when they desired to give him the honour that was due to him as the Maker of all things. (1915:91; Rwehumbiza 1983:201-202)

Roscoe and other theologians had taken the absence of huge temples as evidence of an absence of worship of God among the Haya (Rwehumbiza 1983:114-115). However, Bishop Kibira strongly asserts that "rooted in the indigenous life, people can never understand anything that may tend to neglect the worship of the One God, the Giver of life and all good things. Worship is natural for the Bahaya" (1974:104). An ancient Haya saying goes, *Mbali Ruhanga ali tabaho kabi* (where God is, there is no danger) (Rwehumbiza 1983:202). Such beliefs led people to name their children according to their desire to worship God. When asked why he was given a God-bearing name of *Mwehonge* (let us submit ourselves to God), a person thus named replied, "It is because my forefathers believed in *Ruhanga* and worshipped him" (Mwehonge 1999).

The Haya worship of the Deity involves prayers, since they are essential aspects of worship.

Types of prayers

Prayers form an integral part of any viable religious system. For the Haya, as well as for other Africans, prayer has always been at the core of their worship (Mbiti 1975:1-2). Prayer, therefore, is very important for understanding their worship. The Haya pray to what they see as a personal Creator, one who controls all the forces of nature. Thus, they pray and worship him not only as a powerful God but also because he loves them and cares for their daily needs.

Haya have three types of prayer - individual prayer, communal or family prayer and clan or community prayer. While the former two are essentially small-scale prayers, the latter is a large-scale prayer in service form. Individual and family prayers or worship are conducted at a house

level. Almost every Haya household is a "house-shrine" or "temple" for prayers and worship on a daily basis (Mpolera 1999). Within the house there is *olwikaro* or *ekikaro* or *orubaya* (the former two mean the sitting place and the latter the inside shrine altar) located in the inner recesses on the right side of the residence house. At this place, an individual member of the family - the father or mother normally - performs his or her daily prayers. In a crisis, illness or death, one goes to the *ekikaro* where he or she approaches *Ruhanga,* which involves kneeling in front of the *ekikaro* (Mwombeki 1997:53). The supplicant expresses his or her needs or the needs of the family by uttering a long prayer to God. Prayers differ according to the occasion, such as a child's birth in the home, a home-coming from a journey or a marriage. All are performed in an atmosphere of a dialogue with God or expressing their thanks. For an individual short prayer in an invocation form, one usually says, *Ruhanga wange ngile nta? Waitu banjune* (Oh, *Ruhanga* my God and Creator, what should I do? Oh help me.) (Mpolera 1999).

Similar to prayer on an individual basis, communal prayers are also conducted on a daily or weekly worship basis, led by the father. Initially, "...the head of the household invites and gathers his people and even neighbours for the prayers at the...*olwikaro'* [the shrine altar] (Sundkler 1980:52). Mutembei, an adherent, explains the manner of daily prayers and regular services in those days:

> I remember when I was a young boy, my father used to pray and give offerings before the house-shrine altar. All house members joined him in prayer, by standing behind him kneeling down accordingly and thus responding to the leader by mentioning *Ramankya,* which means long life. (1993:27) (My translation.)

Communal prayers are focused on praising God for creation and expressing domestic needs. The central themes are mainly the welfare of the homestead, health, wealth, cattle, protection from illness and human or animal dangers. Most of the prayers are directed to *Ruhanga* through his Son *Kazoba* and the ancestors (Mahilane 1980:15). Mutembei reports on a typical liturgy in the Haya tradition by referring to Pastor Lutashobya, who was born and lived in a priesthood family:

> (Priest) Creator who created earth and heaven and our parents and our grand parent's parents.
> (Response) *Ramankya*
> Give us a place for worshipping you.
> *Ramankya*
> Bless my house among other men's houses
> *Ramankya*
> Be our shield; prevent enemies and deadly diseases.
> *Ramankya.* (1993:27-28) (My translation)

The word *Ramankya* is a combination of two words. While the prefix/stem word *Rama* means "long life" the suffix *nkya* means "new day" or "new dawn". The whole word *Ramankya* means

"long life everyday" (Mutembei 1993:27). A response of this kind highlights their understanding of God and their worship of him.

All types of communication with God, such as individual prayers, communal prayers and services - especially those done on a daily basis - are usually performed in the early morning before sunrise or in the evening at sunset. At the end of the morning prayer, the leader of the service normally goes outside holding a traditional bowl containing dry roasted coffee nuts.[6] While standing in front of the house, gazing at the surroundings in the four cardinal directions (east, west, south and north), he throws or scatters coffee beans in all of the directions (Sundkler 1980:55): first to the eastern horizon and then to the western, southern and northern horizons. Simultaneously, he utters an invocation verbally or quietly by gestures of his hand. Finally, he gazes to the east and says:

> *Ruhanga Omuhangi wa byona, Ishe abantu boona; ntukwegashaniza.Boneka enkorogo-akamwani Nyashaija, kwema Oburuga izoba nobugwa izoba; obulyo nobumosho, ahansi neiguru.* (Lubatana 1998)
>
> *Ruhanga* the Creator of all, Father of men; we adore you. We offer this to you: here is coffee, get them from east, to west, from the right hand to the left hand, down on earth and above in heaven.

When asked why the four directions of the earth are faced and addressed in this ritual-prayer, the leader of the prayer replied, "It is because *Ruhanga* is the Creator of the entire earth and all therein. He is everywhere in the universe" (Manunga 1998).

Special worship

Similar to individual and communal prayer at the house shrine, the Haya have other categories of worship and prayer conducted in other places. There are prayers and worship on a large scale, mostly for thanksgiving, celebration, consecration and dedication. Most of them are performed at the King's home or *Nyaruju* (palace), which also is a place for his burial. There are large-scale services performed at open air or natural sites, such as under a large bush or tree, in a cave or beside a river or lake. These are for specific purpose relating to the entire society (ordinations, consecrations, retreats and special devotions) together with problems such as human, animal or crop disease, famine, war and drought.

One of the special worships performed at an open-air site is commonly known as *Kagondo* (dedicated or privacy place), which is normally used for religious instruction and private retreat. Often it is a place at the very top of the hill or mountain, usually with some bushes or shrubs around

6 Dry roasted coffee berries are a Haya highly respected favourite substance, mainly used for chewing, entertaining guests and for religious purposes (Katainamwaya 1999).

it. In the course of this research, one such place was visited. It is called *Kyakachoko* (the steep peak of the hill or mountain) (Rwabukwisi 1998). Most services at this place are performed in two phases: firstly, there is *Kagondo ento* (minor Kagondo), which is mainly used for the general instruction for ordinants of priesthood office; secondly, *Kagondo enkuru* (major Kagondo) for major services such as instruction, retreat and preparations for ordinants of priestly office as well as for the consecration of high priesthood office.

In order to attain full priesthood, one had to undergo both minor and major phases. The major phase is accompanied by the possession of the spirit of divination as its climax. This is a confirmation of the office-seeking priest's dedication and a recognition of his suitability and acceptability for priestly office. At this stage, an ordinary is a full priest (Lubatana 1998). While an ordinary priest is comparable to pastoral office, a high priest is comparable to the bishopric office (Mutembei 1993:142).

The reasons for having worship and prayers at natural sites include the more pragmatic needs for shade, privacy for meditation and an opportunity to observe the natural beauty of creation. In no way are these sites or objects worshipped but are rather the means for creating an atmosphere conducive for worshipping God. They also demonstrate Haya-African understanding of cosmology, God and worship. This understanding has roots in the belief that God's presence is everywhere, therefore he can be worshipped anywhere (Lubatana 1998). Thus, the absence of temples and priests do not imply the absence of regular worship of God, but rather illustrate the capability of communicating with him in different ways and in different places. Nyirongo, quoting Gumede, maintains:

> The Africans have always been a highly religious people...they never worshipped man-made objects such as stones, trees, forests or the sun as objects of their beliefs. Their religion was for everyday living. They believed in someone, a supreme being, they worshipped without seeing. (1997:38-39)

STRUCTURE AND POSITION OF THE HOUSE SHRINE

The structure and role of the house shrine plays an essential part in understanding the nature and manner of the Haya worship of God. Since it is inside, an understanding of it depends on the structure of the residence in which it is located. A traditional circle house known as a *msonge* is constructed in a special manner that makes it possible for a shrine altar to be erected within it. A ritual of dedicating the site (conducted by a priest) on which the msonge it is to be built is carried

out. When the *msonge* construction is completed, the construction of an *olwikaro* (an inside shrine altar) begins immediately (Rwehumbiza 1983:199). Nsibu reports on the nature of its construction:

> The shrine (*olubaya*) is constructed in the inner part of the msonge. It is constructed in such a way that it becomes a small house within the big house. Its sides, which are longest, are made of poles, which are set close to one another. The back part is part of the big house and its front part is the entrance. When it is ready the *ebibaya* (papyri stalks) are added on the outer side of the poles. Other stalks are made into a door, which is part of the entrance. In addition, a bark cloth is attached to the door [an indication of privacy and respect). (1966:39)

When the construction of an inside shrine altar is fully completed, a priest must again be consulted to perform an inaugural service. The *msonge* and its inside shrine are dedicated for a dual purpose – serving as a residence and a shrine for prayer and worship. This demonstrates how a Haya house plays a double role and supports the contention that the practice of religion is inseparable from one's normal life (Kyanda 1999). Applying this experience in the light of biblical witness, some Haya pastors have developed the idea of "house-churches" as a means for indigenising Christianity and its ways of worship (Kahakwa 1983:1-20). Fr Mutalemwa, a Roman Catholic priest, reports on an inaugural prayer of a traditional Haya-House-shrine:

> *Waitu Rugaba Nyamuhanga, Ikingura Malembo, Nyakubaho, Singa bakingure eka egi nabalimu, eihanga nabali omuihanga eli. (1978:2)*
>
> Lord giver (*Rugaba*), God Creator, who established and blesses homes. O the everlasting one, establish and bless this home and those who will inhabit it.

Inside the *orwikaro* (shrine-altar) are special insignia or instruments for worship purposes (depending on the religious status of a given family) such as *empuli* or *emihambo.* An *empuli* is a bar of at least six to eight inches in length and three to four inches in width and made of various traditional medicines for removing spells and curing diseases. It is claimed to function as a preventative tool similar a medical vaccination, hence the saying, *empuli nesilika endwara* (*empuli* gives one's immunity and thus resists diseases). Other instruments in the house-altar shrine are: *engabo* (a shield), the *nyamilongo* (with spells and medicine inside), *enfurebe* (a traditional bag made of animal skin for keeping some of the insignia), *entebe* (a traditional chair for the spirit), *obuta n'myambi* (a bow and arrow), *enyege* or *enyimba* (shaking gourds), *amalango* (whistles or pipes), *ensimbi* and other small nuts (cowries-local money), *eichumu* (a spear), *ekisingo* (a crown), *ebebo y'oluhu lw'engo* (the mantle of a leopard skin), *embugo* (bark cloths) and the beer or meat offered on some occasions (Ndibuye 1999). These instruments are only for worship use and are not worshipped themselves.

THE TRADITIONAL PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE DEITY

"One of the most important paradigm shifts in recent theology has been the move away from understanding theological statements as normative or dogmatic propositions" (Burden 1990:191-192). This view has led theologians like Mc Fague and Van Huyssteen to engage seriously in examining "how religious language expressed in images and metaphors becomes theological language" (Huyssteen 1989:158-168). This is an important source for uncovering African categories of thought about man, society and God (Shorter 1973:83). Therefore, instead of ignoring them, they should be searched and applied for interpreting and understanding the traditional and Christian beliefs. Hillman and Olupona, commenting on Cardinal Otunga's report, said:

> Cardinal Maurice Otunga...firmly rejected the older missionary approaches, in which the African religious and cultural heritage, when not completely ignored, was seen only as a "*preparatio evangelii*" that could be set aside once the work of evangelisation had begun. He argued instead [that we must seek] for... the "new and dynamic image" of "the seeds of the Word" already present in traditional ways...[These] possess seeds that can produce flowers which have never been seen before. (1993:150; Olupona 1991:22-23)

These flowers can be attained through an interpretation of the Haya traditional concept of God, which could be used to gain access to Christian flowers as well. It points to the need for research on the nature and manner of how the notion of the Deity is experienced. An analysis of it would start from an understanding of the historical background and the development of the Haya's earlier perception of God. This could be traced from creedal sayings and proverbs about the Deity (Rwehumbiza 1983:166).

SOURCES OF THE HAYA'S PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE DEITY

No one knows the historical beginning of the Haya perception of the Deity. The only sources available are the anthropological values, particularly those portrayed and existing in a mythical narrative form. They are believed to "make up human culture which give glimpse to the perception of the Deity" (Bevans 2003:55). This study also demands a definitive understanding of myth.

Mythical portrayal

The mythical approach is needed because it "provides Africans with the best context in which to live out their theology" (Muzorewa 1985:81). Myths are therefore regarded as a basic method of presenting the divine. Thus they are regarded as the "only adequate way of speaking about God" (Shorter 1973:92-93). Bishop Sundkler maintains:

The Haya's great respect for religion extends to all places of worship with an emphasis on *orwikaro* (an inside shrine altar). There are regulations and taboos about keeping them holy and it is strictly forbidden to be involved in any type of defilement of these places. The leader of the household is responsible for keeping them, particularly the shrine altar, in good order. No fish is allowed to be cooked or eaten in the house shrine because of its stench (Lugakingira 2001). Women during their monthly menstruation and children are not allowed to enter the house-shrine altar area.

LATER ARRIVALS

Many years after the Hinda-Hima immigration to the north-west, another influx of foreigners occurred. While the earlier influxes of immigrants were of African origin, the later immigrants were from Asia and Europe, with some from East Africa. These were African and Arab traders, European travellers, missionaries and administrators.

AFRICAN AND ARAB TRADERS

The two main factors behind the influx of foreign traders into north-western Tanganyika were that the region was in a good position materially to fulfil commercial needs and the region was peaceful and stable. Prior to the foreign influx, some societies in the East African interior had developed political organisations that made it possible for foreign traders to travel inland (Ogot 1974:210). The first influx of traders were African and later Arabs.

Between the first and the last quarter of the eighteenth century, African traders (mainly from coastal and mainland regions of Tanganyika - places like Tabora and Buha etc), Kenya and the island of Zanzibar had expanded their trading business up to north-western Tanganyika. The leading traders were the Nyamwezi, Sumbwa, Yao and Kamba, commonly known as *Abarungwana* (a name influenced by Arabic and Islam). Some of them were already adherents of Islam. Their arrival was an important step for the economic development of the area. From that time on, the region was linked to the main trading areas in and outside the country, notably to the east coast. African traders mainly exchanged beads, chinaware and iron coils for local commodities such as ivory and iron products (Ogot 1974:180-81). Their business was a stimulus for the large-scale influx of Arab traders. Thus, they essentially launched the area through which Arab traders came to know about the wealth in the Great Lake region (Katoke 1975:71).

According to most historians, the Arab traders arrived in the region either in the late 1830s or early 1840s. A small number of Arabs were settled in Karagwe (west in the region) at the time of Speke's and Grant's visit in 1861-2 (Taylor 1969:133). The main interest of the Arab traders was

in ivory and slaves in exchange for commodities like guns, salt, cloths, beads, etc. Their activities, like that of African traders, affected the economic and social life of the people. This occurred mainly through the introduction of the alien concept of money in the form of shells, which were used as coins for the exchange of goods with the local people. Consequently, it caused many people to value money and material commodities more highly (Bishoota 1998). The interaction between Arab traders and Africans in the region gave rise to the intermingling of languages, particularly Arabic. Other foreign words introduced later followed interactions with German, English, Indian and Portuguese people. Arabic words played a major role. As a result, Swahili developed in both Tanganyika and Kenya as a lingua franca, first in the coastal region along the Indian Ocean mainly between the cities of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam and later in other neighbouring countries. In Tanzania and Kenya, Swahili had become the national language. It is also spoken by many people in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo (DRC), Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Somalia, Madagascar and Comoro and by some people in southern African countries. Socially, the interaction between some of the Arabic speaking Swahili traders and local people resulted in inter-marriages, which, although rare, produced the present small element of the so-called "half-castes".

On the religious side, there was relatively little influence on the life of the Haya because, in those times, propagating Islam was not a major issue for most traders. The Arabs and their agents did not therefore win many converts (Katoke 1975:78-80). Thus the Islamic faith never gained much of a stronghold in the area. There are a number of factors behind the Haya's slow response to Islam.

The Arabs, Swahili traders and their agents were more interested in commerce than in converting people to the Islamic faith. Their view was that they were traders, not missionaries (Katoke 1970:26). Even for those converts to Islam, earthly gains held a higher priority than propagating their faith (Lwakalasha 1999). The Haya and their rulers, due to their strong belief and pride in their traditional religion, were not interested in becoming Muslims or converts to other religions.

The dual role played by the King as a political and religious ruler made his subjects think that there was no need for a foreign religion that would not fit their cultural and political framework. The involvement of Muslim traders in the slave trade discouraged potential converts. They could not see the justification for this "evil trade" when Islam preached the equality and the freedom of human beings.

Finally, according to the Islamic faith, every male convert was required to undergo circumcision. However for the Haya, circumcision was regarded as a totally alien practice related to witchcraft (Kanyaburago 1998). King Ruhinda IV declared its practice against Haya indigenous customs. For them, as well as for other societies in the Great Lake region, no type of circumcision for either males or females was practised. Katoke, quoting Bishop Kibira writes:

> The Bahaya, like most intercustrine [Great Lake region's] Bantu traditionally knew no circumcision of any kind. To them the act of cutting or separating a part from a living thing, particularly that of a human being, dead or alive, was considered witchcraft. (1975:79-80)

EUROPEANS

Europeans were the latest foreign arrivals to come to the area. They are classified into three major groups - travellers, missionaries and colonial administrators.

TRAVELLERS

Travellers are said to have paved the way for the missionaries and colonial administrators as they opened up the country to western civilisation, accompanied by new systems of government, law and new religions (Olupona 1991:112). The first Europeans arriving in east Africa mostly came on adventurous expeditions and for exploration purposes. Previously identified as explorers, African historians prefer to identify them as travellers. From a historical point of view, the arrival of the first Europeans among the Haya took place about 400 years ago, after the arrival of the Hinda/Hima in the area. "The most famous [travellers] of East Africa passed through north-western Tanganyika on their journeys to other areas" (Cory [undated]. :105).

The first Europeans who arrived in the area were T.H. Speke and his friend Captain Grant on their quest for the source of the river Nile. "On the 30th July 1858, Speke reached the Southern shore of [the] lake" (Cory [undated] :105; Speke 1863). Upon arriving in the area, they met King Rumanyika of Karagwe whom they reported to be a clever king (Thomas 1939:28). Another traveller, Henry Morton Stanley, arrived in the area in 1876 at the place known as Makongo and Musira Island, both near Bukoba (today's regional headquarter) on the shores of Lake Victoria. Upon his arrival, he stayed on Musira Island for eight weeks after which time he was ordered by the indigenous people to leave the country for political and security reasons (Katoke 1970:27). During his short stay, Stanley wrote his famous letter (printed in the *Daily Telegraph* in England in 1876) exploring the possibility of starting a Christian mission in the region and in Africa as a whole and called for a mission initiative to be implemented as soon as possible (Katoke 1975:95). Thus he paved the way for Christianity. Being interested in the people of the area, Stanley visited Karagwe

a second time in July 1889. One of his goals was to bring back Emin Pasha, the governor and strategic initiator and organiser of Equatorial Africa colonialism (Cory [undated].:115).

The early travellers seem to have had little impact on the people of north-western Tanganyika and on Africa at large, as the indigenous people did not understand the nature of their journeys since they were only partially exposed to them, if at all. In addition, the travellers faced many problems such as illness, poor communication and opposition from the local people, a situation that limited interaction and shortened their stay. A short stay did not allow travellers to learn and adapt to new situations or to establish a stable relationship with their hosts or people they met on their way (Taylor 1969:97). Some of them strategically entered into traditional bonds, aimed at establishing blood-brother relationships, but left before the bond reached its mature stages. It has been asserted that the Arab traders benefited more from the arrival of European travellers than the Africans. They functioned as middle-men between the travellers and the local Africans, welcoming and selling the travellers goods as desired. In most cases, this was a condition for allowing them to proceed with their journey (Ogot 1974: 223).

MISSIONARIES

Missionaries were among the early Europeans who came to the Haya. The Christian Evangelical crusade to the Haya originally started in the neighbouring country of Uganda during the last quarter of the 18th century. Uganda, at that time, served as a channel for introducing Christianity to north-western Tanzania. The Roman Catholics arrived first and were later followed by the Protestants.

Catholic missionaries

The first Roman Catholic missionary in the area was Padre Girault, who arrived at Mubembe in July 1880 via Bukumbi-Mwanza with a caravan of people (Kilaini 1992: 24). At the palace of King Kaitaba of Kyamutwara Kingdom, the caravan met two Arabs (one of whom was known as Kimburu). These had attempted to block the spreading of Christianity by persuading King Kaitaba to not admit Europeans and their religion (Luhasha 1999). (The same strategy was first practised in Uganda). Despite this opposition, a Roman Catholic Mission started in the area.

The second, more successful, phase of Catholic missionary work in the area occurred through the initiative of Bishop Hirth under the leadership of Cardinal Lavigerie (missionaries popularly known as "the White Fathers"). Having started mission work in Uganda, Bishop Hirth looked into the possibility of starting a Roman Catholic Mission in north-western Tanzania (Cory [undated].:

165-167). The political and military instability in Uganda hastened his vision of a mission outside Uganda. In the year of 1892, when the situation was tense, he left Uganda with 10 missionaries and more than 100 converts to seek refuge in north-western Tanganyika. They first settled at Kyabasimba in Kashozi-Bugabo near Bukoba (Kilaini 1992:29), where they experienced fierce and bitter opposition from the indigenous King Kaitaba of Kyamutwara. With the support of the German administration, Bishop Hirth was encouraged to stay and provisionally start a Roman Catholic Mission in the area. Later in the same year, the Roman Catholic mission became official. The first church building at Kashozi was completed in 1904. Thereafter, Bishop Hirth started mission centres in other places in the area, especially at Rubya, in the south of the region. This became his official centre and residence until 1911. Later, he left the area to start another mission in Rwanda at Kabyai (Sundkler 1980:24).

Protestant missionaries

A few years after the arrival of Roman Catholic missionaries, Protestant missionaries arrived in the area. Dr Johanssen was the first Protestant missionary to arrive in the area at Bukoba in 1907. The German colonial administration did not allow him to start a Protestant mission in the area as the Roman Catholics had already started a mission there. However, in a real sense, the refusal was related to political reasons as the German administration favoured the Roman Catholic Mission, hence the statement that "to be a true friend of the Germans you have to be a Catholic" (Bergen 1981:201). Cory writes:

> It has been suggested that the Germans were against the establishment of a CMS Mission in Buhaya because they feared that this mission would try to contact the CMS in Buganda and through this contact promote British influence in the district. (1930:171)

Johanssen stayed and worked unofficially until 20 June 1910 when he was officially allowed by the German administration to start mission work at Kashura Hill (Cory [undated]: 171-173). Earlier, upon his arrival, Johanssen made contact with some small groups of Christian converts who had already been baptised and confirmed in Buganda (Uganda) by the Church Missionary Society (CMS). He found that these converts had already started to organise themselves into a body of a believing community (Mutembei 1943:77). They provided a wonderful and unusual start for Dr Johanssen and later missionaries. With them he was more easily able to start his potential mission. Bishop Sundkler, as quoted by Niwagila, describes these converts as not only being the actual beginning of the church but also a full church in the real sense. He writes:

> In the beginning, there was a congregation. This mission theory speaks more truth of the Evangelical Haya Church, than the majority of African Churches...In the beginning, there was

> no mission station as it was in many of the Protestant missions fields. In the beginning was the congregation. This beginning influenced and coloured the entire work. (1988:82)

From the view point of Sundkler's theory, religious activities undertaken by early Haya converts, which took place 14 to 20 years before the arrival of Dr Johanssen, are regarded as the actual start of the Protestant Church in the area (Spear & Kimambo 1999:17). Accordingly, the year 1896, when the Haya converts arrived from Uganda and started to propagate the Christian faith, is regarded by church historians as the early beginning of the history of the Protestant church in the area. The year 1910, when Protestant European missionaries officially started work in the area (which has been taken as the actual start of the Lutheran church in the area) would only be the official re-inauguration of what already existed (Mutembei 1993:72-77).

ADMINISTRATORS

At the time of the arrival of the colonial administrators in north-western Tanganyika, the inhabitants were under the rule of Hinda/Hima Kings. Their arrival was followed by the establishment of foreign administrations, first by the Germans in 1891 and later by the British in 1916. This caused a gradual and, later, a complete change to the Hima/Hinda Empire. Both the Germans and the British claimed that they ruled the people through the Haya Kings, in what has been described as a policy of "indirect rule" (Sundkler 1980:12).

German colonial administration

Through contact and strategic influence (either persuading or pressuring them) on local Kings, German administration was introduced into Tanganyika. Carl Peters, the German colonial strategic initiator and administrator, played a leading role. Upon his arrival in the area in November 1889, he pressured King Mutatembwa of Kiziba to sign an agreement accepting German rule at regional level (north-western Tanganyika), which officially started on 1st July 1890 (Kilaini 1992:28). Under the influence of Emin Pasha, other German officers arrived at Bukoba at the beginning of the same year for the inauguration of the newly-established government (Cory [undated].: 121). Tanganyika thus became part of the German colony of East Africa (Katoke 1975:111). German administration introduced a system of indirect rule, on the assumption that it would accommodate the traditional system (Taylor 1969:134). But it changed the existing traditional political structure, resulting in diminished power and authority of the King (Morris 1969:23), who, as a result, became answerable to the colonial administrators rather than to his own subjects. This situation led to more weakness and a decline of Hima/Hinda Empire in subsequent years. At the beginning of 1905, coffee was introduced through persuading and encouraging the Haya to plant coffee trees. The project resulted

in an improvement in the economy and the Haya way of life. The German administration also placed an emphasis on the use of the vernacular Haya and Swahili languages. Swahili was officially taught in schools as a potential lingua franca for the entire country. Both languages became major instruments in propagating the Christian mission in the area, and it remains thus to this day.

British colonial administration

Following the defeat of the Germans in the First World War, the British took over the German colony in Tanganyika in 1916 until 1920 when Tanganyika officially came under British rule (Taylor 1969:134). As was the case with the German administration, the British administration followed a policy of "indirect rule" but in their own way (Morris 1969:281). All Kings, in the then 10 traditional Haya Kingdoms, were forced into a newly-established political organisation known as "the Federation of Kingdoms", termed "the District Native Authority". Complying with this system, the Kings gradually lost their sovereign authority, power and autonomy (Sundkler 1980:12). They became agents of the colonial administration in a more subtle way.

TANGANYIKA INDEPENDENCE AND THE BIRTH OF TANZANIA

Through the initiatives of Dr Julius K. Nyerere, the idea of independence, which started as a dream, became a reality on 9 December 1961, when Tanganyika attained its political independence from the British colonial administrators. This event ended both British colonial rule and the Hinda/Hima kingdoms, which had only survived ceremonially in the indirect rule system of former colonial administrations.

The birth of Tanzania

Zanzibar, a neighbouring country island, gained political independence (on the 12 January 1964) under President Amri A. Kalume. Thereafter, both countries (Tanganyika and Zanzibar) merged into a national union and became the Union of the United Republic of Tanzania on the 26th, April 1964 (with Nyerere as the first President). In its early days, Nyerere was often heard speaking about the meaning of Tanzanian independence and Union. He said, "Independence is not loitering with a cigarette in the corner of the mouth or a beer calabash. Independence means work, work, and again work" (1968:2). Elaborating on his rhetoric, Nyerere went on to say that Tanzania's most important asset was not money, but people and their hard work. Therefore, in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, he insisted on "self-reliance" and "ujamaa" (nationhood) as the nation's aims

and policy (Baitu 1988:5). African socialism became the official policy and the foundation of a new society in Tanzania (Sundkler 1980:12-13).

CONCLUSION

The focus in this chapter has been on the contextual background of the Haya concept of God and interpretation of the Christian concept of God.

It has found that the Haya geographical, social, cultural, political, economic and religious beliefs are very important for understanding people's beliefs and, therefore, have to be taken into account when attempting to understand the Haya concept of God. It involves an understanding of the influxes of Bantu-speaking people and, later, the Hima/Hinda people in the area, who contributed to the change in indigenous structures. The study has revealed that the Haya traditional religion is not treated as an isolated fragment of people's lives, but as a system that infuses their whole lives. It is difficult to distinguish between the secular and the spiritual, as they are all in the religious dimension.

The relationship between Haya spiritual powers (divinities, spirits and ancestors) and their concept of God were compared. In order to understand this relationship, the different categories must be understood. Such understanding led the Haya to experience a paradigm shift in understanding spirits. It led to the identification of ancestors as *abazaire abahumwire* (parents who are resting). Moreover, the study has noted that the Haya understand and identify relationship with their departed relatives from an on-going relationship and communion perspective. Even though ancestors, or *abazaire abahumwire*, are neither equal to God nor worshipped, they are seen as the means for understanding and worshipping God, acting as intermediaries). The tokens offered are only symbols of the continuous communion between the departed relatives and their descendants still living on earth. The question of worship of the Deity among the Haya was addressed and it was found to be the heart and soul of their religious beliefs and practices. It is the means for understanding their concept of religion and God.

Finally, the study has found that the latest interaction between the Haya and foreign people and institutions impacted on each other, particularly on the social, cultural, religious and political life of the Haya people. Among the positive impacts notes are social and religious changes, particularly concerning Christianity and its concept of God, as well as the birth and establishment of indigenous administration at national level-Tanganyika independence.

CHAPTER THREE

THE HAYA TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND INVOCATION OF THE DEITY IN A THREEFOLD FORM

INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the Haya traditional experience of God on the basis of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. It seeks a "theological model for interpreting African Christianity in a way that integrates it more fully" (Gifford 1998: 26). This implies applying one's experience of God in order to understand other experiences. As Bettis says, "we make use of our own experience in order to understand the experience of others. We would never be able to describe the essence of Christianity and its concept of God [unless we know it] from our own experience of traditional religion and concept of God" (1969:45). In Taylor's words, "you have not really understood another religion until you have been tempted by the insights of this other religion" (1963:28). Therefore, the Haya traditional experience of God will be used for interpreting and understanding the Christian concept of God (Parrinder 1954:146-147). This approach demands a correct understanding of the Haya concept of God, whose roots lie in an invocation of the Deity in the threefold form, namely, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba*, Son of (or *Kazoba* of) *Ruhanga* of (or my) Father *Ntangaire*). Another Haya idiom expresses it as: *Okumanya Ruhanga hamo n' ekimanyiso ky'okumweitotora* (To understand, describe and express *Ruhanga*) (Kyelimpa 1999).

This chapter asks if is possible to study the Haya experience of God from the viewpoint of an invocation of the Deity in threefold form. Once this has been done, could it be understood and made accessible to non-Haya believers? Would it be able to illuminate an understanding of the Christian concept of God with its trinitarian model?

The chapter is divided into four parts. Part one introduces the chapter and emphasises the goal and methodological approach to the study. Part two explores various features of the Haya Deity according to a threefold form perception of him. It involves knowledge about its rising and development at different times and stages. Part three evaluates an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form through an interpretation of it. Part four concludes the chapter.

> Myths "constitute an original revelation"...in a rhythm, which forms the cosmic framework of space and time. The myths span the whole of existence, from heaven to the hut and heart of the individuals. (1960:100)

Bettis, quoting Malinowski, defines myth as a direct narrative of primeval reality mainly focussing on how reality came into existence. For the Haya, myth is understood as an attempt to portray an event that took place a long time ago, which may or may not be repeated in future. It has also been defined as a history of what took place at the beginning of time (Lutosha 2000). Ray gives a similar definition of myth:

> Myth blends into "history" as cosmic and archetypal events bear upon local situations in history, as local and human events become ritualised and infused with cosmic and archetypal meaning and blend into myth...Myth provides a metaphysical and moral answer to the question of human existence and how it provides systematic knowledge about the world and set of archetypes for social, territorial, village and domestic organisations...The knowledge it conveys is not merely systematic and metaphysical but existential and ritualistic. (1976:24,30)

It is not known where the Haya/African myths originated from or how old they are. They are simply regarded as part of the oral traditional passed down over the centuries by tribal historians and religious specialists. For most myths, the Deity is the source of the world (Mitchell 1977:25), particularly for humans and other creatures. Creation and its consequences are portrayed as sin, death and other catastrophes in society. An optimistic belief is also portrayed about the rescue and restoration of society (Lubatana 1998). Among many different myths, two of them will serve as a model for each concept studied about creation and the Creator. Accordingly, the Haya's early knowledge about creation and the Creator has been gained mainly through observing nature, divine interventions, dreams, visions and world events. These were preserved and transmitted through myths or creation-centred orientation. Consequently, people were enabled to perceive the world or creation as sacramental, as well as the place where God revels Godself (Bevans 2003:21). Possible questions confronted were: What is this universe in which we live? What is its origin? What was there before its creation? These questions and many others were part of the Haya reality-seeking process (Kanono 2000). As with other people in the world, some of the answers to these questions were obtained through the movement of history, which was seen as a divine intervention (Rust 1991:52-53). Through this channel, the Haya came to know that there was one Creator who created the universe and brought all things into being. Hence the Haya asked the question, who is this Deity? What is his relation to the universe in general and to humanity in particular? (Rugabandana 1998). Thus nature was the book from which the knowledge of creation and the Creator was gained. However, this knowledge was neither imposed from above nor was it a foreign imposition or biblical influence. Rather, it was a knowledge revealed and imparted to them by God through nature and experience (Kamulari 1998). This knowledge allowed them access to the image of God, which displays and motivates belief in him. Thus the truth about God was known not only through

scriptures but also through a "fellowship with the living Spirit of truth, who makes God known to them in their own religious experience" (Hughes 1936:30). Allen echoes this view:

> Many religious people, without any particular philosophy or scientific knowledge, believe in God, because they believe that the world has come from somewhere...Nature becomes an extension ...[which] gives indirect contact with the Creator and designer of the world. (1989:115)

The early Haya knowledge of the Deity as the Creator was the root source for their consciousness and experience of him. A similar experience has been reported in other societies in Tanzania and Africa at large. While "Luther speaks of the world as a mask of God and as God's word; the British poet Gerard Manley Hopkins speaks of the world as 'charged with the grandeur of God'" (Bevans 2003:13). According to Wilson's observation as reported by Shorter, people's early religious and theological awareness led them to the perception of the Deity along monotheistic belief (Shorter 1975:75). It led to an affirmation and an invocation of him (Lufulani 2000). All over the world "the affirmation of God as Creator is an answer to the question about meaning [of the belief in him]" (Peacocke 1978:136,145).

EARLY EXPERIENCE OF THE DEITY: NON-VERBAL AND VERBAL INVOCATION

The historical Haya perception of the Deity developed into another important stage of experiencing him, first through a non-verbal invocation and later a verbal invocation of him.

Non-verbal invocation of the Deity

According to most mythical accounts, the non-verbal portrayal experience could be termed as intuitive or symbolic representation (Lubac 1996:105). It is said to have been expressed mainly through gestures, signs, intuition, reflections or symbols (Kyelimpa 1999). These were believed to preserve and reflect traditional beliefs. An understanding of them involves a "semiotic study of cultures, [consisting of] reading the culture texts to discern the signs, codes and message in the signs system" (Schreiter 1985:77-88). When elderly Haya men are asked, how they came to know about the idea of the Deity and how to invoke him, the most common answer given is: "*Abantu bakabanza kumanya Ruhanga batalikumwatura, ebiro kabyahoire bamwatura* (People started to perceive *Ruhanga* (God the Creator) without mentioning his name. Later after many years, they started to express and invoke him. This indicates that an invocation of the Deity did not take place immediately, but rather emerged over many years before evolving into its present form (Kabyangira 1998). In Bosch's words, "new paradigms do not establish themselves overnight. Instead, they take decades, sometimes even centuries, to develop distinctive contours" (1991:349). Therefore, "it takes a long time before a new religious idea becomes widely accepted and expressed in a fixed

from" (Harjula 1969:18). The ability to speak and describe things accelerated this exercise, leading to a verbal invocation of the Deity.

Verbal invocation of the Deity

The Haya perception of the Deity at a pre-verbal stage paved the way to experience him at the verbal invocation stage. The possible way of understanding Haya early experience of an invocation of the Deity is mainly through mythical portrayal and religious sayings going on the assumption that they are amongst people's earliest experience of him. Nothing of worth can be expressed without an invocation of him hence it has become special way of speaking to God (Bettis 1969:57). Since these invocations have early roots in oral literature, a study of them will take into account their history and their mythical form, in consideration of Pailin's question: Can faith in God be based on our understanding of past events? (1986:98). For Pailin, faith, like any other human phenomenon, has a historical background that includes the idea of divine influence in the course of history (1986:106). This raises other questions. How did the Haya religious saying and invocations develop into an invocation of the Deity? How did they contribute in maintaining a notion of him? Ela-Jean states:

> Since the true scandal of faith is the intervention of God in history, we cannot avoid asking ourselves how to talk about God and live our faith in the realm of meaning where Africans try to speak about themselves and the world. (1988:166)

The Haya religious sayings were preserved and transmitted to each generation mainly through stories and myths. They were normally expressed through proverbs, short statements, songs, prayers, names etc, whereby the meaning is depicted metaphorically (Rwanduruko 1998). They are nevertheless regarded as the best Haya way of describing beliefs in the divine, developed from their perception and interpretation of God's involvement in history. Thus, they are the best form of theologising, creating and reflecting on proverbs (Bevans 2003:17). Even when words depict God inappropriately or insufficiently, they still portray an image of him that makes sense (Smith 1970:75). What mattered most for the Haya was not the mere existence of the words applied but the reality communicated, which was beyond words (Rugakingira 2001). For Ranger and Kimambo, "metaphor and allusions hidden in words [or signs] reflect earlier conceptualisation of belief" (1972:45).They are the best instruments, not only for preserving and expressing the Haya religious conceptions and belief, but also for gaining access to the truth about God (Niyelenga 2000). Through language and words, the Haya perception and experience of the Deity had developed through stages up to an invocation of the Deity. Thus they were able to preserve and maintain their perception of the Deity from one generation to another. Seitel describes the Haya oral literature as a tool for understanding the reality (1972:68-69). An understanding of it demands knowledge of

idiomatic expression, the semantic system, word formation and their meanings, links and relationships (Ranger & Kimambo 1972:47). As Schreiter argues, "we need to locate those paradigms of thought in a culture which shape meanings and affirm it in the culture" (1985:77-78).

As with any other human endeavour, the Haya religious sayings in general and an invocation of the Deity in particular were not perfect, as they were liable to human error and limitation. Despite this, they preserved and represented the Haya perception and experience of the Deity through the different ages. Therefore they should not be judged harshly in terms of perfection but in terms of what had already been done or perceived and what can still be done. Hick says, "every statement about God is inevitably inadequate, expressing one among the many possible "projections" of his reality and it may be that manifold ways of expression are the only way in which we can dimly perceive the depth of riches beyond" (1977:4-5).

Like the early perception of the Deity, it is not known when the verbal invocation of the Deity began. Again, we depend on mythical narratives. Two myths have been selected. According to one myth, the perception of the Deity and the invocation of him took place simultaneously (Mpolera 1999). Most Haya scholars doubt the accuracy of this account and maintain that the perception of the Deity was reached before a verbal invocation of him (Basibira 1998). According to the second myth, the invocation of the Deity was accomplished at a later time. This can be traced from later myths of the Deity, which portrayed a clearer image of him, mainly in terms of his name, than earlier portrayals. This supports the contention that the perception of the Deity was developed gradually, from pre-verbal invocation to a verbal invocation. It started with a single name invocation.

SINGLE-NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY

The Haya verbal invocation of the Deity was experienced first as a single name or word and later a double and triple name invocation. Nominal invocation lies in the Haya philosophy that one's beliefs or claims are credible only from the viewpoint of a categorical identification (Ndaluhera 1999). It led to consider one's name as the core of his or her personality or being. A statement from the *Nkole/Kiga* (the Haya neighbours) demonstrates this philosophy well. It goes: "*eibara niwe muntu*" (the person is his name or the name is the person (Twesigye 1996:263:). This applies to God, where the name *Ruhanga* (God and Creator) presents his being symbolically. It summarises people's perception, identification and recognition of his qualifications (Cahn & Shaz 1982:176). Some theologians note its significance. As Triebel contends, "speaking about God is

therefore meaningful only when using the name. [Calling him by name he] becomes present, an encounter is possible, a religious experience is undergone" (Triebel [undated]. b:3-4). Therefore, to name God is a vital step in the human quest to have a "face to face" encounter with him. Cesard, who undertook research among the Haya, describes the invocation of the Deity as a necessary development in the Haya perception and belief in him. He says,

> Not only does he (the Muhaya) know the natural law but he judges his moral actions in relation to the Creator, the neighbour (the state and family) and himself. With regard to God he believes he is obliged to praise Him, to pronounce His name with respect. He does it frequently. He knows whence came his origin, he knows that he depends on the first cause and nothing is more beautiful than the formula which once served for fending off the death of his home. (Cesard 1937:58; Rwehumbiza 1983:180; Beattie 1964:147)

The name of God, therefore, is not an empty utterance but an expression of the Haya belief in him. Even though, like all names for God, it does not depict the whole reality of God, which transcends identification. The use of a single name in addressing the Deity is demonstrated by a common Haya invocation of the Deity, *Ruhanga wange* (Oh *Ruhanga* my God) (Mahilane 1980:15). This is short but a clear Haya affirmation of the Deity. (It has a basis in the belief in the created universe and the existence of the Deity who is the Creator.) The Haya name for the Deity was expanded from a single name invocation to the sphere of worship and prayers. According to Roscoe's observation of the Bakitara, who believe in the same Deity, *Ruhanga,* as the Haya, such an invocation usually focused on asking *Ruhanga* to comply with their needs. In his words, "people invoke *Ruhanga*...entreating him to give them rain" (Roscoe 1923:30; Rwehumbiza 1983:223). Bahendwa, quoting Ishumi, reports on an invocation of this nature in a prayer form of thanksgiving to *Ruhanga*, following a safe return home of one's son from a long journey:

> *Ruhanga...Owamaisho nkolugega, Entabonwa, embonwa luboni omu lubaya; Ninkwehongera kakimo hamo neka yange. Iwe Mulinda byona. Booneka akamwani n' enkologo ezikagenzileo. Iwe ayatweite omwiru wawe mutabaniwa, akatabala omwitunda akashuba kutabaluka. Omuhe amani n'obumaza ashube ashubeyo; Abone ebindi ebyokukusimisa. Iwe Ishewahanga boneka.* (1990: 286-287)

> *Ruhanga*, omnipresent God, with myriad eyes that see everywhere, unseen, seen only in secret in your holy residence; without reserve I commit myself and my household to you. You, who protect all, receive this small gift, the coffee berry and the details therein. You, who led your servant, my son, into the unknown world to seek wealth and safely led him back into the fold; give him the strength and courage to return and amass even more. Out of which he must bring you more in praise and gratitude. You the Omnipotent, do receive. (Translated by Bahendwa)

In this single-name invocation prayer, *Ruhanga* (the Creator) is addressed as the central theme, demonstrating the Haya experience of him.

TOWARDS A DOUBLE-NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY

Father-child relationship

The Haya experience of a double-name invocation of the Deity had taken place through a profound reflection on the personal nature of the Deity and his relationship with humans. It led to perceive him as a personal Deity in a father-child relationship (which is an African anthropomorphic portrayal) (Parratt 1995:125). It gave birth to the Haya notion of the Son of the Deity, which has its roots in the reasoning that since God is the Father, he should have a Son or a Daughter (Rugambarara 1998). The belief in a Deity who has a Son is typically African. According to Professor Moila's observation, the belief is extensively demonstrated in the most ancient African myths and stories. In his words, "many African societies believe in the existence of both God and his Son" (2002:72). They believe that at one time the Deity had a child or children, "some of whom were responsible for the founding of nations" (Mbiti 1969:78). Despite the fact that there are different versions of the Son of the Deity, almost all portrayed basic information about his nature, status and role. The Haya's understanding of the Fatherhood of God does not mean the biological father but rather a spiritual Father. The Haya statement, *Ruhanga Nyamuhanga atonda tazara* (God does not biologically beget but creates) supports this belief. Therefore his status should not be taken literally to mean a biological Son, which implies the existence of a biological mother and wife of the Deity. Because the Haya, as with other Africans, do not consider God to be a human (Mushana 1972:20-30). His status should rather be seen as a metaphorical and symbolic expression of the Haya belief in the Deity in a father/child relationship. For expressing and describing their beliefs in the Deity, the Haya employed anthropomorphic language. Some myths about the creation and the Deity use anthropomorphic names and titles. Among them are names like *Mukamungu* (the wife of God) or *Kazoba*[7] (of, or belongs to or preserves illumination). These names do not portray the sense of a biological relationship with the Deity (Kazoba 2001) but rather a close relationship between the Haya and the Deity, *Ruhanga* (Mukamungu 2000).[8] They perceive him in a filial or parental way, thus feeling confidence in him (Rugakingira 2001). Accordingly, they "do not indulge in theorising or philosophising about the personality of God. Rather, they experience his personality in terms of his actions being described in anthropomorphic terms" (Rwehumbiza 1983:105-106). Even God himself reveals to them through human personality. Thus the Haya approached him and asked him freely to look after them. The notion of God the Father

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7 Kazoba, N. (2001), a Lutheran Bishop, ELCT/Karagwe Diocese, Tanzania, maintains that *Kazoba* is the Son of God name. It expresses the filial relationship between the Son of *Ruhanga* and *Ruhanga* himself and between *Ruhanga* and the Haya people. While *Kazoba,* in rare cases, is used to name a human being, his attributive name, the Illuminator, is used only to identify the Son of *Ruhanga*, hence *Kazoba* the Illuminator. A human being is identified neither as the Illuminator nor as *Ruhanga.*

8 Mukamungu, K. (1998), who holds "a God bearing name" (Mukamungu), maintains that her name depicts an intimate relationship between either an individual or the Haya family and the Deity, *Ruhanga.*

became a Haya custom and he was, and is, addressed as part of the family. Thus for the Haya, "the Deistic theories of the *deus otiosus* or 'the withdrawn God' hold no ground because their belief in God "is not simply as a 'Creator up there' in the heavens, but as God Creator and Father among men, his children" (Rwehumbiza 1983:226). A Haya invocation, which expresses God's paternity, demonstrates this belief: "Oh God, Begetter of kings, Oh Creator of heaven and earth" (Rwehumbiza 1983:174). A similar ancient belief is experienced in other societies, where "the idea of the Godhead as Father of the World and of human beings was extremely old. It has been regarded as one of the primordial phenomena of the history of religions" (Walter 1984:137). For most Africans, particularly the Bantu, it is a key criterion attributed to the Deity. Rwehumbiza states:

> Belief in God as "the Father" of all humanity is the greatest attribute the Bantu conceive of God...It establishes a father-child relationship, which give the Bantu great filial confidence and trust in approaching God to ask him for all kinds of blessings. Thus, he is the Great Caretaker of all humankind. (1983:158)

Christianity did not influence the Haya notion of a personal God in a father-child relationship. It is an ancient perception and part of the Haya traditional experience of God (Bujulu 1998). Two factors highlight this assertion. First, the notions of a personal God and fatherhood were in use many years before the advent of Christianity. The family demonstrated traditional invocations, God-bearing names and God's attributes with attributives names such as *Ish'eka* (the father of the household or family), *Byaruhanga* and *Mugizi* (God who is the Creator, caretaker and doer from a Fatherhood perspective) (Byarugaba 1998).

Secondly, the Christian God was presented to the Haya with borrowed Ganda and Bantu/Swahili names of *Katonda* and *Mungu*. To make him acceptable, the Haya notion of fatherhood was employed to identify the Christian God who became *Isheichwe Katonda* (God our Father). Part Two of Hymn 77 says *Isheichwe* [*Katonda*] *okatonda ebintu byona*... (Our Father *Katonda* who created everything) (NW Diocese 1992:44). The same term was used to address the Deity in the Lord's Prayer, *Isheichwe asingire omu iguru*... (Our Father in heaven...) (Luke 11:2-4). Even when the traditional Haya name for God (*Ruhanga*) was later applied, the term *Isheichwe, Ruhanga* (our Father *Ruhanga*) was also used to address the Christian God.

The notion of the Son of the Deity in the light of creation

The main source of the Haya perception of the notion of the Son of the Deity derives from creation stories. Two myths give a convincing picture. Emphasis will be on the similarities and differences between them.

Differences between versions of creation

Differences are in terms of manner and order of creation. According to the first mythical version of creation, *Ruhanga* is believed to have two Sons, *Rugaba* and *Kibumbi,* with both participating in the creation of man. *Ruhanga* ordered his Sons to mould a human being from clay. *Ruhanga* then blew breath into the created man (Niwagila 1966:8). According to the second mythical version of creation, *Ruhanga* himself moulded the human being from clay. He then ordered his only begotten Son (*Kazoba* the Illuminator) to blow breathe into the nostrils of the created being. He did so and immediately the created being started to breathe (Rujumbi 2000). This version is similar to the Pedi version. According to Professor Moila's research, the Deity "*Kgobe,* created the world and animal and plant life upon it, whereas his Son, *Kgobeane*, created men" (2002:72). While the Haya Son of the Deity participated in the creation of the human being by breathing into the being, the Pedi Son of the Deity was involved in the whole of creation. In both cases, the Son of the Deity is given credit in the creation exercise. There are also differences in terms of the number of deities involved in the creation. There are two Sons of *Ruhanga* involved (*Rugaba* and *Kibumbi*) in the first myth and one Son (*Kazoba*) in the second myth. Some scholars questioned the existence of *Ruhanga's* two Sons (according to the Haya first version) and maintained that the notion of two Sons was a symbolical portrayal of only one Son for the Deity. To justify their stand, they point to both names of *Ruhanga*'s Sons as portraying the same conceptual meaning as that given by the name of the Deity, *Ruhanga*. For instance, the name *Kibumbi* (the moulder or the one who moulds) is derived from the verb *bumba,* which means "to mould". The name *Rugaba* (giver and provider of everything) is derived from the verb *gaba,* which means to give or provide. Thus both names (*Kibumbi* and *Rugaba*) indicate an attribute of *Ruhanga,* whose name also means the moulder or the creator (Rwehumbiza 1983:164-165). While the portrayal of the two Sons describes God's creation as a collaborative effort, the two Sons of *Ruhanga* should rather be seen as conveying the notion of one Father, one Son and one creation (Kandaga 2000). Therefore the notion of two Sons should not be interpreted literally but only in terms of their relationship to *Ruhanga,* particularly in the creation. Rwehumbiza warns the unwary on a too literal interpretation of God:

> The danger for an untrained interpreter is to give the literal meaning of the myth or legend as his informants have narrated it. [However,] more is needed. One has to go deeper and find

> out the correct meaning behind what has been literally narrated... The literal meaning will not bring out the whole truth of what the Bahaya believe about God. (1983:164)

Similarities between versions of creation

There are a number of similarities between the two versions of creation. In both versions, the Deity is the Creator, nominally identified as *Ruhanga,* a name that conveys a double conception of him as God and as the Creator. The creation of human beings, in both versions, takes place in two phases in a collaborative manner. In the first phase, the being was created by being moulded from clay (by *Ruhanga's* Sons according to the first version and *Ruhanga* himself according to second version). In the second phase, the being was given life by the divine breath from the Deity through his Son (later version). Viewing creation as a collaborative effort does not exclude *Ruhanga* from involvement in creation or imply that he was unable to create the human being himself. This would mean that he had to depend on another divine force and the conclusion that *Ruhanga* was not all powerful and therefore not a true God. On the contrary, *Ruhanga* was involved in creation and delegated tasks to his Son of Sons who created on his behalf (Bategereza 2000). In both mythical versions, the human being was moulded from physical and spiritual elements, e.g. clay and *Amagara* (vital force/the breath). In both versions, the participation of the Son of sons is limited to the creation of the human being. It is not clear whether they participated in the rest of creation. Their participation in the creation of the being includes two possibilities - a symbolic participation in the whole creation or only a partial participation (Nyinengabo 2000). The creation of the being in both versions is not isolated from the creation, but is part of it. Both versions portray the notion of the Deity (*Ruhanga*) in all his aspects and the oneness of a threefold form. There are four elements in the first myth: the Deity, *Amagara* (vital force/ the breath) and the two Sons (*Kibumbi* and *Rugaba*, each representing one aspect). There are three elements in the second myth: the Deity, *Amagara* and one Son (*Kazoba*).

The close similarities between the Haya and the Genesis stories of the creation should not be understood as if there were a mutual influence (Kahungya 2000). Two main factors support this assertion. The Haya notion of creation is an ancient one, which existed many thousands of years before the advent of Christianity and its arrival amongst the Haya. Many Old Testament themes are similar to African traditional cultural and religious themes. This does not mean, however, that they influenced everything in African traditional culture or vice versa (Mushendwa 1997:2 ,40). For Bishop Tutu, as quoted by Nyirongo, affinity between Africa's religious insights and biblical insights verifies that the "African religious experience and heritage were not illusory" (Nyirongo 1977:4). To reconcile them, both sides should be viewed in terms of their similarities in the light of

ontological reality (Sundkler 1980:45-46). A similar experience can be seen in other areas of Tanzania. Nyamiti reports:

> It is not in any way strange that Christianity and African traditional religion should have much in common in their teaching about God, for God reveals himself to all people through their consciences and religious experiences, through creation, and even through supernatural revelation in faith. (1984:4)

For Tilley, the similarity of mythical accounts of creation between Christian and non-Christian beliefs is not contradictory as each side contributes to a further understanding of the other side (1985:12). Therefore, each version deserves to be approached in its own way, focussing on its portrayal of the notion of the Son of the Deity from a creation point of view. The second mythical version of creation has been selected for this study as it gives more convincing information.

Authenticity of the notion of the Son of the Deity

Most respondents in the study asserted that the first mythical version of creation portrays the Haya's early perception of the father/child relationship of the Deity (Mujuni 1998). The second version tells the same story as that given by the first version, but in its own way and gives a more correct and integrated account of creation than the first myth (Batungika 1998). In addition, the Son of *Ruhanga* (*Kazoba*) is incorporated into an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, popularly known as *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*. Neither *Kibumbi* nor *Rugaba* (of the first version) have been given such important position and status. This counts towards *Kazoba's* authenticity and credibility.

Lastly, the divinity *Kazoba* is known beyond the Haya account of him. The name *Kazoba* occurs in other creation myths of African societies south of the Sahara, where it identifies a similar notion of the Son of the Deity. It plays the same role in the creation where he was given the status of high rank (as a co-creator). This indicates the popularity of *Kazoba* as a divinity in these regions and knowledge of him is not limited to a single group of people. It also suggests the possibility of a large and rich area of study on a comparative basis. In East and Central Africa and in Southern Africa, the Son of the Deity is identified by the same name, or a similar etymological origin and grammatical form. For the two regions of East and Central Africa, the names *Kazoba*, *Kazooba* or *Kazobe* are common. For some people of Southern Africa the name of the Son of the Deity is etymologically similar to the name *Kazoba*. In all cases, *Kazoba's* names have the same stem, prefixes or suffixes. The Pedi use the name *Kgobeane* (diminutive of *Kgobe*) to identify the Son of the Deity, *Kgobe* (Moila 2002), which is similar to the name *Kazoba*. The difference between the

names, *Kazoba*, *Kazobe* and *Kgobeane,* is the letter "z" for the former two, and the letter "g" for the last.

For analysing the similarities of the concepts of the Son of the Deity, an emphasis should be on their status, role and relationship.

While some people identify him as the Son of the Deity (or the Deity himself), the rest identify him as a divinity of high rank related to the Deity (Shorter 1975:62-63). Most Haya respondents have strongly asserted that *Kazoba* is the Son of *Ruhanga* (Kamulari 1998). Others regard him as *Ruhanga* himself. Their views are similar to the neighbouring Nkole/Kiga who identify him (*Kazoba*) as God, the true illuminator, the light of the world (Twesigye 1999:268). Like creation, this concept is not the result of Jewish influence or what Petazzon and his associate describe as "the Hamitic Conquest Theory" (Rwehumbiza 1983:12). Rather, it is a typical Haya-Nkole/Kiga African perception of the Deity.

Despite some differences in identifying the Son (*Kazoba*) as that of the Deity, he has been identified as an all-powerful, tremendous and inscrutable divinity (Niwagila 1988: 385-386). The grounds for his high rank lie in the following two factors: firstly, his participation in the creation of man or the universe as co-creator; secondly, the belief that he is the Son of a Deity, in this case *Ruhanga*.

A DOUBLE-NAME INVOCATION OF THE DEITY

As with earlier stages, it is not known when a double-name invocation of the Deity was first used. Myths and legends, especially about the father-child relationship, are the only sources of information. According to some of them, the Haya notion of the Son of the Deity (*Omwana wa Ruhanga*) later led the Haya to further perceive and invoke the Deity at another stage. From a single-name invocation, the Haya moved towards a double-name invocation of the Deity. They also invoked his Son, *Kazoba*, either separately or jointly with his Father, *Ruhanga*. For the separate invocation, he was invoked by his single name (*Kazoba*) or his attributive name (the Illuminator). Usually they invoked him by saying *Kazoba* or *Kazoba Wee* (Thou *Kazoba* or Oh *Kazoba*) or, alternatively, *Kazoba Lumulika* (*Kazoba* the Illuminator) (Kamulari 1998).

For the joint invocation, *Kazoba* was invoked together with his Father, *Ruhanga.* Usually the Haya invoked him by saying *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga*) (Kamulari 1998). At this stage, the Deity, *Ruhanga,* was invoked on a binary basis. A binary invocation of the Deity was extended into a short prayer. The Haya invoke the Deity in a father-son relationship by

mentioning the names of *Ruhanga* and his Son, *Kazoba*. An invocation to him takes place in an excited manner: *Iyoo Kazoba owa Ruhanga or Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga!* (Oh *Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga,* this happens!) (Kabalimu 1980:8). This single statement prayer consists of a direct invocation of *Kazoba* and an indirect invocation of *Ruhanga,* asking him to intervene in a particular situation. Usually a short, double-name invocation in prayer form is extended into a long invocation or prayer centred on *Ruhanga.* The Haya prayer to *Ruhanga*, through *Kazoba*, prior to a journey, demonstrates this. The supplicant asks him to guide and protect him on journey, as well as his family at home:

> *Waitu, Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga leba mbwenu nabanza olugendo; waitu, bandinde omulugendo. Kandi balinde abange abonasiga enyuma. Waitu Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga, Bahulire.* (Kashaija 1998)
>
> Oh *Kazoba* Son of [or of] *Ruhanga*, I have embarked on this journey. Guide and protect me on this journey and my family at home. Oh *Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga* hear my prayer. (My translation)

Ruhanga and his Son, *Kazoba*, are both invoked together in such manner that the mention of *Kazoba* opens and ends the invocation. There is no contradiction in pairing the names of *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* in a single prayer or invocation, as both are experienced in a father-son relationship (Mutakyamirwa 2000). It conforms to the Haya custom of addressing people according to their status and rank. A father, or any respected person, is normally addressed indirectly. Similarly, in most cases, divine powers such as the Deity, spirits or ancestors are approached and addressed indirectly. An indirect approach to the Deity explains religious mysteries, which cannot be explained by the direct approach or by ordinary language (Mbiti 1970:29). Usually an invocation is practised regularly (daily or weekly) on an individual or communal basis, mostly at a house-shrine altar. Pastor Bahendwa and Bishop Sundkler, quoting Pastor Ernest Lutashobya, report on a long-term, double-name invocation prayer in which both *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* are invoked:

> (Leader/Priest) Creator, who created earth and heaven and our parents and our grandparents' parents.
> (Response) *Ramankya* (which means: give us good life day after day!)
> Leader/Priest: Give us good life day after day, without illness or death.
> People: Give us good life day after day!
> Leader: Thou *Kazoba*, Son of [*Ruhanga*]/*Nyamuhanga*, Give us place for worship.
> Leader: Give us long life, so that we may worship you.
> People: Give us good life day after day!
> Thou *Kazoba*, give blessing and place for worship. Ramankya.
> Leader: Give us health and prosperity.
> People: Give us good life, day after day!
> Leader: To our parents and our parents' parents give life and blessing. *Ramankya.*
> People: Give us good life, day after day
> To nephews and nieces, grandchildren and grand children's grandchildren. *Ramankya.*
> People: Give us life, day after day!

Leader: Let our wives conceive and bear children, lest we become extinct (Bahendwa 1990:25).
People: Give life, thou *Kazoba* and space for our worship.
Leader: (Facing people) what you have prayed for will be granted to you.
People: *Yezage,* which means let us have a positive response to our prayer. (Sundkler 1980:53)

In this invocation/prayer, *Kazoba* and *Ruhanga* are both invoked as objects of worship, the former directly and the latter indirectly through *Kazoba*, who is the central theme of the prayer. In later times, the Haya double-name invocation of the Deity is believed to have developed into a threefold invocation of the Deity. This followed the perception of the Spirit of the Deity.

THE NOTION OF THE SPIRIT OF THE DEITY

The Haya, like other Africans, experienced the Spirit of the Deity as having a stake in creation and a personal God in the father-child relationship (Mutakyamirwa 2000).Access to this knowledge again is through mythical narrations. Among them, two myths have been chosen. According to one myth, the Spirit is reported to have co-existed with the Deity before any human conception of him. This knowledge was imparted first to the ancestors through their experience of *Ruhanga*, and later to the descendants in each generation (Kyelimpa 1999). According to another myth, which is preferred by most Haya, the Spirit of *Ruhanga* was imparted upon human beings at creation because of the belief that *Amagara* (vital force/the breath) blown into the nostrils of the created being by the Son of *Ruhanga* was from *Ruhanga* himself (Lujumbi 1999). This belief led the Haya to conclude that the *Amagara* was a transcendent vital force (Rwehumbiza 1983:172) and not simply the word *Amagara,* or *omwoyo* (breath). Ultimately, *Amagara* was identified as *Amagara* ga *Ruhanga* (vital force) or *Omwoyo gwa Ruhanga* (the Spirit of *Ruhanga*) (Mutiganzi 1998). For the Haya, the belief in the Deity who had a Spirit was the logical conclusion to their perceptions of him. A similar perception of the Spirit of the Deity, related to the breath of life, is found in other religions (especially Judaism). In the Old Testament, the Spirit was identified as the creative breath of God, giving life to all creatures (Migliore 1991:168; Ps 104:29-30). In Handry's words, "at the most primitive level, spirit was conceived of as the breath of life and was not distinguished from the soul" (1957:104). Its validation lies in the conviction that "faith cannot develop any view of creation that excludes the Spirit since creation only exists in the power of the divine Spirit, which has entered into it. It would perish if God withdrew his Spirit from it" (Moltmann 1981:111; Psalms 104:29f). Other theologians have viewed the perception of the Spirit of the Deity as a vital force of nature and creation. Similarly, Mackey holds that:

> [since} breath is essential to life, by a natural extension of meaning and excluding its religious sense, spirit came to refer to life, measured as it is by the number of our breaths and thence to refer further to those particular extensions or achievements of human life. (1983:68)

The Haya perception of *Amagara* (vital force) breathed into the being at its creation led them to regard human beings as being filled by the Spirit of the Deity - *Amagara or omwoyo* gwa *Ruhanga ogwatuhirwe omumuntu akarora* (The breath of *Ruhanga* breathed into the human being thus made him alive). Even today, the Haya hold that the Spirit of *Ruhanga* is imparted to every individual, before his or her birth and when still in the womb (Kaningo 1999). As a result, they regard life as having a divine essence, given to human beings at birth and inseparable from their lives (Basibira 1998). Life without the Spirit is meaningless. This is a common belief, which leads the Haya and others to regard human beings as spirit-oriented creatures (Desai 1962:37). Handry maintains "man cannot be deprived of active Spirit without ceasing to be man..." (1957:102-103).

Mackey describes this dependence and communication as a continuous act, taking place at creation. He says: "In creation there is a continuous kenosis of God as Spirit, entering into personal dialogue with his creatures, submitting himself to a relationship in which one may respond either with free co-operation or with rejection and hostility" (1983:67). For Oduyoye, the concept of vital force as inseparable from the Deity provides grounds for constructing an African theology of the Spirit of God that is appropriate for African Christians. She writes:

> What is needed is a theology that will enable Africans to become conscious of the fact that life is lived in the presence of God and in full view of a spirit world that is in constant communion with our dimension of life. There are many African sayings of wisdom [proverbs] to help in the articulation of such a theology. (1996:501)

In this sense, whether we identify him as the *Amagara* (vital force) or Spirit of the Deity, the fact that he imbued man with his essence at creation is not altered. It complies with the Haya belief whereby the breadth *(Amagara)* given to man was from above, that is from the Deity. Thus, for them, the *Amagara* (vital force) or the Spirit of *Ruhanga* is not an illusion but the power present among them. In Bishop Kazoba's words, *Roho wa Mungu alijulikana, na alikuwa karibu na watu* (the Spirit of God was known and believed to be close to people) (Kazoba 2001).[9] He is believed to live inside the human being, mostly in the heart, and hence the saying: *Ishenkazi omutima* (aunt of the heart) (Mutashobya 2001). For the Haya, one's aunt usually gives wise advice on the challenges and problems of life. Since the Spirit of *Ruhanga* is believed to guide and direct people in moral issues, he is likened to an aunt and a voice from the heart that directs one to do what is right (Nsiima 1999). Thus, he is a rich treasure for illuminating the Haya-African Christian

9 Kazoba, N. the Lutheran Bishop, ELCT/ Karagwe Diocese, Tanzania. In his letter of 2 March, 2001 to the author, he described the Haya' primal perception of the Spirit of God.

doctrine of the Spirit of God (Muzorewa 1985:93). The Haya belief in the Spirit of *Ruhanga* can be further understood from etymological and conceptual meanings as well as personal relations with *Ruhanga* and humanity. As these are described in chapter five, only the semantic aspects are dealt with in this section. The Haya beliefs about the Spirit of *Ruhanga* will be discussed in terms of his nature, meaning, significance and relation to *Amagara* (vital force /the breath, given to man).

The Haya believe that a human being has a proper spirit and a "copy" called *ekizimu* (the shadow of the spirit) (Kamulari 1998). According to this belief, a few days before a person dies, *ekizimu* departs and one's vision starts to diminish. For diviners or priests, *ekizimu* departs some months before their actual death (Ndibuye 1999). Consequently, the power of divination starts to diminish shortly before death. Finally, the *Amagara* (vital force) is believed to depart from the person on his or her actual death. The saying: *omwoyo gwahwamu* (the spirit has been emptied or diminished) demonstrates this. At that time, the person is said to have undergone a real death. For the Haya, therefore, the definition of dying in the real sense is the absence of the *Amagara* (vital force) *Omwoyo*. This belief led the Haya to perceive another type of dying. It is described as the state of being dead but still living. A person could have died some days or years ago but still be living. If people behave immorally to the extent of committing deadly sins, they are normally regarded as dead, despite the fact that they are still living. The saying, *ogu tagira mwoyo*, or *ogu ti muntu, kintu kusha or akafa eila* (someone who has no breath, spirit or soul) demonstrates this state (Lugakingira 1980:6). One is no longer regarded as a person, but as a thing in the impersonal sense. He or she is addressed as an "it". It can also refer to a state of being foolish. Usually, people say *eki kifela* (someone is a fool). Etymologically the words *kifela* or e-*kifela* connotes an impersonal dying. Both are derived from the stem word "fa". The word *eki-fela* consists of two parts, *eki* and *fela.* The first part "eki" or "ki" denotes a thing, an "it". The second part *fela*, which is the stem word, denotes either a foolish person or a person's pre-death (Rwabukwisi 1998). While Mbiti's term "the living dead" refers to a person who is physically dead but living spiritually, the Haya terms *eki kifela* or *tagira mwoyo* (someone foolish or the absence of the soul, spirit or breath) applies to a person who is physically living but dead spiritually or morally (Niyelenga 2000).

The Haya also believe that the spirit is immortal as the divine breath of God, who is immortal, was breathed into the human being. While his physical body was created from the soil (below), the human's breath originated from God (above). This led the Haya to believe that it is only the body that dies and not the soul, which goes back to its origin. One someone dies, people usually say, *Omwoyo gwashuba owabo mbali gwalugire* (the Spirit has gone back home to *Ruhanga,* where it came from) (Kyamulesire 1999). The *ekizimu* (shadow), which normally departs earlier, does not

accompany the soul in this process but stays near the homestead, mainly in the shrine or around the graveyard (Bavakure 1999). Like other Haya perceptions, the *Amagara* or Spirit of *Ruhanga* is not a foreign import, but a product of their own experience of God.

PERCEPTION OF *RUHANGA* AS A SPIRIT

The Haya belief that a human being is given the *Amagara* (vital force/breath) at their creation was the basis for further understanding the Spirit of the Deity (Rubengabenge 1998). It caused ontological reflections and assumptions. If a human being has been endowed by the breath of life from *Ruhanga* through his Son, *Kazoba*, the breath cannot be separated from its source. This belief led the Haya to regard the Spirit and *Ruhanga* as one. Accordingly, *Ruhanga* (as he took on the aspect of the Spirit) was believed to be a Spirit too (Nyinengabo 2000). Tooke and Temple have the same view. "Above all force is God, the Spirit Creator...The One who has the force, the power by Himself" (Tooke 1937:318). The perception of God as *Amagara* (vital force) or Spirit from the viewpoint of creation has been reported in other religions (mainly Christianity). Moltmann writes:

> Father utters his eternal Word in the eternal breathing out of his Spirit [the breath breathed into man]. There is no God, no Word without the Spirit, and no Spirit without the Word. In this respect the uttering of the Word and the issuing of the Spirit belong indissolubly together... Word and Spirit, Spirit and Word issue together and simultaneously from the Father, for they mutually condition one another. (1981:170)

Accordingly, *Ruhanga* was believed to be the proto Spirit that made all other spirits. He is therefore a superior Spirit above all other categories of spirits and forces. A similar belief has been reported in other African people (Lawson 1984:14; Mbiti 1970:23). Rwehumbiza, quoting Mulago, describes this belief among the Baluba of Shaba in Congo (DRC),

> The Spirit exists, the Creator who created the mountains and valleys,
> The Spirit, Father Creator,
> They pray to Him, God who created by Himself,
> Who created the earth and the animals, which live in it. (1983:64)

The Haya belief that *Ruhanga* is a Spirit depicts him as omniscient, who therefore does not change but remains the same all the time and hence the saying, *Owamaisho nkorugega* (*Ruhanga* has a myriad eyes that see everywhere) (Bahendwa 1990:21). The Haya perception of the Deity *Ruhanga*, who is both God and a Spirit, was a development in the understanding of him. A paradigm shift occurred from a personal God to the Spirit of God, which opened the way to experience the Spirit of God in a personal sense. In turn, it led to personal and nominal identification of him (Rwechungura 1999).

IDENTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT OF *RUHANGA*

Creation was the starting point of an identification of the Spirit of *Ruhanga.* So what is the nature of the *Amagara* vital force breathed into the created man by *Kazoba*? How is he related to the Deity *Ruhanga* and his Son, *Kazoba*? Is the breath a personal divine force, like *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba*, or is it merely breath? (Rwamushonge 1999). What position does he hold in terms of the relationship between them? Is he another Son (as portrayed in the second version of creation story)? Is she a Daughter or a Wife? The most likely answer is the Mother of the Son. Since the Haya already accept the notion of a Father and Son, the missing link is the Mother (Kyangenyenka 2000).

The likely question, following the labelling of the *Amagara* (the Spirit of the Deity) as Mother, would be: Is she the wife of the Deity? Since the Haya do not believe the Deity to be human, the question of *Ruhanga's* wife as another force behind him and his Son is irrelevant and unacceptable (Mujuni 1988). The answer that seems to fit this question is that it is neither a Daughter nor a Mother nor another Son, but the Spirit. In other African societies, according to Moila and Opuku's observations, the Spirit of the Deity was perceived as an active agent (Moila 2002:76). For the Haya, this raised another question. If the Deity, from where the *Amagara* (vital force) originated and, his Son, who breathed the *Amagara* into the created being, were perceived as anthropomorphic, why not his Spirit? The question indicated the need for a nominal identification of the Spirit of the Deity. Factors that influenced the Haya's identification of him are: firstly, the Haya belief in the personal identification of the Spirit of the Deity and, secondly, the importance of a name, since any existing entity without a name is strange and also unacceptable. Thus, every person's identification had a name, which was looked upon as revealing one's nature, personality and role (Lwengongo 1999). Thirdly, the Haya had already named and identified the Deity, and his Son. This laid the groundwork for an identification of his Spirit. The knowledge of its genesis is obtained from mythical portrayal.

In one mythical version, the identification of the Spirit of the Deity was reported to have been experienced with people's perception of him (in the same form as it is today). However, as mentioned earlier, the possibility of an early identification of any aspect of the Deity, in this case his Spirit, has been questioned by most Haya scholars (Ntimba 2000). In another mythical version, the identification of the Spirit of the Deity is believed to have been experienced at a later stage (Kagaruki 2000). Upon the human being's awareness of its creation, (following the *Amagara* (vital force/ breath) breathed into it), *Ntangaire* is believed to be the first word uttered, to express its

awareness of itself as a living creature. This word of surprise was followed by queries. *Ndyohi? Kandi ayangirakwo nohi?* (Who am I? Who did this to me?) (Lwenteme 2001). As Bettis and Soderblom maintain, "the initial state of man's mind is amazement...not only for philosophy but equally for religion" (1969:57). Some Haya theologians regard the utterances of the single word, *Ntangaire,* in a surprised manner as an early affirmation of the Haya creed. On this basis, some theologians formulated a theology of surprise, which is regarded as the Haya's central attitude and response to God's initiatives (Mukasa 1999). Later, the Haya are believed to have used the word *Ntangaire* to identify the *Amagara* or Spirit of the Deity, *Ruhanga.*

Its provenance can be grasped from its etymological and grammatical meaning. The word *Ntangaire* means transcendence, surprise, manifestation and shining forth (Kalemera 1999). The last two words "manifestation" manifestation and "shinning forth" recall the Christian experience of the Spirit in a Triune God (Dockrill & Tanner 1985:112). The name, *Ntangaire,* can be understood in terms of its stem *ntanga*, *ntang, tanga* or *anga.* While the former three words simply mean to protect or prevent, the latter one, *anga,* is a metaphorical word denoting the shinning sky. From the stem, *anga,* the name, *Ruhanga,* and its derivatives *Nyamuhanga, Wahanga* and *Ishewahanga* originated. From the stem, *ntang,* other words were derived, *okutangara* (extremely shining), *okutangaza* (to surprise) and *ekyokutangaza* (which surprises). Other related words of this nature are: *okutanga* (to prevent) and *olutanga* (a wild pumpkin or the thing which protects) (Manwa 1999). All these words have the same stem.

The name, *Ntangaire,* has therefore become the locus of the Haya theology of creation and the Creator. It was theorised that without *okutangara*, the perception and the identification of *Ntangaire* and even of *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* could not have happened (Luhasha 1999). A similar role was reported in Christianity. As Lubac states, "Spirit too... express him and... affirms his existence as... it assimilates us to him... The Spirit alone can plunge the depths of God. The Spirit alone grants us a knowledge of God" (1996:109). The Haya identification of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* was a basis for invoking him.

An invocation of the Spirit of *Ruhanga*

The naming of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* paved the way for an invocation of him, either separately or combined with an invocation of *Ruhanga.* For a separate invocation, he was normally invoked with either a single word or two words. Usually, *Ee Ntangaire!* (Oh Transcendent, or Surprise) (Kyanda 1998). When combined with an invocation of *Ruhanga*, *Ntangaire* was invoked through a long-term invocation with more words. Usually, the Haya invoked him poetically by mentioning his

name and other related attributes - *Ntangaire, Nyamutangalira nantangalira, kuba wenene natanga byona* (*Ntangaire*, manifests and protects me from all dangers and enemies) (Balambirwa 1998). When a Haya member is seriously sick, relatives usually invoke *Ruhanga* indirectly through *Ntangaire* in a ritual poetical invocation, such as: *Ninjwara Olutanga kutangaki manya Ntangaire nantangalira* (I don't need to wear *Olutanga* around my neck or waist to protect me, since *Ntangaire-Amagara ga Ruhanga* [vital force] protects me) (Nyamwiza 2000). The invocation highlights the people's dependence on the mighty power of *Ruhanga*, approached through his aspects, who overcomes all illnesses and other hardships.

Two names (*Olutanga* and *Ntangaire*) are mentioned in this invocation. An understanding of them in terms of their etymological similarities and differences is necessary for an understanding of the meaning, usage and identification of the Spirit of *Ruhanga.* Since the name *Ntangaire* has been described already, only the name *Olutanga* will be dealt with. Etymologically, the words *Olutanga* and *Ntangaire* have the same stem. That is *tanga* or *ntanga* (to protect or to prevent) (Kafumu 1998). *Olutanga* is a Haya word for an indigenous, semi-wild pumpkin plant that produces sizeable, round, green fruits (gourds) with white stripes. *Ntangaire* is the name for the Spirit of the Deity. A non-Haya researcher can easily overlook the similarities between them. The Haya know their meaning and usage precisely and therefore do not confuse them (Luhamiliza 2000).

The words *Olutanga* and *Ntangaire* have different meanings and religious usages. *Olutanga* is believed to prevent or give protection against harmful incidents, diseases or evils (Kamwesigile 2000). Usually in a critical situation (illness or other hardship), a Haya member seeks the assistance of *Olutanga* icons, which are hung above a dwelling's entrance. It is believed that these might prevent evil or harmful incidents occurring in that particular house. Even today, the belief in *Olutanga* still holds the hearts of many Haya, including backsliding Christians. Upon noticing this dual adherence, pastors refuse to offer Holy Communion to a patient at home-based communion services unless *Olutanga* is removed and renounced. Most of them respond positively.[10]

While *Olutanga* is believed to protect people to a limited extent, *Ntangaire* is believed to have no limit in protecting people from evil powers. Some people depend on both *Olutanga* and *Ntangaire* for protection. Only a few depend only on *Ntangaire* (Mutiganzi 1998) in the belief that *Ruhanga* protects and cures them through him. However, the next section discusses how the nominal identification of the Spirit of the Deity led the Haya to experience an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form.

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10 Kahakwa's pastoral ministry in the area of study (1973-1994).

A THREEFOLD INVOCATION OF THE DEITY

Earlier version of an invocation of the Deity

From a single and double-name invocation, the Haya moved to a triple name invocation of the Deity. As Pailin says, "a religious faith does not suddenly appear out of nothing: it emerges through a continuous process of alterations, adaptations and augmentations to some previous faith" (1986:2). The triple invocation of the Deity also has a basis in the creation of man whereby aspects of the Deity are believed to be involved in the creation of human beings - the Deity who created and originated the breath, the *Amagara* (vital force/ breath) breathed and the Son of the Deity through whom the *Amagara* was breathed into man (Kyatafuti 2000). For both the Haya and the Christians, the breath of life is related to creation and the Spirit of God in a threefold form. It is regarded as a special way of understanding the Deity. Hence, "God is Spirit, and any trinitarian statement must be derived from this basis" (Hendry 1957:48). Moltmann has the same view:

> A trinitarian doctrine of creation is able to absorb the elements of truth in the idea of creation as God's "work" and in the notion of creation as a divine overthrowing or "emanation". The metaphor of emanation belongs to the language of pneumatology. This Spirit is the divine breath of life, which fills everything with it's own life. (1981:113)

Two Haya myths have been selected to demonstrate the development of an invocation of a threefold Deity.

According to one mythical account, an invocation of a threefold Deity is reported to have occurred many years ago in the same form as it is today. That is, it addressed a threefold Deity in all its aspects. This implies that from the start, the Deity was perceived in a threefold form. However, an early perception of a trinitarian notion of the Deity has been questioned by most scholars as the invocation of the Deity was reported to have developed gradually through stages (Ntimba 2000). The second mythical account maintains that an invocation of the Deity evolved and developed gradually from a single to a double name (as recounted in earlier sections) and then later to triple aspects of the Deity. An invocation at this stage incorporated all aspects of the Deity (*Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire*). All of them were invoked as a single component (Kayungi 2000). Verbally, the invocation went, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son of (or *Kazoba* of) *Ruhanga* of (or my Father) N*tangaire*). When interpreted in other Haya idiom, it becomes *Okubirikira Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga, owa Tata Ntangaire* (To address or call upon *Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga* of (or of my Father) *Ntangaire*) (Kabyangira 1998).When interpreted

literally, this account offers a different or ambiguous meaning, thus, *Kazoba* of Father of *Ruhanga* of my Father *Ntangaire* (Kandaga 2000).

An invocation of the Deity in a threefold form was an important development in the Haya perception of the Deity. Through it, the idea of the Deity was preserved and thus able to survive from one generation to the next. Most Haya theologians like Niwagila regard it as a clear theological affirmation. His hypothesis is that *Ruhanga* is the source and the originator of the whole community (1988:386). Dependence on him is illustrated by the Haya invocation to *Ruhanga* asking him to intervene in critical situations (illness, accident, famine etc). The usual invocation is *Eego, katulebe, Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire, olangira engabo* (I wonder, I am in a critical situation. Oh, *Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga*, of *Ntangaire* be my shield) (Tibakilana 1999).

Later version of an invocation of the Deity

The study has explored the claim that, for many years, the Haya experienced and reformulated an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form by using different but related traditional terms. The aim was not to formulate a different invocation but to express the original one in a different way for a better understanding according to place and time. It involved replacing some words of the old version of an invocation of the Deity. Thus it gave birth to a similar but new version with slight changes in some words relating to external structure, but not in terms of internal content, meaning and logical flow. The words and names replaced are the name for the Deity (*Ruhanga*), which is replaced by *Lububi*. This was accompanied by a single sentence *Omukuru agambwa mbele* (the Great one who deserves first mention). The new version, which evolved from the old, stands and invokes as follows, *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire Omukuru agambwa mbele* (*Kazoba* of [or who is] *Lububi* of *Ntangaire*, the most high [or the great] who deserves first mention) (Kabalimu 1980:8). Etymologically, both names *Ruhanga* (in the earlier version) and *Lububi* (in the later version) mean the Creator (Mutashobya 2001). The same name (*Lububi*) is used to identify the Deity among the Herero of Namibia (Kanana 2001).

The replacement of the old version included all four linking words of *aka Ishe* and *aka Tata Ntangaire* in the invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. The single linking word, *lwa* (of or of somebody) replaced these, hence *Lububi lwa Ntangaire* (*Lububi* of *Ntangaire* who links to *Ntangaire*). Thus, it becomes: *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire.* The two names, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire,* remained unchanged in the old version (Kabyangira 1998)

Versions of an invocation of the Deity: a comparative view

The study explored five main conceptual factors between the earlier and later versions of the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Structurally and grammatically, both versions are built with seven words, consisting of three nouns and four adjectives, namely, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (earlier version) and *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntagaire Omukuru agambwa mbele* (later version) (Ntimba 2000). In both versions, three aspects of the Deity are portrayed in the same position within an invocation of the Deity, namely, *Kazoba* at the beginning, *Ruhanga* (in the earlier) or *Lububi* (in the later version) in the middle and *Ntangaire* at the end. Both versions portray a similar religious story, not in terms of external form alone, but also in content, of which the central theme is the notion of one Deity. It portrays his centrality as the only Creator. Each version portrays the trinitarian notion of the Deity in a different style but without overlooking or undermining his three aspects. Finally, the notion of the Deity in both versions is portrayed in an anthropomorphic sense, that is, as a moulder, a conceptual term similar to the names of *Lububi* (first version) and *Ruhanga* (later version), which both mean the Creator (Manunga 1998). It involved words derived from the stem, *bumba* (mould), *okubumba* (to mould) (Rwehumbiza 1983:67) and thus *Omubumbi* (moulder) and *Lubumbi* (a competent moulder). The name for the Deity, *Lububi* (the mighty moulder or creator), was easily formulated by dropping the letter "m" from the noun *Lubumbi.* Thus, it is a slightly shortened form of the word *Lubumbi.*

Both versions of the invocation for a threefold Deity are very important for an understanding of the Haya perception and experience of the Deity. In the later version (which is the focus of this study), the question raised is: Why are *Ruhanga*'s aspects invoked by mentioning each with a different name, instead of using one name or term that combines them all into a single corporate form? Some interviewees have suggested that instead of mentioning different names for each aspect of the Deity, a traditional term such as *Obushatu* (triple) should have been used (Kagaruki 2000). For a long time, missionaries and, later, post-missionary Christianity used this term up to a printed literature level. The first part of the prayer on Trinity Sundays goes: *Katonda atahwaho Omubushatu obulikwera* (*Katonda* who exists forever in holy triple or Trinity) (NW Diocese 1992:225).

Some respondents have a different view, however. They maintain that a traditional threefold way of addressing or invoking the Deity through each aspect is an adequate way of describing the Haya traditional concept of God (Bashami 1999). So, although the term *Obushatu* has been in use for a long time (to the extent of being christianised), it is inadequate to depict the Deity in his threefold

form according to the Haya or Christian experience of God (Lufulani 2000). With it, one cannot depict and describe the Trinity in terms of links and relationships of aspects of the Deity as well as identifying each aspect. The inadequacy of the term lies in the fact that the term *Obushatu* was not intended for describing the Deity in his threefold form. Rather, it was a general traditional term for identifying spiritual and physical concepts. For instance, the Haya do not use the term *Obushatu* to invoke or describe the Deity. Instead they address and invoke him in a threefold form by mentioning each of his aspects. *Obushatu* entails a portrayal of him, which is not a question of formulating a doctrinal creed, but rather an expression of their perception and experience of the Deity (Ntimba 2000). The belief in the Deity in a threefold form, as a key characteristic of God, was experienced in other religions. Wells, commenting on Johnson's trinitarian view, states,

> Basic trust in the experience of God's threefold relatedness to us suggests that a certain corresponding threefoldness characterises God's own true being...the triadic character of our religious experience indicate s a threefold character of God's way of being God. (1995:339)

Another question raised is: Why were some terms that are alien to the Haya used to interpret, evaluate and describe a Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form? The lack of suitable words with which to convey the meaning intended is one answer. This is a common problem when one interprets or translates words from one language into another. To fill gaps, other words and terms from other languages or religions have to be borrowed to interpret or describe the original meaning. Another reason was for theological and academic reasons. Alien terms have been employed in this study to interpret the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Essentially, it aims at enabling non-Haya readers access to the Haya concept of God.

Summary view of an invocation of the Deity

The belief about the unity or oneness of the Deity in the plurality of his aspects is a typical African belief (Bediako 1999). This stems from the belief that God cannot create creatures, which enables them to live a communal life and live a solitary life himself (Kahwa 2000). As Wells states, "the very essence of God is to be in relation and thus relatedness rather than the solitary ego is the heart of all reality" (1995:339). A threefold perception of the Deity is a superior way of understanding and expressing him, for both the Haya and for Christianity. For the Haya, this is a product of their traditional experience of God, and not a Christian invention or the influence of western theological thought. It occurred many years before the introduction of Christianity. How then were the Haya able to perceive a threefold notion of God? This occurred because God revealed this notion to them in different ways, particularly through creation and nature (Tinkaligayile 2000). As Massawe

maintains, a trinitarian understanding of God "was a certain kind of preparation but they didn't actually know how it would finally be" (1977:54).

Neither the Haya concept of God nor his invocation in the threefold form was an anti-Christian Triune God as both concepts depicted the notion of one God in different ways and in different degrees. Thus, it could be used to illuminate an identification and understanding of the Christian trinitarian model. Muzorewa contends:

> The significance of the African concept of a trinitarian God before Christianity is that it renders the traditional African culture "Christian" in a peculiar sense. Defined in this way, a "Christian religion" could emerge from the African culture in an indigenous form. (1985:85)

The Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form does not admit to ancestral spirit influences. Neither the first version nor the second version refers to them (Kanyaburago 1998). Even the great spirits are not incorporated. There are some Haya religious invocations and utterances in which divinities and spirits are addressed but this does not happen in this invocation. This is demonstrated in a Haya invocation of the Deity in prayer form, which does not mention any spirit. Normally one invokes:

> *Nyakubaho, Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire, ayatuhire Amagara hamo nokugamulikila. Ruhanga ayahangire eiguru ne'nsi abantu ne'bintu byona na Amagara/ Ntangaire, atangaza nokutangarira Ninkutakira ondindire abange,omushaija wange hamo no'mwana wange, abali omulugendo. Obebembele batabarukege. Waitu bahulire omuzana wawe.* (Mukailuga 2000)

> Oh long live *Kazoba*, Son of *Ruhanga*, of *Ntangaire*, who breathed *Amagara* (the vital force/life) and illuminates it. *Ruhanga* who created the sky and the earth, human beings and all things and *Ntangaire*who shines and protects. I beg thee to protect my family, my husband and my son who are on a journey. Guide them and let them come back safely. Oh *Ruhanga*, hear your servant. (My translation)

The above-mentioned factors not only offer a background to the issue but also shed light on the map and provide the key to an interpretation of the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form.

EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION OF AN INVOCATION OF THE DEITY

Why are an interpretation and an evaluation of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form needed? For the Haya, it is not necessary either interpret or evaluate it, since its meaning and significance is well known. Interpretation is for those few who have lost the key to its meaning. An interpretation would be done without the aid of foreign theological terms because the terms and idioms are well known (Binomutonzi 1998). Interpretation is regarded as an instrument of

evaluation. It demands a prior understanding of the nature, structure and background of the invocation (Amos 1998). Tilley has the same view:

> One did not know the meanings of the metaphors until one knew the stories [invocations] in which they were embedded. One has to uncover the content and structure of the stories in order to determine the meanings of the elements in the stories. If one neglects the stories, one cannot understand the elements. (1985:12-13)

For Ray, a prior knowledge of what is to be evaluated is necessary for understanding its core meaning (1976:xi). Chatman and Nadar describe this approach as an attempt to "uncover the narrative voice" or the conceptual point of view of the text (Chatman 1978:47; Nadar 2002:3). From this point of view, an evaluation of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form will take into account its conceptual meaning and structural form.

Background: structural form and relations of an invocation

An evaluation of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form demands an understanding of its structural form, links, relationships and roles within and among aspects of the Deity. A knowledge of them is attainable through an anthropological approach. The following related questions are raised:. How is each word structured and positioned? What is its meaning? How does each word relate and function in relation to another and to the entire invocation? It demands a knowledge of the conceptual and contextual background of each of them, consisting of the social mores, cosmological beliefs, anthropology, theology and thought forms (Shorter 1975:159). Ray, quoting the anthropologist Horton, writes:

> Philosophical concepts can deepen our understanding of African cosmologies if we look at them as systems of "explanation, prediction, and control" based on "theological models"... African religious systems...can be seen as the outcome of a model-making process, which is found alike in the thought of science and in that of pre-science ...Once we have seen that many traditional religious statements are simply theoretical statements couched in an unfamiliar...idiom, all their more puzzling features at once become intelligible. (1976:13)

The language and its idiomatic expression is also basic to the understanding of each component of an invocation. In Pailin's words, "how we understand is also subtly affected by the grammatical structure of language in which we seek to apprehend and express our thoughts [Therefore] use a language is consequently to adopt its standpoint, whether we are wholly conscious of what we are doing or not" (1986:63, 230).

In terms of structure, an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form (according to both the versions) is composed of a single sentence of seven words: *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*

(earlier version) and *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire Omukuru agambwa mbele* (second version). These are not empty words, as each has a special meaning, which can be understood in relation to other words in terms of its meaning, position and grammatical structure within an invocation (Kamulari 1988). As Rolnick argues, "in order to speak with any confidence in theological matters, one must have some notion of what words are doing...[since] the relationship between the content of thought and how thought is expressed is crucial" (1993:1). On the assumption that "we may understand what a word means when we know the dictionary definition" (Ward 1974:72), Bettis contends that "when a primary word is spoken, it indicates the way in which it could be understood" (1969:223-224). An interpretation and evaluation of an invocation will, therefore, require an analysis of its structure in terms of its words.

The main components within an invocation will be considered, namely, *Ruhanga, Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* (*Ruhanga's aspects*). They are the backbone of an invocation and essential to the Haya understanding of God (Kagaruki 2000). An evaluation of them will take into account the link and relationship of each aspect to the other. These will be detailed because they are considered vital for an understanding of the whole invocation. A detailed analysis of them will elucidate the Haya concept of God (Bategereza 2000). Links are built on two prepositional phrases within the seven words of the earlier version invocation. These linking words highlight an understanding of the relation between and among aspects within the invocation. Despite their structural form in terms of size and number, these words are important not only as linking units but also for the conceptual logic of their relationships and roles within the invocation. Pailin comments on the importance of words and their structural links for achieving the meaning of a given religious model. He writes:

> Philosophers of religion consider what the relevant evidence for religious belief will bear and how the different components may be linked together in a credible manner...granted the perfection of God, they seek to perceive. (1986:2)

The first two words of the first part of the invocation are *aka Ishe* (of his Father or belonging to his Father). The first word *aka* ("of", "this" or "of somebody") and the second word *Ishe* (his Father) are linking words. From these linking words we get an incomplete sentence, which nevertheless makes sense, *aka Ishe Ruhanga* (of or his Father, *Ruhanga*).

The second two words of the second part of the invocation are *aka Tata* (of my Father). The first word *aka* has the same meaning as that of the first part. The second word *Tata* means Father. Combining them together we get another incomplete sentence, which makes sense. It becomes *aka Tata Ntangaire* (of my Father *Ntangaire*), which connotes a sense of belonging to *Ntangaire*. The

link *aka Tata* determines the structural and conceptual position of the entire invocation. Without them none of *Ruhanga*'s aspects would be further developed and understood beyond a single or binary perception (Tinkaligayile 2000).

The relationships among the aspects and words within the invocation (first version) should be looked at, with emphasis on structural position. A double relationship exists between *Ruhanga's* aspects – between *Kazoba* and *Ruhanga* (direct relationship), between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* (direct relationship) and between *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* (indirect relationship). Within these two types of relationships, the Deity, *Ruhanga*, holds the central position within the invocation. This is demonstrated by the link and relationship between him and his aspects, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* (Babyeyaka 1998).

Lastly, the status held and role-played by each aspect within the invocation needs elaboration. They play a determining factor in understanding the entire invocation. The emphasis will be on the contribution of each aspect in depicting and maintaining a threefold notion of the Deity, its meaning and significance. Each aspect functions on its own but in relation to the other aspects. It contributes towards an understanding of the entire structure and the notion depicted by an invocation. Even when some of the words or aspects of an invocation are limited or reduced in terms of number, they still offer an integrated meaning. This means that an exclusion of one or two of the three aspects (*Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* or *Ntangaire*) from their normal positions within an invocation, the one or two remaining are in a position that makes sense. This demonstrates the capacity of each aspect to preserve and convey original meaning. In addition, it demonstrates that a correct interpretation of each of them does not change either the meaning or the content of an invocation. It rather exposes the strength of each aspect as well as its relationship to other aspects (Mborogi 2000). For instance, when one takes *Kazoba* (the Son of *Ruhanga,* who normally holds an opening position) out of an invocation, the remaining aspects of *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* and their respective linking words (*aka Ishe* (of his father) and *aka Tata* (of my father) still convey a message that makes sense on a binary level. It goes, *Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Ruhanga* of Father or my Father *Ntangaire* or *Ruhanga* of *Ntangaire*) (Lubatana 1998). It is a sub- invocation consisting of two aspects and one linking word. Similarly, when one takes *Ntangaire* (who normally holds a concluding position) out of an invocation, the remaining aspects of *Kazoba* and *Ruhanga* still convey a complete sentence and a message that makes sense on a binary level. It goes, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga*) (Kamulari 1988). It is a sub-invocation consisting of two aspects and one linking word. Likewise, when one takes *Ruhanga* (who normally holds a central position) out of an invocation (as was the case in the later version where *Ruhanga*

was replaced by *Lububi*), the remaining aspects of *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* still comprise a full sentence that makes sense (at least literally) from a binary point of view and hence, *Kazoba aka Ishe...Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* of Father of *Ntangaire or Kazoba of Ntangaire*). In the next section the emphasis will be on an interpretation of the Deity, *Ruhanga,* in terms of each of his aspects: *Ruhanga, Kazoba* and *Ntangaire.*

AN INTERPRETATION OF *RUHANGA* AND HIS ASPECTS

Why is an interpretation of *Ruhanga* needed? Interpretation is the best way to analyse, clarify and understand the Haya concept of God in its entirety. The knowledge attained will shed light on whether or not a traditional concept of God is still needed today. If it is, then the question will be how to further re-construct it. Kaufman's view highlights this approach:

> ...each theologian in his or her work can no longer take it for granted that there is a fixed body of belief which is simply to be interpreted and explained. On the contrary, the central task of theology in the present situation is to ascertain just what beliefs or concepts inherited from the tradition are still viable, and to determine in what ways they should be reconstructed so they will continue to serve human intellectual and religious needs. (1981:179-180)

An interpretation of *Ruhanga* will involve all of his aspects. The necessity of such an interpretation is, as Boff argues, "the best theologian, according to Gregory of Nazianzus, is not the one who can give a complete logical account of his subject, but the one who assembles more of truth, image and shadow, and thus moves [from a] pure rationality" (1988:353). Therefore, none of them should be neglected (Allen 1989:1). Such an approach not only demands theological and methodological know-how but also essentially God's guidance and inspiration, since he is the One who brings human beings to a real understanding of him. "He can inspire man to the imaginative grasp of reality" (Ward 1974:167-168). Bosch suggests the map and the key. He says:

> ...how are we to interpret God's action in history and so learn to commit ourselves to participation in this. Which are the signs in human history that reveals God's will and God's presence? How do we identify God's vestigial, God's footprints in the world? (1991:429)

An interpretation of the *Ruhanga* model will be done through three phases, each consisting of *Ruhanga's* aspects: *Ruhanga, Kazoba* and *Ntangaire.* An emphasis will be on the link and relation between and among them, thus demanding an anthropological approach. Through it, "the practitioner of the anthropological model tries to understand more clearly the web of human and cultural relationships and meanings that [shed light to the existence and presence of the Deity]" (Bevans 2003:55). Furthermore, they look for the revelation of the Deity and "his self-manifestation as it is hidden within the values, relations patterns, and concerns of a context. [On the

assertion that] it is within human culture that we find God's revelation...not as a separate supracultural message, but in the very complexity of culture itself, in the warp and woof of human relationships" (Bevans 2003: 56).

Such an approach poses this question: Why should an interpretation of the *Ruhanga* aspect be considered first? The answer is that he plays a prominent, central role in the invocation. *Ruhanga* was also perceived and experienced earlier, before any of his other aspects. Thus, in terms of conceptual perception and development, he holds the highest priority. In terms of structural position within an invocation, he also holds the central position. This position gives him a direct link and relation to his other aspects, *Kazoba* his Son and *Ntangaire* his Spirit. *Ruhanga*'s central position in an invocation can be seen from the viewpoint of a Haya understanding of the position of the father who is the head of the Haya household. Likewise, *Ruhanga* plays a central role of being the Father of the entire Haya community (Kigembe 2000). The saying, *Ruhanga nka Nyinenju n'enyomyo y'engambiro* (*Ruhanga* is the central pole that supports the entire house) illustrates his role (Kamalweki 2000). A main, central pole with four to six minor poles around it usually supports the Haya traditional *Omushonge* (circle house). Therefore, an interpretation of the *Ruhanga* aspect will take into account his role and position as well as these structural, grammatical factors within an invocation. It will also involve an examination of the link and relationship between him and his aspects. It involves a look at the role played by each aspect in the entire invocation and its implications for the Haya people.

Ruhanga's relationship with *Kazoba*

The focus of this section is on an interpretation of the *Kazoba* aspect, the Son of *Ruhanga,* from the viewpoint of his relationship with the Father. It has been chosen because of its importance in the understanding of the Haya concept of God in general and its framework for invoking the Deity in a threefold form, in particular. Like the *Ruhanga* aspect, an interpretation of the *Kazoba* aspect depends on an understanding of the link and relationship to the *Ruhanga* aspect and to the *Ntangaire* aspect. The link and relation between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* are demonstrated by the linking phrase *aka Ishe* (of his Father) that depicts a direct relationship between them within the invocation. In this relationship, *Kazoba* is seen as belonging to, or relating closely to, two aspects or components within the invocation (*Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire*) (Mujuni 1998). In addition to being a linking factor within the invocation, *Kazoba* also plays various roles within it. He plays a primary role because in an invocation he is addressed first and then *Ruhanga* and later *Ntangaire* are addressed. This did not happen coincidentally but intentionally, and is aimed at indicating his

position in relation to each aspect. Accordingly, *Kazoba* serves as an opening or indicating role for the entire invocation. Without *Kazoba*'s role, the Deity, *Ruhanga,* could be perceived but would remain only at the single-name invocation stage. Therefore, a binary or threefold conception of him would not have been achieved.

Kazoba also plays an affirmative role within an invocation in three ways. The affirmation of his status and role as the Son of *Ruhanga* is demonstrated by the sub-invocation of *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhang*a). An affirmation of *Ruhanga's* status and role is achieved through mentioning him as the only Creator and Father (*Kazoba's* Father) (Nyinengabo 2000). These linking and relational words depict *Kazoba*'s relation and dependence on another divine force, or *Ruhanga*'s aspect. at an indirect relationship. From the viewpoint of an affirmation of his status and role in relation to his Father (*Ruhanga*) and *Ntangaire* (*Amagara* -vital force or the Spirit of *Ruhanga*), *Kazoba* also affirms three links and two relationships (direct and indirect) within an invocation: in the first place, the relationship between *Kazoba* and *Ruhanga* (direct relationship); in the second place between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* (direct relationship); and in the third place between *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire*. This state is vividly demonstrated in the invocation, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (Ntimba 2000). Thus *Kazoba's* affirmative role within an invocation is very important for an understanding of the nature, link and role of each aspect. While an invocation is the key to an understanding of the Haya concept of God, *Kazoba's* role within it is the key to an understanding of its nature, meaning and significance. However, the relation between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* (as portrayed in the sub-invocation of *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga*) is symbolic – a metaphorical depiction of the father-son relationship. Therefore, it should not be interpreted literally. A literal interpretation approach would imply the existence of a Father of the Deity (*Kazoba* as the Father of *Ruhanga).* Such perception would remove the quality of transcendent reality and replace it with the more mundane sense of being human. In both cases, it would contradict the notion depicted in an invocation of him. Moreover, it would cast doubt about the position and validity of *Ruhanga* as a true God (Gati 1999). The relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* (his Son) can also be traced to the status and role of *Kazoba* in the light of the Haya parental terms of father-son relationships. It conforms to the Haya expression of a parental relationship with a son or daughter contained in the saying, *mutabani* or *muhara wa nanka* (the son or the daughter of somebody). The neutral phrase, "wa", like *aka Ishe* (of or his father), reveals to whom the son or daughter belongs. This is a typical African way of expressing the relationship between the father and the son. Initially, the father is the source of the son's life and power.

The relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* can also be grasped from the status and role of the first-born male child. Normally, this child is given a status almost similar to his father. Hence the

saying, *omwana womwojo omuzigaijo aigana na ishe* (literally, the first-born male is equal to his father) (Niyelenga 2000). Thus the Son of *Ruhanga* (*Kazoba*) plays a role almost similar to that played by his Father. Through him the breath of life (*Amagara*-vital force) from *Ruhanga* was first given to humans. By virtue of his involvement, *Kazoba* holds almost equal status to his Father. Hence he was ranked as a co-creator as well as being given the title of the Illuminator. This belief is evident in Haya sayings, invocations and prayers whereby both *Ruhanga* and his Son (Kazoba) are invoked in a similar manner. Normally one invokes:

> *Waitu Ruhanga ayahangire ebintu byona, Kazoba ayatuhire Omwoyo (Amagara) omumuntu akarora Waitu, balinde kandi bahe omugisha eka yaitu; abana baitu bazane omukibuga* (Lubatana 1998)
>
> (Oh *Ruhanga*, who created everything, *Kazoba* who breathed the breath (vital force) into human and thus made him alive. Protect and bless our homestead. Let our children play within it). (My translation)

In no way does the father-son relationship portray biological equality but rather a symbolic relational role. This can be traced in another Haya saying, *olumi lukuru lwonka abana* (an old rabbit depends on the breast-feeding of its young children) (Bugurano 1998). It depicts an intimate and dependant relationship between father and son who are seen as "a brother to each other" resulting in the common saying, *omwana womwojo aba murumuna wawe* (your son is your brother or a son is a father's brother) (Mbekenga 1998). It depicts the close and interrelated role between father and son, in which both of them play an ambivalent metaphorical role. Within this relationship, the father and son each play a symbolic role of being a father and son to one another (that is, being a father and son on the side of the father, and being a son and father on the side of the son). Shorter, quoting Harry Sawyer, reports a similar view. "The eldest brother exercises many powers and privileges in the African community, becoming eventually its head" (1978:18). Such relationships do not denote a contradiction between the position and role of the father and son or exclude the power and authority of the Haya father. Rather they elaborate and preserve it. Most young men, when asked why they address their father with the term "brother", replied: *Tinye nyenka, lundi chwena. Bakuru bange na barumuna bange chwena hamo ntubirikira tata nka murumuna weitu* (Not only I, but also my siblings. We all address our father as our brother, because of the intimate fatherly and brotherly relationship) (Kalibajuna 2000). This does not denote a contradiction between the position and role of the father and son, but only an elaboration and an expression of each of them. *Ruhanga*'s relationship with *Kazoba* is incomplete without an understanding of the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire*.

Ruhanga's relationship with *Ntangaire*

The relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* is a further key factor in understanding a Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. However, the relationship between them is the most tantalising question, which raises anthropological related questions. According to the anthropological model theory, such questions start where people are. It involves "people's real questions and interests, rather than by imposing questions asked out of [their] contexts" (Bevans 2003:60). Several questions need to be addressed: Who is *Ntangaire?* Where did he originate? What is his link to, and relationship with, *Ruhanga*? What is his role compared to *Ruhanga's*? The first two questions have been dealt with in earlier sections. In this section, more emphasis will be on the last two questions. Previously, the Spirit of *Ruhanga* was approached from the point of view of creation (as the *Amagara*-vital force/breath given to created man). In this section, he will mainly be approached from theological and anthropomorphic perspectives as they are commonly regarded as the way of speaking about humans and God (Nicolson 1990:79). As Neusner contends, anthropology challenges theologians to wrestle with theological problems (1985:428). Using an anthropological model approach the position and role of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* in terms of his link, position and relation to *Ruhanga* (as found in an invocation of the Deity) will be addressed.

First, the link between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* is demonstrated by the two linking words of *aka Tata* (of my Father). They are the first words of the second part of an invocation (sub-invocation), *Aka Tata Ntangaire* (of my Father *Ntangaire*) (Balira 2001).The linking words indicate that the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* can be understood from the viewpoint of the relationship between *Kazoba* and *Ruhanga*. Therefore, like the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* (his Son), the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* should be evaluated by taking into account the relationship between all *Ruhanga*'s aspects, specifically the linking phrases, *aka Ishe* and *aka Tata*. On the basis of these linking words, some Haya scholars and theologians have suggested an anthropomorphic literal interpretation as the means for understanding the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* (Tinkaligayile 2000). They base it on ontological and hypothetical assumptions in the light of three key questions.

Firstly, *Ntangaire ni mutabani wa Ruhanga*? (Is *Ntangaire* the Son of *Ruhanga*?) If this stands, then could it mean that *Ruhanga* has two Sons (*abatabani babili - Kazoba and Ntangaire*). This could lead to regarding *Ntangaire* as the brother of *Kazoba* (*mukuru wa Kazoba*). This does not conform to either the creation (later version) or an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Such an interpretation could cause a contradiction within the invocation, which portrays only one Son of the Deity. It could also cause a gap in the normal position of *Ntangaire* and *Ruhanga*. Consequently, *Ntangaire* (who is believed to be the *Amagara* (vital force/breath) or Spirit of *Ruhanga* breathed into

humans) would now be the Son of *Ruhanga,* which contradicts both versions of the creation and the invocation. In addition, instead of *Ruhanga* being the Father of *Kazoba,* which conforms to both versions of the invocation, he becomes the Son. Such an interpretation would block further development of an invocation of the Deity, and therefore remain at a binary stage.

Secondly, *Ntangaire ni mutabani wa Kazoba*? Is *Ntangaire* the Son of *Kazoba*?) This would mean that *Ruhanga* is the Father of *Kazoba,* which conforms to the later version of the creation and an invocation of the Deity, and therefore grandfather of *Ntangaire* (*Ruhanga, Ishenkuru Ntangaire*). This could cause two main conceptual problems. It would mean that *Kazoba* is the biological Son of *Ruhanga* and that *Ntangaire* is the biological grandchild of *Ruhanga.* In both cases, it would mean that *Ruhanga* was perceived as a human and not a Deity.

Thirdly, *Ntangaire ni Ishe wa Ruhanga*? (Is *Ntangaire* the Father of *Ruhanga*?) This is the most controversial, since a positive answer to this question would mean that *Ruhanga* is the Son of *Ntangaire,* which does not conform to either versions of the creation and an invocation the Deity. It does mean that *Ruhanga* is the Father of *Kazoba* (*Ruhanga Ishe Kazoba*), which conforms to the later version of the creation and the invocation. Therefore, could it mean that *Kazoba* is the grand-child of *Ntangaire* (*Kazoba Mwijukuru wa Ntangaire*)? This does not conform to either versions of the creation or the invocation. Similar to the first and second hypothetical questions, such an interpretation could cause a change in the position of *Ruhanga* himself, his Son (*Kazoba*) and his Spirit (*Amagara/ Ntangaire*). If *Ruhanga* is not the Godhead (as is strongly believed by the Haya and portrayed in both versions of the creation and the invocation of the Deity) but is the Son of *Ntangaire*, the problem is insoluble because his position as God the Creator would have been taken over or replaced by *Ntangaire.* This could cause other problems too. On the one hand, if *Ruhanga* became the Son of *Ntangaire,* who would be the Son of *Ruhanga?* On the other hand, if *Ntangaire* became *Ruhanga,* the Godhead, who would be the Spirit of *Ruhanga*?

These hypothetical questions shed light on likely conceptual problems, which may arise following a literal interpretation of the Haya invocation of the Deity. It could result in a misunderstanding of the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* as most of the issues raised in these questions do not accord with what the Haya have believed for many years (Balira 2001). For instance, the notion of the Deity who has a Father does not conform to the Haya belief in a divine and transcendent Deity. Also, an evaluation along these hypothetical questions demonstrated the notion of the existence of three divinities of which, without correct interpretation, one could view as separate entities or components without being incorporated or united into a single body or component. This is contrary

to an invocation of the Deity, which invokes and depicts him in a threefold form and is also contrary to the Haya belief in a Deity who is perceived in his aspects as a unified form or oneness. If these interpretations were to be taken literally, it would contradict the position and the role of *Ruhanga* and his aspects, even though these questions were used as the starting point and guiding for further reflection, investigation and evaluation of an invocation of the Deity, particularly the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire*. Ways have been suggested for an understanding of this relationship.

SUGGESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING *NTANGAIRE*

It has been suggested that an evaluation of the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* should follow a theological-anthropomorphic role. The suggestion involves *Ntangaire's* relationship to *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba*, and the meaning of his role and name. These provide grounds for an interpretation, evaluation and understanding of the relationship between him and *Ruhanga.* Such an approach would take into account three factors of *Ntangaire's* involvement in the creation of humans and his place and role within an invocation of the Deity.

Ntangaire's role and relation have roots in the creation in which he is believed to be the divine breath (*Amagara*/vital force) of *Ruhanga* that is breathed into the created man. His involvement in the creation indicates a relational rather than a biological relationship. His name, *Ntangaire,* which is derived from *okutangara* (shining forth), sheds light on the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* based on three factors. Firstly, the Deity, *Ruhanga* (creator), whose role is the foundation and starting point of the Haya perception of him in his aspects. Secondly, the Son of *Ruhanga*, *Kazoba,* whose role (illumination) relates to the universe and humanity. Finally, the conceptual meaning of the name *Ntangaire* sheds light on *Amagara,* that is, the Spirit of *Ruhanga* himself (vital force) breathed into the created human. Thus, he became the root source of not only the life of humans but also their identification of him as *Ntangaire.* In this way, *Amagara* indicates *Ntangaire*'s role and relation to *Ruhanga, Kazoba* and humanity through the relationship between *Ruhanga* and *Kazoba* on the one hand and between *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire* on the other. This can be grasped from a summary view of the role played by each of *Ruhanga*'s aspects. While *Ruhanga* (the Father) plays a central role, *Kazoba* (the Son of *Ruhanga*) plays an indicative and confirming role, *Ntangaire* or *Amagara* (vital force, Spirit of *Ruhanga*) plays a conclusive role. Without *Ntangaire's* conclusive role, the relationship between *Ruhanga*'s aspects as well as the nature and meaning of the entire invocation would be incomplete and therefore not understandable (Mushoke 1999).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focussed on an interpretation and evaluation of the Haya concept of God on the basis of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, mainly according to its earlier version. It found that despite some differences, both the earlier and later versions portray the same notion of God, which thus depicted and preserved a Haya notion of the Deity from generation to generation. In this way, they served as the key to access the understanding of the Haya concept of God. The perception of the Deity, which began as a single name, changed to a double name and later, a triple name, verify the development of the Haya understanding of the Deity in different forms and times through the ages. The rising and development of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form not only depicts and preserves the Haya experience of God in an ancient time, but also how such an experience was made alive through the invocation rituals of dialoguing with the Deity regularly and with different needs. It is this dialogue with the Deity in ritual invocations that is the core and key to the Haya perception and experience of God.

In addition, the study has found that such understanding depends on an understanding of the all aspects of the Deity, namely *Ruhanga/Lububi, Kazoba* and *Ntangaire/Amagara*, because all portray an integrated and complete image-concept of the Deity. However, an understanding of an invocation of the Deity in general, and each of his aspects in particular, depends on an understanding of the links, position, role and relationships among and between them. These image/aspects do not represent three gods or divinities, each with its own identity, but one God with all aspects incorporated in a single Deity. They are components (sub-images) of the whole image of the Deity. The chapter found that a Haya perception of the Deity in the framework of a threefold invocation is capable of illuminating the Christian experience of the Triune God. This involves the use of *Ruhanga's* aspects as well as the links and relations between and among them, which could be used to illuminate the link and relations among the Persons of the Trinity. On this basis, it may be the most suitable trinitarian model ever found on the continent.

CHAPTER FOUR

CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TRINITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. It focuses on their nature and relationship with the trinitarian theology of the early believing community.It also investigates how and to what extent earlier experiences of God along biblical revelation detailing monotheism developed first into a threefold perception of God and later into the doctrine of the Trinity according to classical interpretation. It takes into account the fact that an interpretation of the Trinity was not a question of simply piecing together texts from the Bible and church tradition, but constructing a truth-giving document. It was a question of viewing the gospel in its totality (Welch 1953:126,129). The chapter also investigates how the classical Trinity was reinterpreted by contemporary theologians using other models, resulting in different versions of the doctrine of Trinity. It also deals with an exploration of how these models could shed light on the Haya interpretation of the Trinity on the basis of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form.

The chapter is divided into six parts. Part one is an introduction to the entire chapter. Part two is about the definitive nature of the Trinity. Part three deals with the classical interpretation of the Trinity: section one focuses on its background consisting of the early rising, development and practice of a threefold perception of God and also deals with the later development and interpretation of the biblical revelatory trinitarian theology; section two discusses the latest developments of trinitarian doctrine and the classical interpretation of the Trinity, problems faced and their implications; and section three elaborates on terms and formulas used to interpret and describe the Trinity. Part four discusses the paradigm shift occurring in interpreting the Trinity along contemporary approaches. Part five deals with the importance of this chapter for the entire thesis. Part six is a conclusive view.

THE TRINITY: DEFINITIONS, NATURE AND SCOPE

According to Welch, "unless we know already what the doctrine means, we have no way of determining which element of human experience can best serve as the basis for argument" (1953:90). Therefore any attempt to define and study the Trinity should focus on what we think when we hear the terms of "Triune God" and "Trinity". What ideas do we associate with them? What kind of experience is to be had in the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Due to

the complicated language of the doctrine of the Trinity (One God, three Persons) consisting of philosophical terms used, these questions remained unanswered for most converts in each generation. Despite theologians' efforts to seek answers, the Trinity has remained difficult to understand. Consequently, many converts believe it without understanding or ignore and set it apart. Others regard the doctrine of the Trinity as a speculation fit only for theological specialists, as it has nothing to do with real life. The former seem to agree with the young Melanchthon's maxim, "we adore the mysteries of the Godhead rather than to investigate them". However, Melanchthon's approach is not immune to problems. On the assertion that even belief is the only way of understanding the Trinity is not without difficulties (Moltmann 1981:2). For some theologians, belief or faith is not separated from seeking, which involves investigating.

Despite the weaknesses in the classical interpretation and definition of the Trinity, it holds a profound place in church literature. Leith, responding to Barth, asserts that the doctrine of the Trinity is a unique statement of the Christian understanding of God, even more than that of the cross as it belongs at the beginning of the statement of the Christian faith (1993:46-47). Like most theologians, they view it in terms of its role and scope. Accordingly, any interpretation and definition of the Trinity should be done in the light of the revelation of God. It involves an affirmation of the redemption in Christ as well as the unity of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as witnessed in the New Testament (Welch 1953: 22, 133, 35). That is, the doctrine of the Trinity is grounded solely on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as well as proceeding from the confession of him as Lord. This belief neither excludes a general revelation nor a complete discontinuity of Christian monotheism with other monotheisms, on the conviction that the revelation of God in Christ does not alter the fact that God revealed himself to humanity. Therefore, "we must [not] speak of a complete absence of analogy between the Christian and non-Christian conceptions of God" (Welch 1953:237).

Boff views the nature of the doctrine of the Trinity from the viewpoint of its formulation. He regards it as a human attempt to understand and express their faith in only one God being perceived in a threefold form. Structurally, it is a "systematic working out by human intelligence of the trans-subjective reality of the Trinity" (Boff 1988:25). Content wise, the doctrine of the Trinity is the implication of believers' reflection on God's manifestations through Jesus Christ as witnessed in the Bible - his birth, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension manifested to them through the Holy Spirit (Welch 1953:131). The doctrine of the Trinity could thus be defined and understood as an answer to the questions: What is the relation of the Deity to monotheism or the conception of the Fatherhood of God? What is the nature of God as he reveals himself in Christ? In the light of

the latter question, Welch defines the doctrine of the Trinity as an analysis of what is directly involved in the revelation, which the New Testament documents represent. It is an immediate implication of the revelation being regarded as identical to its content. Accordingly, an affirmation and confession of the Triune God is not different from the content of the confession that Jesus is the Lord or that God has revealed himself in Christ (1953:133, 204).

For Ward, the doctrine of the Trinity should be defined and understood as a model of God's manifestation and the transcendence of his reality, which grows in a complex way, from an actual historical locus of particular experiences of his transcendence (1974:229-230). Thus it " articulates best what God is truly like and what faith in God means for life in the world" (Bevans 2003:40).

On this basis, other theologians attempted to define the Trinity on the basis of "either the threefold form of God" or "One God in three Persons". While the latter is a classical term, the former is an early church perception of God of which an analogy could be found in other non-Christian religions (Ganeri 1996:10-11). Both terms are regarded as a proper method of describing and speaking about God, according to each frame of reference and in a given context. In this perspective, the classical doctrine of the Trinity has been described as an attempt to interpret the biblical revelation of God in the terms of the day. The crucial question is about its role and position in the theological system. This can be grasped from Welch's questions: Is the doctrine truly important and integral to the faith? If so, how is it integral? What is its relation to other central themes of theology? Is the doctrine of primary or only secondary importance? For Schleirmacher, the doctrine of the Trinity is not a primary affirmation of faith, but is secondary and dependent. He regards it as a combination of utterances rather than a direct affirmation of the Christian consciousness (Welch 1953:75-46, 76, 80). Migliore, who has the same view, defines the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of its scope. He writes,

> The doctrine of the Trinity is always an inadequate attempt to interpret this witness in the most suitable images and concepts available to the church in a particular era. Rightly understood, the doctrine of the Trinity is not an arcane, speculative doctrine; rather, it is that understanding of God, which is appropriate to and congruent with the gospel message. It is the product of the reflection of the church on the gospel message over many centuries. The doctrine of the Trinity is second order reflection on the workings of divine love attested in scripture and experienced by the Christian community. [It] is the church's effort to give coherent expression to this mystery of God's free grace announced in the gospel and expressed in Christian faith. (1991:59)

Thus, any definition of the doctrine of the Trinity given should depict and maintain the Christian faith in its totality (Welch 1953:47-48). A well-interpreted and defined doctrine of the Trinity is best understood as the ways in which one may know God according to his experience. Thus, it is not imposed upon believers, but only experienced. It is the recapitulation and definitive summary of

the Christian mystery of salvation, on which the entire reality stands or falls (Walter 1984:223). However, this should not be held as a wholly descriptive understanding of the Trinity but only as a partial and symbolic depiction.

CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

A classical interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity has its roots in the early church's experience of God, which focused on the need to confess and proclaim her belief in God. It is the New Testament chronicle of the revelation of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Hughes 1936:181). An attempt to interpret and describe this belief according to one's context resulted into a paradigm shift. It involved a development from earlier perceptions and experiences of God into different shapes and perspectives, but related in terms of core meaning. Consequently, such development was a move from a simple threefold or trinitarian perception of God to the formulation of a complicated doctrine of the Trinity.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE CLASSICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

The section focuses first on the several phases through which a foundation was laid for the development and interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity and, second, on the post apostolic patristic Fathers, Apologists and theologians (Irenaeus, Tertullian and Origen) and finally, dealing with the Trinity in the context of the problem. These will be dealt with through early and later development of the Trinity.

EARLY RISING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY

Several stages in the early rising and development of the Trinity will be addressed.

APOSTOLIC FATHERS. The Apostolic Fathers' experience of God laid the foundation in which the trinitarian doctrine took its first roots. Faith in one God (known as *Shema*) was the starting - point. Hence, "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord alone (Deut 6:4-5). As Moltmann argues, "first of all comes the proof and assurance that there is a God and that is one. Only after that is the doctrine of the triune God developed" (1981:17). Basically, monotheistic belief later developed into a binary belief (Moltmann 1981:129); hence the assertion that the apostolic age was, in fact, host to a binary belief and practice. This followed taking Jesus of Nazareth out of history and regarding him as a model for a reflection on the new experience of God. It demands a brief understanding of how the belief in the Son of God rose and developed.

The rising and development of the notion of the Son of God

The notion of the Son of God is said to have its origin in ancient Egyptian belief, whereby the King was adopted by God as his Son and representative on earth (Kim 1983:15). Later, the notion was adopted by the Israelites who developed it in their own way. In the Old Testament, the term "Son of God" was bound to the apocalyptic "Son of man" (Mark 13:21 ff; 26:15; 14:6ff). The portrayal of the "Son of man" as found in Old Testament literature, particularly in Daniel (7;13-14), depicts the early perception and practice of this notion. Later, its usage was absorbed into the Jewish-Christian experience by the early church. The main focus was on the question of Jesus' Sonship in the framework of the Son of man (Matthew 4:3,6). Its starting -point was the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth. All the gospels speak about the "Son of man" and the "Son of God" as eschatological figures (Mark 8:38). Such identification is natural because for the Evangelists the divine Sonship of Jesus was a fact (Kim 1983:5, Mark 8:38; 16:1; Matthew 16:13-20; 25:31-46; Luke 9:26; 21:27; John 3:13; 6:61; Matthew 4:3,6). In Mark 14:6, both titles "Son of God" and "Son of man" are explicitly mentioned. He is expected to appear from the heavens at the end of the world. His coming is expected to abolish the enemies of God and establish God's kingdom (Hick 1977:124).

In Acts 3:20,21, "Son of man" is missing; instead the title "Messiah" is used. Its usage does not mean the absence of the notion of the Son of God. Rather, it indicates that the belief in the Sonship of Jesus was held along with the belief in him as the Messiah. However, in its traditional-historical origins, the term Son of man is not a Christian title or a Christian prediction of Jesus, but a description of Christian functions (Walter 1984:116). For the early church, the term "Son of God" was essentially a way of expressing the central conviction of the Christian faith. That is, in the man Jesus is to be found the normative model for understanding what God is and what true humanity is (Kaufman 1981:135). Thus, they regarded him as the Son of God, "the Logos", the eternal Godhead and the object of faith (Walter 1984:54,78). Their belief was grounded in the consciousness of Christ as witnessed in the scriptures of Cf. Luke 4:18; Matthew 11:27,31; 16:27; 19:28; 28:19; 24:25; John 5:15 ff (Neve 1946:122-123). In such manner, it was natural and common for them to express their experience of Jesus in the language of the absolute (Kniter 1983:143). Accordingly, mythical images of the Son of God and incarnation were anthologised into absolutely exclusive categories. It is believed that the title "Son of God" and "Jesus' special relationship to his Father" were only fused together later, in early Christian traditions (Moltmann 1981:70). Before and during the time of Jesus, the term "Son of God" was used to identify humans

(II Sam. 7:14), but for Christians "Son of God" is a unique title (Dunn 1985:49). How was this possible? By his obedience and death on the cross, Jesus was credited and accepted by God as his "Son". Hence, the relationship was an honour conferred on him by God (Ohlig 1996:17). He is of higher "rank" than the angels (Psalms 2:7; 104:4; II Sam. 7:11; Hebrews 1: 1-14).

Thus, Christ's Sonship to the Father is radically different from our Sonship to the same Father. While he is the natural Son and descendant of the Father, we are sons and descendants by adoption (Nyamiti 1984:21). His Sonship is relational and not literal or biological as one cannot "become" God's Son in a natural sense. Either one is God's Son-in external-pre-existence or one is not.
Jesus' uniqueness formed the basis of the church's further reflection on him, from a binary to a trinitarian perception of God and later to the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Moltmann contends,

> ...in order to comprehend the New Testament's testimony to the history of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, theology had to develop the trinitarian concept of God. The history of Jesus the Son cannot be grasped except as part of the history of the Father, the Son and the Spirit. (1981:16)

Thus, the perception and experience of the Son of God later led to the transition from the "Son of God" to the Son who is the second Person of the Trinity (Kniter 1983:132). This means that the Sonship of Christ who became incarnate for humanity is a permanent Person of the Trinity (Ward 1974:181-182). It gave birth to two main views, insisted on the origin and rise of the trinitarian idea from the viewpoint of Jesus, whereas the other held a more conservative or traditional trinitarian view. While for the former, Jesus was looked upon as a hero, as a semi-divine being or demigod, for the latter, the doctrine of the Trinity was regarded as the very foundation for the biblical history of redemption and not as a matter of speculation. Access to it was available even to the untutored or ordinary Christians. Jesus Christ and his mission are the starting- points for reflecting on God. For both schools, the experience of Jesus as the Son of God and the Christian figure, who is the reality of God, was the core of their belief. It involved belief in a close relationship with him. However, intense monotheism, through which Jesus was deeply experienced as the reality of God, rescued the Apostolic Fathers' trinitarian notion of God from dying a "natural death".

Trinitarian experience of God: Scriptural basis

The early believers' experience of God at a binary stage later developed into a threefold or trinitarian invocation of God. The perception of the Spirit of God as the third component in the Trinity was another key factor in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. It involved a

reflection on the divine nature of both Christ and the Spirit, in the light of the New Testament. It implied that the history of Jesus the Son could not be grasped except as part of the history of the Father, the Son and the Sprit, on the conviction that God as the Trinity was revealed in the life of Jesus of Nazareth and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. This implied that from the beginning the trinitarian doctrine was the result of the believers' awareness of God's act in dramatic history revealed in Jesus and manifested by the Holy Spirit. Boff asserts,

> From the earlier consideration of the binding data of faith found in the New Testament, it emerged that God is revealed as Trinity, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Starting from the Trinity as revealed in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit, we can begin to see, as in a glass darkly, the mystery of the very communion existing between the three persons. (1988:76)

The fact that a full doctrine of the Trinity was not reached until centuries later does not alter the truth that it was already lived and experienced by the early believers from the beginning. The perception and interpretation of their experience of God as the Trinity was later depicted and preserved in a written form. Biblical documents as portrayed in the New Testament are a pure expression and verification of this attempt. It demanded a correct interpretation of both the scriptural-based trinitarian belief and the doctrine of the Trinity. Their relationship and role in the early rising and development of the trinitarian theology could be grasped in Moltmann's hypothetical questions. If the doctrine of the Trinity, in its dogmatic form, is not already established in the New Testament era, could it not be a way of interpreting what the scripture proclaims? But what is it the scripture proclaiming for which the doctrine of the Trinity can be viewed as the true interpretation? (1981:63). His questions involve two challenges. Fist, scriptural documents have to offer a locus for formulation and interpretation of a correct trinitarian doctrine. Second, the trinitarian doctrine is looked upon to offer not only a description or summary of the doctrine but also a valid interpretation of it. Both challenges involve believers' attempt to express their beliefs and experience in a Triune God.

Although the early believers' interpretation of the Trinity is not explicitly expressed in the New Testament, it contains the materials out of which it took shape (Hendry 1957:30). In Moltmann's words, " We will describe the scriptural beginning of the doctrine of the Trinity in such a way that we shall be able to recognise the trinitarian origin of the biblical history itself. Otherwise, Trinity would remain a problematical approach to the origins of the Christian faith" (1981:64-65).

Texts that have an apparent threefold structure (Matthew 28:10; Rom. 8:10) support this view. Other texts in support of this belief are: Matthew 28:19; Gal. 4:1-7; I Cor.12: 4-6; II Cor. 13 and Phil. 2:1-2 .The writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers (Wright 1992:53) showed how scriptural

texts played a key role in the rise and development of the trinitarian doctrine. These scriptures were translated into the language of Christian piety, and in the liturgy of the church (Leith 1993:46-47). Its practice was mainly through prayers, praises and the sacraments especially baptismal rites, which were more liturgical than theological (Boff 1988:1). The use of them has a basis in the belief that an encounter with divine mystery evokes a deep experience, utilising all our humanity: emotions, reasons, will, desire and heart. Most of the ritual-liturgical practices were developed into a short invocation of God known as the "Golden Rule" or the "Baptismal Formula".The most popular was the "Great Commission Rite". "Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples; baptise men everywhere in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Segundo reports on the practical applicability of the "Baptismal Formula". Three times, once for each divine Person, the catechumen is asked whether he or she believes, "Do you believe in the Father? Do you believe in the Son? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?" (1980:50, 53). This was an explanation of the Triune God along revelatory-salvatory beliefs in a more practical way. It laid a theological ground for the later formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. As Boff maintains:

> ...in praise and joy in hearts opening out to give thanks and celebrate. So the liturgy became the first setting in which faith in the Trinity was expressed...sacramental practice, particularly of baptism and Eucharist, forms the second setting for the professing faith in the Trinity. (1988: 27)

Thus, worship and theology played a prominent role in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Hence dexology precedes theology. First "we profess faith in Father, Son and Holy Spirit in prayer and praise (*doxology*). Then we reflect on how the divine three are one single God in perchoretic communion between themselves (theology)" (Boff 1988:232). Thus scripture provided a theological basis for perceiving, practising and describing the Trinity.

APOLOGISTS. Apologists or intellectuals responded to the problems faced by the early Christian community, especially in two ways. Firstly, reflecting on the Christian faith and its implications within the church (internal problems) and, secondly, confrontation following the problems arising outside the church. Different religious groups, namely Judaism, Greek polytheism and philosophy and gnosticism challenged and threatened the Christian faith. In both cases, the response to these challenges was theological, mainly regarding the relationship between Father and Son. It meant "the logic of the Christian belief which has roots in God being referred to as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [The burning issue was whether the presence of Christ in the church was similar to that of his Father. They asked], "what exactly do we mean when we proclaim that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God" (Boff 1988:44-45).

Among the apologists, Theophilus (about the year 180 AD) wrote about the Godhead in a triad sense: "God and his word and his wisdom" (Neve 1946:106-107). Another Apologist, Athenagoras, viewed both God and "Logos" by focussing on the unity and fellowship between them. What is the unity of the Son with the Father? What is the fellowship of the Father with the Son? What is the Spirit? What is the union and difference between those who are thus united - the Spirit, the Son, and the Father? The problem facing Athenagoras and other apologists was how to identify the "Logos" according to the Philo interpretation as found in St John's Gospel. They failed to recognise the personal differentiation of the "Logos" from the Father before the creation of the world. Consequently, they were led to subordinate the Son to the Father, as they did not think in terms of co-equality between Father and Son. Through the process of dealing with these key theological issues these intellectuals or theologians became "Apologists. Their involvement was the early foundation of the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity in later times from the double effort: theological (aimed at within the church) and apologetic (aimed at outside the church, according to the culture of the day).

EARLIER FORMULATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

THEOLOGIANS. Theologians (mainly in the Second and Third centuries) created an arena for the formulation and interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity. It involved responding to an inadequate understanding of the Trinity. Among them, Irenaues, Tertullian and Origen played a leading role.

IRENAEUS' reflection was on the divine nature of Christ and the Spirit, being equal to God and the relationship between them. The main emphasis was on the nature of the Spirit of God as the third component in the Trinity. Indications of this theological reflection appear here and there in "triadic formula" (Boff 1988 :27,35). The key questions raised at this stage were: Who is Jesus? What is his relationship to God and to the Holy Spirit? These questions resulted in several definitions that generated controversy (on the nature and role of Jesus and the Holy Spirit).For Irenaeus, an understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity depended on an understanding of the Son and the Spirit of God. Later, it gave birth to the assertion that the Christian trinitarian doctrine is strictly a Christian concept (Mackey 1938:2).

Another stage in the development and interpretation of the trinitarian doctrine had taken place in the fourth century. Like at earlier stages, it was through theological reflection and discussion in which **TERTULLIAN** played a key role. His theological arena was to do with problems patterning the

doctrine of the Trinity. The most tantalising question for Tertullian and other theologians, like Origen, was treating the Trinity as a problem, conceptually known as "the divine three are one God". It was the belief that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are really three distinct and yet related in one God. It involved the question of "how to equate the Trinity in unity and unity in Trinity" (Boff 1988:233). An attempt to seek answers to these questions was mainly through two camps and two main theological schools of thought.

First, there was the eastern group known as the Greek Fathers, who started with the Father as their main theological explication. They regarded him as the source and origin of all divinity. There are two ways out from the Father: "the Son by begetting and the Spirit by proceeding". Hence, he communicated his whole substance to the Son and Holy Spirit. Both are "consubstantial" with the Father and with God. In turn all three are "consubstantial" with one sole God. "The Father also forms the Persons of the Son and of the Holy Spirit in an eternal process. This [description] runs the risk of being understood as subordinationism" (Boff 1988:234).

Second, there was the western group known as the Latin Fathers. In the first five centuries, of Christianity, the church in the West dealt with the doctrine of the Trinity in a way that differed from that followed by the eastern Church, namely by viewing it as a problem, rather than as a means of faith and worship. While eastern orthodox theology continued to be saturated with trinitarian categories, in the western church the doctrine of the Trinity had come into increasing question. Dealing with the doctrine of the Trinity as a problem lacked an explicit motive, which led to regarding it as a problem rather than an answer. It implied encapsulating the heart of the Christian gospel by establishing "a series of mathematic and logical difficulties rather than by glorying in the being of a God, whose reality-answer is found in a communion of Persons" (Gunton 1991:31-32). The central theme of theologians in the western church was essentially to defend the unity of God within the doctrine of the Trinity. Accordingly, any valid trinitarian theology was judged on how it dealt with the problem of the unity of God, which was threatened by heresies. Among the questions raised by the church in the West were how were the Son and the Spirit related to God the Father and to one another. What sort of relationship existed between Father, Son and Holy Spirit? Was there a definite order in their relationship? How did the three relate to biblical faith in the strict oneness of God? Were they simply juxtaposed? How were the Son and the Spirit related to the world, in terms of their roles towards humanity? How did they contribute to the nature and validity of the Trinity? (Moltmann 1981: 168-170). The main starting point of the theological explication was of a divine, spiritual nature believed to be equal in all three Persons. Boff writes:

> ...absolute Spirit is the Father, understanding is the Son and will is the Holy Spirit. The three appropriate the same nature in distinct modes: The Father without beginning, the Son begotten by the Father, and the Spirit breathed out by the Father and the Son. The three are in the same nature in distinct modes...The three are in the same nature, consubstantial, and therefore one God. This current runs the risk of being interpreted as "modalism". (Boff 1988:234)

Thus, God was believed to be an absolute Spirit who thinks and loves, as well as being above all. Accordingly, his supreme understanding or complete surrender of himself was interpreted as his Son. Hence, St Irenaeus described the Son and the Spirit as the two hands of the Father, touching us and building us, taking our human condition in order to save and bring us into the communion of the Trinity. It implies the relation and the unity of the Triune. For describing the nature of each Person in the oneness of God, or unity of three divine Persons, the western church used the terms "distinct" and "subsist". These were regarded as having "the advantage of not easily insinuating as "three persons" the multiplication of the essence and of the subjectivity" (Rahner 1970:113). Rahner maintains:

> We may say, then, that: the one God subsists in three distinct manners of subsisting; manners of subsisting Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct hence these three are not the same one; the Father, Son and Spirit are distinct as relations of opposition; each in a different manner of subsisting...God is 'threefold' through his three manners of subsisting. (1970:113-114)

The western church's approach of treating the doctrine of the Trinity as a problem caused reactions. Tertullian and other theologians in the Third Century dealt seriously with the issue. He constructed technical, philosophical and theological terms whose aim was to defend the doctrine of the Trinity from the heresies of modalism and subordinationalism. His focus was on the most immediate problems facing the church. First, how could the church escape from subordinationalism? How could the church get away from viewing Christ as a kind of second God? Second, how could the Trinity of special Persons (hypostasianism) be maintained without sacrificing Christian monotheism? (Neve 1946:106). In an attempt to defend "hypostasianism" against "monarchism of Praxeas", Tertullian used the word "trinitas" to defend the Trinity. He created 509 nouns, 284 adjectives, 24 adverbs and 161 verbs. His famous terms are known as "one substance, three persons." His central thesis was *unitas ex semetipsa derivans Trinitatem* (The Trinity derives from unity in itself). For him God is not an individual entity, but a reality in process, a self-distribution (dispensation or oeconomia) constituting second and third aspects formed part of God's substance and action (Boff 1988:52-53). Tertullian was the first theologian to use the term Trinity and it became the official term in identifying the doctrine of the Trinity. He stated:

> Everywhere I hold one substance in three cohering. All are of one, by unity of substance; while I hold one substance in three cohering. All are one, by unity of substance; while the mystery of the

> dispension is still guarded, which distributes the unity into a Trinity, placing in their order the three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Neve 1946:107-108)

Like Tertullian, other theologians reacted to this problem from a different theological point of view. Consequently it led to different views in perceiving the trinitarian doctrine. Some of them were contrary to the Christian faith. The issues that most tantalised theologians were the questions relating to christology. Reacting to this problem, some theologians had constructed the trinitarian conception, which depicted the unity of Christ with God in a way that raised the question (Moltmann 1981:129). Some of them belonged to heretic groups – "arianism", "sabellianism", "subordinationalism", "modalism" and "tritheism". The most significant among the modalists was Sabellius. In 215 AD in Rome, his teaching differed from that of Noetus and Praxeas. His trinitarian concept gave the Holy Spirit a place with the Father and the Son. For him there were no distinctions in the divine being, but God the divine. Unity revealed himself as creator (in the Son), as redeemer and, in the Spirit, as Sanctifier. He taught that these are not "hypostases", but roles or parts played by one Person. In other words, all three are one and the same Person. Thus, Sabellius portrayed God as a unity, "a monas", a single Person viewed in three different forms (Neve 1946:110-111). Most of the theologians at this stage ended up in misinterpretation and a misrepresentation of the doctrine of the Trinity, resulting in more problems and more difficulties. Only a few of them produced an appropriate interpretation and understanding of the Trinity, especially at a later stage.

ORIGEN was another theologian who dealt with the Trinity in the context of the problem. Like Irenaeus and Tertullian, he reacted to the problem of the misconception of the Trinity. He struggled to offer an appropriate expression of the Trinity, thus preserving the faith in Christ, the Son of God. He perceived the Trinity as "an eternal dynamic of communication". For him, the Trinity should not be thought of as a reality complete in itself, but rather as a process in everlasting realisation (Boff 1988:52). Like Tertullian, he strongly opposed "monarchanism" teaching, which emphasised "monotheism" to the exclusion of "hypostasianism" and "tri-personality" concepts. Later, Origen differed with the apologists and with Tertullian's views on the question of the "Logos". While they conceived the "Logos" to be a Person from the time of creation, he declared that the "Logos" had been a Person for all eternity. He was everlasting eternal and as brilliance produced by the sun. As light gives brightness, so the Father originated the Son (Logos) and the Father and "Logos" originated the Holy Spirit. Thus, Origen was the first to use the word *hypostasis* (individual) to characterise the three divine Persons in God. He stated that the Father did not beget the Son and set Him free. He was begotten, but He is always begetting Him. Origen walked a step in the direction of the co-eternity and co-equality of the Son and the Father, as expressed in the church doctrine of

the Trinity (Neve 1946:108). His view of the Trinity as a play of relationships and communication based on "three distinct Persons" was a fruitful source for later construction of the doctrine of the Trinity. For instance, his work and that of other theologians paved the way to the formulation and construction of the classic doctrine of the Trinity.

LATER INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

The later interpretation of the Trinity along classical lines took place mainly in the fourth and fifth centuries. This was a more rigidly formulated and interpreted doctrine of the Trinity. Its formulation and development went hand in hand with internal and external pressures, mainly theological. In Boff's words " the doctrine of the Trinity was forged from ... double efforts: theological (aimed within the church) and apologetic (aimed outside the church), against objections from prevailing culture) (1988:45). For the latter, the pagan Greek religious thought known as Neo-Platonism was among the key factors. It provided the cultural background in those times to the Christian theology of the Trinity at a further and more advanced stage (Mackey 1983:137). In such a context, different theological views, mainly "heretical", were among the internal factors that led to the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. However, at times, it was the heresies themselves that produced concepts that came to be embodied in orthodox teaching. Some of the key words used in the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity came from heretical sources. Thus, its formulation did not appear overnight or from a single source, but was "the outcome of many faltering steps with innumerable disputes over terminology and the emergency of several heresies" (Boff 1988:46). As Moltmann writes,

> The early church's doctrine of the Trinity took on the form during its resistance against dangerous heresies, in which the unity of Christ with God was called in question... Both heresies are christological in nature. (1981:129)

There were two main theological factors that went hand in hand with the formulation and interpretation of the trinitarian doctrine: the perception of Jesus in God's salvation in relation to the Spirit of God, and his nature as the Son who is consubstantial with the Father and Spirit of God. How they relate to God and to each other was the burning question (Boff 1988: 27-28). It indicated the trinitarian relationship among the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

COUNCILS. The arena for the latest formulation and interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity was through the councils held at different times and places. Among them, the Councils of Nicaea (A.D. 325), Constantinople (A.D. 381) and Chalcedon (A.D. 451) took a leading role. The main question at the Council of Nicaea was the difference between the terms "begotten" and "created".

After long and deep discussion, it was confirmed that the Son (Jesus) who died and was resurrected was the only begotten Son of God (begotten not created) (Hughes 1936:90). He is one in "substance" or "essence" with the Father and has everything in common with him, except his personal characteristics (Moltmann 1981:166). Thus he was regarded as an eternal aspect of the Trinity, who became incarnate (Ward 1974: 181-182). The fact that the Son of God became incarnate in Jesus Christ does not imply an evolution in God, since for all eternity God was Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The "eternity of the Trinity safeguards the Christian understanding of God against all pantheistic and mystical notions, which tend to make God dependent on man" (Forell 1960:202-202).

The relationship between the Father and the Son was defined as "one substance" and expressed in the key words *homoousia,* meaning of one, and the same *ousia* (essence or substance). The word *hypostasis* was used synonymously with *ousia* or substance, (as it had been until Nicaea). In this way, the council spoke of the dual nature (physis) of Christ coming together to form one Person (*prosopon*) or substance (hypostasis). For Dwane, "the concept of *homoousion* (*homoousia*) (established at Nicaea and clarified at Chalcedon) defines Christ as an eternal Being who is fully and truly as much God" (1988:53-59; Young 1993:209). Bevans speaks of the relationship of both two as well as their theological significance:

> Jesus must be divine, for otherwise his suffering has no power to redeem, and he must be human, for otherwise his suffering has nothing to do with ours. And two must be joined in such a way that his true humanity is neither destroyed nor swallowed up in his divinity. (2003:116)

Another issue at the Council of Nicaea was the question of the relationship of the Father, Son and Spirit, which was dealt with from different perspectives. The question was the root source of the problem of the doctrine of the Trinity to which finding an answer was the focus of different Councils.

"The central problem of trinitarian doctrine is how to express the fact that the divine Three are one God. [Epistemologically,] Father, Son and Holy Spirit are really three and distinct; but they are always related; they are one God" (Boff 1988:233-234).

Responding to the problem, the Council emphasised the "co-existence of the three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, together make up the unity and oneness of God" (Boff 1988:67). However, the Cappadocian Fathers raised the question as to how the three can be one (Studer 1993:144). "The crux of the classical Niceno-Constantinopolitan teaching is that God is 'one in essence, distinguished in three Persons'" (Migliore 1991:62). Accordingly, the name "God" implied the co-existence of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who together make up the unity and oneness of God.

Despite this important conclusion, Nicaea left some questions unanswered. How could one sustain Christ's true Godly and humanity? How were the divine and human elements in Christ related?. Was Jesus equally a human being? His humanity has been regarded by theologians through the ages as "the only way that divinity could touch men and women" (Bevans 2003:115). Despite unanswered theological questions, Nicaea set the course for later reflections on christology and the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. As highlighted already, the council made it clear that "the name God implied the co-existence of three - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus the stage reached at Nicaea served as a reference for later Councils, mainly the Councils of Constantinople (AD 381) and Chalcedon (AD 451). The reason behind the later councils, particularly the Council of Chalcedon, was to regulate the Christian language "in a way which did not divide the essence or confuse persons" (O'Collins 1983:18). Focusing on refuting Apollinarius's teaching, the first Council of Constantinople taught that Christ had a true human nature; it reaffirmed Nicaea's teachings (O'Collins 1983:17). Its theological significance is as Bevans maintains:

> [perception of the humanity of Jesus enabled the] "councils, particularly that of Chalcedon [avoiding] the temptation of spiritulization of Jesus and his redemption by remaining faithful to the biblical witness of Jesus' humanity: the word made flesh. Jesus was not simply God; Jesus was equally a human being. And Jesus' humanity was the only way that divinity could touch men and women. (2003:115)

Hence, what was insinuated at Nicaea became fully explicit at Constantinople. Thus, "Chalcedon's definition of Jesus' divinity and humanity - *'homoousios* with the Father as to his Godhead, and the same *homoousiou* with us to his manhood - is the only christology acceptable [by most classical theologians] (Bevans 2003:116). Also, the Council confirmed that the Spirit of God was equal and of the same nature as the Father and the Son and therefore God. The definition goes: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified" (Boff 1988:55). "According to the revised creed, the Holy Spirit was said to proceed from the Father 'and from the Son'" (Migliore 1991:169), that is he is "of one nature with the Father and the Son" (Boff 1988:27). Hence, the Western church added the word *filioque* to the text of the Nicene Creed in the Sixth Century at the Third Synod of Toledo in AD 559. It led to regard the *filioque* theology as the primary question of the internal relations of the Holy Spirit (Welch 1953:285). The revised creed demonstrated the early establishment of orthodox faith in the Trinity as unity of three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Since then, trinitarian theology stood or fell with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (Mackey 1983:135-37).

At the Council of Chalcedon, it was confirmed that Jesus Christ was fully divine yet fully human, two natures united in one Person (hypostasis) without confusion, change, division or separation

(Migliore 1991:140). Thus, the Chalcedon interpretation of the Trinity in general and Jesus Christ (christology) in particular advanced another step further, beyond the Nicene reflections. It led to the perception of God as Trinity (Nicolson 1990:24-25). While Nicaea essentially dealt with trinitarian doctrine, Chalcedon focused on christology. Chalcedon's significance in the construction of the Christian concept of God lies in the belief that it is only christology that makes a knowledge of the Triune God necessary. Thus it was practiced and anticipated that the doctrine of the Trinity is a strictly christological doctrine, "an attempt to express the early church's perception of God through and in Jesus by using language and terms of that time- Neo-Platonic Greek thought patterns" (Mackey 1983:2). This belief was applicable in the Apostles' Creed in which historical christology had a second mention (Moltmann 1981:97). Kaufman describes the Chalcedonian definition and its significance in terms of God's relationship with humanity as lucid in understanding God. He writes:

> In the classical Chalcedonian formulation, Jesus Christ is said to be truly man and truly God...Jesus is taken to be the perfect expression or representation of humanity, not in the abstract but humanity in its proper relationship to its ultimate metaphysical foundation; and so Jesus is said to be the perfect expression or representation of God as well. It is because both the anthropological and metaphysical are believed to come to a focus in Jesus that he can be the concrete image...for human life in the world. (1981:134)

Thus as Fabella points out, "the true significance of Nicea, and later of Chalcedon, is 'the underlying challenge they pose to us to have our own contemporary culturally-based christological formulations" (Bevans 2003:8).

On the other hand, as was the case at other councils (Nicaea, Constantinople etc), the Chalcedonian conclusion and resolutions are not without weakness. Most of them in general and the Council in particular had presented a negative rather than a positive, a tentative rather than an explicit answer to the question posed. They had, at least, unambiguously excluded the false solutions of Apolinaris and Eutyches, which tended to envisage the divine Word as constituting the animating principle of Jesus' human nature, hence the use of the term "hypostasis" (Studer 1993:217). In describing the dual nature of Jesus, human and divine, the Council speaks of his divinity in a rather formal and abstract manner that fails to bear the specific imprint of the gospel narrative (Migliore 1991:149). In such a manner, the Chalcedonian definition of faith has been described as presenting a dogmatic compromise point of view rather than "kerygmatic" in character (Studer 1993:213). Its main weakness has been described as posing questions without answers. Thus, most theologians (like Karl Rahner) regard it as a beginning and not an end of the issues it dealt with (O'Collins 1995:325). Commenting on its weakness Nicolson writes:

> Many traditional Christians would concede that the language of Chalcedon assumes Greek philosophical concepts which we no longer share and even the comparison of the Greek terms as *ousia* and *hypostasia* with their Latin equivalents of *substantia* and *persona* led to misunderstandings, as the terms are not exact equivalents. (1990:24-25)

Apart from its significant contribution, a classical interpretation of the Trinity has been challenged on how it dealt with some key issues. In the first place, its theism emphasised a one-sided view of the "absolute transcendence" of God over the world, God's untouchability by human suffering. In the second place, it has been challenged by theologians like Moltmann, La Cugna, and Johnson for the loss of a living sense of God as a Triune entity perceived as a threefold form. The weakness has been described as an operative trinitarian theology, which led to Christians' losing their moorings in the foundational trinitarian experience. This was the consequence of defining and describing the Trinity along mainly Greek philosophical lines that emphasised logical reasoning. Reichle states:

> ...the Trinity...evolved through struggles in the church councils over many years (1984:7-8). It resulted in bits of contextual theology which are hard to understand for us who live in another age and different philosophical context. (1987:32)

Despite the weakness in the classical doctrine of the Trinity, classical Christian thinkers of the fourth and fifth centuries had laid a foundation for further formulation and interpretation of the Christian doctrine of God. Therefore, it could not be repudiated because, according to the canon of the New Testament, it had proved its worthiness in terms of Christendom. Through interpretation and development of the doctrine of the Trinity, the church had managed to retain and maintain the Christian faith (Thiselton 1995:116). Thus, its interpretation was not "a matter of trying to domesticate the mystery" (Boff 1988:96). Rather it was an interpretation that bears witness to the unity of God as manifested in Jesus of Nazareth and the strength of the Holy Spirit (Reichle 1987:32-33).

TERMS AND FORMULAS USED TO IDENTIFY THE TRINITY

Terms are the means for defining and expressing the meaning. However, theological terms are regarded as more useful than empirical terms. We need them for interpreting and expressing the Trinity as we can only conceive of God in human terms (Ward 1974:211), in the sense that no one can see or experience God empirically, as the realities of the world are experienced. A use of these terms had roots in the believers' need to express their new experience of God through Jesus Christ (who had become the paradigm of transcendence). Without them one could not understand the language of one's faith. From the beginning theological and technical terms and formulas were not used to undermine the Trinity, but to express it adequately. Most of them had been established

"after many trials, errors and insights through generation after generation of Christian thinkers" (Boff 1988:58). As Welch maintains, "the "evolution of the doctrine of the Trinity was nothing else but a search "for language which can express positively the Trinity" (Welch 1953:276). It consists of defining the character of the unity and the distinction. Boff writes:

> Discourse on the Trinity over the centuries has produced a set of syntactical rules governing the way of speaking of God and the divine persons, the purpose of which is to safeguard faith from inadequate or erroneous expressions. It is not a matter of trying to domesticate the mystery, but of regulating language as not to divide the essence or confuse the divine Persons. (1988:96)

The use of the terms "person" and "persons"

The study focuses on the main terms used to interpret the Trinity along a classical interpretation, namely: "person "(singular) and "persons" (plural). The term "person" or "persons" is not applied in the Bible in its usual form because it uses different language and terms to describe the Trinity. It speaks about it in terms of revelation its point of departure being the history of Jesus, his life and work. The classical doctrine of the Trinity speaks about Trinity in terms of theology and formulas. Its starting point is the philosophical logic and the belief in One God. Hence, the use of "person" or "persons", or "one God in three Persons." Different approaches - biblical and classical interpretations - and languages used highlight the fact that the absence of the term person or persons in the Bible does not mean that it does not give us a full portrayal of the Trinity or revelation about it. It does, but in a different way. Thus, it speaks clearly important facts about the Trinity (Boff 1988:25). Boff maintains:

> We should never forget that the New Testament never uses the expression "trinity of persons" and "unity of nature". To say that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit is revelation; to say that is one substance and three persons is theology, a human endeavour to fit the revelation of God within the limitation of reason. (1988:156)

The fact that the term "person" or "persons" did not originate from biblical documents is not problematic as they are not against it (Allmen 1958:150). "Not biblical" is not the same as "unbiblical" or "anti-biblical". What matters is not whether a concept occurs in the Bible, but whether "it represents an objectively valid interpretation of biblical testimony" (Walter 1984:287). Thus, the physical absence of the terms "person" and "persons" in the Bible (as is the case with other dogma) is not sufficient reason to exclude them from dogmatic discourse. We need them not because of mere historical, geographical and scriptural originality, but because of their capability to depict the Christian God according to time and context. A use of them or even changing or replacing them will not change the reality depicted through them.

Background and earlier use of the term "person"

Earlier in the fourth century, Augustine adopted the term "person" but was not enthusiastic about it because it did not clarify relationships. The aim of using this term was to distinguish the Father, Son and Spirit. He identified "persona" with the "I", thus introducing a revolutionary novelty in the history of Western philosophy. In a subjective sense, "persona" corresponded to the one God rather than to any of the three who make-up the one God. Accordingly, in a single Deity, three I's do not exist, only "three modes of being God" – Father, Son and Spirit (Studer 1993:183). As mentioned previously, in the beginning of the third century, Tertullian was the first theologian to formulate technical terms for an explanation of the Trinity in the Eastern Church. His phrase, "God is one substance in three Persons" was an attempt to express God, who was known to believers in three Persons, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By substance, he meant that God is one being. It is the belief that God exists in a threefold form of one divine nature. By "person" he did not mean an individual as we know in contemporary language, but a reality of self-dispensation or economy of God. Tertullian uses the term "person" to indicate the "depth" of distinctions between Father, Son and Sprit. In such a manner, it ruled out the monarchianism of Noetus and Praxeas. Although Tertullian's definition of the term "person" is imprecise, it shows his aim of depicting that in the being of God there is "a threefold existence" (Leith 1993:49).

Later use of the terms "person" and "persons"

Tertullian's "person" later was developed into a broader meaning. An understanding of it in this study will involve a knowledge of its background. The word "person" (a Greek word meaning mask) comes from the language of the Greek theatrical drama (originally masks were worn over actors' face to disguise the actor's features). In the Greek formula and Greek theology applied the term *hypostasis*, (which means an individual existence of a particular nature), parallel to the term *prosopon* (the normal translation of persona) in the doctrine of the Trinity. Its use implied that the term "*hypostasis* was maintained in preference to *prosopon*…to avoid Sabellian implications which arose from the combination of *prosopon* with *homoousios*".

In this context, the term "person" was used in both single and plural forms (persons). The latter was used to interpret and identify the biblical experience of God in a threefold form, an interpretation of biblical language of God the Father, Son and Spirit. This was an attempt to describe and understand the Triune God according to time and context (Owen 1971:99). Such attempt has been described as the Christian reflection on the way God has revealed himself and the

Christian community's view of it. It is on this basis that the entirety of Christian salvation stands or falls (Walter 1984:233). Boff describes the earlier usage of the term "persons".

> Trinity, for the first time might well form this impression: the Christian faith developed intellectually in the Hellenistic world; Christians had to translate their "decology" into a theology appropriate to the world in order to assert the truth of their faith. So they used expressions accessible to the critical reasoning of that time, such as substance, person, relation, perchoresis, procession. This was most difficult to follow...it has left its mark even today. (1988:156-157)

The problem facing classical theologians and philosophers along the use of the terms "person" and "persons" was how to balance the "distinctiveness of three Persons" in term of the unity of the divine being (Welch 1953:95). Despite this, different Councils tried to explain both the threeness and oneness of the Trinity. In order to express the unity of God (what unites the three persons) the Greeks used the term *hypostasis.* Hypostasis was also used as a synonym for *ousia* and "essence". So in God there is one *hypostasis* (or *ousia* or essence) and three Persons (1988:60). However, "the ground of the confession that God is in his essence three hypostases or modes of existence [lies in what has been described as] an irreducible distinction in the act of revelation" (Welch 1953:282). "In the Latin theology the concept of "persona" was first used in "Sabellian" and "Modalism". The emphasis was on one God in three masks" (Moltmann 1981:171), that is, God is "one hypostasis in three Persons" (*personae, hypostasei*). God exists in a threefold form as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each member of this triad is distinct, but each posses the whole nature of Godhead (Owen 1971:341). Both concepts, of "person" and of *hypostasis*, safeguard Trinity in unity therefore safeguarding the Christian faith. For believers, neither the phrase "one God in three persons" nor "three in one" indicate a "mathematical dice" or "mathematical entity" or even absurdity that could connotate the existence of three and one who are the same, or each member isolated from the being of God. Instead, they are analogical depictions of the unity of God. Thus, the use of "person" and "persons", like any other terms used to identify God, should remain at analogical level and not beyond that, because, the belief in the three Persons of God is human language to better express their perception of God, as well as his unity and relationship. To say that God is one is intended to negate division, thus affirming the unity of divine being. To say that the persons are three is intended to negate singleness, thus affirming a communion in God. These could be understood from the viewpoint of faith and theology. While the terms God the Father, Son and Spirit are empirical terms the term "persons" (One God in three Persons) is a theological term. Boff, contends:

> ...we need to remember the fragmentary nature of the theoretical instruments we use to try to probe the meaning of the Christian God... That there is one and three in God is a matter of faith. That we

> call what is one in God nature (substance or essence) and what is three "persons" is a matter of theology, a human construction whose purpose is better to glimpse the reality of the mystery. (1988:89-90)

However, an understanding of the Trinity from the viewpoint of analogical depiction of the terms "person" and "persons" or any other trinitarian terms should not be limited to these terms because Trinity itself is more profound than saying God is God in three ways. "Theology has never been satisfied with an expression of "the Trinity by the " persons" (Boff 1988:157). On top of that, the word "person" or "persons" has been reported as inappropriate to describe the oneness of God from a trinitarian perspective. Attempts to interpret the Trinity through the ages by using the terms *persona* and *hypostasis* have been hampered by being ambiguously translated (Peacocke 1987:44). These terms do not stand alongside one another but after one another (Mackey 19983:40). A use of them has left its mark even today. Thus, a call has been given to seek new terms for describing the mystery of the Trinity that springs "from an encounter between biblical revelation and dominant culture" This is the scope and the focus of contemporary theologians in general and of this dissertation in particular.

Karl Barth and Karl Rahner were reluctant to speak of three persons in God because of philosophical impacts. The real problem was how to show that the persons existed in absolute unity. For them the term "person" did not draw a distinction between person and personality. Rather, God is three persons in one nature or personality. While "Persons in God" are his threefold individuality, the "three Persons" are centres of consciousness, or three separate self-consciousnesses (Welch 1963:98).

Karl Barth viewed and presented the doctrine of the Trinity as Christian monotheism and argued polemically against a "tritheism" that had never existed. For him the concepts of "person" and "persons" are misleading. He suggested they should be replaced by the phrase "a model of being" for one person and "three models of being" for three persons, or even by the patristic term "model of substance" which he regards as fitting to replace the term "person" (Barth 1975:35; Rahner 1970:130ff). For Barth, "modes of being" "does not refer to distinctions in the content of God's activity or to God only in relation to the world, but to his in most being, the structure of his existence" (Welch 1953:278)

With an astonishing similarity to Barth and almost with the same presuppositions, Karl Rahner developed the doctrine of the Trinity. For him, the statement of "three Persons in God" evokes the misunderstanding that in God there are three different consciousnesses or spiritualities with centres

of activity. In order to stress the subjectivity of the one God who acts in a threefold way, Rahner preferred to use the description of the "threefold God" (Moltmann 1981:144-145). However, Rahner's term is quite similar to the Haya perception of the Deity in a threefold form. He asserted that Barth's "model of being" is in danger of being misunderstood along with modalist thinking. Thus, he proposes "three distinct manners of subsisting". Like Barth, his intention was to replace the use of the term "person", creating his own terminology. He lamented on the later development and use of the word "persona" outside of the trinitarian theology of God in the fourth century, which has further increased ambiguity. He writes:

> We wonder why we did not from the start operate with a concept or word ("person" or some other word) which might more easily be adopted to that which is meant and expressed with less danger of misunderstanding. We do agree with Karl Barth that the word "person" is ill adapted to express the intellectual reality and that it should be replaced in ecclesiastical terminologies by another word which produces fewer misunderstandings. (Rahner 1970:43-44)

Rahner's view was strongly challenged by some theologians. Moltmann contended that the term "three distinct manners of subsisting" is "tritheistic", and therefore wrong to think of the "three Persons" of the Trinity as "three different personalities" with different centres of activity. For him and other theologians like Welch, "it is not so much the 'modes' which subsists in the being of God, but the one God who subsists in these three modes, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (Welch 1953:278-279).

Despite the weakness of the classical term "person" or "persons", it has been used as the means for expressing the Christian trinitarian notion of God in a positive way throughout the ages (Mackey 1983:103). Whatever approach and terms are applied, whether "the three models of being" (Barth) or "the three distinctive ways of "subsisting" or a "threefold form" (Rahner) or any other contemporary term like "aspect" for "person" and "aspects" for "persons", they should not be isolated or interpreted literally, but rather symbolically and theologically. This implies that no Person of the Trinity can be isolated from the whole being of God, as all Persons constituted their relationships to each other in an intelligible manner. As Jungel asserts, the doctrine of the Trinity consider the oneness and differentiation of God's threefold mode of being. For Augustine, an attempt to isolate persons would lead to serious damage to the Christian faith as each has a role to play in the unified whole (Owen 1971:341). To the extent that the works of the Trinity are outwardly indivisible, any description that causes the sharp division of isolating Father, Son and Holy Spirit from each other was not permissible (Leith 1993:49-59).

The most burning issue raised by heresies at the time was the usage and relation of the "number three" in relation to the term "three persons". They claimed that the Trinity was merely based on the logic of the number three. This view was strongly refuted by some church theologians like St Basil. For them, the Trinity or threeness was the same as the unity of God and not division or isolation. Accordingly, the Trinity, or the number three in the Trinity (*trias* and *trinitas,* which was established by Theophilus of Antioch and Tertullian at the end of the second century) did not signify anything that could be counted. Moreover, "the doctrine of the Trinity is not a matter of establishing the same thing three times [Accordingly], Barth views "the three Persons merely as a triple repetition of one and the same God" (Moltmann 1981:141-142). Therefore, it has nothing to do with arithmetical processes of addition and subtraction. Numbers, when linked to God, could not be taken in a quantitative sense (Wells 1995:338-339). Scripture and God are not dependent on numbers. Whether number one, two or three, they do not represent the model of God by virtue of numbers. To God all numbers are numberless. St Basil's reaction on this question is as Boff reports:

> St Basil, the great theologian of the Holy Spirit, says: We do not count simply from one to many or one, two, three, or first, second, third. In confessing the three persons (*hypostases*) without their nature into many, we remain with the unity (monarchy) of the Father. In other words, three does not mean a quantity, but a mysterious order of three that are one in communion. (1988:82)

Thus, as with other terms, the notion of the number three in relation to persons of the Trinity should not be taken literally, but only as a symbolic representation of reality. It represents and depicts a perfect and unified divine reality for humanity. Despite the fact that it is a plural number, it has been regarded as an absolute form of God. In Walter's words, it is an organised plurality and therefore unity in multiplicity. Aristotle calls it the number of completeness (1984:236-237).

CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

The doctrine of the Trinity is an attempt to understand and express in human language the mysterious reality of God, according to the believers' time and context. It seeks an answer to this question: How does one express the divine three in one God? Through the ages, theologians had been attempting to seek answers to these questions. The main aim was to give a correct interpretation and understanding of the Trinity, thus tackling the problem of misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Different interpretations gave birth to different faces of the Trinity. However, all categories of interpretations indicate the fact that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a fixed unchanging dogma, but the church's expression of the mystery of God according to context (Migliore 1991:59). It is the product of the church's reflection on the gospel, reached through

intellectual formulations and interpretation (Welch 1953:126). Even through the "various classical philosophies that have served as the bases of theology [of the Trinity] in the past do not seem to resonate with contemporary experience" (Bevans 2003:9). This part of the chapter investigates how contemporary theologians, by using models different to traditional or classical models, has managed to reinterpret the biblical Triune God and classical doctrine of the Trinity in terms and language more understandable by believers in a given context. Theological justification of contemporary and contextual approach lies in that fact that the Trinity is the core of the Christian faith. Bevans states:

> ...[the] final dynamic in Christianity that calls for contextualization is found in the doctrine [of the Trinity] that is at the heart of Christianity... [Hence] contemporary theology has seen a renewal and revitalization of trinitarian thought and placed it once more at the centre and source of Christian theologising. (2003:15)

Most contemporary theologians regard such an approach (contextualization) as rescuing the doctrine of the Trinity from the danger of falling into metaphysics (Jungel 1976:21). Some of their exemplary models have been selected for this study.

MODELS FOR CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE TRINITY

The need for a contextual model for interpreting and articulating the Trinity could be grasped in Cunningham's words. For him, an understanding of God as Trinity "opens up a vista of God's 'marks' (what Augustine called vestigial) in the world's events, in people's experience and cultures, in the natural world" (Bevans 2003:15). Some models have been chosen to highlight an interpretation of the classical doctrine of the Trinity along a contemporary interpretation, namely, the "revelatory-salvatory Trinity"(or biblical Trinity), "ontological Trinity", "love as Trinity", "economic and immanent Trinity" and "koinonia/ community Trinity".

Revelatory-salvatory Trinity

Revelatory and salvatory models are among the earlier attempts to interpret the Trinity in a biblical perspective. The leading proponents of this approach were Martin Luther and Karl Barth. Although they lived in different times and places, they applied the same approach -Revelatory Salvatory models - to interpret the Trinity. Both used biblical language rather than classical-philosophical language. Methodologically, their approach (Revelatory and Salvatory models of Trinity) has been described as a "dialectical approach" through which theologians "attempt to find the fundamental meaning of the presence of the Trinity in history and of history in the Trinity" (Boff 1988:114). Along this approach they strictly view the revelation of the Trinity in history as

God's process. The theological justification for this approach has its basis in the belief that the early perception of the Triune God had its roots in the belief in and experience of Jesus as the Son of God and saviour of mankind. It underlined and governed biblical thought in the history of redemption (Neve 1946:106). Other theologians like Ward describe revelatory-salvatory Trinity as a self-revelation or "complete transcendence of [God's] reality and continuing imminence of his presence with men" (Ward 1974:229-230). Martin Luther and Karl Barth interpreted and understood the Trinity on this basis. Both of them dealt with Trinity as a mystery of salvation, revealed and communicated to humans not to satisfy their curiosity but to make them perceive, believe and depend on him Luther regards the doctrine of the Trinity as the core of the Christian faith. For him, it had meaning only in so far as it resulted in salvation (Harvey 1967:44).

Similarly, Karl Barth interpreted the Trinity from the viewpoint of revelation and salvation. He holds that the Trinity is repetition *aeternitatis in aeternitate*. By this paradigm shift he believes that he can reconstruct the doctrine of the Trinity in the light of the statement, "God reveals himself as the Lord". Along this view, Barth asserts that an understanding of the revelation of a threefold nature of God does not necessarily depend on trinitarian terms on the grounds that the revelatory Trinity is not bound by triple or any other terms. While following the same path, Barth walked different steps with regards to this question. Starting from the sovereignty of God, he defined and identified the doctrine of the Trinity as the "Christian monotheism", which he views as a recognition that God is Lord (Moltmann 1981:140). From this stage, later in 1927 and 1932 (the latter in the Church Dogmatics), Barth walked another step in the same direction but with alternative views. Thus, he attempted to develop the doctrine of the Trinity out of the logic of the concept of God's revelation. His view at this stage focused on both the revelation and the Word of God and the relationship between them. He stated, "God's Word is God in his revelation; God reveals himself as the Lord. He alone is the revealer. He is wholly revelation. He himself is what is revealed" (Moltimann 1981:142-144). Rather than beginning with the concept of God the reveller, as was the case in his earlier view, at this stage Barth begins with the concrete form of biblical revelation whose emphasis was on God the Son, Jesus whom he regarded to be the Word of God. Accordingly, for Barth, the true God, as well as a true understanding of him (as a Trinity) was found in the movement towards the man Jesus and through him towards other men (1957:7). Thus, the church told the story of this issue within the framework of the Triune name (Rupp 1974:211). Along this view, Norgren describes the doctrine of the Trinity as the way the church identifies God because of Jesus and the gospels (1983:27). Therefore, any experience of the Trinity must be seen in relation to Jesus Christ (Hughes 1936:30).

Ontologically based Trinity

The ontological model is one of the earlier attempts to interpret the Trinity along a contemporary approach. This model enables us to apprehend the logical reality of the Trinity as mystery and doctrine. Boff and Rahner, who are the leading proponents of this model, justified it by asserting the difference between the reality of the Trinity (ontological reality) and the doctrine of the Trinity (theological reflection about the Trinity). The Trinity can therefore be interpreted and described in any human context and by any means, provided its ontological reality remains the same. It involves an ontological reflection on the personal God who is a Trinity, enabling us to understand him as the personal creator and redeemer of the world (Gunton 1991:164). For Gunton, "the true ontological foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity [was] to be found in the conception of a threefold mind and not in the economy of salvation" (1991:43). For him, a threefold ontology helped to understand other models of the Trinity and accelerating an appropriate understanding of an ecclesiastical model (Cor. 12:14 ff; Rom 12:4-8).

Ontological Trinity was also related to the Bible. Proponents of this model lamented the fact that this reality was not taken into account by early traditional theology and theologians. Knowingly or unknowingly, they derived ontology from the Bible. For instance, in the early centuries of the church's existence, Augustine taught the doctrine of the Trinity firmly from a logical perspective and not an ontological one. However, such an interpretative approach was unable to describe properly how each Person in the Trinity related to the other in relation to the oneness of God. Gunton writes:

> Augustine is taking a clear step back from the teaching of the Cappadocian Fathers. For them, the three persons are what they are in their relations and therefore the relations qualify them ontologically in terms of what they are. Because Augustine continues to use relation as a logical rather than an ontological predicate, he is precluded from being able to make claims about the being of the particular persons. (1991:41-42)

An ontological reality of the Trinity is ubiquitous. Therefore, it can be found everywhere, even in non-Christian religions. Thus indigenous models in this case the Haya threefold perception of the Deity, can be used to interpret the Trinity. This is possible because from its start, the doctrine of the Trinity was formulated and interpreted along ontological lines found in the intellectual worlds in which Christianity initially took shape (Gunton 1991:71-72). An ontological justification for using a non-Christian model is due to the trinitarian notion of God not being a human- invented doctrine. Rather, it is God's reality that plunges us into the depths of human existence. This is found all over the world in people's experience of God (Leith 1993:41-42). The fact that the reality of God is experienced differently (different names and terms) does not mean that people have experienced a

false God. Even if names vary, they still all indicate the same reality. In Boff's words, "it may be that [people] have no consciousness of God as God, let alone of a Trinity of Persons as a union of the divine Three. But this does not mean that what they have experienced is less the Triune and true " (1988:9-10). It indicates a deeper understanding of God than what is known and experienced. Boff writes:

> What relationship does the Trinity, as understood by the Christian, bear to the God experienced in the history of humankind? Does it serve to confirm what we already knew? We have to say that, in an ontological sense, it serves to confirm and amplify what we already knew on the level of understanding however, it brings something [new] and different. (1988:9)

In addition, a trinitarian notion of God does not depend on scriptural documents because its reality is not something we might come across in the Scripture, since it was there before their establishment. It was preserved and portrayed mainly through word of mouth. Threefold invocations and some religious sayings were common before reaching the written level. Access to Scripture did not expand the trinitarian reality in terms of content, but did further expose it. Boff says:

> The reality of the Trinity ...is primarily a fact that has always been presented in human life, at all stages of its evolution...in history, reaching its fullness in the New Testament...We find preparatory revelations of the trinitarian reality before the Christian event, both in the deeds and sayings recorded in the Old Testament and in other world religions and historical events. (1988:25-26)

Finally, the trinitarian reality does not depend on doctrine or external forms used to describe it. It was revealed gradually to humanity at different times, places and stages, before its formulation into doctrine. Rahner writes,

> The Trinity is not for us a reality, which can only be expressed as a doctrine. The Trinity itself is with us, it is not merely given to us because revelation offers us statements about it. Rather these statements are made to us because the reality of which they speak is bestowed upon us. (1997:39)

Trinity as the love of God

"Trinity as the love of God" is another contemporary model for interpreting the Trinity. Proponents of this model assert that God or the Trinity is perceived and identified from the viewpoint of love. Hence, "God is love" and "the Trinity is love of God" incorporate the concept of love in terms of its nature, function and relation to God and human beings (the love and the beloved). Augustine described the concept of love by applying the analogies of "mind", "knowledge" and "love" (*mens, notitia, amor*) or "memory", "intelligence" and "will" (*memoria, intelligentia, voluntas*). Their functional relationship goes: "The mind knows and loves, knowledge supposes mind and love and

love implies mind and knowledge". Augustine, regards three persons as the respective subjects as they are concerned with one another and related to one another. Accordingly, "you see the Trinity when you see love" (*vides Trinitatem si vides caritatem*) (Boff 1988:56-57). In other words, it is the practice of love that opens up true access to the mystery of the Trinity, leading to understanding.

Like Augustine, Pannenberg constructed a trinitarian theology based on love. He views love as constituting the ground of selfhood, in a relational and interrelated reciprocal manner between and among the love, the lover and the beloved. He regards it as an ontologically-based concept for understanding the mystery of the Trinity. Thiselton, quoting him, writes:

> ...in the mutual love of the trinitarian Persons, love does not simply denote activities in the mutual relations...[Rather] their selfhood...manifests itself through the reciprocal relation of those who are bound together in love...The personality of each "I" is constituted by the relations to the "Thou"...It is the mystery that holds sway between the "I" and the "Thou". This is a mystery of love. (1995:156)

Moltmann holds a similar view. He defines and describes love as " the self communication of the good". The crux of his thesis is that it is the nature of good to go out into other beings, to participate in other beings and to give itself for other beings. This was the main factor behind almost all the Nineteenth Century missionaries' motivation. "Men were 'constrained by Jesus' love' to leave home and country for the non-Christian world" (Yri 1978:27). Intentionally or unintentionally, this was a practical response to the Triune God who is Love. Moltmann further argues, that the lover communicates himself. He is the one who communicates. "God is love" means, in trinitarian terms in eternity and out the very necessity of his being the Father loves the only begotten Son" (1981:57-58). Brunner describes the Trinity as a love of God from the viewpoint of God's personality (the essence of which is love). This implies that the whole being of God is love. Therefore, he regards the doctrine of the Trinity as a matrix for understanding and expressing the nature of the divine. He perceives God as not merely the loving one in his relation to us but rather, his entire being whose inner life is one of love. It means that God is personal "in himself; and not only in his relation to the world" (Owen 1971:110-111). On this basis, Ward describes and interprets the Trinity as a love of God from the viewpoint of an inward force that enables each individual to understand and express his love. For him the Holy Spirit is this inward force from which we know the context of love. He writes:

> The Holy Spirit... can eventually bring each free individual to express creative love of God, expressing God's love of himself, in his beauty, power and holiness - love expressed in creative response and advance. God is thus the beloved, the lover and love itself - an insight incorporated by Augustine into the doctrine of the Trinity. (Ward 1974:209)

Like Ward, Thiselton perceives the Holy Spirit not only as an inward force or "new force", but also and essentially as being woven into the logic of the work of Christ in the interpersonal and interactive character of love. He supports his thesis by asserting that "a solitary being cannot 'give' or 'love' unless 'another' enters the scene to receive and be loved" (1995:155). Thus, love characterises the very nature of God as a Trinity. It led to the assertion that if God's nature is love he cannot find expression except in a created order or until he creates, on the conviction that his identity as God depends on his creation. God created, therefore he loves what he created. Or God loves because he is the Creator. Thus the statement that God is love, means that he lives in a trinitarian model or a threefold form. Therefore, God is Trinity. Along this view, proponents of a dialectical approach assert that "the one and only God becomes Trinity in the process of penetrating into creation" (Boff 1988:114). For Nicolson, love is not only the locus for the trinitarian notion of God in creation perspective but also a description of it. His thesis has a basis in the belief that if God is love, there must be a Trinity or at least a "binity" unless God is not love. He suggests that an understanding of God in a love perspective must start from Jesus, who is the love of God. Thus, he regards love as the starting point for an interpretation of the Trinity, which is the Love of God. On the conviction that through him, human beings are able to experience the love of God and the mystery of the Trinity. In turn, the Trinity guides and preserves humans' understanding of God's love from obstruction,

> God is love because he loves his creation, which makes the creation eternally necessary to God. He relates both love of God and the trinitarian notion of God in an interrelated manner. Without love we cannot understand the Trinity. In turn, without the Trinity the concept of love of God would be damaged. (1990:66)

I found that the models of "Trinity as the love of God" and "ontological Trinity" both interpret the Trinity well from an ontological perspective, consisting of creation or nature.

Economic and immanent Trinity

"Economic Trinity and immanent Trinity" are widely applied contemporary models for interpreting and describing the Trinity. For Rahner, a definitive understanding of models lies in an understanding of the Trinity as a mystery of salvation. Therefore, he regards the "economic Trinity" and "immanent Trinity" as the best formulation, definition and description of the mystery of the Trinity (Rahner 1970:21-22). An application of them aims to express precisely and logically the nature and scope of the Trinity. Such an approach focuses on interpreting the Trinity from the viewpoint of faith in the economy of salvation. "Since the Trinity is without qualification, the mystery of faith alone must provide the approach to the doctrine of the Trinity" (Walter 1984:273).

It aims at expressing this mystery, not in philosophical language but in revelatory and salvatory language. Philosophical and analogical languages remain only the means for explaining the economy of salvation. Thus, the economy of salvation is regarded as the real starting point for an interpretation of the Trinity along "economic and immanent" approaches. Both describe the mysterious concept of salvation, brought to us by God, through the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of his Son. While "economic Trinity" is the starting point, "immanent Trinity" is a reference for the applicability and understanding of economic Trinity. However, the distinction does not mean that there are two different "Trinities". . It is rather a matter of expressing different experiences of the same Triune God (Moltmann 1981:151). Boff defines and describes the relationship of economic and immanent Trinity in a salvatory perspective,

> The economic Trinity precedes the immanent Trinity. By economic Trinity we mean the manifestation of the divine Three in human history,... for the purpose of our salvation. By immanent Trinity we mean Father, Son and Holy Spirit in their inner, eternal life, considered in itself. Starting with the economic Trinity, we can glimpse something of the immanent Trinity... Only by referring to the incarnation of the Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit can we say that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice-versa. Outside these histories, salvific events, the immanent Trinity remains a mystery. (1988:232-233)

Rahner approaches the economic and immanent Trinity in a revelatory manner. He relates them to faith in Jesus and salvation through him. In this way he describes both of them as a communication with the Son. The internal and external modes of this communicative process are identified as economic and immanent Trinity. Thus he defines and describes economic Trinity as the way through which God comes to meet human beings - or what he describes as God who subsists. This approach has taken place in human history through Jesus Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit. Boff, quoting Rahner, maintains:

> Economic Trinity designates the presence of the Trinity or of the Persons of the Trinity within the history of salvation. This history was seen by early church as "oeconomia", that is a series of phases of divine plan being progressively both realised and revealed. In the Christian experience of faith and revelation, God appears as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Trinity revealed in this histories-salvific process is called economic Trinity. (1988:95)

Rahner also describes the immanent Trinity in a similar manner as the economic Trinity. For him, the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity as they are identical. It is God's redeeming relationship with the world in Christ and Spirit. Both Rahner and Barth articulated the immanent Trinity in terms of "one absolute existing in three modes of being".

Moltmann defines and describes economic Trinity as a means for designating the Triune God in his dispensation of salvation in which he is revealed. Accordingly, he identifies economic Trinity as

the revelatory Trinity and the immanent Trinity as "the name given to the Triune God as he is in himself" (Wells 1981:151). He also identifies the immanent Trinity as the substantial Trinity. For him "the representation of the immanent Trinity is to be found in the sphere of doxology, which responds to the experience of salvation and anticipates the kingdom of glory" (1981:161). For Moltmann, "the real problems about the knowledge and description of the immanent Trinity lie in the integration of these two different patterns: the logic of the Father and the Son, and the logic of the Word and the Spirit" (1981:170). Because the Son is both of the eternal Father and eternal Word he is bound with the eternal process of the Spirit.

For Johnson, economic Trinity characterises God's own true being. Even the triadic character found in other religious experiences (like the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form) indicates a threefold character of God. Thus I found it fitting to interpret the Trinity according to traditional terms of perceiving and experiencing God.

Koinonia or community Trinity

Coinonia or community Trinity is a more recent contemporary model for interpreting the Trinity. Moltmann, who is an initiator of it describes its nature and scope as follows:

> A new treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity today has to come to terms critically with these philosophical and theological traditions...In distinction to the Trinity of substance and to the Trinity of subject we shall be attempting to develop a social doctrine of the Trinity. (1981:19-20)

Accordingly, Moltmann views the Trinity "not as the unity of the absolute divine subjects, but 'koinonia' or 'community' of three divine persons". In other words, God is a communion or a Trinity of three Persons, that is, three Persons in a single communion or a single trinitarian koinonia or community. Thus, he views the Trinity as a "social Trinity". It entails two views. The first is the belief that a true God is a communion as well as living in a divine communion. Gunton views this model as the best way to interpret, describe and understand the Trinity in terms of God's role, especially in creation and salvation (1993:214-217). The second view is the belief that the "human person is an image of the Trinity, broken by sin but yet without having been destroyed totally. Hence "human society is God's sacrament of trinitarian communion" (Boff 1988:24). Johanson and Wells, like Boff and others, relate "koinonia Trinity" to an ontological model in what they describe as "the ontological priority of relations". For them the Persons of the Trinity are constituted by their relationships with each other to the extent that each is unintelligible unless connected with the others Hence, relationship is the very principle of their being. At the heart of the holy mystery is not a monarchy but a community; not an absolute ruler, but a threefold

koinonia. She concludes that the very essence of God is relationship and thus relatedness rather than the solitary ego is the heart of all reality. It involves the immediacy of loving relationships, being one for another, by another, in another and with another. Thus, no divine Person exists alone as they are always and eternally in relationship to one another. Each one relates to the other in terms of significance, role and relationships with others. Hence, the Father is Father because he has a Son; the Son is Son only because he has a Father; the Spirit is Spirit only because of the love in which the Father begets the Son and the Son gives to the Father (Boff 1988:133). Moltmann's koinonia Trinity has been regarded as the best model to represent and interpret the Christian God, because speaking of God must always mean the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the presence of one another as a community.

In this light, Bishop Mwoleka (a Roman Catholic) in the area of study developed a koinonia theology of the Trinity in a more practical way, entitled: *Trinity and community.* It involved himself living and participating in the community (Mwoleka 1975:203-226). Apart from his usual bishopric residence at the Church Diocesan Centre at Rulenge, Ngara, Tanzania, he extended and confined his residence to another simple residence in the heart of the village community, "Ujamaa village". There he lives in a simple house living a common and ordinary life and participating in the activities of the community. He regards living in the community (rather that at Church Centre, usually set apart from community/village life and residence) as a better way of practising and understanding the divine Trinity. The core of such a communal life is mainly love, which is the locus of participation and the sharing of material properties with the community. Mwoleka's approach and its practice have roots in biblical documents (Acts 4:32) whereby the early believing community lived, participated and shared the new belief in the threefold God. Also it is related to the Augustinian view whereby "seeing love is seeing the Trinity" both of which are experienced through a lived and practised faith, such a way that there are not three gods but only one. And Christ's wish is that they (his followers) may be one as we are one. Hence, "with me in them and you in me. May they be completely on" (Shorter 1978:122).

For Bishop Mwoleka, an interpretation and understanding of the Trinity through a *koinonia* or community model demands three components - living, imitating or practising love/faith and sharing. All aspects connotate a sense of Trinity. They are prerequisites for practising and understanding the Trinity and therefore Christianity. He views sharing as the better way to go. On the conviction that as long as we do not know how to share earthly goods (as God would have us to do), it is an illusion to claim imitating and sharing the life in and of Trinity, which is our destiny. Bishop Mwoleka concludes by arguing that unless we live communally and share spiritually and

materially what we have, we will not be able to imitate [perceive] the mystery of the Trinity. The nature and scope of practising Trinity along a k*oinonia* model is summarised in Mwoleka's questions:

> Have we imitated the Holy Trinity in sharing earthly goods? Have Christians tried to do this in all earnest? Could I truthfully say, 'all mine are thine and thine are mine' to each and all? This is what was supposed to imitate (John 17:10). Then in what sense can we be said to be practising to live the life of God? How can we dare to profess the religion of the Trinity? The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council rightly made a confession, 'we Christians have concealed the true face of God and of religion more than we have revealed it. (Shorter 1978:124)

Koinonia as Trinity on an *Ujamaa* basis has been supported by many lay and church leaders and theologians in Tanzania. Camillus Lyimo (formerly a Roman Catholic theological student at Kipalapala Major Seminary, Tabora, Tanzania) following his research on *Ujamaa,* (*A quest for a Relevant African Theology*) views it as the best model of experiencing the Trinity (Lyimo 1976:140-143). On the grounds that living and sharing communally is "part of the whole economy of salvation and it demonstrates and symbolises the Christian belief in a Triune God well. Quoted by Shorter, he says, "The community nature of man is based on the life of the Trinity. [Hence] the Trinity establishes God as community" (Shorter 1978: 127-128).

Koinonia Trinity is not only the best model of interpreting and understanding the Trinity, but is also capable of highlighting other contemporary models applied. Among them, economic and immanent Trinity, ontological Trinity and love as Trinity are closely related to the notion of God as community.

THE RELEVANCE OF THIS CHAPTER FOR THIS DISSERTATION

This chapter addresses interpretations of the Trinity through different approaches - classical and contemporary interpretations. Both approaches have caused a paradigm shift to a Haya understanding of God. This part of the chapter investigates the nature of this impact and its significance. Questions raised include what the Haya hear when the theology of the Trinity is communicated to them. What happens when one is taught that the Christian God is one God in three Persons? The study has explored that classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity are not just and simply accepted by the Haya Christians. Rather, they attempted to reinterpret them according to their own terms of understanding resulting in their own version of the Trinity. However, their attempt raises questions. On what ground and in what manner did such an interpretation take place? To what extent is the Haya interpretation of the Trinity similar to and to what extent is it different from classical and contemporary interpretations? In the light of these

questions, the study in the proceeding chapters focuses on a reinterpretation of the Trinity along classical and contemporary interpretations, but in a different approach. It seeks to construct a Haya theology of the Trinity by synthesising classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. In other words, the study seeks to conceptualise the biblical doctrine of the Trinity in Haya terms. However, a guiding question should be: Which aspects of the Haya belief in the Deity in a threefold form are capable of being fulfilled by the gospel and which are bound to be negated by the gospel? Its implementation demands a referral review to and therefore insights from earlier interpretative approaches.

INTERPRETATIVE APPROACHES TO THE TRINITY

Earlier interpretative approaches to the Trinity to be referred to in this section are the early church's threefold perception of God, classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. Emphasis will be on getting key insights from each approach, which in turn will be used to reinterpret the Trinity in traditional Haya terms.

Insights from the early church's interpretation will focus on scriptural revelation and a threefold perception of God and how these were the main factors for the trinitarian perception and experience of God. For the early church believers, a threefold understanding of God was not a question of intellectual or philosophical formulation, but a lived experience of God. It led them to a lively perception and sense of God. For Johnson, it was the experience of the mystery of the gracious God in Jesus of Nazareth and in the power of the Holy Spirit that gave birth to a threefold perception of God. Rahner describes its manner and theological justification: "God related to us in a threefold manner, and this threefold, free, and gratuitous relation to us is not merely a copy or an analogy of the inner Trinity, but this Trinity itself, albeit as freely and gratuitously communicated" (1970:35).

Classical interpretation will focus on how the early church's threefold perception and experience of God was later developed into the trinitarian theology and the doctrine of Trinity. It deals with classical theologians' and philosophers' interpretation and understanding of the Trinity in other terms and formulas. That is an interpretation of the biblical salvatory-revelation by using non-biblical terms, of Greek philosophical conceptions. It implied a shift from biblical revelatory language in which the Christian God was identified as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to theological-philosophical language. The latter led to identify the Christian God as "one God in three Persons" (or three Persons in one God). Their aim was no to undermine the Trinity, but to promote it by using language and terms understandable by the people of that time. They used

different images to portray and understand the same reality. Their approach had a basis in the assertion that fundamentally theology or any other doctrine is an interpretation and reinterpretation process according to people's needs. Therefore, the fact that the Trinity was interpreted in non-biblical terms is not a problem as even some of the biblical terms originated from non-biblical backgrounds.

Classical interpretation of the Trinity consists of the assertion that the shift from an early church experience of God in classical interpretation of the Trinity resulted in a complicated doctrine difficult to understand. Among its implications was a loss of the lively sense of God. This followed the replacement of a threefold form experience of God by the terms "persons" or God in "three Persons". On top of that, classical terms have lost much of their power of persuasion, since they are no longer adequate to express the Trinity according to time and context. Some theologians claimed that some of these terms, particularly "person", and trinitarian concepts should be either changed or replaced, on the assumption that the term "trinitarian", is a gender-based term. That is identifying the Godhead as well as his Son as He God-Divinity or divinities. In its place, they suggested that gender-neutral terms like creator, redeemer and sanctifier should be applied.

However, other theologians suggested that some classical terms, mainly trinitarian terms, should be retained, on the grounds that they describe the nature and image of a Christian God, who is a Triune God, well. In addition, even the church's full name for God is a trinitarian name - God the Father, Son, Holy Spirit - and had roots in this term.

Other key insights for a reinterpretation of the Trinity are expected to be obtained from a contemporary interpretation of the Trinity. The emphasis will be on the shift from the use of more limited models to neutral or unlimited models applicable and more understandable at the global level. Instead of classical terms they used these newly coined terms to interpret the Trinity in a language understandable by the people. A use of them aimed at regulating classical languages about God. Such approach resulted in a new and simple way of understanding the Trinity, even by ordinary and uneducated people. The significance of contemporary interpretations of the Trinity lies in the fact that they paved the way for further re-interpretation of the Trinity in terms according to a given context, in this case Haya/African models. A use of them is expected to lead to a simple understanding of a Triune God for all believers.

Towards a traditional interpretation of the Trinity

This subsection focuses on how insights from the earlier paradigms shift in interpreting the Trinity

(namely the early church, classical and contemporary interpretative approaches) can be used along a traditional approach and thus accelerate another paradigm shift in understanding the Trinity in Haya idiom and terms. Such attempt demands applying a correct and suitable Haya traditional model, on the ground that "...a theology which does not deal with people's mentality and needs is irrelevant to them and has no future" (Schreiter 1992:18). It implies that the Trinity cannot be understood out of people's frames of reference, as has been the case for many converts. Therefore, we need to express belief in the Triune God in our own language and terms. As Boff argues, when retelling the mystery of the Triune God "we cannot leave out the contribution of our...culture, which directly affects our understanding of the Trinity" (1988:112-113). He further argues:

> We need to go beyond the understanding of Trinity as logical mystery and see it as saving mystery. The Trinity has to do with the lives of each of us, our daily experiences, our struggle to follow our conscience, our love and joy... If we fail to include the Trinity in our personal and social odyssey, we shall have failed to show the saving mystery [therefore] failed in evangelisation. (Boff 1988:157)

A Haya-traditional interpretative approach of the Trinity will involve addressing prior questions. Did the Haya understand the Trinity or did they take it for granted? If not, why? If they did, why? Which factors contributed to their understanding? How can we apply some of them for a reinterpretation and understanding of the Trinity for all Haya converts?

In the light of these questions, the Haya concept of God on the basis of an invocation of the Deity in a three-fold form, will be used to interpret and understand the Christian concept of God according to its trinitarian model in Haya terms of understanding God. A use of it lies in the belief that traditional symbols or images for God, especially a threefold perception of God, are far better for illuminating an interpretation and understanding the Trinity than classical terms (Welch 1953:10). Therefore, Regan and Torrance suggest that a use of it should be done in what they describe as an interweaving of the human culture found in each context. They regard such approach as exploring the theological dynamic of cultural transformation (1993:238). Boff regards this approach as an encounter between biblical revelation and the dominant culture (1988:156). With a traditional model, the classical doctrine of Trinity will be interpreted through a different approach but still maintain its meaning. It will involve using *Ruhanga*'s aspects (*Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire*) to illuminate an understanding of the persons within the classical doctrine of the Trinity. While the emphasis of the classical interpretation was on oneness, unity and relationship with God, the emphasis of a Haya interpretation will be on the links, relationships and role within *Ruhanga*'s aspects. Such an approach takes into account the assertion that any attempt to present the Trinity according to the classical version (consisting terms of "one God in three Persons") in a way in

which believers will not be able to understand the union and Oneness of God, is nothing but polytheism. In Boff's words, "the many gods would be reduced to the three, those of the Trinity" (1988:17). Whatever models are applied in the contemporary approach, methods on how we think of "the unity of the three" and how "the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one sole God", need to be addressed. But how should these terms be maintained? Should they be indigenised fully or partially? A probable answer lies in the fact that any step taken and stage reached should aim at a full and complete understanding of the Trinity in people's language.

SUGGESTED MODELS

For an implementation of a Haya traditional interpretative approach, models from contemporary interpretative approaches need to be applied. These will be used to highlight the interpretation of the Trinity in Haya terms as most of them are closely related to the Haya framework of understanding God. Therefore the "revelatory and salvatory", "ontological", "love", "economic and immanent" and "koinonia" or "community" models, are all relevant. Luther and Barth's revelatory and salvatory understanding of the Trinity demonstrates the scope of the Trinity of which the core is the salvation in Jesus Christ to humanity. I found these models capable to promote the Haya notion of redemption of which, despite its significance, is still at an anticipatory stage.

Ontological Trinity illuminates the Haya interpretation of the Trinity, as well as its justification as the Haya notion of the Deity (which consists of his Son and Spirit) was initially perceived through ontological reflection. It comprises the belief that *Ruhanga* created from *exnihilo* through a collaborative initiative of his aspects- Son and Spirit. Also, the notion of links and relationships among *Ruhanga*'s aspects demonstrates a rich ontological reflection and perception.

Rahner's economic and immanent Trinity, particularly the latter, illuminates the justification for a threefold perception of the Deity and the concept of redemption from a Christian point of view. These concepts as well as Immanent Trinity which have a basis in the early church's experience of God comply well with a Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, in which *Ruhanga* and his aspects are depicted as a unified threefold form. Economic Trinity is less compliant with the Haya perception of the Deity since the latter lacks clear concepts of "incarnation" and "redemption", not in a mythical way but in practical involvement. Therefore, it lacks a traditional model with which to correspond the economic Trinity model. The latter depicts a God who moves for the sake of humanity. Rahner's term of threefold perception and identification of God demonstrates a trinitarian nature which characterises God's true being. He defined the "threefold

God" as transcendent, the author and ground of salvation in history. It led him to talk and speak of God as the threefold Being who is the transcendental of his own 'self communication'" (Moltmann 1981:150). Therefore, a use of it could enable Haya converts to revive a sense of God according to the early church perception and interpretation of the Trinity typical to biblical and Haya traditional understanding of God, rather than intellectual formulations. It implies speaking of God in a traditional idiom and giving it a Christian sense. However, a threefold speaking of God could enable converts (in this case, Haya converts) to experience a God as a Trinity in a revelatory-salvatory, simply and in a lived way.

The model of love as Trinity highlights the notion of a Deity in a trinitarian perspective. Its justification is the Haya's belief in the Deity, *Ruhanga* who is the Creator and a personal God in a father/child relationship. He creates and loves what he created. Haya names like *Atugonza* (God loves us) given to children demonstrate Haya' perception of the love of God in a creation, *koinonia* and trinitarian perspectives (Mutashobya 2001).

Moltmann's model of "*koinonia* Trinity" demonstrates the Haya notion of a threefold perception of God. This is shown in the belief that the Deity *Ruhanga* lives in majestic communion of a threefold form, consisting of himself, his Son and his Spirit. This is verified by an invocation of him in a threefold form in which he is addressed by mentioning his three aspects. On top of that the Haya live and experience a shared communal life, a basis of this belief. This could be used to illuminate an understanding of the Trinity, which is believed to be a trinitarian community.

Finally, I regard these contemporary models as invaluable treasures in which the significance of this chapter for the entire thesis has its roots.

CONCLUSION

This chapter investigated classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. The former consisted of the early church practice and experience of God through a threefold speaking of God. The motive was to determine the reality of the Trinity as already given to humanity through biblical revelatory witness. The experience of God through the belief in his Son (Jesus) in a revelatory and salvatory perspective, the church laid the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Overlooking this reality, some theologians were led to replace the early church's threefold speaking of God with the classical doctrine of the Trinity. Thus, a simple doctrine was too complicated for many converts to understand. However, treating the Trinity as a problem raised more problems. Some

theologians, in an attempt to react to this problem, went contrary to the biblical witness of the Christian faith.

The study also found that constructing and reinterpreting the doctrine of the Trinity was not the end, but only the beginning. More work is needed to interpret it in people's language according to their frame of reference, given time and context. Initially, this need had already been addressed at the start of Christianity. The early church and classical interpretations had laid the foundation for a contemporary interpretation. Essentially, they had attempted to reinterpret the doctrine of the Trinity by using models more acceptable, understandable and not limited to a particular context, people or culture. Thus, they had paved the way for a Haya/African interpretation of the Trinity in indigenous language and terms. However, any interpretative approach of the Trinity into the thought forms and patterns of a given context, should aim at making it more understandable and therefore acceptable. This involves an explication of its whole and the same truth in a new way- other terms without undermining its core meaning.

CHAPTER FIVE

LEVELS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN THE HAYA TRADITIONAL THREEFOLD PERCEPTION OF THE DEITY AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study in this chapter is to investigate levels of interaction between the Haya and their traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form on the one hand, and the missionaries' and post-missionary Christianity's interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity on the other hand (chapter three and four). It involves three main levels of interaction, each with sub-interactions. On the first level, there is the interaction between the Haya and the missionaries and their respective concepts of God (chapter five). It investigates the assumption that during the interaction, the involvement of each side in creating an arena for delivering and deriving the message presented was not dealt with seriously or not dealt with at all. Consequently, the Haya concept of God, which could have been drawn upon as a basis for interpreting and understanding the Christian concept of God, was either left untouched or only partially utilised. On the second level, there is the interaction between the post-missionary Christianity and Haya converts (chapter five). It addresses the question that a correct traditional model and a correct application of the model are essential for a re-interpretation and re-identification of the Christian concept of God in Haya traditional terms. The third level is a by-product of earlier interactions take place in this study. On the assumption that earlier levels of interaction created an arena and framework for a methodological study in this chapter. It focuses on discussing and analysing these interactions for further understanding going. Mainly it deals with the conceptual interaction between related chapters – chapter three and four: the former about the Haya concept of God, along an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, and the latter about the Christian concept of God, along classical and contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. Firstly, the study investigates and identifies the nature and outcome of these interactions at this stage, as well as impacts on each concept of God in general and on Haya converts in particular, on the one hand, and on subsequent chapters-six and seven on the other hand.

This chapter is divided into two parts: part one is about the missionaries' approach and the converts' reactions; part two is about Haya post-missionary Christianity's approach and Haya converts' reaction. While part one discusses earlier and later interaction, part two deals with only later interaction.

THE MISSIONARIES' APPROACH AND CONVERTS' REACTIONS

Part one of the chapter investigates what the missionaries did amongst the Haya in an attempt to present and interpret the biblical God and how the Haya and Haya converts responded. While the missionaries' approach served as a stimulus for further understanding and experiencing God, the converts' approach served as the means for understanding what had been experienced. Converts' reinterpretation demonstrated creativity in reacting to the Christian doctrine, and thus made it understandable to them. Their attempt assumes that a better understanding of the missionaries' version of God is incomplete without the converts' involvement (Katoke 1976:101-102). Luzbetak's work reflects this:

> ...society will hesitate or refuse to adopt any new idea that it senses to be inconsistent with its cultural system or which it feels no need. If, on the other hand, the new idea seems in some respects desirable, the society will, as we shall see, begin to reinterpret it so that it does fit into the symbol system. This reinterpretation would also most likely take place unconsciously. (1991:309)

Part one is divided into five sections. Each section addresses the problems faced following the missionaries' attempt to present the Christian concept of God. It involves the problems faced, their causes and impact. Section one is an introduction and focuses on the central theme. Section two deals with the framework of the missionaries and the converts' paradigm along two methodological theoretical approaches - theoretical and practical frameworks of social (symbolic interactionism) and theological (contextual, inculturation-acculturation) models. Section three deals with the missionaries' version of the Trinity and the Haya response, together with the converts' attempts to reinterpret the missionaries' version of the Trinity in their own terms and version. For each side, an interpretation took place through phases, or levels of interaction: God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Section four investigates the main factors behind the missionaries' and the Haya interpretation of the Christian concept of God. Section five presents the author's suggestive view on the nature, manner and outcome of the missionaries' and converts' interpretation of the Christian concept of God.

THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MISSIONARIES' AND THE CONVERTS' PARADIGM

The framework for the missionaries' and the Haya converts' interpretation of the Christian concept of God consists of two phases: phase one deals with a theoretical framework of interpretation along social-scientific and theological frameworks. Social frameworks will focus on symbolic interactionism, using Mead and Blumer's theories. Making a social analysis of the social interaction will enable one to see the difference between the missionaries' perception of the Trinity and the Haya understanding of the Trinity. Theological framework deals with the contextual,

inculturation and acculturation models. It involves identifying belief systems that inform the different interpretations. Phase two discusses the theoretical and practical approaches.

Theoretical framework

The missionaries' and converts' interpretative approach had its roots in the nature of society. On the assumption that human beings, either individually or collectively, act against or with one another, Mead and Blumer's approach is most appropriate. This section addresses salient issues conducive to this approach. A first assumption is that the individual acts for himself and uses himself as a model when he interprets other people's actions or mimics their behaviour. This can involve aligning "his action to the actions of others by ascertaining what they are doing or what they intend to do... [in so doing he] has a key to interpreting the acts of others" (Blumer 1969: 64, 70-71, 82). Social interaction between groups in a society is not a direct exercising of influence by one group on another, but a participation of all people concerned. Therefore, an involvement in an interaction should not be limited to any single group of people imposing their actions and beliefs on other group. Rather, each group, in this case the missionaries and the Haya, should participate in a joint interpretation of the acts of the other group. Both groups should be "brought into a relationship of subject to subject [and] not of object to object, nor even of subject to object. It means that each side has to view what is interpreted from its stand-point" (Blumer 1969: 54,72, 109).

In this process, indicating and interpreting belong together and are major tools for social interaction because "nothing is known to human beings except in the form [that] indicates or refers to". For Mead, to indicate something is to extricate it from its setting, to hold it apart, to give it a meaning or, as he calls it, "making an object". It involves seeing human beings from the indicators' perspective. Through indicating, the action of a human being is constructed or built up instead of being a mere release (Blumer 1969: 22, 80-81). Blumer further maintains that:

> [to] indicate something is to stand over against it and to put oneself in the position of acting toward it instead of automatically responding to it. In the face of something which one indicates, one can withhold action toward it, inspect it, judge it, ascertain its meaning, determine its possibilities and direct one's action with regard to it. (1969:63-64)

Indicating is also interpreting. One indicates another's actions, and then interprets them by pointing out their meaning. Following such a process, one can interpret what confronts one and organise actions on the basis of the interpretation. "It brings life and illuminates what already exists in the worlds of lived experience" (Denzin 1989:120). It involves translating the unfamiliar into the familiar of one's experience. Hence,

> Interpretation clarifies and untangles the meanings that are produced by a set of experiences. It does so within an interpretive framework that is meaningful to those who have experienced the event in question....An interpretation, as Geertz (1973:27) argues, illuminates the meanings and conceptual structures that organize a subject's experience. (Denzin 1989:109)

Indicating and interpreting what is interacted with or presented both focus on what Blumer termed "disengaging the engaged". In this case, disengaging the meaning embedded in the old and new versions of God (the Haya and the missionaries' versions of God) for a better understanding. Thus, the clarity of the meaning of each side is not made directly, but through indicating and interpreting (Blumer 1969:79). For achieving an interpretation through indicating, knowledge of contextual, inculturation and acculturation models will be applied in this study. A contextual model is needed as an arena for delivering, deriving or interpreting what has interacted and been experienced. Inculturation and acculturation models are needed as the means of transferring beliefs systems from both sides of the interaction. On this basis, converts were able to self-interpret the Christian message presented to them, thus reaching its core meaning. The key criterion of such an approach is that the meaning should be agreed upon by all groups of people involved - the Haya converts, the missionaries and post-missionary Christianity (Burrell & Morgan 1979:251). Unless this is done, one's point of view and experience of God would not be understood because it was approached in a way not in tune with people's actual experiences (Denzin 1989:110).

It was noted that, in some cases, interpretation according to one's point of view could lead people into developing new forms markedly different from those experienced before. When this takes place there is always some connection and continuity with what went before. Both are needed, since one cannot understand the new version without incorporating knowledge of the old version. Both "create a joint action which not only represents a horizontal linkage, so to speak ... but also a vertical linkage with previous joint action" (Blumer 1969:20).

Basis for a practical framework

The methodological interpretative approach of the Triune God, on the basis of the Haya concept of God, will take into account the following issues. In the first place, the Haya believe in only One Deity, *Ruhanga*, who is perceived in his aspects. It entails that the Deity is perceived in a single component of aspects and not different components or gods. Therefore, to understand or describe him they don't separate or divide him into three components. Rather, they approach and address him as a single entity. An invocation of the Deity in a threefold form highlights the nature of this perception and approach.

In the second place, the Christian Triune God, according to classical interpretation is described as three Persons: God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Such a description does not mean the existence of three gods, but is used only for the sake of describing the works of One God according to his revelation. The missionaries' interpretation of the concept of God among the Haya was along this approach.

In the third place, structure-wise, the researcher's methodological approach of investigating missionaries' and converts' interpretation of the Trinity will follow the classical interpretative approach - an interpretation of the Trinity along persons and through phases, but without dividing the indivisible God. It has been chosen for the sake of analysing and classifying what has been searched for. Moreover, it complies with the fact that such an approach has already been applied and known by missionaries, converts and post-missionary Christianity. Thus, an application of it implies utilising the method and language used and known for further research and understanding. Its implementation will be through the framework of levels or phases of interactions as was the case in presenting (missionaries) and responding to the Trinity (converts). However, this approach is not taken as a final say but only as a temporal way towards seeking a traditional model for interpreting and understanding the Trinity in traditional terms in a way through which the Deity in his Persons or aspects of God are approached together as a single component and at a "single" phase.

THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF GOD THE FATHER

Presentation and identification

This section deals with the missionaries' version of God the Father and its presentation along denominational lines. It investigates converts' reactions and factors behind their interpretation and problems encountered, their causes and their implications mainly for the majority of converts.

At the very start, the missionaries' first likely question was, "Do the Haya have a true notion of God?" If they do, was it similar or different from the Christian notion of God? Seeking an answer to this question, the missionaries were aware that direct questions were likely to impose preconceived ideas as to the type of answer depending on the type of question. For instance, a direct question like, "Who created the earth and the sky and all therein including you?" conveys various notions of creation, the created universe and the Creator. The missionaries, being aware of this weakness from the start, preferred indirect questions rather than direct ones. Their aim was to get the Haya's own answers, which convey a genuine understanding of God. Therefore, instead of the question, "Who created you?" they asked, "Why are you and other people here on earth?" and "Where did you come from?" The answer was "All things in the universe, including me and other people, were created." "In what manner were you created?" "We were created by the one who is the only

Creator." "Which name do you call him?" "*Ruhanga"* (the Creator) (Borterbach 2000). "Where does he live?" "In the ancient past, he used to live among human beings. After human beings disappointed him, he changed the way of communicating with them from limited visibility to total invisibility" (Lutosha 2000). Despite suitable questions being asked and correct responses given, the central question, which might shed light on the nature and manner of Haya understanding of the Deity, remained untouched. This question was "How do you address or invoke the Deity?" As an addition to questions, the missionaries applied a narrative approach to present and identify the biblical God to the Haya.

They proclaimed the Deity, *Katonda* (Ganda name for God, Protestant identification) or *Mungu* (Bantu-Swahili name for God - Roman Catholic identification), as the only Creator who created the earth and all things therein: the sky, all creatures and humanity, and has sent them to convey a special message about creation, love and the salvation of humanity. It is good news witnessed in his Book, called the Holy Bible. It is God's Word speaking to us every time we read it. The missionaries mostly used the motif in Genesis 1:1-31; 2-25. "In the beginning [when] God created the heavens and the earth ..." (1:1). Several creation hymns were used to support and emphasise the concept. Among them Hymn 167, part one, says, *Omukama [waitu] Katonda akatonda eiguru n'ensi olwambere na mbere...* (Our King *Katonda* from the beginning created the sky and earth) (NW Diocese 1992:87).

This was the missionaries' earliest presentation of the biblical God to the Haya. The later section focuses on the missionaries' identification of God the Father along denominational lines, namely the mainstream churches - Roman Catholic, Protestant and Islam religion.

The denominational approach

Since the dawn of Christianity among the Haya, the nominal identification of God has been of great concern. Each denomination had its own strategy of reaching the goal of introducing alternative concepts of God, involving the usage of an alien name for God. From the start, and even today, each denomination or religion applies its own particular name to identify God (Mutembei 1993:71-73). This attitude has its roots in the denominational philosophy of difference, which led to superiority being developed along doctrinal lines. In most cases, this led to religious intolerance, antagonism and tension among denominations (Bahendwa 1990:291-292).

Muslim adherents, having arrived in the area earlier than the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries, introduced a new concept of God. It caused conceptual conflict between the Haya

traditional religion and Islam and their respective concepts of God. As a compromise, there was a shift from the Haya and Islamic names for God. Instead of the Haya name for God (*Ruhanga*) or the Arabic name for God (Allah) a Bantu-Swahili name, *Mungu,* was adopted (Dauda 1998). Differences between Christian denominations and Islam were exploited. Later, upon knowledge that the Roman Catholic missionaries used the same name, *Mungu,* the use of it was extended. That is, from a single name, *Mungu,* it was extended to a double reference name, *Mwenyezi Mungu* (Almighty God). The first word is a *Swahili* attributive name for God (Kiswahili Research 1996:17,333). Its usage established a slight difference, mainly in the nominal identification of God, between Muslims and the Roman Catholics (Ayubu 1999).

The Roman Catholic missionaries arrived in the area after the Muslims and a few years before the Protestant missionaries. Like Traditionalists and Muslims, they also had a nominal identification of God, but they went about it in a different way (Rutabanzibwa 2000). Instead of applying the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga,* or the Muslims' double reference name, *Mwenyezi Mungu,* they used only the second word of the double reference words, namely *Mungu* (Keshomushahara 1997:8). Shorter observed a similar use of the name *Mungu* by other people in Tanzania. He says, "In the church, where *Swahili* was spoken, God was referred to as *Mungu* and people mostly clung to the *Swahili* formulas which correctly reflected official Christian doctrine" (1979:137). Etymologically, the *Swahili* word, *Mungu,* has the root *ungu*, the "Mu" being classificatory. *Ungu* is derived since *unga* is the primary root. From it we have the verb *kunga* (join together) (Rwehumbiza 1983:61). These words originated in a Bantu cultural background, especially in Eastern and Central Africa, and were later developed into a single word, *Mungu,* used in *Swahili.* The word *Mungu* can easily be changed, thus creating major conceptual differences. When the word *Mungu* is prefixed with a small letter "m" (*mungu*), it connotes multiple gods or spirits. When prefixed with a capital letter "M" (*Mungu*) it connotes the Almighty God. Its usage in the Swahili Bible reads, *Mwanzo Mungu aliumba mbingu na nchi* (In the beginning God created the heavens and earth) (Genesis 1:1).

Protestant missionaries arrived in the area after the Muslim and Roman Catholic missionaries. Like them, they also applied a nominal identification of God. They did not apply any of the names for God already in use – *Ruhanga* (Haya), *Mungu* (Roman Catholic) or *Mwenyezi Mungu* (Muslim) Instead, they used an alien Ganda name for God, *Katonda*. Etymologically, *Katonda* means "the one who creates". It is derived from the word *okutonda,* which means "to create" or "to cause life or physical structure in harmony and perfect order" (Rwehumbiza 1983:61-2). The Baganda believe that only *Katonda* creates children by moulding them in a woman's womb (Parrinder

1954:35). Historically, the name *Katonda* has its origin in Buganda in the Republic of Uganda and in Kabwari in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was introduced among the Haya mainly through traders from both sides that had contact with the Ganda language and some social, economic and cultural terms. Later, they had contact with Protestant (of the Church Missionary Society) and Roman Catholic missionaries (White Fathers) who arrived in Buganda before and after the year 1887 (Niwagila 1988:76-77), resulting in the conversion of most of them. Back in their homeland in north-western Tanzania, the newly converted the Haya traders (the Protestant side) had propagated the Christian faith framed in the Ganda concept of God – Christianised *Katonda,* and described him in the Ganda language. Cory reports:

> ...the evangelical message reached Buganda early though the indirect influence on the C.M.S. in Buganda. People from Kiziba used to visit Buganda for trading purposes and met missionaries there whose preaching they adopted and brought back to their home villages. (Undated:171)

The use of the name *Katonda* as the Christian God the Father caused an early Haya converts' reaction and they felt it was unnecessary to interpret it in traditional terms. Even the "expatriate missionaries", who arrived later, followed the same path. The name *Katonda* was not replaced by a traditional name (Mutembei 1993:79). Most of the church literature still retains it. The church liturgy in Haya says, *Omwibara lya Katonda, Isheichwe n'omwana na Mwoyo Alikwera amina* (In the name of *Katonda,* our Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen) (NW Diocese 1992:146). In the Haya New Testament, the name *Katonda* is still retained. *Emitima yaanyu eleke kuchundwa. Mwesige Katonda, nanye munyesige* (Do not be worried and upset...believe in *Katonda* and believe also in me) (John 14:1).

CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS

Converts' reaction to the missionaries' version of God took place in two phases. While the first led them to an acceptance of the Christian God and conversion, the latter caused them to pose the question. What happens when one is converted to Christianity or gets to know the Christian God? Understanding of the missionaries' version of God being incorporated into their own version, were regarded as the right answer.

Converts' earlier reactions

Converts' earlier reaction to the missionaries' version of God the Father was a complex process. First the Haya listened keenly to the missionaries' preaching about the biblical God. They also recalled seers' prophecy that foreign people will come in their land and introduce another way of believing and worshiping the same God (Niwagila 1966:52). They reflected and related the

missionaries' arrival to this prophecy. They also related missionaries' version of God to their traditional concept of God on a reciprocal and comparative basis. As Denzin argues, through personal experiences and convictions, stories can be compared and contrasted (1989:11). Ela Jean asks the same question differently. "How far could the newly introduced conception of God be coloured by the old belief?" (1988:45). The question confronting them was: How can we relate the traditional God who is the Creator and the Father, to the Christian God in the framework of traditional but non-indigenous names? With knowledge of both concepts of God, converts noted similarities and differences between them. They found that each side has a belief in only one Deity having roots in creation. They also noted the differences between them, which lay mainly in the use of different names for God.

In an attempt to understand the Christian God from what was known already (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:8), the converts answered a question raised by Schreiter. "How does a community bring its experience to expression in such a way that it can indeed become fertile ground out of which a local theology grows?" (1985:40). Converts claimed that the Christian Deity is one and the same as the Haya Deity, who was believed in and worshipped by their forefathers and their descendants since ancient times. Consequently, they were motivated to respond positively to the missionaries' version of God, identified to them as *Katonda* (for Protestants) and *Mungu* (for Roman Catholics). Despite the fact that he was presented to them through alien frames of reference and names, they believed in him without major difficulty, because they were already familiar with the notion of a Deity who was the Creator. Thus, they did not regard the Christian God as new or strange (Rwabukwisi 1988). Johansson, a Swedish missionary among the Haya, described the converts' response to and acceptance of the Christian God as a local reaction to what has been introduced to them (1977:72). This complies with the theory that one's earlier belief opens the way for a later belief. It indicates the importance of the traditional concept of God, which Schreiter describes as "that word which missionaries find already active in the culture upon their arrival" (1985:20-21). For Hillman, "nothing could have been revealed about anything if men [and] women had not already had the idea about the thing" (1993:49). Therefore Max Warren, as quoted by Niwagila, exhorts Christian missionaries to adopt a "spirit of expectancy" to find out how God had been speaking to non-Christian people (1988:127).

Reaction to the Christian God from traditional concepts of God has been reported in other areas of Africa. As Kraft observes,

> When missionaries first came to my country they spoke of God who created the world as if he were a different God from the one we already knew about. We listened and compared what we heard and

> read in the Bible about this God and discovered that he is the very same God we had always known about. We received many insights from the missionaries and especially we heard that we could come to know God personally through Jesus Christ. But everyone except the missionaries realised that their God was the same as our God. In other words, our God had brought the missionaries to add to our understanding and commitment. The missionaries had not brought a new God with them. (1979:21)

Like in other parts of the world, the primal knowledge of God became more operative in a Christian sense (Bevans 2003:41). At this stage, Haya experienced the first paradigm shift in responding and experiencing the biblical God. "A paradigm is a worldview, [or] a way of seeing the world, involving a set of commitments or positions that cannot easily be related to others, if they can be at all Both the earlier and later paradigms shift enabled the Haya converts to represent what Bevans describes as "very distinct ways of understanding reality.[In turn they] give rise to particular sets of questions that are only possible within their scope" (2003:30). He regards such an approach as experiencing the transcendental model of contextual theology. In his words, "there are some things that we cannot understand without a complete change of mind" (2003:103) on the assumption that such a shift determines our understanding of a given conception. On the contrary, our attempt would be like finding an answer to an inadequate question. For some of them, this was not the end but only a starting point and they further reflected on it.

Converts' later reactions

Converts' earlier reactions to the missionaries' version of God the Father paved the way for later reactions. Like other converts in other areas of Africa, the belief in the Deity who is the Creator and Father accelerated this paradigm (Pauw 1975:56). While reaction initially involved almost all the potential Haya converts, reaction to the second paradigm shift only involved some of them. It involved them taking further steps in order to respond to and experience the biblical God on the assumption that commitment to any kind of belief is an ongoing process. When asked by the author why such step was needed, Kabyangira states, "We needed it in order to achieve a self identification and understanding of the Christian God in our own frame of reference, and terms thus filling the gap of alien identification of him" (Kabyangira 1998). As Bosch argues, "we cannot avoid asking ourselves how to talk about God and live our faith in the realm of meaning where Africans try to speak about themselves" (1968:166). Haya converts attempt to fill the gap of alien identification occupied by the Christian God, could be justified, according to Blumer:

> I have never heard of any society that was free of problems nor any society in which members did not have to engage in discussion to work out ways of action...The participants still have to build up their lines of action and fit them to one another through the dual process of designation and interpretation. (1969:18)

According to Blumer, the converts' attempts could be viewed as seeking verification for their convictions. In his words, " social reality lies deep within the network of typifications which individuals, if pressed, will summon to make sense of the situation in which they find themselves" (Burrell & Morgan 1979:274). Mugambi echoed this view. "Converts, faced with this situation, accepted Christianity but made their own syntheses between the newly introduced way of life and the traditional one" (1989:42). In this manner converts not only discovered, but also practised a commitment to and understanding of the Christian faith. Pailin observed the same thing:

> [They] live by faith rather than are explicitly conscious of it. Often it is only when it is challenged by crises, which cast doubt on their convictions...that they begin to discover what it is that they are finally committed to. What they declare to be the truths upon which their lives ultimately depend are what they take to be their beliefs. It must be recognized, however, that these explicit statements of beliefs do not necessarily represent the actual component of their faith in a satisfactory way. (1986:35)

Converts noted that it was possible, by incorporating the missionaries' concept of God, to find a traditional means of illuminating the understanding of the biblical God. Kabakenga reports, "For further responding to missionaries' God we sought again to traditional experience of God" (Kabakenga 2000). It implies acquiring a theological model in order to interpret him according to the Haya way of understanding. Bediako regards such an approach as finding "convergence with large areas of African Christian confession and experience [His view was], ...if theology is about God, its agenda must come from the concrete experiences of the people" (2001:2, 4).

Ultimately, converts were aware that a perennial religious model required a lasting combination of the two religions, particularly in the framework of an invocation of the Deity in threefold form (*Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*) (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of (or my Father) *Ntangaire*) Tinkaligayile reports: "We noted that an invocation consists of nominal identification of the name of the Deity, *Ruhanga* and other names of his aspects. We regarded it as a rich and suitable model with which to illuminate the identification of the Christian God the Father in traditional terms" (Tinkaligayile 2000). Similarly, they noted that the biblical God is paralleled to Haya Deity, *Ruhanga,* and his aspects. He is the Godhead who is normally addressed, together with his aspects, in a personal sense. They noted that the Haya idiom was needed to describe its meaning. "While the majority of converts remained only at a missionaries' interpretation (at a single paradigm shift) we had discovered our own way of responding to the missionaries' version of God and in our own terms" (Nyinengabo 2000). Tilley views such an approach as a way of making the received version vibrant in a new context (1985:14). For implementing a newly found model, converts followed what Sanneh and Bediako describe as "the historical transmission" (Sanneh 1991:65) and "the indigenous assimilation" (Sanneh 1993:15-16). While missionaries

followed the former, the Haya converts followed the latter. Mugambi and Magesa describe the former as the process of conversion and the latter as the process of inculturation (1990:13-14). This raises the question of which of these two approaches was more significant. For Sanneh and Bediako, it was the "indigenous assimilation" on the grounds that an interpretation of both approaches makes them become possible and meaningful (Bediako 2000:19-20). Schreiter uses a different term, "translation model", to describe the same approach. He takes into account both versions, the old and the new. He writes:

> A translation...sees the task of local theology as one that [follows] a two-step procedure. In the first step, one frees the Christian message as much as possible from its previous cultural accretions...[thus prepares] for the second step of procedure, namely translation [interpretation] into a new situation. (1985:6-7)

The nature and manner of converts' attempts to respond to the missionaries' version of God along historical transmission and indigenous assimilation models and the relationship between them can be grasped in the light of Pastor Mwombeki's view. He says, "there is a dichotomy between what the Haya Christians know from their situation (indigenous assimilation) and what the church teaches, which shapes their catechetical interpretation" (historical transmission) (1997:ii). "Combining these two, Haya converts explored their own interpretative approach of the biblical God" (Mukuta 2000). [1]

Their approach has a basis in Kraft's theory of communication where a communicator's presentation via cultural forms stimulates and shapes the receiver's mind to respond to the message in his own way. Such stimulation "can bring to light hidden potential in each traditional aspect in the form of latent themes [leading to] a reformulation of doctrine" (Shorter 1975:17). Spear and Kimambo regard such an approach as an attempt to interpret Christianity in order to appropriate it according to converts' needs, values and purposes within their context" (1999:3,17,19). For them,

> [meaning] shifted in unpredictable ways as different Christian theological concepts flowed across cultural and linguistic divides to acquire meanings in the minds of African converts. [Thus], their understanding of Christian doctrine was filtered through their own interpretive process. (1999:6)

At this stage, converts underwent identification with the Christian God the Father. Instead of the name *Katonda* (Protestant identification) or *Mungu* (Roman Catholic identification) they renamed him *Ruhanga,* which is a name for the Haya Deity. Bishop Mukuta, when asked about a theological justification of such attempt, replied, "*Ruhanga* had been believed in and addressed by our forefathers through the ages. This has a basis in the Haya philosophy, where one names what one

1 Mukuta, P. The former diocesan Bishop of ELCT/Karagwe Diocese, Tanzania.

knows" (Mukuta 2000). This meant that converts experienced the same reality according to their own definition. For Blumer, usually, people through previous interaction, define and describe what they have encountered in their respective situation. That is, "those life experiences that radically alters and shapes the meaning. [It means acquiring] a common understanding of which definitions require change or amendment" (1969:86). According to communication theory, receptors (the Haya people) alone can make changes according to their own understanding of God (renamed the Christian God). As Denis puts it, "people are signifiers [and] meaning makers...by so doing they structure and direct" (1995:20-21). In Reicher's words, "when people begin using their reason, they investigate their own reality" (1987:28). The Haya converts' naming of the biblical God in traditional terms and idiom can be explained by Hastings' words: "missionaries try to introduce a new name for God, but they found that people either knew that name already, or had their own name which describes their perception of God well" (Mushendwa 1967:66). Self-renaming of the Christian God showed that "the God of the Bible did not remain alien to them, as they called him by the names which were known to them" (1997:40-42). As Triebel argues, "speaking about God meaningfully is related to the traditional name of God. Only through the name his reality is described and an encounter will be possible" (Triebel [Undated].b:3-4). This is possible since "Christianity and Haya African traditional religion have much in common in their teaching about God" (Nyamiti 1989:4). The same question has been dealt with and practically used in other African societies. Paris, quoting Mbiti, writes:

> The God described in the Bible is no other than the God who was already known in the framework of traditional African religiosity...The missionaries who introduced the Gospel to Africa in the past 200 years, did not bring God to our Continent. Instead it is God who brought them. They proclaimed the name of Jesus Christ; but they used the names of the God who was already known by Africa's people such as *Mungu, Murungu, Katonda, Ngai...Ruhanga...Unkulunkuru* and thousands more. These were not empty names. They were names of the one and the same God, the Creator of the world, the Father of Jesus. (1995:29)

The study has found that converts' self-interpretation and renaming of the Christian God did not mean a radical change in identifying him as a core meaning of him was maintained. Bugurano elaborates "Even our traditional concept of God did not involve backsliding, reconverting or renouncing our former traditional beliefs. Rather, we used our past experience of God to identify and understand the biblical God (Bugurano 1998). Thus, their transferral of the biblical God into traditional terms is neither a repudiation of the traditional concept of God nor a rejection of the biblical God (Bediako 2001:5). The Christian experience of God does not require an explicit renunciation of previous beliefs, if the new belief is compatible with the old belief (Shorter 1973:75). Rather, it builds on former beliefs to interpret, articulate and understand the later belief. Defending this thesis Kabunga says, "our aim was not to fabricate a new concept of God or

replace God, but to interpret God into a version understandable in our own language" (Kabunga 1998). For them, as Bujo puts it, "it is not the question of replacing the God of the Africans but rather of enthroning the God of Jesus Christ, not as a rival of the God of the ancestors, but as an identical God" (1992:16). Mayer regards such an approach as translating the contents of the Christian message into a form, which would answer Africans questions in a way, which would really strike Africa's heart (1995:43). For Bevans, it implies "clothing-preaching the Christian message in language and patterns that the men and women of the new context can understand" (2003:41). Its implication is as Moila and Khuboni maintain, "when the gospel is preached to Africans and it touches their soul they would respond by doing what they are asked to do" (Moila 2002:84; Khuboni 2000:3).

Converts' naming of the Christian God in traditional terms enabled them to fill the gap of alien identification. This is due to the fact that for the Haya a traditional concept of God was not applied to identify and understand him. Oosthuizen explored a similar problem and its remedy. He writes:

> ...the missionaries reacted against the old without interpreting it and so left a vacuum...The vacuum left has been filled by the people themselves, as they go time and again to the old foundations to have it filled with what they believed to be the basis, with the result that they revert to the primal basis of the old. (1968:103)

In a real sense, the converts' naming of the Christian God implied the christianisation of the Haya concept of God and the indigenisation of the Christian God. While the former involved the use of traditional concepts to give them Christian meaning, the latter involved the use of Christian concepts to give them a traditional meaning. Meaning achieved by one's self is very important. Therefore, ignoring this achievement would be seen as falsifying their experience of God (Blumer 1989:3). However, the converts' efforts did not mean a radical indigenisation of biblical concept of God. Even today, both the old and new names of God are still in use. At church level, converts explicitly continue to address the Christian God as *Katonda* or *Mungu*. At an individual level, some of them address him as *Ruhanga,* as we shall see in the second part of this chapter. A resonance rather than a contradiction between both uses lies in the fact that what converts had experienced subjectively was shared explicitly (Lufulani 2000).

The converts' self-interpretation and identification of the missionaries' version of God led them to profound insights, enabling them to understand and experience the Christian God, more so than ever before. Ikambura states, "we shifted from an understanding of him in the framework of Ganda-Bantu-Swahili concepts of God to the Haya religious framework (Ikambura 1998). Thus they discovered a model for a better understanding of the biblical God". In other parts of Africa,

converts self-interpretation of Christianity led them to a close relationship with God (Pauw 1975:76). As Denzin puts it, "meaningful interpretations of human experience can only come from those persons who have thoroughly immersed [themselves] in the phenomenon they wish to interpret and understand" (1989:26). Moreover, it demonstrated the availability and validity of traditional means with which to respond to the Christian message according to the needs and categories of meaning. The converts' experience of the Christian God enabled a self-affirmation resulting in experiencing him anew. Thus, they experienced what Gifford calls "reflective affirmative paradigm thought" (1998:2). It implies the confirmation and clarification of the Christian experience of God. On the assumption that for them, as for other Africans, "self-affirmation is very important if one's new belief would be able to take a form [which suits one's context and] experiences" (Mugambi 1989:9). It means building a platform from where the individual convert can respond and practise what he believes. At this point converts were able to interpret and translate their new understanding and experience of the biblical-missionary God into traditional terms and idiom. This results in their producing their own version of the Haya-Christian theology of God the Father.

PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT

Most of the problems are related to the methodological approach. At the start, the Haya concept of God was not researched and applied to illuminating an interpretation of the Christian God the Father. The central question, "How do you address or invoke the Deity?" was not asked. A first generation Christian, Dean Lutosha, said: "If the question could have been asked, the answer could have shed light on a genuine Haya understanding of the Deity" (Lutosha 2000). It also could have revealed his nature and manner of relating and communicating with human beings". Questions about whether he is a monotheistic or polytheistic Deity could have been answered. The necessity of raising such questions can be expressed in Bishop Sundkler's words, "...in religion the answer depends on the question; this statement is also true of the church in the Haya land" (1980:95) where the Christian God was presented as an alien question seeking an indigenous answer. Thus it led to identifying him with Ganda-Swahili names for God (*Katonda* for Protestants) and *Mungu* for Roman Catholic). An alien identification of God was strange for the Haya who's Deity was identified with indigenous names. Sundkler, who participated in this process, describes it as narrowly missing the open gate to identify and indigenise Christianity and its concept of God. In his words, "it was only one foot from the missionaries to the gate" (1960:100-111).

The missionaries probably applied alien names for several reasons. Among them was an eagerness to propagate Christianity as soon as possible, using whatever means they could to establish the new

concept of God. Father Bodelschwingh, as quoted by Niwagila, strongly supports this view: "Do not waste your energy for minor affairs, but keep the most important task in mind; to preach the gospel to the pagans as soon as possible" (1988:139). The early travellers and later missionaries, even before their arrival in the area, had preconceptions about Haya traditional religious beliefs and practices. This resulted in a negative attitude about the traditional God leading to the claim that the Haya had no valid notion of God (Lutahoire 1974:35). For instance, H. M. Stanley, upon his arrival in the area, claimed that the Haya seemed to have hardly any idea of God (Mbwilo 1978:27). His claim impacted on later scholars and missionaries, even in other areas of Africa.

There was also the missionaries' fear of what has been termed as "spiritualism". Accordingly, they were suspicious of some essential names and terms used in religious activities if they were related to spirits or ancestors (Tinkaligayile 1974:35) and therefore unsuitable to identify the Christian God. However, an exclusion of them, even in other African societies "excluded aspects of continuity between Christianity, cultures and traditional religion" (Parratt 1995:8). The same problem has been noted in other areas of Africa. Blackely reports,

> Throughout its history, Christian missionary work...has displayed little cultural sensitivity toward African society. Catholic missionaries, like their Protestant brothers, were apparently ignorant of African institutions and did not care to investigate them. Indeed, they were busy suppressing traditional rituals and beliefs. (1968:221)

However, an application of alien names for God faces the question: How and to what extent would an alien concept of God be accepted and understood in the Haya context where concepts are experienced and expressed differently? For Mbekenga "missionaries thought that an identification of the Christian God using traditional concepts and names of God employed from non-Haya culture would be easily received and understood" (Mbekenga 1998). Therefore, the use of them was thought to solve the problem to the extent that one could, for example, identify the Haya-African traditional God with the Christian God. Like in other places in Tanzania and Africa at large, missionaries "assumed that the Haya/African they were addressing employed the same thought categories as themselves" (Shorter 1975:32). However, in reality, it was a different story because "words do not always mean what we think they mean, even in our own native tongue" (Kraft 1979:288). Since these foreign names did not fit into the traditional frame of reference, the use of them led to an ambiguous understanding of the Christian God. Such problem could have been avoided by applying the Haya name for God (*Ruhanga*) to illuminate, identify and understand him. On the grounds that " the new concept can be well understood in terms of 'the old concept' if it happens that the old forms are ignored or disallowed, one might question whether an understanding

of the new has been reached" (Walter 1999:67). Udofia describes the latter as wearing "a hat that does not fit" (1987:128).

Impact on the concept of God

The use of different names for God along denominational lines caused the existence of five different concepts of God. This was an extraordinary phenomenon to the Haya, who had experienced only one concept of God (Bagonza 1992:12). These were: *Ruhanga* (non-christianised *Ruhanga*), *Mwenyezi Mungu* (for Islam), *Katonda* (for Protestants), *Mungu* (for the Roman Catholics). Furthermore, some Haya converts proceeded to combine traditional and Christian concepts of God and thus a christianised *Ruhanga* was created, nourished by both concepts of God. A christianised Deity, *Ruhanga* became the indigenised Christian Deity for both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Shorter observed a similar converts' attempt to indigenise the Christian God in Tanzania. He writes:

> Missionaries and Africans priests ...were preaching *Mungu* and Kimbu [or the Haya] Christians were understanding *Iluvya* [or *Ruhanga*], without preachers being aware that there might be any differences between two concepts...Then, I said [to Angelo] 'how do you address God? What name do you use? *Iluvya* came the unhesitating reply. With complete frankness, Angelo went on to tell me how he used the *Iluvya*...in his own private devotions. [I was] amazed at this revelation. For them, God was *Iluvya,* and Iluvya [or *Ruhanga*] was an immensely powerful concept at the centre of a whole network or religious symbolism, quite different from the subjective picture of *Mungu* [or *Katonda*]. (1979:137-138)

The existence of various concepts of God in the same people and even the same church raises questions as to the actual image of God portrayed. Does it promote or hinder a Christian understanding of God according to biblical witness? How did converts manage to maintain the true image of the biblical God? Although different concepts of God can be regarded as different ways of addressing the same God, the conclusion was, in this case, that it contributed to confusion and misunderstanding of him for most converts.

However, the converts' continuous use of the traditional God, *Ruhanga* at subjective basis for understanding the Christian God was unknown to the missionaries. Such a possibility did not occur to them. Because missionaries assumed that "the African past had not been given theological significance". It led them to depend only on their interpretative approach. Mugambi states,

> When Christianity was introduced into the interior of Africa...missionaries... were convinced that their Christian interpretation...was correct. Indeed, they did not entertain the possibility that African people had another interpretation, which might also be valid. (1989:134)

As a result, the christianised *Ruhanga* was unknown to them. For Denzin "one must share, at least indirectly, in other people's experiences, [otherwise] shallow, empty, spurious, one-sided interpretation and understanding are produced" (1989:121). Bediako, quoting Walls, describes this as missing the tools of acquisition for theological interpretation when engaging with the new Christian realities (2001:5). " Without them, one cannot interpret and therefore understand the experience of other people" (Denzin 1989:73).

Impact on most converts

Many converts did not understand the biblical God because he was presented in concepts and names incomprehensible to them. As Bishoota says, "even the language used to describe him was alien to us. All communication was through the Ganda language" (Bishoota 1998). Bishop Sundkler describes its root problem. "I have known Canon Leakey since 1917. He did not have much contact with people. He led the worship in Luganda. He did not make the effort to learn a single word of Haya" (1980:28). This indicates the gap in describing Christian concepts in traditional terms. Sundkler writes,

> The first generation in Bukoba, and throughout Africa, lacked the support that traditional idiom could give. They had just abandoned their old traditions. The new message was conveyed by foreigners - Baganda, Germans, Englishmen - who, at best, could only put the message across in a vague manner, and always with a faltering tongue. (1980:94)

The language used led most converts to react positively to the missionaries' version of God, but without adequate understanding. This is a likely state especially when "the words [and sentences] were transmitted to us outside our frame of reference" (Hesselgrave 1978:72). A view exists that, "experience cannot be shared if the language and the meanings that organize the experience are not understood. When a language and its meanings are shared, mutual understandings can be produced" (Denzin 1989:72). Converts' misunderstanding of the Christian message was reported in other parts of Africa where the Christian God remained a stranger to most converts because was introduced out of people's cultural-religious frame of references (Becken 1972:75). Dickson, quoted by Moila, observed:

> The African convert has to break through the encrustation of culture before arriving at the core of the Christian faith. What actually happens is that the convert remains rooted in his culture...becomes entangled in the cultural values [of] the world of Western culture and Christianity, which he only imperfectly apprehends. (1989:146)

Converts themselves also are responsible for misunderstanding the biblical God. For most of them, their response and experience of him remained rudimentary. At this stage, they did not embark on

a more advanced step of further responding and experiencing him according to their own terms of understanding (Ntimba 2000). This could have been achieved through applying the Haya concept of God for illuminating understanding of the biblical God. Conversely, they renounced both of them (Spear & Kimambo 1999:18). As in other parts of Africa, Haya- Africans were taught that their ancient ways were deficient therefore had to be set aside if they wish to become Christian adherents (Bevans 2003:140). Thus, they depended on the missionaries' interpretation (without understanding it) or on their own incorrect interpretation. Dependence only on one's interpretation of the gospel raises Oduyoye's question, "How long did the missionaries remain the interpreters of the Christian concept of God to the African converts?" (1986:42). Dependence on their own incorrect interpretation resulted in what Shorter described as "many Christians interpret what they do not understand in their own way" (1973:66), or what Tanner (who had done research among the Sukuma of Tanzania) called a "working misunderstanding" (1967:122). Like the missionaries, most converts did not understand their fellow converts' interpretation of the biblical God because they had already renounced the tools for such an understanding. This lack affected their understanding of the entire Christian concept of God – Triune God.

THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE SON OF GOD

The missionaries' interpretation of the Christian concept of God among the Haya was expanded from God the Father to the Son and later to the Spirit on the conviction that they determined an understanding of the Christian God when they were all together. An approach to these terms in this section will be through presentation and interpretation.

Presentation and identification

This section discusses the missionaries' presentation and interpretation of the Christian Son of God. It also deals with converts' reactions and discusses the causes, impact and problems faced on most converts. Finally, it suggests a remedy.

As was the case with God the Father, the missionaries' presentation of the Son of God was also through a narrative approach. While they depended on creation to demonstrate belief in God, they depended on the concept of love and redemption to describe the notion of the Son of God; that is, what God did for the whole of humanity thorough him. The missionaries' central motif in this regard, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16). Dean Lutosha reported on further representation of the Christian Son of God in a narrative form:

The Deity we believe in – (who is already described and identified to them as *Katonda* for Protestants and *Mungu* for Roman Catholics and some Haya converts subjectively continued to address him as *Ruhanga)* gave his only begotten Son. Conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, he was named Jesus. When he grew up, he served people in various godly ways - preaching, teaching, and prophesying (mainly about the kingdom of God and eternal life) (Matthew 1:18-21). He was concerned with people's physical life to the extent of curing them of various ailments. He lived a perfect and holy life without committing sin. Finally, and only because of his mission, he was crucified on the cross (Acts 2:22-36). He offered his life as atonement through the shedding of his precious blood for the redemption of humanity. He was buried and rose again after three days. Later, he ascended into heaven to his Father from where he sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples to remind and guide them to remain committed. He promised to return to judge and reward humanity depending on what they had done while on earth. This judgment is unquenchable fire for those who did not believe in him and the reward of eternal life for those who believed in him. This is the Word of God contained in the Holy Bible, which gives living witness to God about what his Son did and still does for humanity (Lutosha 2000).

Each denomination had its own way of presenting and teaching about the Son of God according to its belief, but in a way that maintains his significance. It also involved a nominal identification of Jesus as the Son of *Katonda* or *Mungu.* Hymn 112 Verse one says, *Twina Omukama Mwana wa Katonda* (We have the King, the Son of *Katonda*) (NW Diocese 1992:59). For further explication of the Christian Son of God, missionaries also applied an interpretative approach.

Interpretation of the Son of God

For interpreting the Christian Son of God, missionaries used various traditional paradigms, but they were unsuitable for identifying him in the Haya context. Some of the most commonly applied models were: *Omukama* (the King), *Eizoba* (the sun), *Omufumu* (the diviner), *Omutambi* (the healer) and *Omunywanyi* (the Blood Brother). Among them, only *eizoba* was chosen for this study because of its etymological and terminological similarities to *Kazoba*, the Son of *Ruhanga.*

***Eizoba,* a christological concept**

A study on *eizoba* involves an understanding of another similar, concept of the *Kazoba* model. They share similarities in terms of external form but are quite different in terms of content. Their similarities are the main reasons behind the missionaries' application of the name *eizoba* rather than

Kazoba. Differences in terms of conceptual meaning involve the name *eizoba* denoting the sun as an object and the name *Kazoba* denoting "the Illuminator", the Son of *Ruhanga* believed to illuminate the entire universe, especially humanity.

There are also similarities in terms of the etymological roots of words like *eizoba* and *Kazoba*. Both have the same stem – *zoba*. From it, two important Haya names were derived, *eizoba* (the sun) and *Kazoba* (the Son of *Ruhanga*). The name *Kazoba* has two elements – the prefix "k*a*" and the stem, *zoba*. While "*ka*" means of someone or belonging to someone, the stem *zoba* (also of *eizoba*) means of the Sun or "an illumination". The name *eizoba* consists two elements: the prefix "ei" and the stem *zoba.* The close similarities between both names, when interpreted literally, could lead one to think that they have the same meaning, either the sun or an identification of God with the sun. Such an interpretation is unacceptable to the Haya since *Kazoba* does not represent the sun but the Son of *Ruhanga* (the Illuminator). Rwehumbiza maintains:

> When *Nyamuhanga* (God the Creator) is placed in a genitive case for *Kazoba*, then the latter becomes an attributive of God and the name then means, the Light, the Illuminator, God the All-Seer par excellence. There is no identification of God with the sun, which is an epiphany of God as it symbolises his grandeur and power. (1983:170)

The best way to understand the difference between *eizoba* and *Kazoba* is to note that the name "the Illuminator" has been given only to *Kazoba,* the Son of *Ruhanga* and not to *eizoba,* which is an object in the sky. However, "the Illuminator" portrays the nature and role of *Kazoba* effectively. The lack of knowledge of the Haya idiomatic expression and traditional beliefs about *eizoba* and *Kazoba,* particularly their similarities, confused most scholars, missionaries, theologians and some converts. Consequently, the conceptual significance of the *Kazoba* model remained untouched because it was not explored in the light of the transcendence experienced within the African primal religion's world-views (Bediako 2000:56).

The visibility of *eizoba* (the sun) and the invisibility of *Kazoba* (the Son of *Ruhanga*) is another factor behind the application of *eizoba* and not *Kazoba* together with the biblical analogy, which depicts Jesus as the light of the world. The text in the Gospel according to John, in the Haya language, echoes this view: *Inye ndi mushana gw'ensi. Ampondera tatambukirega mu mwilima, nawe aina omushana gw'oburora* (I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness) (John 8:12). This implies that Jesus Christ, the perfect image of God, the Father, is the Light who has shone on all mankind (Shorter 1979:176). The view of Christ as the sun is echoed in Church documents - part three of Hymn 15 says:

Ninkusima eizoba lyange, okanyakiza omwoyo. Ninkusima mushana gwange, Okanyeza omutima. Ninkusima, Mukiza wange, kuba okanfera. (NW Diocese 1992:27)

I praise You my Sun, because you have illuminated my soul. I praise You my sunshine because you have cleansed my heart. I praise You my Saviour, because You have died for me. (My translation)

Shorter has observed the practical use of sun symbolism among the Kimbu of Tanzania which led Christians to identify Jesus as the light of the world. He reports, "...when you call upon God to witness your actions, when you say *Iluvya* [or *Ruhanga*] is there and point to the Sun in the sky above and think of your duty to reflect the light of Jesus Christ" (1979:177).

There were misconceptions about the suitability of *Kazoba* as a christological model. This led some scholars and converts to relate him to spirits or to hold the view that he was a spirit himself. This view can be seen in some literature where *Kazoba* is identified as one of the great spirits (Mutembei 1993:30). This misidentification is a religious phenomenon, even in the New Testament, where Jesus' power and authority were claimed to be either related or have their origin in the great spirit, Beelzebub (Matthew 12:22-32).

Lastly, the view of the sun as a cosmic phenomenon in terms of light gave birth to a cosmic Christianity deemed suitable for identifying the nature of Jesus on a global level (Kraft 1979:290). Viewed from the missionaries' experience of western cultural-religious cosmology, *eizoba* (the sun) was chosen as a christological model to represent Jesus who is the true light of God. Pastor Muller, in his Christmas homily of 2000, described the impact of cosmology on western Christianity,

...A hundred years earlier Caesar Aurelian had nominated 25 December as the festival of the sun. The Bishop of Rome rededicated the same day to Christ, the light of the world. Christians would celebrate the fact that Christ, the true Sun, had conquered the pagan Roman Empire and all its deities. (Muller 2000)

Eizoba, although a global christological model in terms of light, is unsuitable in the Haya context as it does not portray the notion of the Son of God as experienced in the Haya and Christian concepts of God. Among the factors making it unsuitable are: " *eizoba* is absent from the famous Haya invocation of the Deity in threefold form - *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of (or my Father) *Ntangaire*). Only *Kazoba* is incorporated in the invocation" (Kamalweki 2000). Its absence indicates that *eizoba* is not closely related to *Ruhanga* or invoked in the same way as *Ruhanga* who is normally invoked with his aspects. "Even when people address *Ruhanga* (mostly at sunrise or sunset), facing either eastward or westward (they do

so only as a symbolic gesture of the omnipotence and omniscience of the Deity), the name *eizoba* (the sun) is not mentioned (Manwa 1999).

CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS

Converts' reaction to the missionaries' version of the Christian Son of God was through two phases: The earlier and later reactions. While the former was an initial acceptance of him, the latter was an interpretation and identification of him in traditional belief, thus producing their own version.

Concerts' earlier reactions

The Haya converts earlier reaction to the missionaries' version of the Son of God was similar to an interpretation of God the Father. Initially, they related the missionaries' teaching about the Son of God to their own belief in the Son of the Deity on a reciprocal basis. Kamulari says, "we heard keenly the missionaries' teaching about the Son of God. We noted the similarities between them, particularly how the notion of the Son of the Deity in both cases relates to the nature of the Deity, his role and his relationship to humanity" (Kamulari 1998). They noted that both sides portrayed the notion of the Son of God differently, mainly in terms of identification. Despite differences they noted that the notion of the Son of God, according to each side, did not contradict the other" (Kyanda 1998). Consequently, they were motivated to respond amazingly but positively. Positively, because the notion of a Deity who has a Son was not strange to us since we had a similar notion, although experienced differently (Mujuni 1998). Pastor Kempanju asserts, "our amazement was mainly due to the nature of the Deity (*Katonda* or *Mungu* - now the Christian God) and whether or not he was related to *Ruhanga* (the Haya Deity) and his Son or was he *Ruhanga* himself? Was *Katonda* or *Mungu* the same Deity? (Ndaluhera 1999). Was he *Ruhanga* whom the Haya had believed in and worshiping, through his Son *Kazoba*, since ancient times? Were the Deity (*Katonda* or M*ungu*) and his Son powerful *emizimu* (spirits) whom *Ruhanga* and his Son *Kazoba* had sent to guide them? (Kempanju 1975:16). Does the Christian Deity *Katonda* or *Mungu* have a Son similar to *Ruhanga*? "Despite the lack of answers to these questions, we had responded positively to the missionaries' version and accepted that Jesus was the Son of *Katonda* or *Mungu"* (Balinda 1999) because they perceived him in the light of the Son of *Ruhanga* being the same as the Christian Son of God. Attempts to understand the Christian Son of God in traditional terms have been encountered by other people in East Africa. Despite the differences between traditional and Christian beliefs, each side has similarities conducive to further experiencing him. Donders reports,

> When Rebmann explained that God sent his only Son to show his love, they said that they did not need that Son to know that God loved them. They knew about that love, because God had given them their lives...children, the Sun and the Moon, the rain and

> harvest...Krapf and Rebmann felt that they had not been understood. The Warabai had not contradicted the missionaries. They had interpreted everything that had been told to them through their own perspective. The Warabai amended and corrected the missionaries' views from the beginning. (1985:2-3)

Some of the Haya converts experienced the need to further respond to the missionaries' version of the Son of God beyond the stage reached.

Converts' later reactions

The converts' initial positive response to the Son of God served as a basis for further reflection and response. Kandaga reports, "the question tantalising us most was, how to identify the Christian Son of God and describe the link and relationship to his Father in traditional terms?" (Kandaga 2000). Reacting to this question, they were motivated to embark on seeking the answer by undergoing a second paradigm shift. Its implementation was as Balinda and Pastor Ntimba say, "We noted that a second paradigm shift would be possible through a referral basis of the traditional concept of God of which the key lies in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form (Balinda 1999). "We also noted that it incorporates the notion of the Son of the Deity. We regarded it as a suitable christological model to illuminate identification and understanding of the Christian Son of God (Ntimba 2000). On the ground that it portrayed the notion of the Deity, *Ruhanga,* who has a Son (*Kazoba*)" . This involved linking the Deity and his aspects (Jesus' relationship with God) and the Spirit in Haya idiom. The question of the validity of *Kazoba*, as the Son of God in a Christian sense was posed by converts such as Machume and Magezi, "If *Katonda* or *Mungu*, who is normally not believed to have a Son, had been identified as having a Son (the Christian Son of God) why not *Ruhanga*, who since ancient times was believed to have had a Son? (Machume 2000). If the Haya responded to *Ruhanga,* who is the Father of *Kazoba*, why could they not expand this belief to include the Christian Son of God?" (Magezi 2000). The question indicates the possibility of seeking a traditional christological conception in the framework of the Son of *Ruhanga*, for illuminating the Christian Son of God. This is a challenge that has been raised in other African societies (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:9-10).

Schreiter and Parratt record converts' attempts to listen to their past experience of God in order to explore signs or elements of the Son of God (1985:29) as an African attempt "to translate the one Faith of Jesus to suit [people]: the tongue, style, genius, character and culture" (Parratt 1995:44). Similarly, Bishop Sundkler views this need as "Africa cries for the original foundation"(1980:45-46). He sees myths, invocations and other religious sayings as providing an arena for such seeking and interpretation. As de Carvalho says, "it is from [the] encounter between the African religion

and Christianity...that an African experience of the Jesus Christ of the Bible came about" (1981:17).

Converts, upon acquiring this knowledge, attempted to identify and address him in traditional idiom and terms. " This was an attempt to interpret the missionaries' version of the Son of God according to Haya frame of reference (Tinkaligayile 2000).Its implementation was as Mutiganzi reports. "Traditional knowledge of God in his Son aspect (of *Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga, Kazoba* Son of *Ruhanga*) enabled us to perceive Jesus as the Son of *Ruhanga.* It led us to invoke him as *Yesu Omwana* wa *Ruhanga* (Jesus the Son of *Ruhang*a) (Mutiganzi 1998). This was a shift from the alien identification of him in the Ganda-Bantu-Swahili frame of reference, *Yesu Omwana wa Katonda* or *Yesu Omwana wa Mungu* (Jesus the Son of *Katonda* or *Mungu*), to an identification of him in the traditional Haya frame of reference (Mukasa 1999). When asked what this change really means, Pastor Ntimba said, "The Fatherhood of *Ruhanga* (Father of *Kazoba)* took on a new perspective and significance resulting in him being seen as the Father of Jesus Christ" (Ntimba 2000). Elaborating on this, Bilikwija says, "since the Haya notion of the Deity and his Son was not applied to illuminate identification of the Christian Son of God, it caused the gap in identifying and understanding him, which we filled ourselves" (Bilikwija 1999). Schreiter views this experience as "an attempt to grasp the mystery of the face of Christ and to give him a name that will seal his face" (1992:101). Haya converts attempt could be grasped in Robert's question as quoted by Douglas, "If the universal Christ came to all people in their particular historical context, then all people had a right to define Christ in their own likeness" (1994:61).Consequently, Jesus remained the Son of God, but in a more understandable way. In Ward's words, "Jesus remains a paradigm model for the reality of God" (1977:181), a phrase revealed to all people in different ways at different stages and in different languages. Thus, Haya converts' identification of Jesus in traditional idiom demonstrated their ambition to "put the words of the Bible into the people's beloved mother tongue" (Sundkler 1980:128). "They used different vocabularies to express the same Christian truths and meanings" (Mukuta 2000). Hence, the presence of Christ in a cultural world determines what Schreiter describes as a new human symbology, a new language and a new manner of life Thus the right way of identifying and announcing Christ in the Haya idiom and the meaning of the Christian mystery and its significance, had been discovered. On the assertion that the ultimate formulation of what is understood is done within the receiver's mind and not within the communicator's (Kraft 1979:147, 150). Parratt, quoting Cave states:

> We have to explore for ourselves the significance of Christ and his place in the experience of the Church and then seek to express what we discover in terms which shall be intelligible to our age and congruous with Christian values. (1995)

The converts' perception and identification of Jesus within the framework of the Son of *Ruhanga* did not change him or distort his meaning and his significance. Also it did not produce another concept of the Son of God contrary to the Christian experience. Rather, "converts had interpreted the biblical and missionaries' version of him into their own version according to their terms of understanding" (Lwenteme 2001). It demonstrated the fact that while "the task of the missionary is to present the gospel, ... the task of [the recipients is to respond to and] express the gospel and its meaning in their own language and within their own thought forms" (Bevans 2003:65). Sundkler noted this need earlier, hence, "theology in Africa has to interpret this Christ in terms that are relevant and essential to African existence" (1961:281). It entails the analogy of "the kernel and the husk", of which, as Bevans puts it, "there is the kernel of the gospel, which is surrounded in a disposable, nonessential cultural husk" (2003:40). The latter implies contextualising or stripping the kernel (the gospel) its wrappings (the contextual husk) in order to find what has been described as the gospel kernel (Bevans 2003:40). Therefore, the Christian community claims the right to mould and portray the gospel into the form that will fit their context and time. Kaufman writes:

> Ordinary humans, looking at the Jesus presented to them in one tradition or another, have always been the ones who decide how Jesus should be regarded, what should be believed about him... throughout Church history believers and others have repeatedly interpreted and reinterpreted who Jesus was and what his work consisted of...always in accord with the needs, insights and meaningful symbolism of the time. (1981:126)

The study has concluded that the Haya converts' reaction to the missionaries' interpretation of the Christian Son of God resulted in two versions: the missionaries' version as offered initially and the converts' version springing from the missionaries' version. Both indicate the existence of two concepts of the Son of God within a single church. In the first version the Christian Son of God was identified and experienced in the framework of Ganda and Bantu-Swahili concepts of God, hence *Yesu Omwana wa Katonda* (Jesus the Son of *Katonda*) on the Protestant side or *Yezu Omwana wa Mungu* (on the Roman Catholic side) (Jesus the Son of *Mungu* - the letter "z" is used for the name Yesu (Jesus) used instead of the letter "s" as used in the Protestant version). In the second version, the Christian Son of God was identified and experienced within the framework of the traditional concept of God expressed in the Haya idiom, hence *Yesu Omwana* wa *Ruhanga* (for all Christian denominations) (Mukasa 1999). It implied that converts had indigenised both the container (the Ganda and Swahili concepts of God) and the contained (the Christian concept of

God). It was an attempt to discover what Christ [looks like] when seen from a different world view "Instead of echoing other people's responses to Jesus, the Haya converts had discovered their own answers" (Bakena 2000). In Bediako's words, it is as much a question of what the converts experienced in their traditional experience of God (1995:214). This was possible because the Haya had already encountered the Deity, *Ruhanga*, in his Son aspect (Kalugila & Stevenson 1987:43). Thus, "traditional and Christian beliefs enabled them to Christianise the Son of *Ruhanga* and indigenise the Christian Son of God resulting into producing a Haya-Christian theology and version of the Christian Son of God. It led them a new understanding of the Son of God, according to Christian experience" (Bilikwija 1999). At this stage, converts had produced a Haya-Christian version of the Christian Son of God. Their attempt has a basis in the assertion that "Africans have every right to formulate their own christology, their own response to who Jesus is to them" (Schreiter 1992:53), which implies understanding him in the context of their own religious consciousness. As Bediako maintains, "the eternal gospel has already found a home within the African response to it, showing that Christ has become the integrating reality and power linking Old and New in the African experience" (2000:55). Similarly, Hillman maintains:

> If it is to be communicated to all people in their own historical periods and cultural contexts, the meaning of what God has done in Jesus must be creatively reinterpreted and articulated through locally intelligible symbols already operative in the existing culture of each people. (1993:71)

Young regards the converts' version of the Haya- Christian Son of God as an attempt "to discover their own ways of responding to the Christian kerygma and from abstract statement of dogma, [thus] to show how Christ is present in African history, culture and society" (1993:xi).

Converts, upon an identification, indigenisation and formulation of the Haya-Christian Son of God, in traditional terms, were enabled to perceive and experience him anew. Their experience and answers attained at the first paradigm shift and the conversion stage were framed and posed anew at the second paradigm shift stage. This view has a basis in the conviction that encounters between Christ and the meanings inherent in other religions take place in the terms of those meanings themselves. In this way, the true face of Jesus is explored, which meshes with the traditional religious framework. It implied access to "christology that speaks to the actual questions that converts are asking" (Pobee 1992:47-48).

Finally, the converts' new experience of Jesus leads them to be reaffirmed in their beliefs. This echoes the traditional belief where the affirmation and invocation of the Deity *Ruhanga* incorporated his Son.

PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT

Problems faced at this phase are related to the way through which the Christian Son of God was presented and identified to the Haya. The presentation of him differed to some extent, from the presentation of God the Father that mainly depended on indirect questions, mostly about creation. No specific question about the traditional notion of the Son of the Deity had been raised. For instance, the question of whether or not the Haya had a notion of the Deity who has son/s or daughter/s was not raised. As was the case with God the Father, the central question of how the Haya address or invoke the Deity was not raised (Lufulani 2000). If asked, the answer (an invocation of the Deity in a threefold ford) that depicts the notion of the Son of the Deity and the relationship between him and his Father could have been given (Kamulari 1998).

In its absence, other christological models were applied to identify Jesus. All were traditional by nature as they were taken out of the traditional frame of reference for understanding the Deity, *Ruhanga* and his Son (Tinkaligayile 2000). Thus they lacked a clear christological conception, as there was no invocation or saying that portrayed the Deity and his Son. "Even the Ganda name for God, *Katonda,* or Bantu/Swahili name, *Mungu,* already used to identify the Christian God, had no room for the Son of the Deity" (Mukasa 1999). Therefore, they were unable to illuminate the notion of the Son of God according to Haya and Christian beliefs. For Kahwa, "an application of christological models taken out of Haya frame of reference caused a credibility gap in relating Jesus to the traditional notion of the Son of *Ruhanga*". Essentially, they did not depict the unique and divine nature of Jesus Christ in traditional terms and idiom (Kahwa 2000). At continental level, suitable christological concepts are still an open question. Even where found and applied, they are seldom taken seriously (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:34-35). Consequently, they have no appreciable influence on the life of the Haya or on other African churches (Bediako 2000:77). Most of them portrayed the reality of Jesus in a way that does not fit in Haya traditional understanding. The same problem has been reported in other parts of Africa, as Taylor mentions:

> Christ has been presented as the answer to the questions a White man would ask, the solution to the needs that Western man would ask, the solution to the needs that Western man would feel, the Saviour of the world of the European world view...But if Christ were to appear as the answer to the questions that Africans are asking, what would he look like? If he came into the world of African cosmology to redeem man as Africans understand him, would he be recognised in the rest of the universal church? In addition, if Africans offered him the praise and petitions of her total unlimited humanity, would they be acceptable? (1963:16)

As was the case with God the Father, the converts' interpretation of the Christian Son of God, its nature and manner remained unknown to missionaries, was not sought as a possible alternative interpretation along traditional lines (Kabyangira 1988).

Impact on most converts

Most converts did not understand the christological models used to present and identify the Christian Son of God. Because models and other related terms used such as *Omwana gw'endiga* (the young lamb, Ganda words used to portray a christological concept) were unknown to most of them. In Haya this would be *Omwana gw'e ntama* (Mukasa 1999). Moreover, questions such as the position he held and how he related to the Godhead, namely the link and relationship of Jesus to the Deity, *Katonda* or *Mungu*, his Father remained unanswered" (Katabaro 2000). In other African societies, as Pauw observes, "the mediation of the Son of God remains vague and unreal" (1975:77). For a remedy, a call has been given to address Jesus in a biblical-African perspective. Pobee rightly maintains, "If we accept the same God known in the Bible, then it is legitimate to raise the question of who is Jesus in African religions?" His view has roots in the assertion that "we cannot talk about God and leave out Jesus Christ if we are to take the Trinity into serious consideration" (1992:45).

Converts' lack of understanding of how Jesus Christ is related to God (christianised *Ruhanga*) and to themselves led them to respond to God the Father only and not at all to the Son (Luguma 2000). Shorter experienced a similar problem among converts in Tanzania where "the name of Christ was hardly mentioned. People were more at home with phrases such as 'Almighty God' and 'Eternal Father' " (1979:138). This indicates a gap, not only in the nominal identification of his name (Jesus) but also in the perception of him for many converts. "This gap could have been filled by applying the traditional notion of the Son of the Deity and Haya idiom to illuminate a close link between Jesus and his Father" (Tinkaligayile 2000). This was impossible for most converts because they had already renounced the traditional concept of God, which incorporates the notion of the Son of God. As was the case with God the Father, most converts did not understand their fellow converts' interpretation of the Christian Son of God and the versions thus produced.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUITABLE TRADITIONAL CHRISTOLOGICAL MODEL

This section deals with the challenges following an application of unsuitable christological models amongst the Haya and the need for seeking and applying a correct traditional christological model. This will be through reflecting on key questions. Firstly, a definitive understanding of christology is needed that "is not simply intellectual or speculative activity, [rather a] reflection on the meaning of Jesus, who makes a difference in people's lives and calls them to strive for the humanity that he came to bring" (Bevans 2003:84-85). Secondly, will post-missionary Christianity continue to

preach Christ, who remains alien for most converts? In other words, will they continue to apply the unsuitable christological models so far used? Or will they change their methods so that they may understand and practise the gospel message according to Haya context? It means seeking suitable a traditional christological model with which to interpret Jesus in traditional terms. This implies seeking more suitable christological models that interpret Jesus in traditional Haya terms relevant to believers (Bakinikana 2000). This means that "Africans must experience Christ in their own communities and within their own cultural traditions" (Shorter 1988:22-23), without betraying biblical witness of him (Pobee 1992:47). Pobee regards such an approach as a way of reducing the strangeness of Jesus prevailing among most converts (1992:52).

The seeking of a traditional christological model raises a crucial question. Is a correct christological model to be found within the Haya religious frame of reference? There are two views. Some missionaries, scholars and converts claim that there is an absence of a valid Haya traditional christological model. However, most respondents strongly assert its availability. They regard the Haya Deity in a Son perspective as a suitable model to illuminate the interpretation of the Christian Son of God ever found on the continent (Ntimba 2000). For Mutembei, it could have been used to interpret Jesus in local terms (1993:38). As we have seen in this chapter, some converts already used it subjectively to interpret the Christian Son of God in Haya terms. Pastor Tinkaligayile, as quoted by Bishop Sundkler, reports on this possibility:

> Throughout the whole continent, there is a search for understanding the place of the African in salvation history...Africa's cry for an African theology implies the restoration of the original foundation. Jesus must not be interpreted as if he were only the restoration of the "desire of Israel". Every people has a history with God, who in different ways, prepares to receive Jesus. (1980:45-46)

Once a traditional Christian model has been found, it should not be put aside or ignored. Instead it should be used to interpret, identify and indigenise Jesus within the Haya religious framework. Mugambi, Magesa and Ela-Jean regard such an approach as the right way to enable Africans "to find their own questions so that they may derive their own answers" (1990:40-41), thus enabling them to understand Jesus in their own terms. Ela-Jean describes this step as a "move beyond the scholastic categories of catechism [in translating] our message about Jesus of Nazareth into the language of African culture, the language of symbols" (1988:42).

Even after a correct traditional christological model has been found and applied, it should not be regarded as the end of the story, but only as a means for further seeking, interpreting and

understanding Jesus because Christianity demands a continuous learning process by referring to similar attempts from the past. It involves amending or changing any christological model found to enable it to fit into its current context. Nicolson's comments shed light on this question. Do the ways in which Jesus has been perceived and portrayed in the past and our present perception of him still fit our own experience? He argues that to adequately describe Jesus, either in the past or in the present, depends on a portrayal of him in an identifiable and reasonable way (1990: xiv-v).

THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

This section investigates the missionaries' version of the concept of the Spirit of God among the Haya and the converts' reactions. It also investigates the implications of both approaches.

Presentation and identification

The missionaries' presentation and identification of the Spirit of God also was through a narrative method approach. They preached that the Christian God not only has a Son, but also has a spirit, called the Holy Spirit. Likewise, God has no beginning as he was there before creation. He belongs to God, *Katonda* (for Protestants) or *Mungu* (for Roman Catholics). The missionaries' favourite motif in this regard was the text in the Gospel according to John. It says, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 15:13). Later, hymns were used to emphasise this concept at both an oral and written level. Part two of Hymn 64 illustrates this: *Oli nchuro y'magezi...otusindike tugende kubalangira abandi bahereze Katonda*... (You are the stream of knowledge...Send us forth to proclaim the Word of God to other people so that they may serve *Katonda*) (NW Diocese 1992:38). For further explication of the Spirit of God, the missionaries applied an interpretative approach.

Interpretation of the Spirit of God

Early attempts to interpret the Christian concept of the Spirit in Haya traditional terms were along denominational lines. The post-missionary Christianity on the side of Lutheran and Roman Catholic missionaries focused on the same goal, but in separate ways. The Lutheran interpretation of the Christian concept of the Spirit used the Haya vernacular "double reference words" of *Omwoyo ogulikwera* (Holy Spirit). The first, *mwoyo,* literally means breath or soul or heart. It relates to the concept of the Spirit of God as found in the Old Testament, whereby the word, *ruah* (breath or wind) is used (Dockrill & Tanner 1985: 10-11). The second word, *ogulikwera,* means

white or clean and pure. For Haya the words, *omwoyo ogulikwera,* in a combined single form are usually not used. Rather, each word is used independently to identify either spiritual or non-spiritual things. Its grammatical structure is as follows: The prefix "o" is appended to the word *omwoyo* and the prefix *oguli* is appended to the word *ogulikwera*. While the letters *oyo* are the stem of the word *omwoyo,* the stem *kwera* is for the word *ogulikwera*. Both words joined together form the double reference term *Omwoyo Ogulikwera*. The word *ogulikwera* is a neutral word normally used to signify an object, either material or creature, in an impersonal religious sense. Mostly, it is used to indicate things related to religious purposes - purity, holiness and sanctity. The emphasis here is on its meaning, which is white. It connotes a sense of cleanliness, transparency, innocence and moral behaviour, hence it is physically and spiritually applicable (Nkoba 2000). Its importance is exemplified by a poetical metaphorical saying, *Nayela, Nayela, Nayela Omungoma, Nayela, nkamata, nayela omungoma* (by virtue of his Office, the King and religious leader or any great leader is white like milk) (Lugenge 1999). The word *ogulikwera* taken alone does not give a Christian sense of the Spirit of God, in a personal sense, despite the fact that it is a neutral word which could also be used in a personal sense. It becomes a Christian term only when both words, *omwoyo* and *ogulikwera,* are applied together. On this basis, the term was applied in oral and church literature, namely the New Testament, the hymns, the liturgy and the catechism. Its use in the New Testament is demonstrated by *Inye nababatiza n'amaizi, nawe ogwo alibabatiza n' Omwoyo Ogulikwera* (I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit).

Even the usage of these words in double reference form is inadequate to identify the Christian concept of the Spirit because it is unable to portray a Christian sense of the Spirit, in terms of a personal relationship to God. Because the double reference term is inadequate to illuminate the link and to relate it to the Deity and his aspects or Persons on the Christian side (Luguma 2000). A use of them demonstrates not only the lack of access to suitable traditional models with which to express and identify the Christian concept of the Spirit, but also how difficult it is to identify him (Hendy 1957:11).

The Roman Catholic missionaries interpreted the concept of the Spirit in a slightly different way from the Protestants. The Protestants applied a set of Haya words of *Omwoyo Ogulikwera.* The Catholics applied a combination of Haya and Swahili words of *Mwoyo Mtakatifu* (Holy Spirit). The second word is Swahili, which means "holier," "holiness" or "sanctity" (Kiswahili Research 1996:372). Although both the Protestants and the Roman Catholics used the Haya word *Mwoyo* (at the beginning of each double reference) they differ in the use of it. While the Protestants used it with the prefix "o" the Roman Catholics used it without the prefix. There are two possible reasons

for this omission. The word *Mwoyo* without the "o" sounds acceptable and fits well in combination with the Swahili word (*Mwoyo Mtakatifu*). More importantly, its usage connotes a personal dimension, according to the Christian experience of the Spirit of God.

Factors behind the usage of a Swahili word, *Mtakatifu,* and not the Haya word, *omwoyo,* are the grammatical position of the Haya word, *ogulikwera,* which was regarded as inadequate for identifying the Spirit of God in a Christian sense. This was replaced by the Swahili word *Mtakatifu,* which was believed to convey the more precise, religious meaning intended (Byamungu 1999).

There was the assumption that the word *ogulikwera,* like most traditional names, was used in traditional religious activities and it was assumed that it might have influence with the spirits (Gilman 1999). Also, a need was felt to conform to an earlier identification of the Christian God, in which a Swahili name (*Mungu*) was applied to identify the Christian God the Father. Finally, it was felt necessary to use a term different from those used by other denominations.

A similar combination of traditional and Swahili words (*Mwoyo Mtukufu*) with slight differences, was applied by the neighbouring Roman Catholics in Uganda to identify the Holy Spirit. In both cases, a traditional word (*mwoyo*) claimed the priority position in double combination words. The difference lies in the use of a second word of each double reference words of *Mwoyo Mtakatifu* and *Mwoyo Mtukufu.* While Roman Catholics in north -western Tanzania used the Swahili word *Mtakatifu* (Holy), the Roman Catholics in Uganda used the Swahili word *Mtukufu* (the glorified). The word *Mtukufu* is derived from the Swahili words *tukufu* (glory) *tukuka* (to be glorified) and *tukuza* (to glorify) (Swahili Research 1996:328). The word *Mtukufu* therefore means the one who is glorified. Together, the words *Mwoyo* and *Mtukufu* formed the double reference phrase *Mwoyo Mtukufu* (the glorified Spirit) (Aida 2000). While Haya Christians on both sides (Protestant and Roman Catholic) had identified the Holy Spirit mainly in the sense of holiness, the Roman Catholics in Uganda identified him with the emphasis on the sense of might, power and glory. This demonstrates how the Christian concept of the Spirit can be identified using traditional terms with or without a explicit sense of holiness (as is the case of the English word "holy") yet without distorting biblical status.

CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS

Converts' reaction to the missionaries' version of the Spirit of God took place in two main phases. The earlier and later reactions. While the former led them to an initial acceptance of the Christian

Spirit of God, the latter led them into interpreting and identifying the missionaries' version of the Spirit and incorporating it into their own version.

Converts' earlier reactions

The first reaction had roots in their previous experience of interpreting God the Father and the Son. Some respondents maintain: "We heard the missionaries preaching about the Spirit of God. Thereafter, we reflected on its conceptual grounds in relation to their traditional belief about the Spirit of the Deity, *Ruhanga,* on a reciprocal and correspondence basis" (Bishoota 1998). "We noted the similarities and differences between them and found that the notion of the Christian Spirit of God (as presented in the Ganda-Swahili frame of reference) was not contrary to our traditional notion of the Spirit of the Deity" (Ntimba 2000). Hood, as reported by, Bevans observed a similar view among the African and Caribbean people. He regards the traditional understanding of the Spirit of the Deity, as crucial for understanding the biblical and Christian worldview of the Spirit of God, being regarded as similar if not the same with the African worldview (2003:63). The question that confronted them at this stage was the alien identification of the Spirit of God (the Spirit of *Katonda* or *Mungu*). However, these converts had "responded positively to the missionaries' version of the Spirit of God" (Rwechungura 1999). The basis for their acceptance of him is, as Bishop Kazoba says, "for many years, even before the advent of Christianity, Nyambo/Haya had experienced a manifestation of the Deity who had a Spirit. Consequently, they did not regard the Christian Spirit of God as alien or contrary to their belief" (Kazoba 2001). In addition, they noted a resonance and continuity between the traditional notion of the Spirit of the Deity (*Ruhanga*) and the Christian Spirit. Sundkler, an eyewitness of this experience, states:

> The congregation's willingness to accept was the all-important factor... The Spirit builds the bridge leading from human need to the world of faith and of the Bible. Although this probably cannot be fully explained, it can be seen in the life of the Bukoba Church [among the Haya]. (1980:95)

At this stage, converts experienced the first paradigm shift in responding to the missionaries' version of the Spirit of God. They shifted from the traditional concept of the Spirit of *Ruhanga*, to the Christian concept of Spirit (Kamulari 1998).

Converts' later reactions

The converts' later reaction to the missionaries' version of the Spirit of God was built on the experience already gained through interpreting God the Father and the Son. Having responded to the missionaries' version of the Spirit of God, later they felt the need for a further response. Gati reports, "Our goal was the identification and understanding of the Christian Spirit of God in a

traditional frame of reference" (Gati 1999). Like God the Father and the Son, "we referred to our traditional concept of God and its invocation of the Deity in a threefold form (*Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*) (*Kazoba* Son of (or of) *Ruhanga* of (or of my Father) *Ntangaire*" (Mahitane 1998). They found that, among the aspects of the Deity as portrayed in an invocation of him, one is his Spirit (nominally identified as *Ntangaire* or *Amagara.* They regarded this as a suitable image to illuminate, interpret and identify the Christian Spirit of God (Kahwa 2000).

Acting on this knowledge, converts embarked on interpreting and identifying the Christian Spirit in traditional terms and idiom. Bategereza reports, "We renamed him *Amagara* or *Ntangaire Omwoyo gwa Ruhanga* (The vital force or Spirit of *Ruhanga*) and thus gave him a new name according to our frame of reference" (Bategereza 2000). Consequently, at the local level, subjectively he was no longer identified as the Spirit of *Katonda* or *Mungu*, but the Spirit of *Ruhanga* (Ntimba 2000). A similar experience of perception and formulation of the Spirit of God in a Christian sense, as well as its justification and validity has been practised in other parts of the world. Accordingly, Hood suggests that the Holy Spirit can be interpreted as the sovereign over lesser spirits. For Haya he can be understood in the framework of traditional understanding of the Spirit of the Deity. Bevans reports on its cultural and theological basis and possibility:

> [Hood admits that such a theology] would not be possible within the framework of the Greek, [in which] Eurocentric worldview … controls the theological possibilities of the Christian traditional today. [Rather] he insists that it is completely plausible within the context of Africa and cultures of African diaspora. (2003:64-65)

However, dentification of the Christian concept of the Spirit in traditional terms did not imply a new concept of the Spirit, but rather an experience of him in a traditional way. As Pastor Kagaruki maintains, "we had christianised the traditional concept of the Spirit and indigenised the Christian the Spirit of God at the same time (Kagaruki 2000). The former was the means for illuminating an understanding of the latter. Bediako regards such an approach as a move forward. In his words, "there is at least minimal paradigm-shift as we pass from the spiritual universe of primal religion into the environment of the Christian faith [which] we have been waiting for" (2000:89).

The converts' new understanding of the Christian Spirit of God led them to a new experience and caused them to understand him as never before. In turn, this led them to a self-affirming of him in traditional terms. At this stage, converts had produced a Haya-Christian theology of the Spirit of

God (Kangeizi 2000). For Hood, it implies an alternate theology of the Holy Spirit, based on the African worldview as well as reading the scripture in its light (Bevans 2003:64).

PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT

Like an interpretation of God the Father and the Son, problem faced revolved around the methods used. The traditional pneumatological model was not sought to correspond and relate to the Christian concept of the Spirit on the assumption that no valid model of this nature could be found in Haya religious culture. Therefore, the question of how the Haya address the Deity was not asked. Consequently, the nature and manner of invoking him was not accessed. Such knowledge could have revealed to them the belief in the Deity who has the Spirit (Ntimba 2000). In its absence, traditional models, although out of the frame of reference, were applied to interpret and identify the Christian concept of the Spirit. There was no religious saying or invocation, in either Ganda or Swahili thought forms, which portrayed the notion of the Spirit of the Deity. Thus terms used were unable to illuminate the Haya notion of the Spirit of the Deity and how it relates to the Christian concept of the Spirit. Their impact included blocking any possibility of understanding the converts' attempt at tackling this problem. That is a self-interpretation of the Christian concept of the Spirit in traditional terms because the possibility was beyond expectations.

Converts themselves were responsible for a lack of understanding the Christian Spirit of God. Their response to missionaries' version of him was not beyond the first paradigm shift. They did not embark on a second paradigm shift through referring to a traditional concept of God in a Spirit perspective, for illuminating an understanding of him (Ishebabi 2000). Thus, like in other areas of Africa, the Holy Spirit seemed to have received much less attention and therefore little relevance of him since he was not described in their own term. This is due to the fact that (like God the Father and the Son) they had renounced already traditional concept of God and Haya idiom, which are the channel through to such experience. According to Pauw's suggestions, the remedy could be through activating the Christian belief of the Spirit into traditional belief (1975:56, 79). Like previous identifications of God the Father and the Son, converts also did not understand their fellow converts' interpretation of the Christian concept of the Spirit.

THE MISSIONARIES' VERSION OF THE TRINITY

The procedure for interpreting the Trinity focused on an interpretation of it in its entirety. It is looked upon as a logical conclusion of an interpretation of each Person of the Trinity so far done in this chapter. This was essential because the Christian concept of God is the Trinity. Therefore, an

understanding of it depends on an understanding of all persons or aspects of the Triune God, and not only on a partial understanding (Ward 1977:180). This is crucial "if one does not want the [biblical] God to disappear into Sabellian obscurity" (Moltmann 1981:164-165). Hence, "all truly profound theology must be ultimately rooted in the Trinity...Without this ground it is bound to be radically superficial" (Schreiter 1992:16). In view of this, the propagation of Christianity among the Haya was along trinitarian lines from the start. The section looks at the missionaries' attempt to present and identify the Trinity involving a description of each Person, an investigation of the converts' earlier and later reactions. It also investigates implications and problems faced, and their impact on most converts.

Presentation and identification

As with earlier approaches, the presentation of the entire Trinity was mainly through a narrative form, consisting of teaching, preaching and singing. Levels of interactions provided an arena and framework. Building on what was already said, missionaries, proclaimed, "The Christian God, *Katonda* (for Protestants) or *Mungu* (for Roman Catholics) is the Trinity. He is One God manifesting in three Persons, God the Father, the Son and the Spirit in a perfect union without separation, confusion and contradiction. Various hymns were used to support this doctrine as in Hymn 76, part one, goes *Katonda Omo, Omubushatu* (One God in Trinity) (NW Diocese 1992:44). The narration continues. The Christian God revealed himself to humanity, through creation, redemption and sanctification. Hymn 73, Part one, says, *Katusime Obushatu, Ogw'ayatutonzire, Nogw'ayatuchungwire; N'ogwo atushemeza* (Let us praise and give thanks to the Trinity, the One who created us; the One who redeemed us and the One who sanctifies us) (NWDiocese 1992:42).The Great Commission that portrays a threefold perception of God was sought to conclude the narration: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). A narrative presentation of the Trinity was also applied in other areas of Africa, where it was presented generally but enthusiastically. As Oduyoye observes, on Trinity Sundays most preachers preach dynamically by throwing up their hands in emphasising the doctrine of the Trinity. "The Trinity is mysterious and part of our faith. If you do not accept it then you are not Christian" (1986:53). Such an approach allowed converts to respond accordingly and energetically by singing. Parts one, two and three of Hymn 74 goes, *Ichw' abantu tusiime Omukama ayatonzire byona. Ichw'abantu tusiime Yesu...ayatuchungwire. Ichw' abantu tusiime Mwoyo Alikwera...ayeza abantu boona* (Let us give thanks to God the Creator of all. Let us give thanks to Jesus who redeemed our Redeemer. Let us give thanks to the Holy Spirit who

sanctifies all humanity' (NW Diocese 1992:42). This was the climax of the missionaries' exercise in presenting and identifying the Christian concept of God along trinitarian lines (Balira 2001).

CONVERTS' EARLIER AND LATER REACTIONS

Converts' earlier and later reaction to the missionaries' version of the Trinity was similar to their reaction to each Person.

Converts' earlier reactions

Converts absorbed the missionaries' teaching that the Christian God was a Trinity - one God in three Persons (God the Father, the Son and the Spirit). Kanyaburago reports, "We reflected on this and related it to our traditional concept of God in a threefold perception of the Deity. We noted the similarities and differences between both concepts (Kanyaburago 1998). Despite differences mainly in external form, they found that both portrayed the notion of one Deity. Thus, they did not regard the Trinity as strange or an illusion but an ontological reality. Consequently had responded positively to the missionaries' version of the Trinity. Kakiziba says, "We believed and accepted the teaching that *Katonda* or *Mungu* was one God manifesting in three Persons" (Kakiziba 2000).

Converts' later reactions

The converts' initial response to the missionaries' version of the Trinity was not the end of the story. Having reached this stage, they were motivated to further reflect and respond to the doctrine. Their goal was to establish a means for interpretation, identification and incorporation of the Trinity into a traditional frame of reference. Balambirwa reports, "We referred to our traditional concept of God in the framework of an invocation of the Deity in threefold form, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son (or of) of *Ruhanga* of my (or of) Father N*tangaire*)" (Balambirwa 1998). They noted that when applied together with a Haya idiom it could be used to illuminate the Trinity in traditional terms. They found that a nominal identification of this model, *Ruhanga*'s aspects could be used to parallel the identification of the Persons of the Trinity (Tinkaligayile 2000). Moreover, they noted that the images of link and relationship between *Ruhanga's* aspects sufficed to illuminate the link and relationship of the Persons of the Trinity (Ntimba 2000). On this basis some converts subjectively had attempted to identify the Trinity in Haya terms. Thus, "we replaced the names of *Katonda* (Protestant) and *Mungu* (Roman Catholic) so far used to identify the Triune God with the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga*, who became the Godhead of the Triune God. His other aspects had applied to illuminate identification of other Persons of the Trinity" (Musingakyaro 1998). While initially, most converts' perception of the

Trinity was limited to one aspect of the Deity who was the Father and the Creator, for some of them the perception of the Trinity was extended from a single aspect to all aspects of *Ruhanga* (Ntimba 2000). Omoyajowo views such approach as discovering an African trinitarian structure of the Divinity/Deity (Young 1992:221).

The identification of the Trinity in traditional terms does not alter or change the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Rather, it articulates and expresses its content in a way understandable to traditional believers. Thus, such an attempt contributed towards the achievement of the missionaries' goal (Amos 1998). Pobee, quoted by Parratt, describes the converts' translation of the Trinity into traditional terms, as "translating Christianity into genuine African categories" (1995:48).

Converts' self-interpretation and identification of the Trinity in traditional terms had enabled them to walk two steps. In the first place, they perceived and experienced the doctrine more than ever before. In the second place, they underwent a self affirmation and confession of it in the entire Christian life (Bakakyemahi 2000). It was an affirmation of the same God the Creator, according to traditional and Christian beliefs, being perceived in local historical manifestation (Parratt 1995:120). Through such experience, they were are enabled to formulate a Haya-Christian theology of the Trinity, enabling them to experience and understand the Triune God in the light of a Haya traditional threefold terms" (Ntimba 2000).

The theological justification of the Haya-Christian theology of the Trinity lies in two factors: the belief that God is the Trinity and Haya converts' understanding of him in their own terms. The former implies that the belief in God as a Trinity was not only understood in a non-Christian background but also and essentially found there. This verifies the fact that the belief in the Trinity and the Trinity itself is true. Therefore is neither an illusion, nor a human construction. It also verifies the biblical and missionaries' teaching about God. The latter connotes three possibilities. On the one hand, it verifies the communicator and the means used to communicate the message. On the other hand, it verifies the fact that the doctrine of the Trinity is an effort to interpret human perception of the mystery of God into a language conducive to a given context. Finally, it verifies the receptors and their means of disengaging and interpreting the message delivered – Trinity, in their own terms.

PROBLEMS FACED AND THEIR IMPACT

The problems faced lay in describing the doctrine of the Trinity in its totality. Mainly, they are methodological and conceptual factors that have roots in earlier phases of interpreting each Person of the Trinity. Before the actual start of presenting the Trinity among the Haya, no sound research had been done to seek traditional models with which to illuminate and identify it. It was assumed that no valid trinitarian model could be found in the Haya religious belief (Lufulani 2000). Therefore, like a representation and identification of each person, a likely imperative question "how do you address the Deity?" again was not asked. Once asked, an answer could have been given. At this stage, it could have revealed the paramount significance of the nature of the Haya concept of Go, its framework of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. It demonstrates aspects of the Deity in a unified manner: *Kazoba*, *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire.* Each aspect could have been used as an image to illuminate an identification of each Person within the Christian trinitarian model in the Haya language (Tinkaligayile 2000). In turn, all together could have been used to illuminate the whole trinitarian model in traditional idiom. Such approach could have offered a simple and easy way of identifying, experiencing and understanding the Trinity, without hurting the head with classical terms. However, it conforms with the biblical threefold perception of the Deity.

Due to the lack of access to a traditional trinitarian model, missionaries depended on models already applied to represent and identify each Person of the Trinity again were applied. Like a presentation of each of them, a presentation of all of them together into a whole single trinitarian model also faced problems because, the models and terms used lacked traditional trinitarian sense of the Deity. There are no sayings or invocations that portray the Deity in a unified form consisting of his aspects. Its absence demonstrated the gap faced in interpreting and identifying the Trinity in local terms consisting of link and relation within the Persons. This resulted in gaps in relating and describing them (Bakena 2000). For instance, the question of how *Katonda* or *Mungu,* who has made the Christian God, is related to the Son and the Spirit is obscure for most converts (Mutembei 2000). In turn, it gave birth to a culture of silence about Jesus and the Holy Spirit, among most converts. Tanner, who has done research on a related question in Tanzania, as quoted by Shorter, contends: "The majority of prayers address God in largely traditional terms without reference to Christ or the Holy Spirit" (1975:14). Also, according to Pauw's research among the Xhosa "speaking Christians, speaking about Christ and the Holy Spirit is not prominent in the thought of average church members because they were not identified in their own terms" (1975:78, 220). Bishop Mwoleka related this silence in general and the lack of understanding the Trinity in particular to the way the Trinity was presented to the Haya. That is, a way that does not conform to

their tradition understanding of God who was lived as experienced reality, rather than thought about. Bishop Mwoleka[2], quoted by Shorter, states,

> Theologians have made the Trinity a kind of intellectual exercise, speculating on it until their heads get dizzy. We are told that Saint Augustine almost lost his head trying to grasp what the Trinity was about until the angel came to his rescue at the seashore, which really means he gave up! I think we have problems in understanding the Holy Trinity because we approach it as a dogma and not a revealed and experienced reality. (1978:126-128)

For Bishop Mwoleka, such approach did not allow believers to rejoice in the Triune God because he was presented to them in a way which did not relate to their way of understanding: what they know, practise and believe in their daily life. Such an approach did not allow them to imitate what they believe. For him "imitating the Trinity is the right approach to experience and understand the mystery of the Trinity. On believing in this mystery, the first thing we should have done was to imitate God, then we would ask no more questions, for we would understand"(1978:123). Bishop Mwoleka not only relates the misunderstanding of the Trinity to the methodological approach but also suggests a remedy. He states,

> ...there is something faulty with our methods of presenting the message of the Gospel...We have not presented religion as sharing of life. All that people know about religion is the carrying out of commandments...reducing Christianity almost to the same category as the natural religions. What we should do is to put the Trinity before men, not in abstract ideas but in concrete facts of our human earthly life: present the life of the Trinity as lived by us Christians here and now. (1978:132)

The language used to present the Trinity was another factor behind the converts' inadequate understanding of it, because they did not understand the terms used. As Sundkler puts it, "Christian language in Hayaland started by being foreign, difficult to understand, hard and awkward to speak" (1980:128). Thus concepts represented (Trinity) remained incomprehensible to them. Pobee reports on this language problem in West Africa,

> The language used by the missionaries did not allow us to come into the reality of the "mysteries'" in the Christ event. Language was reduced to a tool of communication. [But] language, as Africans use it, means more than a tool for communication; it includes our way of understanding, interpreting and experiencing the world, our culture. Language is not just a concept, but a deep reality in the life of the people. (992:133-134)

The converts' inadequate understanding of the Trinity due to the language used is a common phenomenon in other parts of Africa. p'Bitek observed a similar problem in the neighbouring Haya countries of East Africa: "The thing they shout I do not understand...The Padre shouts words

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2 Christopher Mwoleka is a Roman Catholic Bishop in the Area of Study- Rulenge Diocese in north-western

you cannot understand...The strange language they speak" (1967:116). This misunderstanding is stressed by Kraft: "When communicators employ specialised jargon, they risk the possibility of losing their hearer if the frame of reference, in terms of which they are speaking, is not shared by their hearers" (1979:151). Hughes regards incomprehensibility of the Christian doctrine as a global problem of the Christian Faith (1936:188), which Baeta suggests a remedy. In his words, "there are many biblical concepts which are foreign to the vocabularies of African languages. These should be interpreted in local languages, understood by the hearers" (1968:331). According to this logic, "all the assertions we make which are not in accord with strictly implicit principles must be attributed to fundamental confusions due largely to the language we use" (Lewis 1959:29). Bishop Mwoleka laments this problem as well as indicating its implications,

> It is a pity that many people find it very difficult to understand what this mystery is all about. Many Christians...do not know what to do with it, except that it must be believed. It is a dogma they put aside to look for interesting devotions elsewhere. (Shorter 1978:126)

The lack of access to a traditional trinitarian model also blocked the way for an understanding of converts' attempt to tackle the problem through reinterpretation of it traditionally and subjectively. Thus, their attempt and the version they produced remain unknown to missionaries and other converts.

On the other hand, converts themselves also contributed to the lack of understanding of the Trinity. Most of their responses to missionaries' version of the Trinity were limited in the first paradigm shift. At this stage, they did not attempt a second paradigm shift by seeking traditional means with which to further respond to it. This was not possible, because they had a negative attitude to the traditional concept of God and idiom (Kagaruki 2000).

Finally, the lack of a better understanding of the Trinity among the Haya and elsewhere in Africa can, however, be solved. As Ela-Jean maintains, "there is always something new to hear and discover, the core meaning of the gospel through listening to God in the context of our communities. It involves seeking the answers to the questions left unanswered during the first evangelisation" (1988:167).

Tanzania.

THE MAIN FACTORS BEHIND MISSIONARIES' AND CONVERTS' INTERPRETATION

Traditional religion and language were the main factors behind the missionaries' and converts' interpretation of the biblical God. Their relevance can be grasped from their relationship and role. While "language is the experience of reality, religion is its expression" (Pieris 1988:70). The process indicates "the significance of a local language and religion for providing the idiom for Christian apprehension...or what Bediako describes as "the Word of God in concrete local idiom" (1995:120-121).

Traditional religion

The recognition of traditional religion when understanding the Christian God implies a consciousness of its significance in providing a perspective of continuity (Bediako 2000:192). Its value lay in creating an atmosphere for a positive response to Christianity. Dr Johanssen, the early German missionary in the area of the study, regarded the Haya religion as a fertile field on which the gospel seed could be sown (Sundkler 1980:39). For Ranger and Kimambo, "the initial reception of Christianity in different African societies depended...upon the religious situation in those societies" (1972:22). Among them are " many similarities between Christianity and the old religion and Christ [of which Bishop Kibira as reported by Pastor Per Larsson regarded] as the fulfilment and revelation of what his forefathers already believed in" (Per Larsson. [Undated].: 19). People's earlier paradigms of thought thus led them to a paradigm shift making them amenable to the reception of Christianity. In Moila's words, "it was as if African Religion said a big YES to the gospel of Jesus Christ" (2002:77). Moreover, traditional religion was a tool not only for the reception of Christianity, but also for shaping meaning and affirming it in the culture (Scheiter 1985:77-78). As Bishop Sundkler argues, "new religion was experienced [by the Haya] within other frames of reference and other ways than the usages and phrases formulated by missionaries" (1980:59). Thus, converts were able to translate and interpret the missionaries' version of God into their own version. Bediako views such an approach as an attempt to seek an answer to the question, "How might the primal imagination bring its own peculiar gifts to the shaping of Christian affirmation?" (2000:89). The answer can be derived from Pastor Bahendwa's findings. For him, the Haya converts "used their knowledge of African religion to explain the new one" (1990:73). Mugambi views its contribution as a process of acculturation and conversion. He says:

> African converts combined their traditional belief with the new one's in their own ways according to their religious perceptions and needs and irrespective of the official doctrines of the denominations to which they had been converted. Therefore, during the missionary activity in East Africa, two processes went on simultaneously: the process of acculturation and the process of conversion. (1989:44)

Ruhaya language

Like traditional religion, language also played a significant role in expressing the missionaries' version of God and the converts' reaction to this version. Speaking adequately about God demands mastery of the language and involves a knowledge of the traditional way of hearing and understanding, as the Christian message is determined and conditioned by a particular culture, expressed in a particular language (Renck 1990:2). Therefore, it is imperative that language has "the relevant concepts and terminology in which these concepts can be manifest" (Renck 1990:47). Applying semantic and idiomatic expressions, the Haya converts were able to reinterpret the Christian God into their own version. Thus, "it is inevitable that the new message will sometimes be misunderstood, precisely because…it can only be understood in terms of traditional thought form" (Sundkler, 1980:95) echoes this. As Bevans argues, "if the gospel is to be adequately communicated, it has to be done 'in the language of those to whom it is addressed and has to be clothed in symbols which are meaningful to them" (2003:119). Thus, any religious language that converts do not understand has no significance to them, because "we do not know what we believe unless we say it in own language" (Ela-Jean 1988:164). Hence, "we must re-hear everything previously spoken about God in all times, all languages…all cultures" (Bediako 1995:164).

While the missionaries interpreted the Christian concept of God from within the culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Haya converts heard and responded to the message within the African world-view. As Taylor says, "the convert receives the Word of God, but can only hear it from within the "auditorium" of his world, as he sees and knows it" (1958:253). Being aware of its importance, most missionaries learnt and used the Ruhaya language from the start as an engine to foster missionary work. Among them Sr Berit Ek (a Swedish missionary) and Albrecht (a German missionary) spoke the Haya language fluently to the extent of using its idiomatic expressions, metaphors, proverbs, riddles and sayings (*enfumo, omwizo, emigani ne'ebikoikyo*) to illustrate their speeches and sermons (Berit Ek 2000).

Thus, the Ruhaya language, together with other African languages, served as a channel for translating the Christian message to people according to their thought forms (Jenkson & Sullivan (1991:59). This happens through a dual role. It functions as a channel for transmitting the Christian gospel to converts and is used as a tool for articulating and expressing the gospel in local idioms. This is a distinctive way of comprehending and expressing the truth of the Christian message. Vernacular language, therefore, served as a useful instrument for translating, interpreting and expressing the Haya and Christain concepts of God. As Bahendwa puts it, language enabled

them "to drive home new concepts found in the Bible" (1990:73). "It involved shifting unfamiliar Christian meaning to familiar ones" (Spear & Kimambo 1999:1). Biblical concepts, images and symbols, translated into traditional thought forms, enabled the Haya to better understand the Christian message (Sundkler 1980:94).

AUTHOR'S VIEW

So far the missionaries' and converts' interpretation of the Trinity has been dealt with in this part of the chapter. The likely question in some people's minds is: Why are there different interpretations and understandings of the Trinity between the missionaries and Haya converts? There are several factors to highlight this question. First, both missionaries and Haya converts had interpreted the Trinity from different frames of reference and points of view. Missionaries interpreted the Trinity from the viewpoint of the church beliefs, the Bible and the classical theology of the Trinity. The Haya converts had interpreted the Trinity from the viewpoint of traditional concept of God, in the framework of a threefold perception of the Deity. Thus, both missionaries and Haya had approached the reality from different perspectives. Therefore, an understanding of it was determined by each one's point of view.

Secondly, for both sides, the Haya and the missionaries, who is the bearer of the correct interpretation of the Trinity? In my opinion, this is the correct question in the wrong position on the assumption that it is not a question of who held the correct interpretation but who hold the key to an understanding of any interpretation reached. On the one hand, both groups involved/ interacted created an arena not only for delivering but also for deriving, interpreting and understanding each side in its own way. Missionaries, essentially through motivation and conversion, and Haya converts, mainly through reaction at both first (conversion) and second paradigm shifts (self interpretation). On the other hand, according to the theory of communication, a key to understand what has been delivered and derived lies always with the hearers of the message and not with the communicators. Accordingly, the hearers Haya converts - judge the nature of the message conveyed as well as its significance and consequences through a self-interpretation and understanding of it.

Thirdly, the converts' key to understanding the missionaries' message-Trinity depends on the position or contribution of each side of the concept of God: the Haya and the Christian concept of God at a continuity basis. On the Haya side, the continuity lies in the notion of the Deity who is perceived as a threefold form in a unified manner, consisting of his aspects: the Godhead who is

Father, Son and *Amagara* (vital force) or Spirit. Their belief is demonstrated in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Even without being applied by either the missionaries or post-missionary Christianity, this invocation was applied subjectively by some converts to interpret the Triune God. It includes nominal identification of the Christian God by the name *Ruhanga.* Thus, *Ruhanga* holds an active continuity, while the Christian Deity holds a passive continuity. In terms of incarnation and redemption the Christian concept of God holds an active continuity while the Haya concept of God holds a passive continuity. Because the Christian Son and Spirit of God had been involved fully in God's universal salvatory plan through incarnation and redemption. These are not only advanced conceptions but are also practically realised and fulfilled. Thus both the Christian concept of Son and Spirit of God hold an active continuity while the Haya traditional beliefs in the Son and Spirit of *Ruhanga* hold a passive continuity. This is demonstrated by the fact that, while the notion of the traditional Deity is predominantly held by most converts, the traditional notion of the Son and the Spirit of God is held by some converts.

THE HAYA POST-MISSIONARY CHRISTIANITY'S APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

This part of the chapter is a logical continuation of the previous one, which dealt with the missionaries' approach and the converts' reaction. It investigates post-missionary Christianity's attempt to reinterpret the Christian concept of God among the Haya and the converts' reaction. It also addresses two main factors: post-missionary Christianity's awareness of the converts' lack of understanding of the Christian concept of God, and attempts to seek a remedy. Post-missionary Christianity's goal has methodological and theological justifications. The former is related to the fact that from the start of the propagation in the area, the Haya traditional concept of God was not applied for illuminating, interpreting and identifying the Christian concept of God. The latter is related to the assertion that theology is an ongoing process of reformulations and reinterpretations of the concept of God within different contexts. For Segundo "each new reality obliges us to interpret the Word of God afresh, to change accordingly, and then to go back and re-interpret the Word of God again, and so on" (Bevans 2003:76). As Taylor puts it, "You have not understood them until you have been compelled to interpret your own gospel in entirely new terms" (1963:28). Kaufmann has the same view:

> Theologians have always been engaged in the task of analysing, criticising and reconstructing received ideas of God into terms which seemed more appropriate and adequate and true to their own time and place…Each generation the image/concept of God has to be reconstructed anew, bringing in new elements not thought of before, or even downright false, correcting what appears to be the misconceptions or misinterpretations of previous generations. (1981:273-274)

This part of the chapter is divided into five sections. Section one is an introduction explaining the approach. Section two is about the reinterpretation of the Christian concept of God. It is divided into three subsections: attempts to reinterpret the Christian Son of God in Haya terms, a reinterpretation of the Christian concept of the Spirit into traditional Haya terms and language, and a reinterpretation of the Christian God the Father by using a indigenous concept of God, *Ruhanga.* It involves the use of vernacular language at oral and written levels, the main focus being on the use of *Ruhaya* Bible. Section four presents the author's suggestion and view. Section five concludes the chapter.

THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF GOD

For the implementation of her goal the post-missionary Christianity faced a question. Which methodological approach was to be followed in reinterpreting the Christian concept of God? The Lutheran church initially found the answer. She noted that a traditional model is not only the correct answer but also the right way to go. In addition, she was aware that an application of it would not be quick and should be done with courage and endurance. Should the church make minor changes to the traditional models and terms so far applied? Should she immediately abandon the usage of models so far applied to interpret and identify the Christian concept of God? Should she follow a mixed approach by applying the old models currently in use and the newly-found models at the same time? The last alternative entails a simultaneous application of both models until such time as the old models would be replaced by the new ones.

SOLUTIONS

With these alternatives, post-missionary Christianity sought to apply the first and the third options, but with slight changes to some of the traditional models already in use. The strengths and weaknesses of a simultaneous application, which Mair has described as keeping "old wine in new bottles" was taken into account (1974:182-192). The risk was obvious, since both models were liable to be changed or destroyed. It could mean the distortion and change of the old and new concepts. Therefore, post-missionary Christianity was keen to apply a simultaneous approach. An implementation of the proposal, it involved a reflection on priorities. Instead of starting with the God the Father, as was the case in the earlier missionaries' approach, she sought to start with the Son of God, later the Spirit, and finally, God the Father. However, the author is aware of the fact that theologically, the Spirit of God, rather than the Logos, is the correct departure when

interpreting the Trinity (Hendry 1957:48). The likely reasons behind this priority relate to methodological issues, namely, some traditional terms for identifying the Christian Son and the Spirit of God were already in use. Only slight changes were needed for a gradual transition. Therefore, post-missionary Christianity should start with a lighter load and later continue with the heavier load. Also, there was fear of making radical changes in the application of the new paradigms on the assumption that it could cause converts to respond negatively, resulting in confusion and distortion of what had already been established for many years (Balira 2000).

THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE SON OF GOD

Post-missionary Christianity's attempt to reinterpret the Christian Son of God in traditional terms raises questions: Why has the church taken this step? Its awareness of most converts' inadequate understanding of Jesus is among the main reasons. A reinterpretation of him in traditional terms was regarded as the right answer (Kandaga 2000). It raises another question: Will she be able to find the correct means with which to reinterpret Jesus in traditional terms? It involves seeking the correct traditional christological model.

In responding to this need the Lutheran Church embarked on a search for a suitable model. Finally, she came across the *Nyamuhanga* model. Although correct, it was unsuitable for naming the Son of God according to Haya or Christian beliefs (Kahugya 2000) and because *Nyamuhanga* is neither a concept nor a name for the Son of the Deity, it cannot therefore be a christological model.

Nyamuhanga or *Ruhanga* is a typical name for the Deity among the Haya and other people in the Great Lakes Region (north-western Tanzania and Uganda) (Rwehumbiza 1983: 163-165). Etymologically, *Nyamuhanga* as well as *Wahanga* and *Ishewahanga* are attributive names derived from the popular name for the Deity, *Ruhanga.* All of them are built on the same verb stem *hanga,* which means to create or to speak with authority, hence the saying *Ruhanga akahanga* (*Ruhanga* has spoken or commanded) (Bona- Baisi 1960:57). While "to create" is limited to God only, "to speak with authority" could be applied in rare cases to denote the King's utterances, (Kibira 1974:111). The only difference between the names of *Ruhanga* and *Nyamuhanga* lies in the prefixes *Ru* and *Nyamu* (due to their use in different Haya dialects). While the people in Karagwe, Bushubi and Buzinza areas (the west, south and south-east of the Kagera region in north-western Tanzania) mostly refer to God as *Nyamuhanga* (Mulyakazi 1998), people in the eastern, southern and northern areas prefer to identify him as *Ruhanga.*

Overlooking the conceptual meaning and position of *Nyamuhanga* (the Godhead) led to identify the Son of *Nyamuhanga* instead of God himself. This was contrary to his normal position and role as the Deity Godhead. This can be seen in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire.* Within it, *Nyamuhanga* holds the position of the God the Creator and the Father (Kahwa 2000). There were implications of misapplication of *Nyamuhanga*. During the missionaries' approach (on the Protestant side) the Christian Son of God was identified as the Son of *Katonda* (Ganda Deity). The Haya Hymn 46 demonstrates *Mwana Katonda, Mulokozi wange, Akandokora omugonzibwa Mwana wa Katonda* (Jesus the Son of *Katonda,* my Saviour. He saved me, the Son of *Katonda*) (NW Diocese 1992:28). During the post-missionary Christianity (Lutheran Church approach) the Christian Son of God (Jesus) was identified as *Nyamuhanga* (the Haya Deity). Both concepts were applied in the Son of God perspective. An application of the latter was based on a biblical text. *Aho nirwo balibona Omwana w'omuntu naizira aha Kichwi, aina amaani n'ekitinwa kingi* (That time people will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and glory) (Luke 21:27). This text inspired a hymn,

> *Omukama Nyamuhanga Kalihabuka,*
> *Omubichwi kulamura, Abantu boona,*
> *Nirw'alija kutora, Abamuhondera,*
> *Kabatura nawe, Omu bukamabwe.*
>
> When the Lord *Nyamuhanga* will appear majestically,
> and in the glory in the clouds to judge all humanity.
> On that day he will receive all people
> who have followed him in his kingdom (NW Diocese 1992:134).

At this stage there were two different christological models derived from two different concepts of God - *Yesu Omwana wa Katonda* (Jesus the Son of *Katonda,* the Ganda concept of God) and Jesus who was identified as *Nyamuhanga* (the Haya name for the Deity) (Bugurano 1998). This differed from the traditional understanding of the Deity and his Son. As Lufulani states, "while for the Haya, *Nyamuhanga* is God the Creator, for post-missionary Christianity he is the Son of God" (Lufulani 2000). In this context the Son of God implied the Son of the Ganda Deity, *Katonda*, who was already identified as the Christian God (christianised *Katonda*). How could this be possible? An identification of Jesus as *Nyamuhanga* contradicts the Haya belief where *Nyamuhanga* is the Godhead and not the Son. The Haya adherents would ask: If *Nyamuhanga* is the Son, who is God the Father? (Ikambura 1998). The same gap or problem has been encountered in other parts of Africa, where some of the names for God had conceptual differences and therefore did not comply with the Christian teaching of God consisting his Son and Spirit (Mugambi 1989:44). Kibicho, Setiloane and Parratt regard an identification of this nature, as a "diminution" of the actual conceptual position of the African Deity (Parratt 1995:71-72). Nicolson suggests a remedy. He says,

"concepts must make logical sense, must be reasonable and must be consistent with empirical experience" (1990:xiii).

An identification of Jesus as *Nyamuhanga* could affect an identification of the Deity and his Son in both the Haya and Christian concepts of God. This could be construed as Jesus replacing the conceptual position of the Deity, (*Ruhanga / Nyamuhanga*). It could also mean that his name, position and role as the Creator and Father have been shifted or replaced by the Christian Son of God. Such an identification could lead to a presentation of Christ, who does not fit into the conceptual position of the Son of God, according to *Katonda* model (missionaries' approach) or the *Ruhanga* model (post-missionary Christianity's and some converts' approach). In addition, an identification of Jesus as *Nyamuhanga* could lead converts to regard him not as the Son of the Deity, but as the Deity Godhead (Muhoza 2000). This could lead them to believe that there are two Deities within the Christian concept of God (*Katonda* and *Nyamuhanga*). This would be contrary to both the Haya and Christian concepts of God, which insist on the existence of only one Deity (Kigembe 2000). The application of the *Nyamuhanga* model (as the Son of God, instead of God himself) demonstrates how post-missionary Christianity, in an attempt to reinterpret and re-identify the Christian Son of God in traditional terms, not only faced the problem of finding the correct model, but also of applying it correctly (Lutosha 2000). The application of the *Nyamuhanga* model did not affect all the Haya converts. As explained already in Chapter Five, some of the Haya converts had subjectively used the traditional concept of God in the normal sense of being God the Father. They had identified the Christian Deity as *Ruhanga/Nyamuhanga* and Jesus as his Son (Kanono 2000).

Post-missionary Christianity's attempt, on the Lutheran side, to interpret the Christian Son of God in traditional terms should be applauded because it set the course for further investigation and application of *Nyamuhanga* model according to its frame of reference. Despite problems and errors encountered, an application of it "opened the way for further reinterpretation and indigenisation of the Christian Son of God (Jesus) in the Haya religious frame of reference" (Katabaro 2000). Theological errors have been normal occurrences in the history of the church since its inception. Through correcting them, theological realism was achieved. The four positive factors flowing the application of the *Nyamuhanga* model are looked upon to offer a starting point, namely the availability and validity of the traditional concept of God aspects of the Deity which could be used to illuminate the Christian Triune God, the possibility of applying the traditional concept of God according to its frame of reference, and the pressing need for a correct traditional christological model and the proper application of it (Bulaura 2000).

THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Post-missionary Christianity on the Lutheran side embarked on a reinterpretation and re identification of the Spirit of God. The traditional double reference term *Omwoyo Ogulikwera* (literally white, clean or pure soul or breath) was already in use and had been since the start of propagation in the area. They noted that although the term was traditional by nature, it did not appropriately signify the Christian concept of the Spirit of God as it was inadequate in denoting his personal nature and role. An impersonal identification of the Spirit did not reflect the Christian experience of the Spirit, particularly in the relationship with other persons of the Trinity. For the Haya, as for other Africans, the Spirit of the Deity was inseparable from either the Deity or traditional religion. This complies with the African philosophy of life, which includes all aspects of humanity in personal rather than material terms. Accordingly, some African theologians questioned the impersonal portrayal and simplistic identification of the Christian concept of the Spirit as it isolated Jesus from the Spirit and endangered the trinitarian notion of God (Segundo 1980:63). The question now faced was how to interpret him in traditional terms in a personal sense, without distorting his significance as promulgated in the Bible and Church tradition. Responding to the question, the church made slight grammatical changes to the double reference words, *Omwoyo Ogulikwera,* used to identify the Holy Spirit. The letter 'o' of the word *omwoyo* was dropped and the word became *mwoyo* (Kigembe 2000). The prefix *'ogu'* of the word *ogulikwera* was dropped. In its place the letter 'a' was inserted, thus it became *alikwera.* Both words became a double reference term of *Mwoyo Alikwera,* which replaced the former double reference term of *Omwoyo Ogulikwera.* The prefixes "Mw" and "Ali" conformed to a personal depiction of the Spirit of the Deity according to both Haya and Christian identification. The Lutheran Church sought a biblical text as a foundation for the re-identification of the Spirit of God. Mainly she referred to the Gospel of John, which portrays the Holy Spirit in a personal sense in the light of the Paraclete (*Paracletos* - the helper or advocate). One of its texts says, *Nawe Omubezi, Mwoyo Alikwera, Tata owo alituma omu ibara lyange* (but when the *Paraclete* comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me) (John 15:26;16:7,26; Hendry 1957:23). A personal identification of the Spirit of God was applied in the church hymnal, liturgy and catechism. In the church liturgy the Haya version goes: *Omukama agwisiza Mwoyo we abantu boona*, Halleluya (God pours his Spirit out on all people. Allelujah!) (NWDiocese 1992: 225). The church hymns in the Haya language depict the Spirit in a personal sense, *Nyegera, Nyegerage Mugenyi murungi. Mwoyo Nyamugonzibwa, Ija omulinye* (Welcome, welcome the good guest. The beloved Holy Spirit, come into me) (Empoya hymnal book No 65, part one) (NWDiocese 1992:38). The focus here is not only on a personal sense, but also on his activity. In

Moltmann's words, "...whether we ought to interpret the Holy Spirit in a dynamic sense is not a question of ideas about his nature...It is a question of what necessity has to be said about his activity" (1981:125). Observing a similar exercise, Hood suggests that an interpretation of the Holy Spirit in an African-Caribbean idiom could led to interpret him as the "Ministering Spirit" of God (Bevans 2003:64).

On the other hand, the newly applied traditional double reference term of *Mwoyo Alikwera* does not portray a full personal concept of the Christian Spirit as it is incapable of portraying the links and relations between the Spirit and the Deity and his other aspects (Ntimba 2000). Its incapability lies in the fact that in the Haya language the words *Mwoyo Alikwera* are not incorporated in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. However, an invocation depicts the Deity in his aspects – in personal links and relations among them (Kabikabo 2000). It could have been applied to illuminate a personal identification of the Christian concept of the Spirit. Given that the church's goal was to translate him into Haya traditional terms, why did they not apply this model? .

What post-missionary Christianity did among the Haya has been seen as an initial and remarkable step towards interpreting and indigenising the Christian concept of the Spirit. If one evaluates it in terms of grammatical construction, the exercise may be seen as minor. However, when evaluated in terms of theological and conceptual meaning one would find that a very important step had been taken. It caused a paradigm shift in experiencing the concept of the Spirit from a traditional Haya frame of reference to a Christian identification and understanding of the Spirit. The Haya understanding of the Christian Spirit of God had developed from an impersonal to a personal understanding, expressed in traditional terms. Other theologians have noted the importance of this approach. As Kraft maintains, "the church took over the linguistic forms of the native people and found her doctrine and ethics expressible in the constructions and thought-forms" (1979:338). However, from these foundations, the Haya could take another step. That is, a further reinterpretation and identification of the Holy Spirit in traditional anthropological terms and local idioms could be carried out (Bakinikana 2001). Hood regards a reinterpretation of the Holy Spirit in traditional terms by using anthropological model as pointing to "the radical revision of the Christian doctrinal thought and theological formulation" (Bevans 2003:64). Pobee suggests that any attempt to respond to the Spirit of God according to traditional and Christian experiences should be viewed in a continuous perspective. His thesis is that traditional belief in the Spirit of God further impact converts who regard him as a reality and no abstract thing (1992:15-16).

In this view, any interpretative approach to the Christian concept of the Spirit needs to take into account two issues. Should the involvement and power of the Holy Spirit be limited to the ecclesiastical sphere? Should the Haya traditional concept of the Spirit of the Deity be able to illuminate and name the Christian Spirit of God? The latter question has an initial answer as some converts had already indigenised him in the Haya idiom and terms. A similar answer has been found in Melanesian society. According to Trompf, the church should welcome these transformations born of the Spirit. It could enable converts to experience the Christian concept of the Spirit in more dramatic and effective ways than those experienced before (1987:116-117). A traditional interpretation of the Spirit of God could also shed light on the interpretation and understanding of the Christian God the Father.

RE-INTERPRETATION OF GOD THE FATHER

After many years of interpreting and identifying the Christian concept of God the Father in the framework of traditional but alien concepts and names of God *Katonda* (Protestant identification) and *Mungu* (Roman Catholic identification), later post-missionary Christianity felt the need to interpret and identify the Christian God in the light of the traditional Haya concept of God. It implied her awareness of the gaps and problems in earlier approaches (missionaries' approach) and therefore changed gear. Other churches in the area joined together, along denominational lines, seeking a traditional concept of God. Finally, they came across the *Ruhanga* model, which had never been applied to identify the Christian God (Buberwa 2001).[3] Its theological justification goes on in the light of Kaufmann's views,

> The problem of theology has been the problem of conceiving and reinterpreting the concept of God in terms which are indigenous to new situations but which have not previously been used theologically. The whole history of theology is nothing else than the history of the appropriation of such new terms and concepts, thus transforming and developing the concept of God and at the same time showing God's relevance to wider reaches of experience. (1981:277)

Key issues facing post-missionary Christianity in interpreting the *Ruhanga* model were: What way and in which manner should it be applied to reinterpret and re identify the Christian God? Should it be applied together with the old names of *Katonda* and *Mungu* so far applied? Or should these be replaced immediately with the newly-found *Ruhanga* model? Finally, she decided to apply both the old and the new names for God simultaneously, for the time being (Kyakajumba 2000). Another knotty question was which correct traditional tool could be used to interpret the *Ruhanga* model - the Haya vernacular and its idiomatic expressions served.

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A LITERARY INTERPRETATIVE APPROACH

Literary interpretation involved the use of the Haya language. This had a basis in the earlier missionaries' approach where the Haya language played a key role in presenting and describing the biblical God, at both oral and written levels.

The use of Ruhaya at oral level

Post-missionary Christianity's goal was to use the vernacular for interpreting *Ruhanga* as a channel for reinterpreting the Christian concept of God (Bakena 2000). The emphasis was placed on the use of Haya idiomatic expressions, proverbs, riddles, stories, metaphors and symbols to articulate and describe *Ruhanga*. Seitil regards the Haya oral literature as an important tool for communication. He states, "when speaking of a proverb in the Haya tongue [one] can realize a whole range of communicative acts" (1972:68). Bishop Sundker, who learnt the Ruhaya language and its proverbs, has this to say:

> The age-old wisdom of Haya cultural life was in the proverbs, which constitute a whole treasury of oral literature. A person who wishes to give colour and spice to his story resorts to a proverb...One can safely assume that every proverb is known by all and all will respond to it. Here at home this is their mother language. (1980:3)

This advantage was called upon to help articulate the Ruhaya ideas of God. In other parts of Africa, the vernacular, or what has been described as "mother tongue theology", has been regarded as appropriate for creating an arena for theological thinking and formulation (Bediako 2001:7). In most cases, a use of it started with a reflection on the traditional concept of God. Thus, *Ruhaya* was regarded as an engine fostering the Christian concept of God. Earlier, when missionary Hans Shorten (a Germany missionary) was asked about his use of the Haya language, he replied, "The *Ruhaya* language describes and expresses Haya ideas and conceptions more graphically than any other language" (Mutembei 1993:121). Its capacity to articulate both the traditional and Christian concept of God lies in its ability to transmit the idea of God first from Haya thought forms to the Bible (Christianised God) and then from the Bible to the *Ruhaya* language (indigenised God). Sundker supports this when he says:

> The Haya language was not neutral in itself, but loaded with all ideas and concepts of traditional religion, and it was here that missionaries came up with its greatest difficulty. The Haya language was like a gear lever in that it "shifted" the meaning of the message from biblical concepts to traditional ones of the Haya culture. (1980:95)

The use of Ruhaya at written level

At literature level, post-missionary Christianity aimed at producing the whole Bible in Ruhaya. It was looked upon as a major tool for expressing the Christian concept of God in a way understood by the Haya. It never accomplished this, as it was not fully realised. For more than a century of propagation in the area, the complete Bible in Ruhaya was unavailable, except for the New Testament and some portions of the Old Testament. Sundkler states:

> The new Christian religion was a religion of the Book...When one speaks about the Book and the first generations in the church, it is important to realize that one refers not to the Bible as a whole, but to certain selected parts of it which were translated into Ruhaya in the first generation and which also happened to be available in the villages. (1980:88)

The absence of the whole Bible in Ruhaya was an intolerable state of affairs since for the Haya, as for other Africans, "Christianity...is inconceivable without the existence of the Bible in indigenous languages" (Bediako 2000:4-6). Moreover, the Haya perceived the scripture in terms of its full message as contained in the whole Bible and not simply portions of it. However, those portions available conveyed a wonderful message to the Haya. They instilled a desire to have a message as well as the motivation to read it. This caused them to value the biblical message highly and gave birth to a culture of regarding the Word of God as powerful. This attitude is demonstrated by a Haya saying, "*Ekigambo kyo'mukuru kikira engoma kuraha*" (The Word of God or Great man sounds dynamically like a drum beat) (Lutosha 2000; Seitil 1972:187). The printed Word of God was regarded as the mystery and voice of God (Oliver 1928:79). As a result the written biblical message has become a symbol for Haya Christianity and exponents of this message are identified as *abashomi* (readers) (Kahakwa 1986:25-35). It has also become an indelible mark and guideline for Christian life. As Sundkler remarks:

> ...a group experience is sparked off by certain Bible passages or words with which the bulk of the congregation feels at home: images and symbol, hallowed by tradition, which help the whole congregation to experience an unmistakable feeling of collective and uplifting fellowship. (1980:94)

It was against this background that the demand for the Bible in Ruhaya took place and reached its climax. Its initial implementation was highly regarded by converts and post-missionary Christianity as a whole.

The use of the Bible: the making of the Ruhaya Bible

The need for having the Bible in *Ruhaya* was first noted and its implementation initiated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, early in 1981. This was in response to the converts' demand and the vision of the Bible Society of Tanzania. A need was identified to launch a Bible

project, which would be implemented and run along denominational lines (NWDiocese 2001:1). Most of the denominations in the area of study - the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans, Baptists and Pentecostals - accepted the idea. Together they embarked on its implementation through a denominational joint effort (Mushemba 1995).[4] This was unusual, in that close co-operation in religious matters, especially between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Churches, rarely works. For the first time, these denominations unanimously agreed to co-operate in running the project (Timanywa 2000).[5] This demonstrates the extent of the need for a Haya concept of God and a local language for describing the biblical concept of God, felt by all denominations. This need united them and minimised denominational divisions and strife (NW Diocese 2001:1). As Bishop Mushemba rightly maintains, the launching of this project was the right answer to this need for each denomination (Mushemba 1995). The Roman Catholic Bishop, Timanywa, when asked by the author why denominational co-operation for running the project was necessary, he replied:

> *Ruhaya* languages communicates, binds and unites all of us irrespective of our differences. Therefore, a co-operative effort in utilising this treasure and other traditional values for propagating and communicating the Word of God is the right thing at the right time. (Timanywa 2000)

The practical implementation of the project was carried out under the auspices of the respective denominations, known in Swahili as *mradi wa pamoja wa kutafsri Biblia kwa lugha ya Kihaya* (A joint project for Bible translation into the Ruhaya language). The project was sponsored by various churches and the Bible Society of Tanzania (Buberwa 2001). Its initial start was a workshop, attended by members from all the denominations concerned, on 25-28.11.1981 (NW Diocese 2001:2). The official inauguration of the project took place in the Lutheran Cathedral at Bukoba Provincial town on 15.1.1982. It was presided over by Bishop Josiah Kibira in co-operation with the various denominational leaders. The practical running of the project was rotated among the denominational leaders (NW Diocese 2001:3). The project had six different committees - consultation, executive, translation, theology, review and orthography.

The central theme of the *Ruhaya* Bible Project was a reinterpretation and description of the biblical concept of God in the Haya language. The main objectives were:

- to foster and preserve the Haya language in the biblical document, thus rescuing it from the threat of extinction,
- to maintain and develop vocabularies for further and special communication,
- to give the majority of the Haya access to the Word of God in their mother tongue, and

4 Mushemba, S. The former Diocesan Bishop of NW Diocese, currently the Mkuu (Head Bishop) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

5 Timanywa, N. Roman Catholic Bishop in the area of study, Bukoba Diocese, Tanzania.

- to enable Christians of all denominations to make "their own responses to the Christian message, in terms of their own needs and according to their own categories of thought and meaning" (Bediako 2001:6).

Elsewhere on the continent, as Denis observes, expressing biblical conceptions in the vernacular, at an oral and written level, has been regarded as an attempt to research "the forgotten witness of the indigenous treasure" (1995:1-i-iii). The catch phrase for the Bible translation in Haya was, *ekigambo kyawe niyo tara aha bilenge byange, nikyo kitangaara ky'omuhanda gwange* (your word is a lamp at my feet and a light on my path) (Psalms 119:105). The catchphrase in Swahili was, *kadri Wahaya wanavyoitumia Lugha yao kila siku, vivyo hivyo waitumie Biblia ambayo sasa inapatikana katika Lugha yao* (The *Ruhaya* language for daily Bible reading) (NW Diocese 2001). Hearing and expressing the Word of God in their own language was a sign to them of understanding its meaning but also an indication that the Word of God was not only for other people but for them as well. Bevans observes the way and manner of a translation model. He writes:

> By translation model, we do not mean a mere word-for-word correspondence of, say, doctrinal language of one culture into doctrinal language o another. Rather, we are concerned with translating the meaning of doctrines into another cultural context-and this translation might make those doctrines look and sound quite different from their original formulation. Nevertheless, the translation model insists that there is 'something' [mainly from the outside] that must be 'put into' other terms[that is be made to fit inside]. (2003:39)

The main sources used for the translation of the Bible were the "Revised Standard Version" and the "Union Bible Swahili Version".These were regarded as precise and accurate translations of the Biblical languages Hebrew and New Testament Greek (NW Diocese 2001:1-2). As each denomination already had the New Testament in the Haya language, the priority was to begin with the Old Testament.

At last, after many years of development, the Bible in *Ruhaya* was a reality. Most converts of all denominations in the area warmly welcomed its completion. The event was marked by an inauguration of the *Ruhaya* Bible, as briefly reported,

> The project (of the *Ruhaya* Bible), which started on 15th January 1982, has, at last, reached completion. The event reached its climax at an inauguration service and ceremony on 18th November 2001, in the Lutheran Diocesan Cathedral [at Bukoba town]. Among those who participated were all Church leaders from their respective denominations, the Provincial Commissioner, Christians and other invited people. (NW Diocese 2001:1)

Initial use of *Ruhanga* in the *Ruhaya* Bible

The most profound step of having the whole Bible in Ruhaya language was the printing of the traditional name for God *Ruhanga.* It was the key Haya word amongst all the Haya words printed. Its usage was a full replacement for the former names for God-*Katonda* (Protestant side) and *Mungu* (Roman Catholic side). The Lutheran Bishop Elisa Buberwa, one of the workers on the project during its early years, explained that the initial replacement of the name *Katonda* with the name *Ruhanga* was an attempt to use the Haya traditional concept of God for identifying and understanding the Christian concept of God (2001). The practical use of the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga,* in the Haya Bible is demonstrated in the Old Testament text,

> *Abraham kayabaile aina emyaka kyenda na mwenda ahabukirwa Omukama. Amugambira ati: 'Ninye Ruhanga Rushobora byona...Aho Abrahamu agwa ahansi ajumaire. Ruhanga amugambira ati: 'Leba ninye endagano yawe alaba hamo nanye.*(Genesis 17:1-2)
>
> When Abraham was ninety years old, the Lord appeared to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you and will make you exceedingly numerous'.

Blakely, quoting Henry Venn, comments on the significance of this approach. "For Christianity to be successful, it must encourage national characteristics, for it utilizes the vernacular paradigm to express its message" (1994:34-40). Similarly, Kraft noted the importance of translating the Christian concept of God into local terms. "...much better is the approach that employs indigenous terms in the Bible'" (1979:358).

The printing of the *Ruhanga* paradigm in the Bible and other Church literature was accompanied by other related Haya thought forms and themes. On the conviction that a mere translation of the traditional concept of God in the Bible was not enough. On the assertion that any language cannot be adequately understood without being described and expressed in its traditional thought forms Thus, "it is not just the Bible but the whole area of the vernacular, imagination, experience and the expression of the Christian faith" (Bediako 2001:6-7), which creates a framework for approaching and using the Bible. Translation, then, has to be idiomatic, that is it must be done by functional or dynamic equivalent method aims at eliciting the same reaction in contemporary hearers or readers. It points to the core, nature and meaning of translation model. Bevans maintains,

> Any translation has to be a translation of meanings, not of words and grammar. A good translation...is one that captures the spirit of a text, and a clear sign of having mastered a language is when one is able to understand jokes [and other informal expressions] in that language, since humour often emerges in double entendres and idiomatic meanings. (2003:38)

The significance and implications of printing the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga*, in biblical documents, had various effects. It demonstrated the importance of the Haya traditional concept of God, involving its capacity to preserve the continuity and importance of the Haya traditional concept of God. Bishop Mukuta describes it as an attempt to utilise the "untouched treasure" (Mukuta 2000). Printing the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga*, in the biblical document, denoted an affirmation, recognition and publicity of the Haya concept of God in general and the name of *Ruhanga* in particular. That is beyond traditional boundaries. The traditional name for God (*Ruhanga*) in the Haya Bible, on the one hand implied that the Haya traditional religion and its concept of God, were christianised, to serve the entire Haya Christian community. On the other hand, both the Bible and its concept of God were indigenised as the means for understanding the Christian God. In both cases, the *Ruhaya* Bible serves as a channel for transmitting and translating the biblical message. The Haya Deity, *Ruhanga,* upon being printed in biblical documents gives a traditional sense of God while transmitted at the same time, a Christian sense of God. At this stage the *Ruhaya* Bible integrated "the old and the new [but] not to overthrow the old assurance for the new vision" (Sanneh 1991:190). Also, the presence of the traditional name for God (*Ruhanga*) in the Haya Bible, formed a link between the Haya traditional religion and Christianity. This resonance is regarded as an event that "opens a deep and authentic dialogue...between the Gospel and African tradition" (Bediako 1994: 224-225). Bediako regards this atmosphere as ingredients for the birth of local theology (2000:58).

Converts' reaction to the use of *Ruhanga* in the Bible

Most converts of all denominations responded positively to the translation of the Bible into the Haya language. Even before being fully completed, the church in general, some lay and church leaders and theologians of various denominations responded initially to the use of it. Bahemuka reports: "We used traditional thought forms for expressing the Christian faith (Bahemuka 2000). At church level initial use of traditional terms was seriously noted. The potential Bible was used provisionally to christianise *Ruhanga* and other religious terms. At an oral level the biblical use of *Ruhanga* was mainly concerned with teaching, preaching and singing. At a written level, its use was essentially through literature, the liturgy, the catechism, hymns, magazines and biblical tracts.

At an individual level, the inclusion of the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga,* in the Haya Bible was regarded as a recognition of the traditional concept of God-*Ruhanga*, which had been subjectively applied for understanding Christianity since its inception in the area. In practical terms, converts used a christianised *Ruhanga* in the Bible in different ways to express the Christian faith. Referring to *Ruhanga* as the central theme, different hymns were composed. While most of those involved focused either only on the oral or written level, some of them looked at both oral and written levels (Kangeizi 2000). In the written category Hymn 231, verse one (composed by Pastor Kalumuna) portrays the newly applied, traditional name for God, *Ruhanga,* which had replaced the name *Katonda.* He writes:

> *Kasinge Ruhanga wa byona. Entabuko y'obushwere, Olebe ababili aba, abali omaisho gawe* (NW Diocese 1992:119). (We give thanks to thee *Ruhanga* who is the source of all, and the initiator of marriage. Bless this couple before you). (My translation)

Pastor Karumuna in Hymn 232, verse one, also uses the name *Ruhanga*, hence, *Omukama Nyakusinga, Ruhanga Alikwera, Gumis'obushwere obu* (Oh the King, Holy *Ruhanga*, strengthen this marriage) (NW Diocese 1992:119). In Hymn 143 verse five, Rwehabura applies the name *Ruhanga* in the entire hymn. He says, *Ichwena tusiime Ruhanga, Eihanga lyona ly'Omukama* (Let us all give thanks to *Ruhanga*, the whole nation belongs to him) (NW Diocese 1992:75). In some cases both names for identifying the Christian God, *Katonda* (old use) and the traditional *Ruhanga* (new use) were preserved and applied together. In Hymn 125, Pastor Kyakajumba uses both of them in a single song, but with more weight given to *Ruhanga,* while *Katonda* is invoked in only two parts of the song (part one and two). *Ruhanga* is invoked in all six choruses. Each part depicts *Ruhanga* as the central theme of the hymn. Kyakajumba writes:

> *Katonda kwem'eira, akabishemeza, burokozi bwaitu. Yabishemeza byona, Kubarokora bona. Nyetonganilentanye? Ali Ruhanga* (NW Diocese 1992:66) (Since ancient times, *Katonda* planned our salvation and has done all well, to save all. How can I stand before *Ruhanga*). (My translation.)

The use of two concepts and names for God (*Katonda* and *Ruhanga*) in a single hymn is not contradictory as might be initially assumed. It is, rather, a gradual escalation towards the full application and christianisation of the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga,* and a gradual replacement of *Katonda* (Kyakajumba 2000). Kyakajumba seems to comply with the philosophy of keeping the old and the new together for the time being.

EVALUATION OF THE USE OF *RUHANGA* IN THE BIBLE

Post-missionary Christianity's initiative is highly appreciated for walking another step in the attempt to communicate the biblical message in traditional terms and idiom. After more than a century of identifying the biblical concept of God by using traditional but non-Haya names for God, at last she has found a correct traditional model for identifying the Christian concept of God. Although such a step has been only partially taken, it has laid a foundation for another work to be done towards a full application of *Ruhanga.* An evaluation of the stage reached and the problems faced is important for further attempts on this question.

At the oral and written levels, the application and utilisation of *Ruhanga* through denominational involvement was limited to only one of his aspects. The other two aspects, his Son (*Kazoba* the Illuminator) and his Spirit (*Amagara* or *Ntangaire* (vital force) who manifests, were left untouched. This implied that *Ruhanga* was not fully accessed, because such state happens when he is invoked by mentioning all his aspects, as is the case in an invocation of him, namely, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire.* These were not accessed "because *Ruhanga* was applied out of his frame of reference. If one or two aspects are left out, an understanding of him is difficult as all *Ruhanga*'s aspects together determine such understanding. *Ruhanga* is not understood by a mere nominal identification of either a single or double aspects; or even by printing one or two of his aspects in the biblical document, but through a perception of all of his aspects" (Ntimba 2000). An application of only a single aspect of *Ruhanga,* (even in the Bible) could be regarded as cutting the Haya concept of God into pieces, resulting into partial or ambiguous understanding. As Emerson and Bevans maintain, "a person who does not fully share one's experience is not to be fully trusted to speak of God in that person's context" (Bevans 2003:19.

Partial application of *Ruhanga* had resulted in an ambiguous or partial understanding of a christianised *Ruhanga*. This approach has been challenged by some African theologians because it does not lead to a complete christianisation of the concept of God. As Bediako asks, "the Church has adapted African names for translating God, but how far is the popular theology coloured by the old belief?" (1995:11). For Hillman, such step involves having access to people's special language, which conforms to their way of life.

> It is not enough to present Christianity to people in their own language in a semantic or literary sense. A more comprehensive language in the "anthropological" sense must also be appreciated, assumed and used. This language consists of the people's indigenous cultural symbols, sings, myth, rites, images, customs and gestures ... these are the appropriate means of religious communication with

> any people. Without such communication, their view of reality is gradually and irretrievably lost. (1993:68-69)

As a remedy to this gap, post-missionary Christianity is urged to further embark on seeking the possibility of applying *Ruhanga* fully according to his framework, which consists of his aspects. It means using them to name and identify the Triune God - God the Father, the Son and Spirit in the Ruhaya Bible.

AUTHOR'S VIEW

An application of *Ruhanga* in biblical writings, although a remarkable step, does not enable the reader to gain a full understanding of him. Therefore, something more should be done. This indicates the need to walk further steps in applying him wholly and fully in terms of all of his aspects. Kaufman comments on the need of a full use of the concept of God:

> We must be persuaded precisely [of the] concept of God that provides a full and adequate - not partial and incomplete or even a misleading. This means that we need to consider [how and in what] respects a concept of God [can be] constructed [and reconstructed] based on the traditional model. (1981:147)

The need for a full application of *Ruhanga* in the Ruhaya Bible means a full understanding of his name of which already has found a home - fixed in the documents of the Ruhaya Bible. It involves application of all his aspects: *Ruhang*a (God the Father) *Kazoba* –the Illuminator (his Son) and *Amagara /Ntangaire* (vital force) (his Spirit). It implies an application of the Haya traditional concept of God, according to its frame of reference (as found in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form). A use of it could lead to accessing a full interpretation and identification of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in Haya traditional idiom and terms.

In my opinion, the stage reached so far in applying the *Ruhanga* model to the extent of fixing it in the biblical documents, is not the end of the story. Rather, it is only a part of the whole process, which needs to be followed and implemented. This approach would involve filling conceptual gaps raised in earlier applications of *Ruhanga.* This could be reached by applying *Ruhanga* fully by including all his aspects in the Bible. This is necessary if a better understanding of the Christian concept of God in general and the christianised *Ruhanga* in particular is to be reached by most converts. Nida and Tabor have the same view:

> ...a translation of the Bible must not only provide information which people can understand but must present the message in such a way that people can feel its relevance (expressive element in communication) and can then respond to it in action (the imperative action). (Bevans 2003:39)

The study investigated how a full use of *Ruhanga* in the Bible could be reached, not through once and for all, but through stages - a shift from an indigenous understanding of God to the use of traditional but alien names for God, *Katonda* and *Mungu* (missionary version) to a christianised *Ruhanga* (only one of his aspects). Furthermore, there would be a shift from the use of a single aspect of *Ruhanga* to a full use, the christianisation of *Ruhanga* in terms of all his aspects – his Son and the Spirit. A biblical text has been chosen as an exemplary model to highlight these steps. That is different translations and versions of the same biblical text, namely the missionaries', post-missionary Christianity's, converts' and the author's versions.

A translation of the text of 2 Peter 1:16-2 according to traditional but non-indigenous concepts of God (missionaries' version) with the name for God identified as *Katonda* (Ganda) or *Mungu* (Swahili) and impersonal or less personal identification of the Spirit reads:

> *Kuba katwabamanyisize amani g'Omukama waitu* ***Yesu Kristo****... titwahondeire migani eyachwire omubugezi, nawe tukaba tuli bajulizi ababoine ekitinwakye. Kuba akahabwa amakune n'ekitinwa kuruga ahali* ***Katonda/ Mungu*** *Ishe...Kuba oburangi tibwalesirwe bweyendezi bw'omuntu, nawe abantu bakagamba ebyarugire ahali* ***Katonda/Mungu*** *nibasindikwa Mwoyo Ogulikwera.*
>
> For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God his Father, ***Katonda/Mungu…***Because no prophesy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit.

The same text (see English version above) when partially translated according to the Haya concept of God (christianisation of a single aspect of *Ruhanga (*biblical partial use of *Ruhanga*) (Denominational approach -church version) and personal identification of the Spirit (Lutheran approach) (NW Diocese 2001), reads:

> *Kuba katwabanyisize amani g'Omukama waitu* ***Yesu Kristo*** *...titwahondeire migani eyachwirwe omubugezi, nawe tukaba tuli bajulizi ababoine ekitinwakye. Kuba akahabwa amakune n'ekitinwa kuruga ahali Ruhanga Ishe Kuba oburangi tibwalesirwe bweyendezi bw'omuntu, nawe abantu bakagamba ebyarugire ahali* ***Ruhanga****, nibasindikwa* ***Mwoyo Alikwera****." (translation above)*

The text, (see English version above) when translated fully according to the Haya understanding of God and expressed in the Haya idiom (christianisation of all aspects of *Ruhanga* - full use of *Ruhanga*) (converts' and author's version) reads:

> *Kuba katwabamanyisize amani g'Omukama waitu* ***Yesu Lumulika (Jesus/Kazoba the Illuminator)*** *titwahondeire migani eyachwire omubugezi, nawe tukaba tuli bajulizi ababoine ekitinwakye. Kuba akahabwa amakune n'ekitinwa kuruga ahali Ruhanga Ishe Kuba oburangi tibwalesirwe bweyendezi bw'omuntu, nawe abantu bakagamba ebyarugire*

ahali ***Ruhanga,*** *nibasindikwa* ***Amagara ga Ruhanga,*** (vital force) ***Mwoyo Nyamutangalira*** *(the Sprit who manifests and enlightens) (translation above)*

This is only an exemplary model of how efficaciously *Ruhanga* can be applied fully in the *Ruhaya* Bible in terms of his aspects or images. The Bible demonstrates rich concepts with which to host and christianise *Ruhanga* according to his framework. It demands a further search on the capacity of the traditional Haya concept of God to be fully christianised as well as the Bible position to incorporate the traditional concept of God in its pages. The later implies indigenisation of the Christian concept of God. A similar approach has been applied at continent level and the in the world at large. Migliore says:

> Today we are even more aware of how imperfect and historically burned all language about God is. The search for new and more inclusive metaphors of God that correct and complete the old one-sided, patriarchal metaphors is an important development in recent theology. (1991:66)

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on levels of interaction between the Haya traditional threefold perception of the Deity and the doctrine of the Trinity on the one hand. And interaction between missionary Christianity and the Haya people, and the Haya converts and between Haya post-missionary Christianity and the Haya converts on the other hand. The later interaction led to the Christianization of the Haya threefold perception of the Deity and indigenisation of the Christian Triune God. The study has addressed key issues of these interactions and process.

For many years since the start of Christianity in the area, the Haya Deity, *Ruhanga,* was not used to identify and understand the Christian concept of God. It indicated the gaps in presenting and identifying it in a Haya traditional context. There were different approaches of filling these gaps. Missionaries used traditional but non-indigenous concepts of God, *Katonda* (Ganda) and *Mungu* (Bantu/ Swahili). Converts filled the gas through a subjectively-based interpretation on the basis of a threefold perception of the Deity. It led them to understand and believe in the Christian Triune God in traditional terms.

At last an indigenous Deity, *Ruhanga,* was accessed and applied by post-missionary Christianity to identify and describe the Christian God. At this stage, *Ruhanga* was Christianised and indigenised. To what extent he was Christianised is the main question that has been investigated in this chapter. On the one hand, the study investigated the hypothesis that the correct interpretation of the traditional model, depended on a correct application. It has found that post-missionary Christianity

has found a suitable model of *Nyamuhanga/Ruhanga*, but lacked a correct application of it. It led to a partial application of a suitable traditional model which led to a partial understanding of the Christian concept of God

On the other hand, the study investigated the assertion that the partial application of *Ruhanga* gave birth to a partial christianisation of the traditional concept of God and a partial indigenisation of the Christian concept of God. It raises the question whether or not all his aspects or Persons of the Deity in a respective concept were fully christianised or indigenised?

It found that in both sides only one aspect or Person of the Deity was either christianised or indigenised on the basis of a conceptual and nominal identification. It means that two of his aspects - *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* - were left untouched, because *Ruhanga* was applied out of his framework, which involves addressing him together with his aspects. It led to a christianised *Ruhanga* without addressing the question of his Fatherhood in Son and Spirit perspectives and, moreover, without addressing the link and relations between and among *Ruhanga*'s aspects. For Christianity it implied that two Persons-the Son and the Spirit were not incorporated in the christianised *Ruhanga* and indigenised Christian God. It led to a partial understanding of a christianised *Ruhanga* and an indigenised Christian Deity. Gaps following a partial application of God were filled by converts themselves. This was through a subjectively referral based approach of a traditional threefold perception of the Deity. The conclusion here is that, to achieve a better understanding of the Christian concept of God on the basis of a traditional concept of God, both a suitable model and a correct application of it, should be taken into account.

However, the study investigated how and to what extent interaction - its arena and manner: delivering and deriving the message on the one hand, and christianisation and indigenisation on the other hand - had taken place? It involved the questions of how and what purpose, world view and goal each side of interaction-missionaries and post-missionary Christianity on the one hand, and Haya and Haya converts in the other hand had been done. Thus, it addressed key issues that influenced the process of interaction and its consequences.

The delivering of the message (on the side of the missionaries) and disengaging it (on the side of the converts) each side depended on a conceptual-theological basis. While the former had a basis in scriptural witness and classical interpretation of the Trinity, the latter had roots in a threefold perception of the Deity. An interaction between the missionaries, the Haya people and the converts produced various theologies, namely, missionaries' and converts' theology of the Trinity on the one

hand and the missionaries' and the author's theology of the Trinity on the other hand. It involves addressing the nature, scope and consequences of each side.

While the missionaries' datum of theological reflection was the biblical doctrine along the classical interpretation of the Trinity, the author's reflection was on the interactions between the Bible and its readers. The production of scripture and finally the whole Bible in *Ruhaya* hastened this need, resulting in different interpretations and perceptions of the Christian God. It indicates two sources of delivering and deriving the missionaries' and Christian view of God.

For interaction with the missionaries, converts used a traditional perception of a threefold Deity to drive, identify and understand the biblical God. For interaction with the Bible, they used both a traditional threefold perception of the Deity and the doctrine of the Trinity. It led them to the biblical perception of God, and found that it is more related to a traditional threefold perception of the Deity than a classical interpretation of the Trinity. Thus, for the Haya converts, the Bible becomes an instrument for getting the Christian view of God. This was through deriving its message and its meaning, in Haya idiom resulting in a better understanding of the Trinity.

For the missionaries, the task of theology is to interpret the biblical doctrines, mainly the Trinity, whereas for the author, it is to unearth the outcome of the interaction between the Bible and its readers. It led to re-interpretation of the biblical message and doctrines.

For the missionaries, the purpose of theology is to impose their interpretation of the biblical doctrine-theology of the Trinity on the converts, whereas for the author it is to understand what the converts hear when the biblical doctrines are communicated to them. How do they respond to what was heard? The former approach has been described as a dual communication, whereby the communicator delivers the message as well as derives its meaning or interprets it to the hearers. But for interactionists, the communicator and the hearers both engage in the process of getting the message heard, that is, first deriving and later disengaging it. In such a process, the hearers are said to hold the key to disengage and understand the message delivered.

Thus, converts, upon hearing the missionaries' message about a lovely Deity who is the Creator and the Redeemer, disengaged it and thus accessed its meaning (evaluating biblical doctrine) in their own idiom and terms. In terms of ontological reality, they found that it speaks of the same God being experienced differently. At the level of understanding, they found that the Christian message presents what is new, especially incarnation and a realised redemption. Consequently, they

combined what was known (a threefold perception of the Deity) and what is new (the doctrine of the Trinity), resulting in their own view of the Christian-biblical God. It involved christianising *Ruhanga*'s aspects and indigenising the Persons of the Trinity resulting into the construction of a Haya-Christian theology of the Trinity. It implied the validity of Haya and Christian concept of God at a continuous basis.

CHAPTER SIX

THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY IN TERMS OF HAYA TRADITIONAL THREEFOLD PERCEPTION OF THE DEITY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the theology of the Trinity in terms of Haya traditional threefold perception of God. It is a by-product of the previous chapter or levels of interactions between the Haya traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form and the Trinity. Thus it addresses of how the former perception influences the perception of the latter along Haya-post missionary Christianity. Its relevance is related to the fact that the interaction between Haya and Christian concepts of God was not determined absolutely but rather is an ongoing process, continuing to influence the Haya understanding of the Trinity. Its purpose is to identify, explain and evaluate these perceptions and their impact. This will be done at three levels, using three categories of people: theologians at continental level, Haya clergy and the laity consisting of *abalokore* ("the saved"or "born again" Christians) and some theologians. The selection was made by taking into account the experience of each category of people. Briefly, selected African theologians will be looked at and their theories of the Trinity will be reviewed. Then the perceptions of the Trinity among the Haya clergy will be examined and how they relate to the identification, christianisation and indigenisation of the Trinity. Finally, the perceptions of the Trinity among the Haya laity and some theologians will be reviewed in the framework of redemption.

The chapter is divided into five parts. Part one is an introduction to the chapter. Part two deals with African theologies of the Trinity. Part three discusses perceptions of the Trinity among the Haya clergy. Part four focuses on the perception of the Trinity among Haya laity and theologians. Part five incorporates the summary and concluding remarks of the chapter.

AFRICAN THEOLOGIES OF THE TRINITY

A study of the African theologies of the Trinity is needed in order to offer insights into attempts to interpret and apply the Trinity in African terms. Emphasis will be placed on earlier attempts to interpret the Trinity along contemporary lines. These are deemed suitable to offer a background and justify attempts to interpret the Trinity at the African/Haya level, as a Haya theology of the Trinity is seen as part of the universal church. Therefore, it should be exposed (beyond the Haya interpretation) to challenges and further contributions. On the assertion that a good theological system will generally recognize the limitations of its own root metaphors [as well as] be open to

criticism from other points of view" (Bevans 2003:31). With the Trinity being the core of the Christian faith, a culture of silence (regarding doing research and writing on it) has developed among theologians. While written about extensively at global level, it is rarely written about at continental level. Even some of those who have attempted to write on it approached it either partially or indirectly. Most of them had focused on christology. Some of them suggested ways to be followed towards an interpretation of the Trinity in an African context. Such a scarcity is one of the factors that motivated me to write on this topic in order that I might contribute something to what has already been indicated. Such contribution/attempt will focus on the theology of the Trinity because " all truly profound theology must therefore be rooted in the Trinity...Without this ground it is bound to be radically superficial" (Mugambi & Magesa 1998:3).

The attempt to explore and develop a creative perception of God in a trinitarian perspective focuses on how an ontological reality of the Trinity is present in the interweaving of human cultural context. Access to it "involves finding and developing ways through which this could be accessed and applied" (Regan & Torrance 1993:238). Such attempts began earlier. At a global level, Hebrew monotheism and "communitarism" influenced the Christian doctrine in terms of anthropology and theology. At continental level, culture was looked upon to play a similar role. This provided the impetus for African converts in general and theologians in particular, to investigate ways in which their cultures can offer fresh insights into a trinitarian understanding of God. Language was looked upon as a major tool as "African languages are more faithful to biblical truth as other languages tend to cause confusion" (Young 1993:185). Shorter suggests the map and key to an interpretation of the Trinity in African terms:

> One must start with the indigenous culture itself, to discover how far these values are already Christian values, or can be developed as 'seeds of the Gospels' into Christian values. One must never begin with a Christian doctrine for example, of the Holy Trinity and then look for similarities in an African tradition. This is an entirely superficial adaptation...In teaching the doctrine of the Trinity for example, one might begin with the indigenous idea of the richness of God expressed, let us say, in plural terms [threefold form]...[This] must be developed and given an entirely new dimension. (1973:69-70)

It is this dimension in understanding the Trinity in traditional terms that is the focus of this chapter and the entire study. Since culture is a huge component, only a specific aspect is addressed, that is, the ancestral approach which largely influences cultural, religious and social concepts. Its African context ensures that most African theologians prefer it for interpreting the Trinity in an African way of understanding God. The starting -point has been suggested to be a rich notion of the Deity in three aspects (Young 1993:170), which is a core of the African perception and belief in the Deity. Its authenticity and justification are supported by Mugambi and Magesa. "In fact, there exists

ancestral kinship in the Trinity... The ancestral relationship with the Trinity is external, immanent and absolutely necessary in God, for it belongs to the essential structure of the divinity" (1990:130-131).

The ancestral interpretative approach to the Trinity belongs to the school of contemporary interpretations of the Trinity. This approach involves seeking a contextual model with which to interpret and articulate the Trinity according to local beliefs. Although most African theologians felt that the ancestral approach was an appropriate model for interpreting the Trinity in an African perspective, each has applied it differently. For most of them, emphasis was placed on the Divinity and on christological and in some rare cases on pneumatological concepts as these were regarded as channels for interpreting and understanding the Trinity in an African way, which is still related to biblical and classical interpretations. This is possible because Christian models provided a special language with which to talk about the Trinity in an African ancestral context. Some theologians, like Twesigye, Moila and Shorter, prefer the use of traditional images, particularly the Deity as the central model of an ancestral interpretative approach to the Trinity. The main practicality of this model lies in the use of invocation rituals and ancestral images, that is, addressing the Deity in Haya/African idiom, which involves the mentioning of his aspects in a threefold form. The perception of these aspects demonstrates that the trinitarian notion of God was not new in Africa upon the arrival of Christianity. The Christian perception of the Trinity among Africans largely depended on a traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form. For instance, for people like the Nkole, Kiga, Nyoro, Haya and Padhola, the new faith, in the Christian God-Triune God was a question of "restating what they had believed in all along. The belief in One God, a Holy Trinity (Were, Were, Othim Madiodipo)" (Ranger & Kimambo 1972:132-133).

African theologians who had discussed and articulated this question have been selected. Namely, Twesigye (a threefold invocation of the Deity), Nyamiti (trinitarian kinship/Brother Ancestor), Bujo (Proto-Ancestor/ Ancestor par excellence), Mugambi & Magesa (Ancestral kinship/trinitarian relationship/Christ Ancestor-divinity) Moila (Ancestral trinitarian communion/ Superior Brother Ancestor) and Mwoleka & Lyimo (koinonia/community Trinity).

TWESIGYE: A threefold invocation of the Deity

Twesigye approaches the traditional interpretation of the Trinity through a ritual invocation to the threefold Deity, which involves invoking all his aspects. He regards such an approach as appropriate for exploring and interpreting the Trinity in an African way. His thesis rests on the basis that "African beliefs are centred around the divine [either] in the form of the Supreme Being

or divinity" (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:9-10). A ritual invocation of the Deity in a threefold form is not only a way of perceiving God as a single trinitarian body-the Trinity, but also the link and relations of his aspects. This unification is demonstrated in ritual invocations (Mugambi & Magesa 1990: 26). For Twesigye, an understanding of an invocation ritual of the Deity depends on an understanding of the language used, assuming that "language is rightly considered as evidence of a unique tool for human abstract thought, mind, knowledge, truth, self-consciousness, self-transcendence and communication with God" (1996:8). Such an understanding can illuminate the Christian Trinity in an African way. Mosha views an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form as an attempt to investigate ways in which African cultures bring fresh insights into what he describes as "three in one". For him, the use of a theistic notion of three Persons in one God reflects the "communitarian" aspect of African society, that is, the concept of the family that he regards as providing a basis for an understanding of the Deity in a threefold form (Mosha 1989:40-47). Twesigye suggests that even the names of the Deity addressed in an invocation should be considered as playing a major role as "a name is an expression of the essential inner nature of its bearer. Therefore, it should be used to access and describe the divine attributes of the Deity" (1996:200).

GOD THE FATHER

Twesigye regards the notion of the Deity in a plurality of oneness as important for understanding the nature and manner of the perception of the Deity in a threefold form. This comprises an understanding mainly in terms of concept and identification of the Deity (*Ruhanga*) and relationships with his aspects. Nkole/Kiga and Haya identify the Deity and his aspects in an anthropological language. The main idea is not biological identification, but rather of a symbolic/metaphoric depiction of the reality of the Deity as perceived and experienced. It is an African way of depicting realities. Even "in Christianity, God is anthropomorphically [depicted and] known [since] he is believed to be involved in all the affairs of the community" (Mugambi 1989:76). Addressing the Deity in his aspects in the form of an invocation demonstrates that the Kiga/Nkole as well as the Haya and other Africans "knew God through special experiences of the encounters with the divine transcendence" (Twesigye 1996:185). Twesigye defends his argument by asserting that even early missionaries to the Nkole/Kiga testified to the authenticity of the perception and belief in the Deity. For instance, Father Geraud asserted that the Bakiga and the Banyankole worshipped the Deity, *Ruhanga*, as One God who was the Creator. They perceived him in an "eternal triune of divine brothers". Although it is an anthropological term, it depicts the perception of the Deity as perceived in a threefold form. It is a description of the unity of him in his aspects "*Nyamuhanga* (Godhead and "Senior Brother") who is the creator of everything; *Kazoba*

(Junior Brother), who is the divine light which illuminates the world and enlightens the lives, minds and hearts of human beings; and *Rugaba* (The Spirit), who is the Giver of life to all living things and the distributor of talents, wealth and all other things according to personal discretion" (Twesigye 1996:203). For Haya, different names or status are used to describe the same notions, particularly the Son and Spirit of the Deity-*Ruhanga* (Kashaija 2000). In the classical theology of the Trinity, a similar approach was used to describe the reality of God in three Persons.

THE SON

The concept of the Son of the Deity was defined differently by Haya and Nkole/Kiga and other Africans. The Haya used the term *Mutabani wa Ruhanga* (the Son of *Ruhanga*) to describe the status of the Son of the Deity (*Kazoba*) (Kikoito 2000). The Nkole/Kiga used the term *Mukuru wa Ruhanga* (the Brother of R*uhanga*) to describe the status, role and relation with the Deity. However, "the expression Son or Brother of the Deity, *Ruhanga* does not suggest biological relation, but only a relational role" (Twesigye 1996:75). The Nkole/Kiga describe *Kazoba* as the light and the seer of everything on earth (the omniscient). "He who makes the sun to rise or set; the Eternal One. He knows good and evil, even when hidden in the hearts of men. He can lead people to a happy life when they behave well or to a doomed life when they behave badly" (Twesigye 1996:200). Quoting an old man (Mr Bintukwanga), Twesigye describes the authenticity and validity of *Kazoba* in terms and relation with "the logos in western religious and philosophical thought" (1996:202). He reports:

> ... the African tradition conceives *Kazoba* ... as the second person of the Trinity, and views him as the eternal Light ...or the Logos, that enlightens and guides all human beings from error into truth and from the wrong path into the right one and protects the individuals from physical and moral or spiritual pitfalls ...*Kazoba* ... as the transcendent, cosmic, omnipresent holy God and Light of the World (cf John 1:1-6;3:16-21, also bestows spiritual and moral insights on obedient and wise people. (1996:268-269)

Twesigye also asserts that *Kazoba* underwent an explicit incarnation. This view is lacking in other African notions of the Son of the Deity, in this case the Haya. He regards it as a strong justification of the authenticity of the Nkole/Kiga perception of an aspect of the Deity in the brother perspective. Twesigye views the Deity's conceptual nature in the light of biblical witness of the Son of God "Logos"-Jesus. In his words, "it nowhere claims that *Kazoba* became a human being in order to enlighten human beings by way of identification and example" (1996:268). According to this view, *Kazoba*'s incarnation is interpreted to mean an incarnation of Jesus Christ whom he regards as cosmic. He justifies his thesis by asserting that "God's Word/ Logos is efficaciously omnipresent in the universe. Therefore, the Logos-Christ is universally active, teaching and leading men and women everywhere" (Twesige 1996:7). Twesigye writes:

> This cosmic Christ and universal saviour is also the same eternal Logos. According to Christianity, this God's Logos/Word is the second person of the Trinity. As such, the Christ-Logos is eternal, divine in nature and the inseparable dual agent of God's cosmic creation and redemption. (Twesigye 1996:74)

Kazoba's incarnation (according to Nkole/Kiga belief) raises a theological question. If *Kazoba* underwent an incarnation similar to Christian belief, then what is new to Christianity and its concept of God? Is the Nkole/ Kiga's portrayal of an incarnation of *Kazoba* is only a symbolical depiction of the Christian concept of incarnation? If this is the case, then can we say that what was new to the Nkole/Kiga and to some African converts was the life and work (redemption) of Jesus Christ? (Mugambi 1989:75).

THE SPIRIT

The third aspect in an Nkole/Kiga invocation of the Deity in general and belief in him in particular are believed to be inspired by divine power. On the ground that like other Africans, they believe that "the divine power or Spirit could dwell everywhere and whenever it chooses and manifest itself anywhere" (Twesigye 1996:104). He is identified with a human status and was named *Rugaba*. While Nkole/Kiga used the name *Rugaba* to identify the Spirit of the Deity (*Ruhanga*), Haya used the name *Ntangaire* or *Amagara* to identify the same concept (Bulakuba 1998). He is related to the Christian experience of the Spirit of God, according to classical interpretations of the Trinity. In both cases, he is the prevailing presence of God and is identified as the Holy Spirit (Twesigye 1996:75-76).

NYAMITI: Ancestral kinship Trinity

Nyamiti's interpretation of the Trinity in traditional terms is based on the assertion that it can be interpreted and described in different ways and in different contexts. His approach is grounded in the Trinity being interpreted along classical and contemporary lines. In his words, "it was through Greek philosophy and terminology that the mysteries of the Trinity and christology were explicated and expressed; but such use of pagan philosophies did not deprive them of their Christian character and originality" (1984: 85). So, instead of alien terminologies that did not fit the African background, he suggested the use of African models for interpreting the Trinity. He defends their authenticity by arguing that "African thoughts are naturally apt to express themselves in trinitarian terms. It is here that the African theologians could contribute much to renew the theology of the Trinity" (1989:65-68). Bediako describes such an approach as "an attempt to root Christianity in Africa on the basis of its pre-Christian religious heritage" (1995:76-77). On this basis, Nyamiti has

chosen an ancestral approach to interpreting and articulating the Trinity. It involves the use of African models and terms to describe the Trinity. For instance, the perception of the Deity in a threefold form suits this category at Christian level. Its application could lead us to understand Jesus, the second Person of the Trinity, and his close relationship with humanity from his consanguinity with humanity through his Adamic origin. This is the basis for Nyamiti's ancestral approach. He regards it as suitable to describe the classical terms of three Persons of the Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Spirit). He says:

> ...analogically speaking, one can affirm the presence of the ancestral kinship in the Trinity as follows; God the Father is the ancestor of the Son and the Son is the descendant of the Father. These two are entitled to eternal reciprocal communication in the Holy Spirit who they produce as the fruit of their mutual love. The communication takes place through their reciprocal donation of the divine Spirit as their mutual gift. (1999:37)

GOD THE FATHER

The term "Father" is a locus of Nyamiti's ancestral approach. It is based on what Mulago describes as the "Father of men" and "vital participation". He sees them as an analogy of the Triune God of whom christological and pneumatological images could be described in terms of Bantu cultures (Young 1993:172, 183; Mulago 1969:137-158). Like Shorter, he regards the term "Father" as an ancestral term, which fits better in representing "the first Person of the Trinity" (Shorter 1978:15-20). This conclusion was reached on the basis that Africans never question the importance and authenticity of the term "Father" as a model for describing the Deity, who is the greatest Father of men. He is regarded as the Great Ancestor (Magesa 1997:45). Nyamiti thus regards traditional views of God as inseparable from the Christian Fatherhood of God, as both depict the same reality from different perspectives.

THE SON

Nyamiti's attempt at describing the second Person in the Trinity in African terms can be grasped from Mugambi and Magesa's argument. "The African can define his own situation, leading into discovering Christ" (1990:5). For Nyamiti, it meant developing a framework that integrated traditional Christian doctrine with African thought patterns. He refers to Moltmann, who also strived to "offer a theological interpretation of the Trinity in his context by interpreting the Cross of Jesus Christ". He regarded it as the principal material and knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity conducive to formulating universal christological concepts and therefore the Trinity (Nyamiti 1984:44). While Moltmann interpreted the Trinity through the cross, Nyamiti interpreted the Trinity through the ancestral approach. His thesis was based on the belief that both terms, "Father" and "Son of God", are well known in African families as is the case in conventional Christian

backgrounds. The biblical fact that Jesus Christ was the Son of God was a key element to him. As Mugambi and Magesa put it, "if [God] the Father revealed Himself to Africans and they responded in faith, why could the same Africans not discover Christ in their acts of faith?" (1990: 8-10).

For them, christology offered a locus for interpreting the Trinity in an African context as "christology is, in the final analysis, the most basic and central issue of Christian theology" (1990: x). How is this related to the life of believers? This was Nyamiti's key question of which in seeking the answer, he starts from the viewpoint of ancestral interpretation of the Trinity along christology. He aims at determining how Africans perceive Christ in their life-experience. It involves the question of whether or not Jesus was present or known in the past among the Africans. For Bahemuka, the physical presence of Jesus of Nazareth was unknown in traditional Africa (although the Bible narrates his staying in Egypt in early life). However, Christ as the liberating force for humanity was and is present in various manifestations of African culture in general in its myths, rituals, invocations, beliefs, symbols, art and language (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:xiv). It involves experience of an ontological transcendence and immanence of God. On this basis, Nyamiti attempted an interpretation of christology into African ancestral terminology. He regards Christ as an ancestor of whose ancestorship has various parallels with that of the Father and both were founded on divine holiness. In the light of biblical and classical interpretation of the Trinity, he had attempted to describe the relationship between the Father and the Son in ancestral perspectives. His aim was to use the biblical concept of the Trinity and give it a traditional meaning. His emphasis was on the links and relations among the Persons of the Triune God. He regarded Christ as an ancestor of whose ancestor ship had various parallels with that of the Father and both were founded on divine holiness. It consists of link and a relation with his Father. On this ground he had identified him as "Brother" or "Brother Ancestor" (1984:64). In his words, "it is because the Son is generated in the Trinity that He is our 'Brother Ancestor'". He regards this status as entitling him to the divine sanctity of descendants' ritual veneration. Earlier, Harry Sawyer used the terms "the Elder Brother" and "the first born among many sons" (Shorter 1978:17-18) to describe the same model. He regarded them as fitting and more meaningful to present the biblical portrayal of Jesus in an African frame of reference. Nyamiti's description and classification reveal "qualitative differences between Christ and biological ancestors. Christ's ancestorship consists of his exemplary quality as our prototype of a divine nature. He attained a status of being Brother Ancestor because of divine nature with descendants. While Christ's brother ancestorship was made possible through habitual grace, our ancestor ship was through being adopted as sons of the Father and brothers of the *Logos*. The implication of an ancestral interpretation of the Trinity is that it enables people to become true brother-descendants of Jesus. In turn, it makes the African

profoundly christianised. Nyamiti regards such a state as a radical christianisation (1984:85). He writes:

> ... the Father's Ancestorship is parental, whereas that of Christ is brotherly. [Also] the Ancestorship of the Father to the Logos is immanent, eternal and necessary; but the one of Christ to us is essentially economic and bestowed on us. It is, ...grounded on hypostatic union and His redemptive mission. (1984:64)

To avoid formulating a defective Christology (and therefore Trinity), Nyamiti relates his interpretation of Christology or the second Person of the Trinity with the nature of Jesus Christ. For him, the ancestorship of Jesus was rooted in His divinity and humanity. It integrates the two natures of Christ into one nature without confusion or contradiction, which complies with biblical and classical requirements. Viewed from the angle of his divinity, Christ's ancestorship appears as one with his eternal immanent descendancy. Thus by sharing a divine descendancy, the Logos makes believers. In the language of the classical theology of the Trinity, Christ's ancestorship is rooted in the first and second Persons of the Trinity. In Nyamiti's words, "it is rooted in the first because it implies divine filiation on the part of Christ. It is rooted in the second because, being descendancy, it is essentially connected with the Holy Spirit" (1984: 25). Nyamiti further applies ancestral Trinity to describe the nature of links and the relationships of Persons of the Trinity in what he describes as "ancestral relationships" between ancestor and of descendants. He writes:

> Christ is like His Father (ancestor) entitled to regular communication with us, his descendants, in the Holy Spirit...Summarising the parallelism and difference between the ancestral relationship in the Trinity and the one between Christ and us. In the Trinity, the Father and the Son, as ancestor and descendant, are both entitled in strict justice to mutual communication in the Holy Spirit. Similarly, Christ our Ancestor and we his descendants have to communicate to each other in the divine Spirit. However, it is only Christ who is entitled in strict justice to this communication; we obtain as a gift from His loving and merciful initiative. (1984)

THE SPIRIT

Nyamiti's interpretation of the Holy Spirit along ancestral lines is also related to the Trinity. It is closely related to ancestral involvement and the role, of the kinship between the Father and the Son. Through a mutual ancestor (Father and Son) they contact descendants through reciprocal giving of the Spirit being perceived as a token of love, veneration (oblation) and thanksgiving (Nyamiti 1984:60). For Nyamiti, this connotates a "divine ancestral relationship" between the Father and the Son in the Trinity on the one hand, and between Christ and believers (which is a pneumatic affair, realized in the Spirit) on the other hand. Ancestral interpretation of the third Person of the Trinity or the Holy Spirit has been said to represent "authentic faith directed by Spirit rather than by dogma." Such an interpretation challenges African theologians to build on it (Young 1993:194).

BUJO'S Proto-Ancestor/ Ancestor par excellence

Bujo's ancestral interpretation of the Trinity starts with a definition of ancestral approach. He says, "when we say that we want to use the concept of ancestor as the basis of christology, we refer only to God-fearing forefathers, who exercise a good influence on their descendants by showing how the force which is life is used as God wishes it to be used" (1992: 79).

Bujo further reflected on christology from an African ancestral beliefs and practices point of view. He regards ancestors as well as ritual communication and communion with them as natural and "forerunner images" of Jesus (1992:83). In such manner, proto-ancestor ancestral ritual is a commemorative narrative that ensures the unity of the past, present and future community of the living and the dead. Thus Bujo views the mystery of Christ in an ancestral perspective and sees Him as "Proto-Ancestor" – "the unique ancestor", the "source of life" and "highest model of ancestorship". About the significance of ancestral interpretation of christology in trinitarian perspectives Bujo, as reported by Mugambi and Magesa, asserts that the idea of Christ as ancestor is more meaningful to the African than the term "*Logos*", "*Kyrious*" (Lord) or the classical term of the second Person on the grounds that it enables African anthropocentrism (prominent in ancestral thinking) to be "the source of life and accomplishment and the model of human conduct through experiences of His paschal mystery" (1990: 25). Bujo's view only differs slightly from Nyamiti's. While Nyamiti insists on a common biological origin between Christ and humans, Bujo takes a metaphysical view of Jesus consisting of human relationship. In his words, "to say that Jesus is an ancestor is not to treat him as an ancestor in any crudely biological sense. It is to regard him as an ancestor par excellence, that we find in him one who begets us in a mystical and supernatural life" (1992:94). Both approaches are relevant to an interpretation of the second Person of the Trinity, as they offer different clues to understanding Jesus in ancestral trinitarian terms.

MUGAMBI AND MAGESA: Ancestral kinship trinitarian relationship/Christ Ancestor

In a collaborative effort Mugambi and Magesa attempted an interpretation of the Trinity in African terms along ancestral model and contemporary approaches. In their words, "with an understanding of ancestral relationships it is possible to examine the inner life of God (Trinity) and discover that there are is an ancestral kinship among the Persons" (1998:129-131). Like fellow Africans, their aim was to present and interpret the Trinity in African terms, in a way that led believers to a better understanding of it in traditional terms. Alternatively, such an interpretation could be used to identify and describe the Persons of the Trinity without undermining or replacing them. This entailed that the classical term (three persons), could be interpreted to imply the Deity in all his

aspects (O'Donovan 1992:45). Mugambi had already explored and practised how the Persons of the Trinity could be identified in African idiom. He reports:

> ...instead of "God the Father", we talked of the "Father of God". Instead of "God the Son" we talked of "God in Man". And instead of "God the Holy Spirit", we talked of the "Spirit of God who is universally and eternally present. (1989:75)

In this perspective, Mugambi and Magesa interpreted the Persons of the Trinity according to the language and terms used to describe the close links and relationships of ancestral kinship surrounding the Deity in his aspects. They argued, "the Father is the Ancestor of the Son, the Son is the descendant of the Father. These two Persons live in their ancestral kinship through the Spirit whom they mutually communicate with as their ancestral oblation and Eucharist" (1990:26). This trinitarian ritual is the ultimate basis and model of all other rituals. Its ultimate goal is the intimate unification of the Father (ancestor) and the Son (descendant) in the Holy Spirit (*pneumatic prichores*) (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:27). On this basis, Mugambi and Magesa regarded the ancestral relationship of the Father and the Son, as a suitable christological model for interpreting the Trinity in African terms. Their thesis was that no christology discussion in Africa today can avoid the question of the credibility of Christ in the doctrine of the Trinity. Thus, they view such attempt as an answer to the question of "how we can present Christ to the African world as truly its Lord and Saviour" (1998: xiv).

They related an interpretation of christology along two schools of thought prevailing on the continent at the time, namely inculturation and liberation. According to the former school, African Christology's inculturation proceeded in two ways, cultural reality and scripture. The question for the latter school (liberation) was "how can the African worldview enlighten the mystery of Christ?" (1998: xiii). Who was Christ for the Africans? For Mugambi and Magesa, the question not only indicated a christological issue but highlighted the theology of the Trinity, which determined an understanding of Christ. Accordingly, any understanding of him that is not related to the Trinity is a false understanding. In their words, without the Trinity, Christ Himself (and hence christology) would lose personality (1998:31). For Young, a true understanding of Jesus in a trinitarian perspective in African contexts is better understood in the indigenous idiom (1993:195), in this case an invocation of the Deity. Therefore, any interpretation of Christ's ancestral status and mediation must be intimately linked with and rooted in the mystery of the Trinity. It implies an understanding of the mystery of Christ from the African ancestral angle where the kinship is rooted in the Trinity. It consists of his divine human status and redemptive work. For "Oduyoye, Amoah and Evans it entailed Christ's mediation and participation in the divine/human axis that linked humanity to

divinity" (Evans 1992:95). On this basis, Mugambi and Magesa assert that Christ is a redeeming descendancy of "Logos incarnate". Like the Trinity, his link to humanity determines his ancestor ship (1998:26-27). This involves an affirmation of the Spirit of God who is also the "ancestral ritual offering" (obligation) and "Eucharist" between the Father and the Son in the Trinity. This view is predicated on the belief that Christ has become our kin (our brother in the Father and source of our divine life).

MOILA: Ancestral trinitarian communion/ Superior Brother Ancestor

Moila's interpretation of the Trinity along an ancestral approach has roots in two sources: On the one hand, "an ongoing continuous communion" between living descendants and departed relatives. Hence, the belief that the spirit of ancestors continues to govern living descendants (Shorter 1978:143). Thus he becomes "the source of life for the earthly relatives" (Mugambi & Magesa 1998:26). It indicates the Deity in his aspects, who also continues to communicate with living people. Also it indicates an identification of the Persons of the Trinity in general and the second Person in particular in traditional terms. On the other hand, the ancestral status of the Son of the Deity has a basis in cultural features. Moila maintains that both sources have influenced Africa's view of Christ. He views Christ as a special and superior ancestor, more close to the Deity than other ordinary ancestors. In his words, "his status as the Son of God gives him a status of extraordinary ancestor, Prime ancestor [or superior ancestor] because he did what no human being is able to do" (2002:72). He suggests that Jesus be identified as "Brother" or "Brother Ancestor". The basis for his argument is that Christ as ancestor is suitable to describe the Second Person of the Trinity in an African context. Thus he gives a call for "an African contextualization of christology" (2002: 67). He echoes Young when he suggests a christological approach that suits an ancestral interpretation of the Trinity, from below rather than from above (Young 1993:19). Moila defends his thesis by arguing that even leading traditional notions of the Son of the Deity (like *Kgobe* and his Son *Kgobeane*) of Pedi beliefs were perceived in ancestral perspectives from below (2002:75). He further points out that even New Testament teaching on the unique humanity and Sonship of Jesus agrees with African belief systems. Regarding Christ's relationship to the Spirit Moila, like Bediako, suggests that an ancestral interpretation of him should, involve the Spirit power in an African context (Bediako 2000:22).

However, while insisting an ancestral interpretative approach to the Trinity, Moila has followed a similar but different way from other theologians of this school. Similarly, because he followed the same paradigm involving an ancestral interpretation of the Trinity; differently because he focused on a different path in reaching the same goal. That is an "ancestral trinitarian communion". He is

currently involved in exploring further this model. The main area of his research is Pedi kinship, that incorporates living and departed relatives or ancestors and its relationship to the trinitarian model. This model consists of three aspects – "the departed, who represents the Deity (*Kgobe*) who is also the latent power behind the ruling King. "The ruling King" represents the Son of the Deity (*Kgobeane*). The third aspect is "the great ancestral spirit of the ruling clan" who represents the Spirit of the Deity (Moila 2003**). 6** The nature of his research could be grasped in his comment to Bishop Sundkler's view. "Something must be done [to establish contact] between the old belief and Christianity. Contact with both is therefore the key to enter the African door and the African's heart" (2002:77). Such an ancestral interpretation of the Trinity does not involve replacing or distorting the Persons of the Trinity with ancestral spirits. Rather, it is a question of using them as images for understanding the unity of the Deity in plurality of his oneness to give them the Christian meaning. It means to interpret and represent the Persons of the Trinity in African terms (ancestral trinitarian images have greatly influenced an understanding of the Trinity among the Pedi and other African people). A use of them involved Moila's change of direction. While other theologians, like Nyamiti, Bujo, Mugambi and Magesa start from Christian concepts (an indigenisation of the Persons of the Trinity) and move to traditional concepts (christianisation of traditional images /aspects of God or Ancestral trinitarian images), Moila starts differently. He starts from traditional ancestral images and moves to Christian images (Persons of the Trinity), which give meaning to traditional terms (Moila 2003). His approach is in line with Nkole /Kiga and Haya societies, as well as Shorter's view whereby aspects of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form are first sought and then given Christian meaning. In summary, Moila's interpretative approach to the Trinity begins with the christianisation of traditional models (aspects of the Deity) and later proceeds to the indigenisation of Christian models. However, his approach (christianisation first) has been recommended as a better way for indigenisation of the Trinity. It has roots in symbolic interactions, which is his major methodological tool for a paradigm shift and interpretation. For him the meaning is not merely given but interpreted. Moila's use of images from living and departed communities promises a remarkable traditional ancestral interpretative approach of the Trinity. He has gone a step further than other proponents of his school.

MWOLEKA AND LYIMO: Koinonia/Community Trinity

Bishop Mwoleka's (a Roman Catholic leader) interpretative approach to the Trinity in an African context followed a different but similar route. While other contemporary theologians followed ancestral approaches, he followed a *koinonia* or "community or *Ujamaa*" approach. The approaches differ because while the emphasis on the ancestral approach was on the images of

6 Insights obtained from interview with Professor Moeahabo P. Moila, on 8/5/2003, at the University of natal.

departed relatives, Mwoleka's emphasis is on the living community. They are similar because an African community consists of both the living and departed community. Thus, Mwoleka's "community Trinity model" does not contradict the "ancestral Trinity model". Rather, both approaches complement one another. The core of Mwoleka's "community Trinity" lies in the theology of *Ujamaa* (family-hood), which is part of Tanzania's political philosophy. The family community is the model for community co-operation and unity" (Shorter 1978:122). It is based on the analogy between the Trinity and African communalism. Mwoleka regards it as "an indirect witness to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, in which Persons are freely bound in an indivisible oneness" (Young 1993:178-179; Mwoleka 1976: 161-155). With it, Mwoleka attempted to interpret Trinity in an *Ujamaa* or community perspective by participating in the life of the community as an ideal of *Ujamaa.* He says:

> I am dedicated to ideal or *Ujamaa* because it invites all men (and women), in a down-to earth, practical way, to imitate the life of the Trinity, which is a life of sharing. The three divine Persons share everything in such a way that they are not three gods but only one. And Christ's wish is that they (his followers) may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me. May be completely One... (Shorter 1978:122, 124).

Mwoleka's view has a basis in what Mulago describes as a likeness between the community "vital union" and the Trinity. He regards both as complementary (Young 1993:172).

Like Mwoleka, Fr Lyimo (also in Tanzania) sought a communal interpretation of the Trinity (Lyimo 1980:126-129). He asserts that the perfect *ujamaa* (familyhood) is the Trinity. His thesis has a basis in the belief "that in God there is an economic and essential sharing among Persons who are one" (Young 1993:163). For Bishop Mwoleka and Fr Lyimo as well as for other Africans, "the community of three in the one Godhead is certainly more than Father plus Son plus Spirit each Person is distinct and yet the community is a reality, because of the way in which it functions" (Hudson 1954:45). For Lochman and Oduyoye, "Christian theology has not presented the Trinity simply as a more adequate metaphysical symbolism of the Deity, but an attempt to demonstrate the Trinity's values to us as a model for human relationships" (Oduyoye 1986:140, 143). The fact that a community is made of individuals of different characteristics is not seen as a problem since the unity in diversity of the Trinity points to the true community. God is One, yet his oneness incorporates relationships among the three Persons. In Mugambi and Magesa's words, "unity and diversity reflect the oneness of the three trinitarian Persons in the divine being; whereas diversity in unity mirrors the union of the divine persons" (1990:149).

PERCEPTIONS OF THE TRINITY AMONG THE HAYA CLERGY

This part of the chapter focuses on perceptions of the Trinity among the Haya clergy. It addresses the question of how a theology of the Trinity along pastoral perspectives can be described and understood in terms of the Haya traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form. It demands a methodological approach either starting from the viewpoint of the Christian concept of God (the Triune God) or from a Haya traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form. The latter has been chosen because it is capable of leading to sound findings of what has been studied. Most pastors and theologians consider and recommend the traditional model as an appropriate methodological approach for describing and understanding the Trinity in Haya traditional terms (Aligawesa 2000). As Bediako rightly says, one needs to grasp the significance of the African primal worldviews as a key to hermeneutical investigation, illumination and appreciation of the Christian concepts (2001:3). They regard the alternative approach as likely to lead to a superficial understanding. Moreover, as Hastings maintains, the "Christian doctrine which is not reflected in the African experience of God is liable either to disappear or be marginalised (Bediako 2000:50). Starting from the viewpoint of an indigenous idea of the Deity, and then proceeding to the Christian idea of God, implies developing the theology by giving it a Christian meaning and new dimensions. It entails christianising it to illuminate the Christian idea of God. Such christianisation aims at seeing whether it can reveal a Haya trinitarian notion of God and renewing the theology of the Trinity so that it can be expressed and described in Haya/African traditional terms. It involves articulating the Trinity in traditional threefold form and terms, of the Deity thus enriching the Christian concept of God. The emphasis will be on christianising the Deity and his aspects and thus indigenising and understanding the biblical Triune God, and his images/ Persons, (God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and therefore the entire Trinity.

For an implementation, a dialogical interactionist model has been chosen as the main methodological tool in this section of the study. On the assertion that theology, in general and even contextual theology in particular "is always a dialogical process...Even the biblical message was developed in a dialogue with human experience, culture, and cultural and social change" (Bevans 2003:24, 33). Moreover, proponents of dialogical model assert that truth or reality is grasped in [and though] engaging in a dialogical process. That is "a dialogue with life as it is actually lived" (Bevans 2003:81), which involves dialoguing with divine realities. Bevans maintains:

> Contemporary post-modern thinking,[are attempting]to understanding ...truth more in terms of relation, conversation, and dialogue...Truth in this scheme of things is understood not so much as

> something 'out there' but as a reality that emerges in true conversation between authentic women and men when they 'allow questioning to take place. (2003:93)

Other reasons for selecting a dialogical model in this study are: firstly, it complies with the nature of the Trinity (which is believed to have been revealed and perceived in a dialogical manner). Secondly, a dialogue is an aspect of symbolic interactions, which is the main theoretical approach used in this study. Also a dialogue takes place in an atmosphere of interaction, in which it is an essential part. While an interaction is an arena, a dialogue is an expression of it. Commenting on its significance, the practitioners of the synthetic model say that it is only when women and men are in dialogue (that is in interaction) that we have true human growth. "Each participant in a context has something to give to the other, and each context has something from which it needs to be exorcised" (Bevans 2003:91). Theologically speaking, it leads to define theology as a by-product of a dialogical model. Thus, theology neither is a finished product produced by experts, nor a mere recording of 'what people think'. Rather, is and must be an activity of dialogue, emerging out of a mutual respect between professional theologians and ordinary theologians and even non-theologians (Bevans 2003: 18, 93).

Thirdly, a dialogical model also complies with contemporary interpretations of the Trinity using ancestral models. In this study, the same direction will be followed but via a different path. While for some African theologians an approach to the Trinity is through ancestral models, the approach here essentially will be using a dialogical model. A dialogical model is uniquely Haya way for understanding reality: history, religious realities, ancestors and the Deity to mention but a few (Mwebesa 1998). Even the Deity himself confronts the Haya in a dialogical manner. Most Haya myths, legends, stories, dreams (Sundkler 1980:85), and invocations detail of a dialogue between humans and the Deity (or spiritual beings). A dialogical-methodological approach enables one to understand ancestral models from a different perspective in a way that allows ancestors and humans to hold a dialogue with each other. It involves dialogues with the Deity and his aspects in a trinitarian manner and in the light of creation. A dialogical model has been said to be an appropriate paradigm for understanding the earlier and later Haya notion of the Deity in his aspects. In this study the focus will be on how it can illuminate or interpret and identify the theology of the Trinity in Haya traditional terms. It complies with the Haya perception of the Deity involving an invocation of him in a threefold form. The invocation itself is a pure dialogical / interactionist example of the dialogue between the Haya and the Deity. For Schreiter, the dialogical model that takes place between culture and tradition has a mutually transforming effect on both conversations partners. He relates it to a synthetic model of which like Bevans he describes it as having two

parallel columns in constant interaction and dialogue with one another. Bevans views such a process as creating an arena for basic methodological attitude of openness and dialogue.

The practical implementation of the model will be in two phases. First, the dialogue of the Deity and his aspects and the universe. Secondly, the dialogue between Haya humans and the Deity (Ndekezi 2000). In both phases dialogue will have taken place in a way that portrays the Deity in a threefold form. The study will focus on how such knowledge could be used to describe and express the Trinity. It means whether or not the language of the Trinity can fit a Haya perception of the Deity within a dialogical framework (that is, describing and defining the Deity through an invocational ritual approach). Using the dialogical approach, emphasis will be on the traditional invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son of (or Kazoba of) *Ruhanga* and of (or of my Father) *Ntangaire).* The Deity's dialogue and the humans' dialogue will be analysed. Both phases have roots in the creation and are described in a ritual invocation of the Deity in a threefold manner. It focuses on two realities: God as Trinity according to the biblical idea of a Triune God and the doctrine of the Trinity according to classical, contemporary and traditional interpretations. Such an approach, which involves all converts, has a basis in the conviction that "a theology that is not the activity of a faithful and integrated subject cannot claim to be an adequate expression of Christian faith" (Bevans 2003:33).

DIALOGUE OF THE DEITY

For most pastors consulted, the best way to understand the nature and role of God in general and the Trinity in particular among the Haya is through a traditional dialogical model which depicts dramatic expressions of the Deity within himself and the universe. Pastors regard such an approach as fitting to interpret the Trinity along biblical revelatory lines whereby God takes initiatives through symbolic dialogue (Bilikwija 1999).

The Haya believe that the Deity's dialogue started with a dialogue with himself about his role in creation, whereby he held a dialogue with his aspects, Son and Spirit. Both were ordered to participate in the creation of man. While *Amagara* (vital force) functioned as the essence of life, the Son functioned as the means of passing through the *Amagara* into humans. The act-dialogue demonstrated the Trinity in creation – "the Deity", "his Son" and his "*Amagara*" (Spirit). It portrays an intimate trinitarian link and relationship within the Deity and among his aspects. He links and relations to his Son (*Kazoba*) and his Spirit (*Amagara/Ntangaire*) in terms of their relational roles in creation. Likewise his aspects relate to each other. All of them demonstrate the

unity of the Deity or the Trinity (Kameli 2000). Perception of God as the Trinity from the point of view of collaborative relationship of images (aspects of the Deity) in creation stories has been reported by some Christian theologians. For Boff, "the Trinity is in creation because the Father creates all things from the inexhaustible source of his life and love, through the Son in whom all things are enclosed" (1988:230). It led to assertion that "the knowledge of God as Trinity belongs with the knowledge of God the Creator" (Mackey 1983:190-191). According to Gunton there are three related images or aspects in creation that symbolise God as the Trinity: the Creator, the world and the creatures (1993:215-216). Earlier theologians like Tertullian, Novatian and Irenaeus sought biblical texts to justify God's dialogue within himself from the point of view of creation and relations with his aspects. Among them are: Genesis 1:26;19:24; Isaiah 45:14 ff; Psalm, 44:1; 8: 109:1. These are the locus of the Christian belief in which creation "proceeds from the Father of the Son being manifested by the Spirit. It means that the Father creates men and earth through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. For Moltmann, creation manifests the work of the Trinity (1981:164). In the classical language, God's trinitarian manifestation in creation is described as One God in three Persons. Accordingly, God as a Trinity links and relates with his Persons is the basis for his dialogue. Boff states:

> [Theologians of the third and fourth centuries] used the term "prosopon" "persona" to imply dialogues and mutual relationship, at least between Father and Son, thereby introducing the subjective and "persona" character of the three divine persons. (Boff 1998:63)

The Haya believe that the main consequence of God's dialogue with his aspects is the existence of humans and their perception of him as a threefold Deity (Ntimba 2000). Pastors also suggested that the dialogical nature of the Deity could be christianised and given a Christian meaning and a new dimension. The theological justification lies in the biblical documents in which dialogical nature of God with the universe and humans is extensively portrayed (Isaiah 6:1-8; Jeremiah 1:4-19; Acts 9:3-6; 10:9-19).

DIALOGUE OF HUMANS

According to Haya belief, the Deity's dialogue with his aspects and the universe was extended to a dialogue with humans. Again creation was an arena. This section addresses how humans held a dialogue with the Deity and his aspects: the Deity, the Son and his Spirit.

Dialogue with the Deity

The dialogue with the Deity was believed to be within the framework of surprising, affirming, believing, naming and invoking the Deity, following human awareness of his existence, and the

entire creation-environment. The main consequence of human dialogue with the Deity was a perception of him in a threefold form. The naming of the Deity and an invocation of him in a threefold form (which is an example of dialogue with the Deity along ritual lines) is a summary of this experience. It is the Haya highest stage in holding dialogue and understanding him (Tinkaligayile 2000).

Most pastors suggest that the Deity's dialogue with Haya humans could be christianised and thus given a Christian meaning. That is dialoguing with the Christian Deity. In both cases creation is the starting- point. For Pastor Ntimba it entails an identification of the Christian God, which he suggests could be done in the light of the Haya dialogue with the Deity. Like other pastors, he suggested that the Christian God (God the Father) be named with the name *Ruhanga*, thus christianising *Ruhanga*. Post-missionary Christianity had already christianised him and used his name *Ruhanga* to name and identify the Christian Deity. It led to an indigenisation of the Christian Deity. Other pastors suggested other ways of using the name *Ruhanga* beyond its current use. It could be used as a single name (as with post-missionary Christianity) resulting in identifying the Christian God as *Ruhanga* (the Creator- the first Person of the Trinity) (Mufuruki 2000), or it could be used with one of his attributives , *Nyamuhanga* or *Wahanga,* causing a two-word/name invocation of the Christian God (first Person) hence *Ruhanga, Nyamuhanga* (*Ruhanga* who is the Creator) or *Ruhanga Ishe Wahanga* (*Ruhanga* who is the Creator and Father). The name *Wahanga* denotes the Deity, *Ruhanga*, in a majestic or trinitarian union in a creation perspective. The theological affirmation of the name *Ruhanga*, which has roots in the creation, is found in an invocation of the Deity. Thus, use of the traditional name for God, *Ruhanga* in a Christian sense is a continuation of the human dialogue with a traditional Deity, into a new dimension – the Christian one. At this stage, a re-christianised *Ruhanga*, who became the Father of Jesus Christ, opened the way for an ongoing dialogue between the believers and Jesus on the one hand and the Spirit of God on the other (Ntimba 2000).

Dialogue with the Son

The dialogue with the Deity was extended from the Deity *Ruhanga* to his Son-*Kazoba*. In the case of his Father, creation is an arena for this dialogue.

Most pastors consulted preferred the later version of creation in which the Son of the Deity, *Kazoba*, participated in the creation of man as it depicted the trinitarian notion in the creation better than the earlier version of creation. The nature and manner of the Haya dialogue with the Son of the Deity is in the form of recognising and confirming his nature, role and relation to the Deity

which culminated in believing, naming, and invoking him. An attributive name, "the Illuminator", given to him demonstrates to what extent the dialogue and perception of him had taken place. Pastors suggested that like the Deity also the dialogue of the humans, Haya with the Son of the Deity could be christianised.

It followed logically, that because his Father *Ruhanga* had been christianised. The need and significance of a christianised Son of *Ruhanga* for describing and understanding the nature, role and relation of the Christian Son of God (Jesus) should be seen in the light of Bujo's question. "Could we not use... a cultural phenomenon to find new messianic titles for Jesus Christ and work out a new way of speaking of him?" (1992:78-19). The theological justification for christianising the Son of *Ruhanga*, lies in the fact that the task of theology is to get out of forms of expression used into forms of expression found in the given context" (Katabaro 2000). The arena of such christianisation is the dialogue with the Son of *Ruhanga*. Other pastors suggested that this could be either a nominal or a conceptual identification. It depicts the need for the involvement of a local theology for expressing and describing Jesus in the Haya religious frame of reference (Ntimba 2000). Like Ela-Jean, it aims at using the traditional theology of God to interpret the gospel in a way that would give new meaning to Jesus of Nazareth (1988:7-8). Schreiter describes such an approach as hearing " the voice of the same Christ in human socio-cultural situations" (1985:143). Bishop Mukuta regards it as responding meaningfully to the gospel within the Haya/Nyambo religious framework. Hence, it describes a local theology worked out by converts themselves by being expressed in their idiom (Mukuta 2000).[7] Ela-Jean describes it as "the language of peasants and shepherds" (1988:180). For Mugambi and Magesa, this is a better channel for translating christological questions into the local languages of African people. In their words, "our christology in Africa will be meaningful when we translate into our contextual situation in daily life" (1998:57). Such christianisation could open the way for a dialogue with the Christian Son of God, Jesus or the second person of the Trinity in Haya idiom. Upon christianisation, the Son of *Ruhanga* would continue to be the Son of *Ruhanga* but in a Christian way, namely the second Person of the Trinity. The main area of his christianisation is suggested to be illumination, a role and title which fit well the role and title of the Christian Son of God. In terms of creation and illumination both the Haya and the Christian Sons of God hold a continuity. In terms of restoration of the fallen creation-redemption, the Christian Son of God (Jesus) plays an active continuity, while the Haya Son of God (*Lumulika/ Kazoba*) plays a passive continuity. It means that the former Son (indigenised Son of God) engaged in further dialogue with the Deity and humans beyond creation at earlier stage. On this basis, Pastors Lufulani and Kagaruki strongly recommended the use of a traditional name for

the Son of *Ruhanga, Lumulika* (*Kazoba* the Illuminator) for further holding a dialogue and identifying the Christian Son of God. On the grounds that "it depicts adequately the role and significance of Jesus, the light of the world, as witnessed in the biblical documents" (John 8:12; Lufulani 2000).

A similar approach has been taken by Professor Twesigye, of the neighbouring Nkole/ Kiga people whereby *Kazoba* has been identified as the Illuminator the Light of the World. For them as well as the Haya this attributive name is regarded as a correct model for interpreting the nature and role of the Son of God in the light perspective. In Bediako's words, "[it] has been the source of our life and illuminator of our path in life" (2000:25). While the name *Kazoba* can only be applied for identifying divinity in an anthropological sense, the name "Illuminator" is limited to divine identification. It is used only to identify the Son of *Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* (and not human beings) (Mutashobya 2001). Pastors Ntimba and Tinkaligayile suggested two ways for naming and identifying Jesus: either the use of indigenous or biblical names or a combination of both indigenous and biblical names. The former suggestion (only indigenous words) would lead to an address to Jesus as follows, *Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga*) – note the lack of his attributive name "the Illuminator". Alternatively, *Kazoba Lumulika Omwana wa Ruhanga* (*Kazoba* the Illuminator the Son of *Ruhanga*) with his attributive name "the Illuminator" (Tinkaligayile 2000).

The latter suggestion (a combination of indigenous and biblical names/words) would lead to address Jesus as follows, *Yesu Omwana wa Ruhanga* (Jesus the Son of *Ruhanga*) without his attributive name of the Illuminator or *Yesu Lumulika Omwana wa Ruhanga* (Jesus the Illuminator the Son of *Ruhanga*) - with his attributive name, "the Illuminator" (Ntimba 2000). Both alternatives highlight how traditional notions of the Son of *Ruhanga* could serve as the key to a dialogue, interpretation and an understanding of Jesus in traditional terms. Bishop Kibira regards this approach as applying traditional idiom to give a Christian meaning (1974:67). His hypothesis complies with Evans's assertion that "one cannot…simply create a new language without the ushering in of a new reality" (1992:73). Bediako regards such attempt as "the distinctive stamp of mature African thinking and reflection" (2000:64), on what God has done already among Africans. He describes it as an interpretation of the African reality according to the Christian experience of God, leading to an appropriate understanding of Jesus. Parratt and Bediako view it as "an understanding of Christ's event in and within a traditional worldview" (Parratt 1995:49), without surrendering Christian content which is Jesus Christ himself" (Bediako 2000:43-44).

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7 Mukuta, P. The former Lutheran Bishop of ELCT /Karagwe Diocese, Tanzania.

Mutembei, (1993) (one of the first generation of Christians and a lay church leader in the area of study) views this approach as a two-way channel through which traditional beliefs and Christian beliefs flow without denying elements on the traditional side. In his book *Kristo Au Wamara* he writes:

> *Kwa njia hiyo uhamisho kutoka dini za asili kuingia dini mpya ungalipokelewa pasipo kuonekana kama mapinduzi, (bali) kama dini iliyojengwa juu ya utamaduni wa uasilia wetu...katika upya wa mambo wenye kiini kile kile.* (1993:262)
>
> The use of traditional idiom and religious terms to describe and identify Christian faith would cause moderate acceleration to a non- or less radical paradigm shift from traditional religion to Christianity. In such a manner, the former becomes the locus for the latter. (My translation)

For most Pastors, the meaning and significance of Jesus is better understood in the Haya idiom. They suggested two salient factors to take into account when using traditional terms to identify Jesus. First, an identification of the Christian Son of God in Haya traditional terms neither replaces, renames nor changes his title, role or significance. It is only naming the container (in a way), which does not distort the contained. It is a representation of his name (which is external) and his reality (Katabaro 2000). Stephen, in the light of Schleiermacher, regards this approach as translating Jesus from an historical local setting into traditional contexts and settings. Unless this is done, knowledge of him has no practical value, for he ceases to have an exemplary character (1987:55). Identification of Jesus, on this basis, with the traditional name of: *Yesu Lumulika* (Jesus the Illuminator) does not mean distorting the concept of the Christian Son of God but is rather a description of its meaning (Kagaruki 2000). This is how Christianity, since its start, has been practised and communicated in various places, without adding to or reducing its content and significance. The writer of the fourth gospel applied the non-Hebrew/Aramaic word *Logos* (which expressed a Greek concept with a philosophical background) in his attempt to express that the *Logos* was revealed in Jesus (John 1:1-5).

Use of it was a remarkable christological development in the formulation and construction of the Christian doctrine of God (Hughes 1936:48). Through inculturation, the gospel spread from Palestinian to Hellenistic patterns of thought. In such manner, the mysteries of the christology were interpreted and expressed but the use of non-Christian terms or Greek philosophical thought did not deprive them of their Christian character and originality (Nyamiti 1984:85). Rather, it demonstrated the power of the gospel to incarnate itself in new cultural situations (Walter 1984:109). Thus, "a replacement of Christian or biblical terms with Haya traditional terms is not a distortion of them, but only the means for expressing and understanding the gospel in a local

context" (Mukuta 2000). Bediako, quoting Mbiti, has the same view. "We can add nothing to the gospel, for this is an eternal gift of God; but Christianity is always a beggar seeking food and drink, cover and shelter from the centuries it encounters in its never-ending journeys and wandering" (1995:117). It implies that Christianity was not only bonded to "the biblical worldview" since its message can be expressed in many patterns of thought (Kahugya 2000). It means that believers in their own contexts can interpret the gospel's significance in their own terms. Douglas, quoting Robert, comments on this possibility:

> Christ's significance was found, not in Christ's special relationship with a particular group of people, but in Christ's universal relationship with all people... if the universal Christ came to all people in their particular historical context, then all people had a right to define Christ through their particular experience and image [of] Christ in their own likeness. (1994:61)

Some pastors suggest that even biblical witness related to Jesus Christ should be interpreted and identified in local terms. On the grounds that a mere faithful use of them, without their meaning being understood by converts, challenges our proclamation. For instance, some of the biblical terms used to interpret Jesus, are puzzling and often serve to obscure rather than to illuminate the message (Bujo 1992:76). To overcome this, Christianity should adopt terms and systems of beliefs found in a traditional context, otherwise it will simply live in a vacuum. It involves translating the Christian message into the language and cultural values of the local people (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:113). Baeta, as reported by Oduyoye, regards traditional religious names and terms as "building blocks" for constructing new Christian terms for identifying the Christian faith (1986:58-59). That is, describing it in language familiar to people so that they can understand that Jesus is man's saviour here and now (Meyer 1955: 38-39). Mutembei, in his book about the church's work and history in the area of study, urges the church to use indigenous/religious vocabularies and terms to identify and thus indigenise the Christian faith. He says:

> *Ili Kanisa liende mbele kwa mambo ya imani litapaswa kujenga mafundisho yake-Biblia-juu ya uasiliawetu...Lisitishwe na mawazo mengine litakapofikiria kutumia msamiati wa dini za asili [iwapo] unakubalian na mawazo ya kuabudu. Msamiati huo unatafusiri vizuri tabia za kidini. Ikiwezekana...[uingizwe] ulivyo katika lugha ya Taifa-Kiswahili.* (1993:261-262)
>
> For moving a step forward in doctrinal issues, the church is obliged to build biblical centred teaching on our heritage. In so doing, she should not fear any threat, especially when deciding to use indigenous vocabularies from traditional religion, as long these are not contrary to Christian faith. They are in a position to describe and explain well the nature and content of traditional religion. If possible should be included as they are [without revision or additions in the church vocabularies or] the national Swahili language. (My translation)

"By insisting on identifying the primacy of Jesus' universality in local terms we do not reduce his incarnation and its particularity from a historical-geographical sphere" (Tinkaligayile 2000). Rather, we hold on to this incarnation and its particularity from a historical background, in the divine

promises of God (Ephesians 2:11-22). It is "a way of saying that the human becomes divine because in Jesus the divine became human" (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:57). Responding to this belief the early church had attempted to interpret incarnation and christology into language found in the context comprehensible to them. Thus, was "dynamic primarily because it had actively incorporated or imaginarily used the beliefs and practices of the local, pagan and folk religions with which it has come in contact" (Moila 1989:148. In our case, incarnation could be understood from a Haya/African perspective, whereby the "mysteries of incarnation are the highest fulfilment of personality as understood by the Africans" (Schreiter 1992:5). This is contrary to Tylor's claim that God's transcendence through "incarnation has been presented as an isolated crossing over rather than the closing of the gulf" (Pauw 1975:77).

A similar approach was already felt and applied in the early days of christianisation amongst the Haya. Pastor Karoma, a son of a traditional priest who belonged to the first generation of converts and pastors, courageously embarked on the path towards the use of indigenous names. Like Ela-Jean, the question in his mind was "how can we use traditional names and give them a Christian meaning?" (1988:48). The answer was to use traditional values to identify Christian concepts. Karoma's starting -point for christianising the traditional concept of God, was by using traditional Christian baptismal names and traditional names for the church liturgy and theology. This was an early attempt to indigenise the Christian faith and theology in Haya traditional religious terms. Thus "Karoma went much further than just attempting, within the framework of the church, to preserve certain folkloristic customs. [He did so not through foreign Christian forms but through Haya-African] forms and patterns which have emerged in Hayaland" (Sundkler 1980:75,79). His approach was strongly supported by Bishops Sundkler, Kibira and other lay converts and church leaders, like Mutembei. Like him, they used indigenous Haya names for Christian baptisms. Thus, they indigenised not only names, but also the theology of baptism, conversion, Trinity and African/Christian identity. Karoma's attempt was related to the Trinity because most of the names used denoted, directly or indirectly, a strong Christian notion of a Triune God being described in traditional idiom. His attempt provided better grounds and an exemplary model for the further indigenisation of Christian concepts and terms. Sundkler reports:

> Pastor Karoma initiated a new direction in name use. He gave his children Haya names with Christian meanings, such as *Kokushubira* (through hope), *Binomugizi* (God has made) and *Nganyirwa* (I have received mercy). Both Bishop Kibira and Secretary Mutembei have given a good example by choosing for their own children a combination of biblical and African names. (1980:85)

Dialogue with the Spirit

The Haya dialogue with the Deity is believed to have extended from the Deity and his Son to his Spirit. Again, creation is the arena of the dialogue. This has roots in the belief that the *Amagara* (vital force) of *Ruhanga* was given to the created man through his Son. Therefore, we cannot exclude *Amagara* from a dialogue with the Deity and his Son if we are to understand his dialogue with the universe and his Son. According to this belief, the Deity's dialogue with *Amagara* took place together with the dialogue with his Son, following the created man's surprise, recognition and affirmation of his existence. It entailed being made alive by the *Amagara* of *Ruhanga* breathed into him by his Son *Kazoba*. This is the basis of humans' dialogue with both the Son and Spirit of God. The names *Amagara* and *Ntangaire* given to the breath (Spirit of *Ruhanga*) demonstrate this experience. Thus, the main consequence of human dialogue with the *Amagara* is the perception of him as the Spirit of the Deity given to man/humans.

Like other aspects of the Deity (*Ruhanga*), pastors suggest that his Spirit (*Amagara*) needed to be christianised. It means christianisation of the dialogue with the Spirit of the Deity and thus experiences it in a Christian way. It could open the way for dialoguing with the third Person of the Trinity (Biita 2000). Theological justification lies in the role played in the creation of man, relationships with the Deity and his Son. As is depicted in an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. In both cases the *Amagara* (Spirit) is closely related with the Deity and his Son. The relationship between the Deity and his Spirit conforms to the biblical account in which the Spirit of God is also believed to be the Spirit of God and his Son. According to a classical interpretation, the term *filioque* was used in an attempt to convey the fact that the Spirit was not only related but also came from both the Father and the Son. The most tantalizing question in dialoguing with the Spirit of God in a Christian sense in nominal identification of him as he has no proper name. Earlier Aquinas attempted to fill the gap. For him "Love" is a proper name for the Holy Spirit, and "Gift" is his personal name, when taken personally (Mackey 1983:183). This highlights on the possibility of dialoguing and naming the Holy Spirit by using images found in the context. Based on creation theories, Haya clergy consulted suggested that the name *Amagara* or *Ntangaire* fitted in well with attempts to identify and describe the nature, role and relationship of traditional beliefs in relation to the Christian concept of the Spirit of God. The name *Ntangaire* (which means surprising, shining, transparent) complies with the Christian concept of the Spirit who is believed to enlighten and sanctify. Even the term *Amagara* (vital force) like the Greek word *dunamis* was believed to demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit. Also it complies with Acquinas' names of "Love" and "Gift" of which also depict on the perception of God from the view point of creation. Pastors, suggests that instead of "ignoring or putting it aside, the Haya traditional concept of the Spirit

should be used to indigenise and understand the Christian experience of the Spirit of God" (Kagaruki 2000). As Du Preez, quoting Bosch says, "whenever a true search for God is to be found, one has to [deal] with a transcendental dimension of the Spirit which is not to be dismissed lightly as mere foolishness" (1990:196-197). For Moltmann, any model application should pay attention to the relationship of the Spirit to God as well as his Son. He regards this as a way for reaching a meaningful interpretation and identification of the Spirit of God. He writes:

> Whether we ought to interpret the Holy Spirit in a dynamic or personal sense, it is not a question of ideas about his nature, which have already been formed or still have to be formed. It is a question of what necessarily has to be said about his activity. Whether it is termed the Spirit of God or the Spirit of Christ, what is meant is an energy or power whose subject is God or Christ. (1981:125)

About the nature, scope and implications of christianising the Haya concept of the Spirit of *Ruhanga,* Pastor Ntimba maintains. "The christianisation of the Spirit of the Deity, *Ruhanga* would enabled us to hold a dialogue with the Christian Spirit of God or the third Person of the Trinity in traditional idiom and terms" (Ntimba 2000).In this regard, some pastors suggest different, but related, traditional ways of how a christianised Spirit of *Ruhanga (Amagara/ Ntangaire*) could be identified in a way which maintains a Christian meaning.

According to Pastor Ntimba, the name *Ntangaire* (transcendent, manifest and shining) could be applied singly (single word as it is in an invocation of the Deity) to identify the Christian Spirit of God. Or the name *Ntangaire* could be used with another indigenous name (*Amagara*) (vital force) in a double reference form. This leads to the invocation of *Amagara Ntangaire* (*Ntangaire* who is source of life). It could also be used with a combination of two words from the Haya and Christian trinitarian models, together with an attachment of either English adjective word "holy" or the Haya word *alikwer*a (the one who is holy). This could be identified and used in an invocation as, *Alikwera Ntangaire* (Holy *Ntangaire*) or *Alikwera Amagara* (Holy the vital force) (Ntimba 2000). For a full identification in a radical way only two traditional names are used. *Amagara* or *Ntangaire* (nouns) and *Nyamutangalira* (adjective attributive noun) could be applied to identify the Christian experience of the Spirit of God. This could lead to an invocation of him as, *Amagara Ntangaire* or *Amagara Nyamutangalira* (*Ntangaire*/vital force the Spirit who shines or manifests).

DIALOGUE WITH THE TRINITY

The Haya's dialogue with the Deity-*Ruhanga* (unchristianised *Ruhanga*) in his aspects, led to a dialogue with the Christian Deity (christianised *Ruhanga*), in his Persons: God the Father, the Son

and the Holy Spirit. It resulted in a dialogue with the Deity as the Trinity. This means that the dialogue with a christianised *Ruhanga* was extended beyond a single aspect, thus it included all of his aspects. It opened the way for Haya humans' perceiving and holding a dialogue with the christianised Deity in a trinitarian way. Bishop Mwoleka's describes such attempts as "imitating the dialogue of God" who is the Trinity. This is possible as the Haya had already started "imitating" him before the advent of Christianity. An invocation of the Deity in both versions or forms is an illustration of this imitation of God's dialogue. in a trinitarian perspective. Upon christianisation, both the imitation and an invocation of the Deity could be done in a Christian way (Katabaro 2000). It implied an imitation of God's dialogue from what the Haya already knew about God (in their own terms) or what Smith describes as the African's awareness of God (1961:43). It entails different perceptions of the same reality-the notion of one Deity being perceived in different ways. It could give birth to a Haya theology of the Trinity that has roots in both the Deity's dialogue and humans' dialogue. A dialogue between a traditional adherent and a Christian missionary, which is typical of most Africans interactions with missionaries, sheds light on the Haya dialogue with the Christian Triune God, its content and scope from a traditional viewpoint. Trompf reports:

> I asked the old man 'what do you think of the idea that there are three persons in one God? He replied: Yes, you are right. Father, Son and Holy Spirit: That did not answer my question, so I asked again. I reformulated my question: 'Did your ancestors have an idea of one God in three persons? He said that was not so. There was only One God of the Above…If you say so, you are not agreeing with the Christian belief that there is God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit, all in one. 'No'! That idea is also true. They are all the same. There is only One God! God is God, Jesus is God's Son, and the Holy Spirit is God's Spirit. (1987:37)

The dialogue reveals to what extent the traditional understanding of God in this case a Haya perception of the Deity in threefold form, was understood. Also shows its influence to the Christian trinitarian model. For Pastor Ntimba identification of the Christian God, in the light of the Haya dialogue with the Deity in his aspects, involved a conceptual identification. For him a Christianisation of the traditional model also means an indigenisation and identification of the Trinity in Haya terms. He argues that after a dialogue or indigenisation of each Person of the Trinity, what follows is a dialogue with the entire Trinity. The starting-point is the Christianisation of the dialogue with each aspect of the Deity. Bishop Mukuta suggests that Christianisation and indigenisation should be accompanied by a prior research and interpretation (Mukuta 2000). He points to some theologians, like Kibicho, who have ambitiously attempted to Christianise traditional religious terms without first interpreting them according to their frame of reference. The intended goal was not reached (Kalugila & Stevenson 1987:16). Therefore, this study regards an interpretation and identification of the Haya traditional concept of God as the key means for

indigenisation and Christianisation. Its implementation will take into account converts, who had interpreted and indigenised the Trinity in Haya traditional terms based on a threefold perception of the Deity. The focus will be on christianisation and indigenisation.

CHRISTIANISATION AND INDIGENISATION: A Full and Semi Approach

The central theme of Haya dialogue with the Trinity is an understanding of the Trinity from the view point of traditional and Christian concepts of God (with each frame work of a threefold perception of the Deity and the trinitarian model). It means an understanding of them in a Haya context. Hence indigenisation which focuses "on the purely cultural dimension of human experience...It tends to see both the home culture and the culture 'out there' as good" (Bevans 2003:26-27). An application in this study demands christianisation of the Haya concept of God and indigenisation of Christian concept of God. Its implementation will be through a combination of both sides or half and half approach. It implies full christianisation and semi-indigenisation on the one hand, and full indigenisation and semi-christianisation on the other hand. There is no contradiction between both combinations-semi and full application, since each side is not approached in a confrontational manner but in a dialogue way. However, the study has noted three views about this approach. While some pastors prefer a full christianisation and indigenisation, others prefer a full christianisation and a semi indigenisation. The third category prefers only a semi-approach of each of them. On the ground that a full christianisation or indigenisation is likely to limit or impede each side (traditional and Christian concepts of God) critical response to and learning from each other (Katabaro 2000). Even at a global level the same view has maintained. For Kaufman, a fully indigenised concept of God (which means a full adaptation to the norms and values of a culture) cannot be critical to a new culture in which it is indigenised. He regards such state as paving the way for its destruction (1981:278).

In this perspective, an application of a full and semi christianisation or indigenisation in this study is a methodological approach aims at creating an arena for a critical response and learning and understanding from each side (christianisation and indigenisation). It could result into paving the way to a better understanding of the Christian concept of God. Ultimately, a semi approach is expected to determine whether or not a full christianisation or indigenisation is needed. On this basis the study investigates on an initial use and implementation of this approach.

Full christianisation and semi-indigenisation

Full christianisation and semi indigenisation are methodological tools used in the exercise to promote the use of traditional and Christian terms for understanding the Trinity. They involve an application of all traditional terms and images found within an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form and a partial application of Christian terms or images found within the Christian trinitarian model. The former aims at an application of all traditional religious terms leading to a complete christianisation of the traditional trinitarian model. The latter aims at a partial application of Christian terms leading to a semi-indigenisation of the Haya concept of God (according to its framework in a threefold perception of the Deity). Most pastors consulted regard a combined methodological approach (that is the use of traditional and Christian terms together) as the best way to christianise and indigenise traditional and Christian experiences of God to produce a single concept of God (Bakena 2000). Lawson regards such approach as an " attempt to combine traditional beliefs with biblical insights and practices" (1984:37). The need for a full christianisation lies in the fact that it gives a full perception of the Deity in a Christian way. The practical implementation of this dual approach has been suggested to take place as follows. Full christianisation and semi indigenisation could be done through a combination of two traditional terms (from an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form) and one Christian term (from the trinitarian model). The first name (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga*) in the first version of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form (*Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*) could be replaced (and thus christianised) by the name Jesus (and thus indigenised) from the Christian trinitarian model. The other names, *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire*, would remain in their normal position but with a new Christian meaning. It would be invoked as *Yesu* (replacing the name *Kazoba*) *Omwana wa Ruhanga owa* (Tata) *Ntangaire* (Jesus the Son of *Ruhanga* and of my Father, *Ntangaire*) (Ntimba 2000).

However, some pastors have suggested a full christianisation of the Haya threefold perception of the Deity. It involves a replacement of all names in the Christian trinitarian model by three names of the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. That is, the christianisation of the traditional Deity by giving him a Christian value and sense of the Trinity. The structural form and invocation of such christianisation would be *Kazoba omwana wa Ruhanga owa mwoyo Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* the Son of *Ruhanga* of the Spirit Ntangaire) (Tinkaligayile 2000). Other pastors have suggested a full christianisation of a Haya threefold perception of the Deity in a radical way. It involves a replacement of all names of the Christian trinitarian model by three names of the Haya invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Its structural form and invocation could remain in normal position as follows. *Kazoba Omwana wa Ruhanga owa Mwoyo Ntangaire*: *Kazoba* the Son

of *Ruhanga* of (or and) the Spirit *Ntangaire*. Other pastors have suggested that instead of replacing the name of Jesus with the name *Kazoba*, his (*Kazoba's*) attributive name "the Illuminator" could be used together with the name Jesus (Kahwa 2000). This double identification of Jesus could lead to the christianisation of the name "Illuminator" (*Lumulika*) and an indigenisation of the name Jesus. The invocation could be *Yesu Lumulika/ Nyamwakila* (Jesus the Illuminator). Such identification could be a remarkable paradigm shift in the use of the name Jesus in Haya terms.

Full indigenisation and semi-indigenisation

Full indigenisation and semi-christianisation is the use or an application of all Christian images in the Trinity and a partial application of traditional terms or images from each respective concept of God. Pastors suggested that its implementation could take place by a combination of two names from the Christian trinitarian model (indigenisation) and one name from the Haya (invocation of the Deity in a threefold form) (Tinkaligayile 2000). The replacement of the names of *Kazob*a (the Son of *Ruhanga*) and *Ntangaire* (the Spirit of *Ruhanga*) by Jesus and the Holy Spirit from the Christian trinitarian model, would indigenise it. It would be invoked as *Yesu Omwana wa Ruhanga owa Mwoyo* (or Tata) *Ntangaire* (Jesus the Son of *Ruhanga* (and or of) the Holy Spirit (or my Father) *Ntangaire*) (Ntimba 2000). For Mugambi and Magesa, indigenisation of this nature could enable believers to regard Jesus as the source of life who accomplishes the model of human conduct through his paschal mystery (1990:25).

However, why a replacement of only two names from the traditional model and not all three names or aspects? It is "because the Christian concept of God and its trinitarian model has no particular name for the Deity. To fill the gap the names *Katonda* (for Protestant missionaries) and *Mungu* (for Roman Catholic missionaries) were used. Later some converts set themselves the task of filling the gap. This resulted in the Haya name for God (*Ruhanga*) being used to identify the Christian God (Ndekezi 2000). For Ela-Jean, the use of traditional terms with a Christian meaning was the proper way towards an appropriate indigenisation of Christian terms and the necessary creation of a new language for describing of Christianity. He writes:

> An entire reservoir of words, images, symbols and concrete categories can cause a new Christian vocabulary to burst forth from the encounter between the church and African society. The catechetical and liturgical vocabulary coming from Africa can result in the birth of a theological language rooted in the cultures of our soil. (1988:144)

When asked about the actual goal of this step, Pastor Tinkaligayile says "our goal is not merely a use or replacement of traditional or Christian terms, rather it is an application of a particular concept for illuminating a similar or related concept" (Tinkaligayile 2000).Defending this approach, Pastor

Ndekezi says that "even replacing or changing Christian names into traditional idioms and terms would not change their content, but only their form" (Ndekezi 2000). Oosthuizen's view confirms this approach. He says, "there is a difference between the form and content. Therefore, the communicator must be intelligent and faithful to both in form and content" (1968:232).

PERCEPTIONS OF THE TRINITY AMONG THE HAYA LAITY AND THEOLOGIANS

This part of the chapter deals with the perception of the Trinity among Haya converts the laity and some theologians. While for the clergy, the emphasis was on structure, terms and formulas in their quest for dialoguing, identification, christianisation and indigenisation, the emphasis for the remainder was on conceptual meaning and significance, creation and redemption. Such an approach had been chosen because for most laity, particularly the *abalokore* (the saved or born again Christians) the Trinity was not necessarily only understood in terms of formulas and terminologies but also in terms of its core meaning- revelation and redemption. For most of them *obulokozi/ okulokorwa* (salvation/ redemption and to be saved) is a better definition of the biblical Trinity. Thus, "salvation is viewed not only the goal but also the meaning of Trinity" (Mutwara 1998). It led them to the formulation of a christological term/invocation commonly known as *Tumutendereze Yesu* (in Ganda) and *Tumuhaisirize Yesu* (in Haya) and *Bwana Asifiwe* (in Swahili). In English it means "we magnify The". Such invocation in an interaction and dialogical manner is an indication of the perception of the Christian Son of God (who is the Second Person of the Trinity) in a redemption perspective. In Lugakingira's words, "faith, grace and forgiveness of sins by and in Jesus Christ is the channel through to the eternal life in the Kingdom of God (Lugakingira 2001). Their approach conforms to contemporary interpretative models of the Trinity, particularly revelatory, salvatory, economic and immanent models. Also it conforms to biblical view of God. Hence it speaks of the Triune God in terms of revelation and redemption both of which have roots in the creation. It demonstrates Jesus' universal significance in salvation to the whole universe (Ndyamukama 1999), which also is related to creation. On the conviction that if Christ is the foundation for salvation in the whole universe, then he is also the foundation of creation (Gunton 1991:161-146-147). Accordingly, Luther, Moltmann and Barth regard Christ's redemption as a key to understanding the Christian belief of creation and the Trinity. On this basis they had attempted to interpret the Trinity in revelatory and salvatory perspectives, regarding them suitable in reflecting on God. Their approach is useful for evaluating the perception of the Trinity among most laity and some theologians, particularly non-ordained theologians and those who belong to the fundamentalist school. Their selection took into account that most of the converts perceive the Trinity in terms of its meaning and what it does for the concept of God in

general and for believers in particular. An approach to them will focus on their understanding of the Trinity through the language of revelation and redemption.

TRINITY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF REDEMPTION

The need for a redemption-centred theology is characterised by the conviction that "culture and human experience are either in need of a radical transformation or in need of total replacement" (Bevans 2003:21). The main approach in this part of the chapter is essentially through selected questions and their expected answers. It has been chosen as a methodological approach to access and evaluate the laity including *abalokore* and theologians' perceptions of the Trinity. The evaluative questions focus on wether or not the traditional and Christian concepts of redemption can fit the Trinity. If they do, how and to what extent?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How far has the Haya threefold perception of the Deity gone in experiencing God, particularly in a redemptive perspective? For converts, an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form (in spite of its conceptual importance should not be taken as the end of the story. but an ongoing experience. First it developed from single and binary stages, which are believed to have existed at creation. Later it developed into a threefold perception of the Deity. Even though, all stages lacked a realised notion of redemption according to the Christian experience (Kabunga 1998). The theologian Kyangenyenka, when asked about this lack said. For acquiring such experience, Haya should move further in conceptualising the Deity, in terms of the redemption beyond stages reached. That is, from an anticipatory stage to a fully realised redemptive stage according to Christian experience (Kyangenyenka 2000). This is where a contribution of the Christian concept of God, Trinity to the Haya traditional concept of God lies.

Since the Haya already have reached a full invocation of the Deity, which portrays him as a threefold being, is there a need to progress to a further stage? Evangelist Nyinengabo says that further moves are essential for attaining a realised redemption, which is a Haya desire. He elaborates on his statement by asserting. "I mean redemption according to Christian experience as an actualisation of what the Haya believed in and anticipated through the ages" (Nyinengabo 2000). For him, the Haya experience of God in a threefold perception is still at an anticipatory stage. It could not attain a full trinitarian notion of the redemptive qualities of the Deity in a Christian way. Such a perception is only attained at a realised stage culminating in and through Jesus' event.

If the Haya had already experienced a threefold perception of the Deity through an invocation of him in a threefold form, why have they not achieved a stage of realised redemption? The answer to this question had roots in incarnation and christology. Kyangenyenka asserts that failure to achieve realised redemption is due to the lack of an explicit concept of incarnation. That is, a God who came into the human world by taking on human form. Who died on the cross, was buried and rose again and ascended into heaven (Kyangenyenka 2000). Thus, the doctrine of the incarnation the proclamation that "God is revealed not primarily in ideas but rather in concrete reality"(Bevans 2003:12). Explaining further she said "despite the fact that the Haya had experienced a reasonable notion of redemption, it was not promoted and developed from the anticipatory stage to a realized redemption. Therefore, the "redeemer" has not appeared (Kyangenyenka 2000). For instance, there is no myth which tells of either *Ruhanga* or his Son, *Kazoba*'s involvement in restoring fallen humanity, analogous to that played by the Christian Son of God, Jesus. Even the anticipated restoration and redemption through human or animal involvement is not explicitly related to *Ruhanga* or his Son (Muhoza 2000). What was known to them was the Deity, *Ruhanga* (the Creator) who has a Son (*Kazoba*) and a Spirit (*Ntangaire*) believed to stay constantly, without any involvement with humanity in terms of redemption beyond creation at a universal level (Mahano 1998). However, as Twesigye argues, "...for Christianity, in contrast to the African tradition, God is not only the ultimate source of humanity as Creator, but he has also become permanently united with humanity, since God has become one with humanity by virtue of the incarnation" (1996:269).

Even though the absence of an explicit incarnation among the Haya and other Africans as Twesigye maintains does not in any way nullify the validity of the concept of redemption. Therefore, their perception of it and the stage reached should be regarded as God's own effective preparation. Thus, for some Haya theologians, the Christian concept of redemption does not only depend on the doctrine of incarnation, christology and the Trinity but is also inseparable from them if it is to be understood in a Christian way (Kyangenyenka 2000). In Oduyoye's words, incarnation is "the unique theological factor that Christianity introduced into Africa". Hence the call to see how and to what extent of this doctrine could fit and function in an African context and theology (in this case, redemption and the Trinity). This is possible since a Haya/African understanding of personality-incarnation is "directly linked with the mystery of the Trinity, grace, the paschal mystery, pentecost, *parousia* and ecclesiology" (Schreiter 1992:5-6). Thus, "for many traditional Africans, it is good news indeed to hear that God the Creator and Redeemer has in the past become incarnate in a real human being". For Twesigye, this is understandable, since "Africans have deified ancestors...and charged them with mediation to God..." (1996:55). Theology in general and the Trinity in particular, falls or stands with how it understands, translates and interprets Jesus

Christ in terms of incarnation, christology, redemption and the Trinity at any given time or human situation (Parratt 1995:78).

Why did God's salvific plan first start in the Jewish/Christian experience of God and not in other people's experience of God in this case the Haya? Nyinengabo replied,

> It is true that God's plan for human redemption was started and realized in the geographical and cultural milieu of the Jewish-Christian experience of God. It is also true that God's plan for salvation was for all humanity and therefore, was not limited to a place of its beginning. Hence, the universality of Christ. On this basis, the notion of redemption has been experienced in a non-Jewish background, in this case the Haya. (Nyinengabo 2000)

Haya converts' claims have a basis in the belief that "the Divine Logos who lightens every man, has shone in the souls of Africans" (Kramer 1938:338). Professor Moila shares that view. "God's divine truth and salvation have not been confined to a favoured few; on the contrary, God is God because he is accessible to all and his revelation does not lead to the denial of his presence in certain areas of the world and an affirmation of his presence elsewhere" (2002:77). For Professor Twesigye, "God was present in the Logos, calling all human beings, according to their respective frame of reference, for divine redemption" (1996:55). Hence, God called people through the African religion. Therefore, the pre-incarnate cosmic Logos-Christ was equally present in north - western Tanzania and Africa as a whole as he was in Israel, Asia, America and Europe.

After the inception of the biblical Trinity, is there a need for the Haya converts to further experience God in the framework of an invocation of him in a threefold form? It is needed because both concepts do not go against each other. Thus the perception and an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form will be used not only in a more extended sense but also given a Christian meaning. It involves being the means for indigenising, expressing and understanding the former (Christian trinitarian model) in Haya idiom and terms of perceiving and understanding only one God (Bakinikana 2001).

After Christ's event, could the Haya further maintain an optimistic concept of redemption at the anticipatory stage? Church' elder Mushuti replied, "we believe that the answer given to humanity through Christ is final. God's redemption manifests through Jesus of Nazareth is the final revelation" (Mushuti 2000). In other words, "salvation of the world had been wrought once and for all by the death and resurrection of Christ" (Bruteau 1974:11). When asked to further clarify his statement he asserted. "Jesus is God's final answer to humanity. No further answer to this question will be given. Therefore, waiting for another answer is superfluous" (Mushuti 2000). His

statement does not negate what was known and experienced before Christ's event. Rather an actualisation of it or what Smith describes as fulfilment (1968:92). Long-term church secretary, Mborogi maintains the same view:

"A true adherent of the Haya traditional religion who has embraced Christianity will not await another answer. Because God's answer to humanity through Jesus has addressed our questions about God and redemption". His view implied that Jesus answered all questions raised in the context of a traditional experience of God. This experience involved experiencing Jesus (the Christian God) through the Haya threefold perception of the Deity. It incorporated a dialogue with the Son of the Deity in a Christian way, resulting in attaining God's salvific answer through Jesus Christ. In the sense that the Christian faith, the Trinity adds a new meaning and dimension to the traditional concept of God (Mutwara 2000).

Once the Christian concepts of redemption and the Trinity have been applied, could the concepts fit an indigenisation in the traditional Haya experience of God in the framework of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form? According to first generation Christian evangelist Mujuni, its fitness can be grasped from the fact that the Haya have experienced a rich notion of redemption, which has its origin in creation. From there, it moved up to ongoing creation anticipatory stage. This stage had prepared Haya adherents to accept Christ the Saviour of all humankind, on the advent of Christianity (Mujuni 1998). Thus, it played an Old Testament role, despite the fact that the manner and degree of preparation varied for both Haya and Christians (Rwehumbiza 1983:22). Ohlig holds a similar view.

> All human expectations of salvation are directed finally to a total redemption and innovation of our unredeemed reality. These expectations are designated by the word 'God'. The Christ confession
> also articulates that Jesus ...mediates the highest hopes of those who are oriented toward God. (1996:15)

On this basis, some converts have asserted that the Christian notion of a realised redemption should be applied to illuminate and accelerate the Haya notion of redemption and the Trinity. In turn it could be used to identify and indigenise the Christian concept of redemption (Musingakyaro 1998).

Does the Haya Son of *Ruhanga* (*Kazoba*) fit in the drama of Jesus' redemption to humanity? Nyinengabo asserts that both concepts depend on the role played by the Son of God in terms of his involvement with humanity. On the Haya side, *Kazoba*'s major involvement with humanity was through his participation in creation by being a "channel" for imparting the *Amagara* (vital force /breath) into the created human being. On the Christian side, an involvement of the Son of God

with humanity was mainly through creation and redemption. The latter was accomplished through incarnation, atonement, redemption resurrection ascension and sanctification (Meja 1998). An indigenisation or christianisation of the concept of redemption for understanding Trinity should take into account that creation is the locus for both concepts of God hence they are related to it. Both of them are linked together in a way that they are seen as "the restoring and completing of that which was in the beginning" (Gunton 1991:174). God is a reality that holds creation and redemption together (1993:vii). While "creation is seen as the work of the Father, atonement is seen as the work of the Son and sanctification as the work of the Spirit" (Moltmann 1981:97-98).

Kazoba's involvement in creation has been recommended as a rich analogy to relate the Christian concept of creation, the Trinity and redemption (Bakinikana 2001). For Muhoza and Mushuli, *Kazoba*'s breathing the breath into the created man could be related to Jesus' self-giving and sacrifice to humanity through incarnation and atonement. It means restoring fallen humanity. According to Haya belief, this would mean restoring the *Amagara* (vital force) emanating from *Ruhanga* and breathed into human beings by *Kazoba*. The *Amagara* breathed by *Kazoba* could be used to illuminate an understanding of Jesus' relation to the other aspects of the Trinity, whereby he is believed to be the source of new creation and new life (Mushuli 1998). The belief in *Kazoba*'s intimate relationship with *Ruhanga* as well as his interest in human beings (which had roots in creation) could be used to illuminate the relationship and love of God and his Son for humanity according to Christian experience. This entails a trinitarian union. However, such approach does not mean that *Kazoba* had become another "redeemer" or replaced Jesus. Rather it is the effort to indigenise Christian concepts of redemption and the Trinity in Haya threefold perception of the Deity in a Son perspective (Kyangenyenka 2000). Bediako regards this approach as an attempt to respond to the questions posed by the traditional world-view (2000:22). John the Baptist's messianic question to Jesus sheds light on this possibility, in the Haya context. "Are you the one who is to come or are we to wait for another?" (Matthew 11:3). Both the question and the answer indicate the advent of Jesus' redemption, described as God's revelation of transcendence. When translated into Haya idiom, could it mean not so much God's coming to humankind, but God's rending of the veil so that nature and the divine precedence may be made manifest. The translation interprets Jesus' redemptive role, which corresponds closely to the traditional names *Lumulika* or *Nyamwakila* (the Illuminator). Use of them could allow the New Testament to speak in the idiom of the Haya/Africans (Bediako 2000:93). For most Haya converts this is what the Trinity means and aims for (Babyeyaka 1998). Therefore, Stephen says, "the centrality of the experience of redemption brought by Jesus, who promotes a belief in the Trinity, does not mean a total discontinuity with the notion [of God] or redemption in other religions" (Stephen 1987:62). Hence a

call has been given to "discover commonalities and continuities within other religious traditions rather than to emphasize the discontinuity and superiority of the 'Christian fact'" (Bevans 2003:127). Thus Mbiti and Parratt suggest that the centrality of biblical and historical christological dogma should be interpreted in categories that are both traditionally African and relevant to the Africa of today (Parratt 1995:78). Once this had been done, it enabled the Haya to realise what was anticipated but not fulfilled (redemption) and gave a Christian meaning to what had been experienced already (Tinkaligayile 2000).

For Bishop Sundkler, it meant moving forward. Hence his plea, "you [the Haya/Africans] are fortunate that you have such a belief... There is only one more for you to know. Take a step forward" (1960: 110-111). In our case, this step means christianisation of Haya traditional experience of God and indigenising the Christian notion of redemption, in trinitarian perspective.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter has been on the theology of the Trinity in terms of a Haya perception of the Deity in threefold form. It discussed selected African theologians who had dealt with Trinity from an African perspective. Their efforts created the background for further research on the use of traditional religious models for understanding the Trinity in African contexts, in this case a Haya threefold perception of God. The study also investigated perceptions of the Trinity amongst the Haya clergy with emphasis on dialoguing with the Deity in his aspects (Haya concept of God) or Persons (Christian concept of God). Their perception was important for identifying, Christianising and indigenising the Trinity in a Haya milieu. The chapter dealt with the perception of the Trinity among the Haya laity and some theologians. In the framework of selected questions it explored ways that they had experienced, for indigenising and understanding the Trinity. For them, the Trinity was experienced not in terms of a formula but in terms of redemption on the grounds that it was the core of God's biblical revelation of the Trinity. Understanding it depends on an understanding of the concepts of incarnation and redemption. It can be argued that the Christian redemption wrought by Jesus had gone a step further than the Haya notion of redemption. While the latter remains at an anticipatory stage, the former has progressed up to a realised stage. This is where the Christian contribution to the Haya concept of God lay. It involves utilizing, fostering and promoting the Haya perception of the Deity in a threefold form, in a way that conforms with the Christian concept of redemption. This would be a move from an anticipatory stage to a realized stage. At this stage, a Haya convert could understand the Triune God, not as a mere formula or dogma but as a lived experience, part of his past experience of God. This demands further research in learning how to interpret, identify and indigenise the Trinity in Haya traditional thought forms.

The study has explored that understanding the Trinity in traditional terms, that is an identification of the Triune God in general and Jesus and the Holy Spirit in particular, could be responded to from four different perspectives. There are converts who, since their conversion to Christianity, have attempted in their own way an interpretation of the Trinity. They did this subjectively based on the traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form that comprised his aspects. For them a further indigenisation of the Trinity at church level would be regarded as an event awaited. Therefore, they could regard it as a step forward, towards an explicit application and indigenisation of their earlier interpretation of the Trinity. Consequently, such a step could potentially lead them to an understanding of the Trinity (Mutalemwa 2000). Many converts did not understand the Trinity, because they had renounced the traditional experience of a threefold perception of the Deity. A knowledge of him could be used to identify and indigenise the Trinity in terms of the Haya frame of reference. It implied a reacquisition of what they had lost. They could use it for an interpretation and understanding the Trinity (Bakena 2000). There was, however, a negative response from some converts, especially those with negative or fundamentalist views to the traditional concept of God. For them, an indigenisation of the Trinity in general and Jesus and the Holy Spirit in particular, was seen as a movement away from biblical and traditional church terms to non-biblical terms (Muluga 1998). But for Maluleke, it is not enough to look at what the Bible has done and can do to Africa, but also "at what Africa has done and can do to the Bible" (1998:11). For him any model used, inculturation, acculturation or indigenisation, should touch both form and content. He writes, "inculturation and indigenisation are not enough when these are understood as mere forms, while the ideas themselves are left intact. [Indigenisation] is not merely a change of form, it is a change of content, method, objective and vision" (1998:10-11). Sundkler regards an indigenisation of this nature as an attempt to plant the gospel in a new language, of which could result in access to "the forgotten or hidden treasure for enriching the church as a whole" (1980:295). To a certain extent, the church had also attempted to indigenise the Trinity in Haya traditional contexts. such step is regarded as a continuity of past vision (Amos 1998).

The main obstacle to such attempts is what Bishop Kibira described as the fear of making changes to both form and content. He maintains that there are many African theologians who know how to correctly interpret and indigenise Christianity and its concept of God. In his words, "if the gospel would free an African from fear, there are no grounds as to why some of his culture cannot be used to serve the gospel and thus make it really function at home" (1974:15). Responding to Kibira's argument, Mutembei, in his book *Kristo Au Wamara* has called on the church to unshackle the chains of fear. He says:

> *Wanatheologia wetu wangeshauriwa kutafuta uwezekanifu wa kuchunguza sana ili kuunganisha urithi wa dini za asili...ili mafundisho ya Biblia yajengwe juu ya urithi huo. Wasiache [kufanya hivyo] chini ya woga wa kukemewa....Urithi toka dini za asili [uwekwe]mbele ya hadhara upate kubishaniwa kitheologia.* (1993:262)
>
> Haya-African theologians are urged to strictly and deeply undergo research on traditional religion and theology. The focus would be on seeking and scrutinizing the possibility of building biblical teaching on traditional religion and theology. To enhance this, traditional religious treasure-theology should be publicly discussed and debated, academically and theologically. They should do so without fear of being rebuked. (My translation)

Mutembei's call means determining what Haya traditional religion and theology can contribute to the universal church (1993:261-262).

Finally, the study has revealed that the challenge of understanding the Trinity in Haya traditional terms can be responded to and implemented positively. This means an application of the Haya concept of God according to its invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Oduyoye views such approach as indigenisation of the Trinity into cultural-religious terms, which she regards as a remedy to an inadequate understanding of the Trinity. She maintains, "If the African really understood the doctrine as taught by the missionaries, Christianity would have been more rooted in the culture" (1986:53). Boff regards such an approach as an attempt "to articulate the same treasure in conjunction with the old. [In his words], what is new is not a distortion but something that can be recognised as a true expression of the treasure or faith in which our Lord said, there is old and new" (Matthew 13:52; Boff 1988:2).

CHAPTER SEVEN

TOWARDS A HAYA –CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

OVERVIEW

The title of this chapter a Haya /Christian theology of the Trinity indicates the answer to the question raised in the sub-title of the dissertation: How applicable is an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form for indigenising and understanding the Christian trinitarian model? While other chapters, particularly chapter one, five and six, contributed in creating an arena for such a possibility, this chapter indicates and summarises what has been found. This is done by discussing and commenting on the main issues that have been dealt with in the study. The intention is not to repeat what has already been said but to analyse the issues to determine how and to what extent they have contributed to achieving the aims of the study.

The chapter is divided into six parts. Part one gives an overview. Part two focuses on a brief summary of each chapter. Part three deals with the social and theological perspectives as interpretative tools: symbolic interaction, contextual, acculturation and inculturation models. Part four discusses the Haya/Christian theology of the Trinity as an instrument for a better understanding of the Trinity in the Haya context. Part five deals with recommendations and suggestions. Part six is a concluding summary of the dissertation.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one discussed the nature and purpose of the study with an emphasis on methodology. Chapter two focused on background information to the Haya, where contextual knowledge was the key to field research work. The emphasis was on social, cultural and religious beliefs, particularly divinities, spirits and ancestors together with details on the worship of the Deity. Chapter three investigated the Haya traditional belief and experience of God through an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. Chapter four dealt with classical and contemporary interpretative approaches of the Trinity. The emphasis was on how some of the contemporary models can be used to illuminate an interpretation of the Trinity in Haya traditional terms. Chapter five investigated the levels of interaction between the Haya and the missionaries and between the Haya and post-missionary Christianity. It also discusses the implications of these interactions to both sides and to the traditional and Christian concepts of God. Chapter six dealt with the theology of the Trinity in terms of the Haya's traditional beliefs in the threefold perception of the Deity. It detailed African theologies and perceptions of the Trinity among the African theologians, Haya clergy, laity and

theologians. For the latter two, the emphasis was on christianising, indigenising and understanding the Trinity in redemption perspective. The final, current chapter focuses on the main issues addressed in the study and a summary of findings. It determines that the goals of the study - towards a Haya theology of the Trinity could be met through using the correct methodological interpretative approach to the Trinity. This involves defining and identifying the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of the traditional threefold perception of the Deity. Finally, it presents recommendations and suggestions derived from the findings.

SOCIAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

This topic has been looked at from the perspectives of the church and theology, where social and theological models are viewed as key instruments. The main focus was on the task of the church and her use of theology and methodology.

The church and theology

From the beginning, the main task of the church was to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus for all humanity. She did this by proclaiming and explaining it, generation by generation, according to context (1 Peter 2:9). However, the belief that such proclamation and witnessing depended on inspiration by the Holy Spirit did not ignore the need for delivering the message, translating and interpreting it into the language of people and appropriate to their place, time and culture.

Two major instruments of theology and methodology were recommended. While the gospel message was inspired, the model of its expression (theology) is created (Hesselgrave 1978: 87). In other words, theology functioned as a means for articulating the gospel and the methodology served as a means of creating the framework for its transmission. Thus, theology and methodology not only related but also depended on one another. Both are church's instruments, hence a church without a theology is a strange phenomenon. For Washington, as quoted by Evans, a church without a theology, which is an interpretation of the will of God, is a contradiction (1992:143). "A church is only truly independent when she comes forward with her own theology in her environment" (Oosthuizen 1968:258). The statement implies that the church needs to acquire the means for further living, seeking and understanding her convictions. As Boff argues, "...as soon as we seek to know the truth about God, then theology emerges as a discipline of thought and form, of which the main concern is to express a clear concept in exact terms to each culture" (1988:44-45). This involves an interpretation of "theological statements about God for a better understanding" (Moltmann 1981:62), that is, articulating and expressing the word of God according to each

people's context and way of understanding (Kijanga 1978:34). As Leith says, "the primary purpose of theology is always first to explicate in understandable language the deposit of faith that has been the tradition in the church" (1993:xii).

The question is whether or not theology can be applied to attaining a meaningful interpretation of the Christian concept of God that suits a traditional understanding of God? Church histories, as well as this study, have revealed that Christian theology is capable of interpreting and incorporating the gospels into a given context. It only requires a traditional context for providing a local theology for its actualisation. When this did not happen, it led to the formulation of a theology that did not fit into the traditional frames of reference. To avoid this Bediako suggests, "...African theology is now called upon to engage creatively with the developing African intellectual opinion that interprets African reality differently" (2000:73).

However, the need for contextual theology did not mean ignoring or abandoning universal theology. Rather, it was an attempt to understand it in a traditional language and culture. Thus, the central task of the church and theologians in every culture is to construct a concept of God that is appropriate to the local cultural context (Kaufman 1981:278-279). For Oduyoye, such attempts could start with a search for meaningful theological ways with which to express the Christian faith (1986:139). This involves correcting or revising theological models as required.

The study has addressed the questions. Why was the trinitarian theology given a high priority in their theological reflection and interpretation? First, a trinitarian or threefold perception of God is the best way of describing and understanding God, even in traditional terms. Secondly, the trinitarian perception of God was the meaning for the church's existence on earth; that is, glorifying the Triune God and witnessing the fulfilment of his plan. The Trinity is thus the reason for the church's existence. A better understanding of the Trinity can enable the avoidance of misconceptions related to the unity of the church (Oduyoye 1986:144). In this regard, "the church functions as the prolongation of the trinitarian life in human communities" (Nyamiti 1999:37). Thus, the church can (and should) reject any theological interpretative method that does not give witness to a Triune God. Nyamiti further maintains:

> ...the Trinity is the supreme model according to which the church was designed by its divine source. As a result, the church is bound to reflect its trinitarian exemplar in its dimensions...like any created reality; the church is destined for the Triune God as its ultimate goal. (1999:55)

The church and methodology

The study has found that for an implementation of any theology the church is obliged to address these key questions: What is her response to the need for a correct traditional methodology to interpret her message correctly? Will the church "continue to present and interpret the concept of God which does not touch the heart of hearers? Or will she change her method so that her message could be understood and accepted? It implies exploring new ways of interpreting the Christian concept of God rather than depending on methods that are unsuitable. As Bishop Kalilombwe, quoted by Vischer, says, "The church needs methods that fit the contemporary concrete situation and the needs of people" (Carter 1963:13). According to Balcomb's observation such step would be achieved through "[searching] for a model of action appropriate to its subjection to the Word of God" (1999:10). It requires the selection of a correct model and the correct application of it. Post-missionary Christianity has found a correct traditional model for understanding the Haya traditional concept of God but they are applying it partially.

For Bujo, the correct model and correct application could be accessed by uncovering the vital elements of African culture stamped on the African soul (1992:68). An approach of this nature would enable converts to interpret the Christian message according to their own values, experiences and terms of understanding in the light of biblical witness (Jenkson & Sullivan 1991:105). For Ela-Jean, an interpretation of the Christian God could enable converts to revitalise Christianity from what he calls a "Christianity museum" (1988:100). He writes:

> A Christianity that does no more than imitate is powerless to resolve our problems, because it is cut off from our own realities. If Christianity just repeats previously articulated doctrines that have been objectified and institutionalised, it will only contribute to the development of a pure passive receptivity in Africans, who will become incapable of examining or creating anything for themselves. (1998:143)

According to this view of these theologians and others, the church should reject any method of interpreting the Christian concept of God that does not fit into a local context. As Nicholson argues, we "need to find the interpretation that fits our own experience which is ...part of the experience of our forebears with which we can still identify, as logically and as economically as possible" (1990:29). It indicates the need for a method conducive to context in order to lead the church towards this goal, which this study argues can be found in the social and theological models it has deployed.

Social methodological approaches

The need for a social methodological approach is rooted in the fact that the church's greatest

difficulty lies within the field of communication, where understanding was taken for granted and led to an unwillingness to study the African mind and way of life. Such a situation has been described as speaking "in tongue". The remedy to problems such as these can be reached through engaging in social-theological reflection in praxis. Since it is said to resemble social relationships, which determine the structures of social consciousness, it can be viewed as essential to the theological process (Schreiter 1985:91-92). However, the praxis approach does not mean a withdrawal of our reflection upon the theological meaning...or from the practice of it, but "critical reflection on historical practice" (Bevans 2003:81). Proponents of a praxis model assert that it could be better applied and utilised when approached in interrelationship with translation and anthropological models. Both focus on Christian values within a given context. Bevans states:

> If the translation model focuses on Christian identity within a particular context and seeks to preserve continuity with the older and wider tradition, and if the anthropological model focuses on the identity of Christians within a particular context and seeks to develop their unique way of articulating faith, the praxis model of contextual theology focuses on the identity of Christians within a context particularly as that context is understood in terms of social change. (2003:70)

The study has determined that, among the social methodological approaches, symbolic interactionism, along the lines of Mead, Blumer and Denzin, plays a leading role. It complies with the fact that all human beings live by interpreting each other's actions as well as indicating their own with body language and various behaviours. Secondly, each group (the Haya and the missionaries) has its specific role to play, which contributes to the process of interaction - delivering and deriving the message presented. For effective interaction, both sides "must be in a position to attach similar meanings to the symbols employed, operating within a common context" (Kraft 1979:151). This is contrary to other methodological approaches whereby only one group plays a role in the interaction, while the other group plays a latent or a merely passive role. Hence, the message and its interpretation are imposed upon them. Such approach does not guarantee acceptance of the message delivered and interpreted however as it is unable to reach the hearts of the receptors. In Majawa's words, "...[wherever] Christianity is imposed on any culture, it does not give room for dialogue and understanding and does not touch the hearts and life of the people" (Mugambi & Magesa 1990:7). We admit that while we can communicate the gospel message, we don't have power to make people respond. Therefore, we should not try to impose the Christian message on our hearers, rather participate in creating an arena for a self-disengaging and understanding of it.

The study has explored that a theological message and interpretation demand a social and theological methodological framework for actualisation. On the one hand, the missionaries had

historically presented the Christian concept of God by using the Bible and classical interpretations of the Trinity. The fact that the Haya had also engaged in hearing and deriving the message presented in their own terms was overlooked. However, it remains true that the Haya held the key to the meaning of the message delivered. They did this according to their frame of reference without distorting the content of the message. Their approach was based on the assertion that "there is a difference between the form and the content of the message presented. While the content remains the same the form changes" (Oosthuizen 1968:232). Thus the Haya converts assimilated the message along cultural and contextual lines of which the core was the traditional perception of the Deity in a threefold form. They interpreted the missionaries' version of God in their own terms of understanding and context. Kraft says,

> Receptors alone can make the recommended changes in their own perspectives and everything depends upon their feeling that whatever change they make is on the basis of their own insights into their needs and choices rather than because of outside coercion. (Kraft 1979:164)

The necessity of a context in such an approach is as Schreiter states, "We cannot gain orientation in life and cannot act without some conception or version of the context within which we are living and moving" (Kaufmann 1981:27-28). Even our knowledge of God is only attained through a context. In Regan and Torrance words, "... we only know God through his relation to the contextuality which is ours" (1993:245). It involves a "reflection on how God is active in human history" (Schreiter 1985:91-92). Contextualisation leads people to regard the Christian message as "relevant in their own situation, in this case the Haya, because it has roots in their context" (Renck 1990:1). By its very nature, theology is contextual (Bediako 1995:129). It conforms to the belief that "every text [or theology] is an interpreted text and that, in a sense, the reader 'creates' the text which she or he reads... the text 'becomes' as we engage with it...our entire context comes into play when we interpret biblical (or any) text" (Bosch 1991:422-423).

The study has found that in the process of delivering and deriving the Christian message in a given context acculturation and inculturation were essential tools. They are the means for a reformulation of the Christian doctrine into the very thought-patterns of people. Acculturation is necessary because it enabled the converts, who once received the Christian doctrine in wrappings that made it impossible for them to understand it (Bujo 1992:76). It turn, inculturation, enabled them to exercise and recognise a transcultural significance of the gospel. Thus it becomes a cultural and religious instruments in the process of expanding and adopting Christianity (Twesigye 1996:7). This was an attempt to make Christ and his message of salvation ever more understandable in the Haya context. For Penoukou, "inculturation signifies the insertion of the Christian message into the

totality of culture" (Young 1993:186). It implied meaningfully and effectively presentation of it to the African thought forms and modes of self-expression". Thus the church aims at "a continuous endeavour to make Christianity 'feel at home' in the culture of each [believer]" (Mugambi & Magesa 1998:14), leading to a better understanding of faith. By applying acculturation and inculturation models, Haya converts were led to a new way of life developed as a result of cumulative choices made by individuals that led to the construction of a Haya theology of the Trinity.

THE HAYA- CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF THE TRINITY

The study revealed that the Haya –Christian theology of the Trinity had a basis in four main factors –traditional view of creation, an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, classical and biblical views of the Trinity. Among them, creation was the locus. This lies in the belief that the Deity created humanity in collaboration with his Son, through whom *Amagara* was breathed into man-humanity. Three factors were demonstrated - the Deity, his Son and *Amagara* (Vital force/ Breath of life) are the basic aspects of a Haya/Christian theology of the Trinity. An invocation of the Deity in a threefold form - *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* - verifies the Haya's earlier use of these images/ aspects. A classical interpretation of the Trinity demonstrates believers' attempts to interpret the biblical concept of God in a different way. It gave insights into, and challenged, the traditional belief in a threefold perception of the Deity at a reciprocal basis. Finally, the converts' reading and interpretation of the Bible led them to a biblical-Christian view of God. Combining these sources, converts had constructed a Haya/Christian theology of the Trinity.

Defining and identifying "aspects" and "persons" in traditional terms

The study investigated how Persons of the Trinity could be identified, defined and understood in the traditional terms of a threefold perception of the Deity or *Ruhanga*'s aspects. The need for defining the aspects lies in the need for understanding the Trinity in traditional terms and constructing a Haya Christian theology of the Trinity. As Shreiter says, "for a local theology to become a Christian theology it must have a genuine encounter with the Christian tradition..." (1985:29-34). Therefore, "we need to remake our faith in our experience of the Christian God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we speak of the Trinity we need to see in faith the divine phenomenon expressed in our speech" (Boff 1988:112-113). This thesis has a basis in the assertion that a Christian account of the Trinity can be perceived and recognised in another way, as it is not a creation of theology or doctrine of any people, but recognition of a paradigm of reality. Moreover, the doctrine of the Trinity, in whatever form, is an attempt to make clear what has always been happening, even in

non-Christian societies. Therefore, is not anti-Trinity, but an expression of its reality (Bediako 1999).

However, the use of *Ruhanga's* aspects for identifying the Persons of the Trinity took into account the fact that for the Haya these aspects did not mean three gods but only one. As Idowu argues, "Africans do not think in term of a plurality of supreme gods. When in each locality they think or speak of the Supreme God, they speak of him in terms of an all-embracing, all controlling God" (1973:68). In such a manner, *Ruhanga's* aspects were used as images or metaphors to illuminate the trinitarian model in general and each aspect in particular. The main emphasis is not on mere terms, either persons or aspects, but on images, metaphors or notions presented by them, namely, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It echoes "contemporary understanding of God as Trinity [which speaks] of God as a dynamic, relational community of persons, whose very nature it is to be present and active in the world" (Bevans 2003:15). These images are maintained even in a Haya Christian theology of the Trinity, (after being interpreted into Haya idiom) because their meaning is familiar to the Haya. Moreover, they have proved to have a powerful effect on our imagination about the nature of God (Boff 1988:44-45). Their necessity is as Boff says, "if God were not Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the manifestation would have been different and human beings would never have grasped the idea of the divine Three" (1988:213-214). The starting point for christianising traditional aspects and indigenising the Persons of the Trinity had its roots in what happened earlier. During the missionaries' approach, the Christian God (in the framework of traditional but non-indigenous concept and name for God) was identified as the one God (*Katonda/Mungu*) in three Persons. Such language was familiar to the Haya because they perceived the Deity in a threefold form.

During post-missionary Christianity, an indigenous Haya Deity (*Ruhanga*) was christianised and used to identify the Christian God the Father, but only one of his aspects, *Ruhanga.* The study found that the christianisation of only one aspect of the Deity caused the gaps in a christianised *Ruhanga.* Even though such an approach paved the way for christianising his other aspects. On this basis, some converts, in the light of *Ruhanga*'s aspects, had subjectively attempted christianisation of all *Ruhanga*'s aspects – *Ruhanga*, the Son and the Spirit. Thus had filled up the gaps in a christianised *Ruhanga.* The logic of their approach lies in the belief that first, *Ruhanga* and his aspects are inseparable as they all depict a complete image of one God. Secondly, once *Ruhanga* has been christianised the need to christianise all of his other aspects are inevitable if he is to be understood in a threefold form and sense of his existence.

However, the christianised *Ruhanga's* aspects were used as images to illuminate an understanding of the Persons of the doctrine of the Trinity. This was done by taking into account conceptual and nominal identification of each aspect or Person.

The starting -point was the Haya theology of creation and the perception of the Deity in a threefold form, nominally identified as *Ruhanga Omuhangi wa byoona* (God the Creator of the universe and all therein). Therefore, the Haya related the traditional belief in God the Creator to the Christian experience of the Creator at a reciprocal approach. While the Haya Deity was believed essentially to have been involved only in creation, the Christian Deity is believed to have been involved in both creation and the restoration. This connotes the passive continuity of Haya creation and the active continuity of Christian. creation for the latter. In terms of nominal identification, the Haya Deity (christianised *Ruhanga*) undergoes an active continuity, while the Christian Deity (unnamed Deity) undergoes a passive continuity. At this stage, the *Ruhanga* aspect (God the Father) was christianised to illuminate the identification of the first Person of the doctrine of the Trinity. It led to the identification of the Christian God-a christianised *Ruhanga* in general and the Trinity (partially) in Haya idiom.

Ruhanga's aspect in his Son perspective also was used to define and identify the Son of God (Jesus). The belief that the Haya and Christian God had only one Son accelerated christianisation. For the Haya, *Ruhanga's* Son was not through biological procreation, but through playing a relational role. This was through his involvement in the creation of humans together with the Deity and his *Amagara* (vital force). His role was to breathe *Amagara* into the nostrils of the created man. This is the root source of his name, *Lumulika* or *Kazoba* (the Illuminator)

Converts noted some of different experiences of the Haya and the Christian Son of God (*Kazoba* and Jesus). While both were involved in creation, the latter is believed to have gone some stages further, namely the restoration of the creation through incarnation and redemption for the sake of humanity. Thus, he plays an active continuity while *Ruhanga*'s Son plays a passive continuity. With such knowledge, converts had subjectively christianised the Son of *Ruhanga* to illuminate an identification and definition of the second Person of the Trinity. It led them to identify the Christian Son of God (Jesus) as the Son of *Ruhanga.* Mainly this was through the use of his attribute name, *Lumulika/ Kazoba* (the Illuminator). Identification of Jesus as an aspect of God the Father, rather than a Person (second Person) enabled converts to perceive and identify him in their own idiom (Kamulari 1998). Also, the name illuminator enabled them to maintain the dual nature of Jesus-divine and human according to classical interpretation, since the status and title illuminator is given only to *Ruhanga* (God) and his Son, *Kazoba/Lumulika.*

Converts also used the christianisation of *Ruhanga*'s aspect in his Spirit perspective to illuminate to the third person of the doctrine of the Trinity. Like other *Ruhanga*'s aspects, also the starting point was the creation. It has roots in the belief that the *Amagara* (vital force-breath) from *Ruhanga* given to the created man through his Son, was the Spirit of *Ruhanga*. Thus he was identified and regarded as a vital force and essence of human life and source of his perception. As Hillman maintains, "humanity is being continually stirred by the Spirit of God who is at the very origin of humankind's existential and religious imagining, wondering, questioning, searching, praying and celebrating" (1993:30).

Later, the *Amagara* (vital force) was nominally identified as *Ntangaire* which means the one who shines forth and manifests. Converts, upon relating traditional beliefs of the Spirit of *Ruhanga* with the Christian Spirit who is the Sanctifier, found that both concepts belong to the same Deity-un christianised and christianised *Ruhanga*. Converts, also noted the different experiences of the traditional and the Christian concepts of the Spirit. While the belief in the Spirit of *Ruhanga* is mainly related to the creation of man and an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, the Christian Spirit of God was believed to have gone a step further. Mainly, he was given to humanity through Christ's event in which he was an inaugurator and fulfiller of the new life in Jesus. Thus, the Christian Spirit plays an active continuity while the Spirit of *Ruhanga* plays a passive continuity. In terms of nominal identification the Christian Spirit of God holds a passive continuity, while the Spirit of *Ruhanga* plays an active continuity. At this stage the Spirit of *Ruhanga* was christianised and thus used to illuminate the identification of the Christian Spirit of God-the third Person. Thus, was identified as closely linked and related with the christianised *Ruhanga*. Upon christianisation the same name/title *Amagara/Ntangaire* was used but in a Christian sense to identify the Christain concept of the Spirit of God. This filled the gap of the absence of a particular name for the Christian Spirit.

Defining the Christian trinitarian model-the Trinity

The christianisation of each of *Ruhanga's* aspects enabled Haya converts to christianise the entire invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, namely *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* (*Kazoba* Son of (or *Kazoba* of) *Ruhanga* of (or my Father) *Ntangaire*). Thus it paved the way for the indigenisation of the Christian-classical trinitarian model – Trinity leading to an invocation of it in a Christian sense. It implied addressing and invoking the entire doctrine of the Trinity in the framework of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. It led to invoke or address *Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire*, in a Christian way. Hence: *Lumulika Omwana wa Ruhanga owa Tata Ntangaire* (The Illuminator, Son of *Ruhanga* of (or my Father) *Amagara* (vital force or

Ntangaire). The entire doctrine of the trinitarian model according to the three articles of the Apostles' Creeds in the Haya idiom was invoked as follows: I believe in the only *Ruhanga,* the Creator of sky and earth (God the Father). I believe in Jesus *Lumulika* (Jesus the Illuminator), the Son of *Ruhanga* who breathes and illuminates. I believe in the *Amagara/Ntangaire* (vital force/the Breath of God), (the Sprit of *Ruhanga/* the Holy Spirit), who is the essence of human life (Ntimba 2000).

Consequently, converts saw the Persons not in terms of number but in terms of a symbolic depiction of the oneness of the Deity, as they are linked and incorporated with the christianised *Ruhanga.* Like Rahner, they found that such perception was similar to the biblical and the early Church perception of God. This study found that what converts did was not to replace the concept of the Trinity or persons or distort them but to define and express them in the Haya idiom. Thus, they replaced only the form, while the content (the notion of Triune God) remained intact. It led them to a better understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity in traditional terms. While the christianisation of *Ruhanga's* aspect indicates an active continuity, an indigenisation of the classical Persons indicates passive active continuity.

Links and relationships: Interactions

A knowledge of the links and relations is very important in experiencing and understanding God as the Trinity. This reality has been overlooked by most Christian theologians. It led to the assertion that "one of the most striking features of contemporary Protestant discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity is…the total neglect of the doctrine of relations" (Welch 1953:281).

Responding to this challenge (understanding the Trinity in terms of links and relations), the study addressed the question of how the christianisation of a Haya perception of the Deity in a threefold form (*Ruhanga*'s aspects) was accompanied by the christianisation of the links and relationships among the aspects. These were manifested by the linking words of *aka Ishe* and *aka Tata,* which both indicate a relational belonging and role. A knowledge of them enabled converts to further experience the Deity in a relational way. As Allen says, "we know God…not in essence but only in relation to us" (1985:12). In St Thomas' words, as quoted by Lubac, "we do not know what [God] he is; we only know the relation of everything else to him" (1996:147).

According to these links and relationships, each of *Ruhanga*'s aspects plays a special role. The Son of God (*Kazoba/Lumulika,* the Illuminator) plays a facilitating or indicating role (hence, *aka Ishe Ruhanga*). *Ruhanga* (the Creator and his Father) plays a central role and *Amagara* (vital force) or

Ntangaire) plays a conclusive role (hence, *aka Tata Ntangaire*). These links and relations were christianised to illuminate the links and relations between the Christian God the Father and his Son on the one hand and his Spirit on the other hand. This was through a christianisation of the structural framework in which they belong, that is, an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form.

The christianised *Ruhanga* did not end or limit his link and relations with his aspects; (upon christianisation) rather he continued to link to, relate and make dialogue with them in a Christian way. Thus he makes dialogue with his Son (Jesus, the christianised Son of *Ruhanga*) through creation (for both the Haya and the Christian) incarnation and redemption (only for Christians). Also the christianised *Ruhanga* links to, relates and makes dialogue with the Spirit through creation (Holy Spirit) (for both the Haya and Christians) and Christ's event- incarnation and redemption (only for Christians). In both cases, the Spirit of God responds positively to God's initiatives.

Likewise, the christianised Son of *Ruhanga* relates to and dialogues with both *Ruhanga* (christianised *Ruhanga*) and his Spirit (christianised Spirit of *Ruhanga*). In turn both, the christianised Son of God and christianised Spirit of God link, relate and dialogue with each other through creation (for the Haya) and in Christ's event in which the Spirit of God is an empowering factor throughout the life and work of Jesus (for Christians). The Christian belief that the Spirit of God relates to both God the Father and the Son as well as being sent by the Son to the believers complements the traditional belief that the link and relationship between the Deity, his Son and his Spirit has roots in the creation of man. This is demonstrated by the belief that the Spirit of *Ruhanga* was breathed into the created man through his Son. For both Haya and Christianity, the Spirit of God is closely related to God and his Son. Converts were aware of the manner of these links and relationships. While for Christianity, essentially the Deity plays the role of God the head in a triangle form, for the Haya the Deity plays a central role in a linear form. In both cases, traditional and Christian, God the Father is approached through his Son. For the former, this relationship is demonstrated in an invocation in which the Son (*Kazoba*) is invoked first followed by an invocation of his Father. This study found that the link and relation between the christianised *Ruhanga* and his aspects or Persons plays an active continuity while the links and relation between indigenised Christian *Ruhanga* plays a passive continuity.

The study discovered another way of interaction between *Ruhanga* and his aspects, which also had a basis in creation. This was an interaction and dialogue of *Ruhanga* with the humanity-Haya. Mainly this was first through creation and later through an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form. As in creation, it shows how *Ruhanga* links, relates and dialogues with his aspects (*Ruhanga*, *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire*). An invocation also depicts the link, relation and the role of each aspect,

and dialogue between *Ruhanga* and the humans. For all of them, the Haya responded by invoking him to intervene in certain situations. This was through naming and invoking Ruhanga's aspects together. Hence, they believe that their prayers would reach *Ruhanga* through his Son, (*Kazoba/ Lumulika* the Illuminator and his Spirit-*Amagara/ Ntangaire* (the vital force)

The study has explored that upon christianisation of an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form, the converts continue to interact with the christianised *Ruhanga* in a Christian sense. While the Haya depended mainly on ritual invocations for interacting with the unchristianised *Ruhanga,* converts depend on both the christianised invocation of the Deity and the indigenised trinitarian model or Trinity. The source of inspiration of such perception is/was obtained from scriptural readings, through the Spirit (the Holy Spirit). These sources create for them an arena for further interacting and dialoguing with a christianised *Ruhanga* in his aspects in the form of prayers and worship on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The concluding remarks and an evaluation of the entire study mainly focuses on the need for methodological theological interpretation. These interpretations involve the earlier and later interpretative approaches of the Christian concept of God by missionaries, converts and post-missionary Christianity. Questions addressed are about the nature and role of theological interpretation, the role and place of a traditional concept of God along with a perception of the Deity in a threefold form. Also, to what extent traditional perceptions influenced the means for identifying and understanding the Christian trinitarian model?

This study argues that what had taken place in the past laid foundations for the further application and interpretation of the Christian concept of God on the assumption that one's later experience of God usually depends on the experience gained in the past (Kaufman 1981:180). On this basis, each group involved in interpretation in the past, namely missionaries, converts and post-missionary Christianity should be sought to provide a foundation and insights.

Missionaries's approach

The missionaries' approach mainly had its roots in the Haya traditional context despite the fact that the traditional religious frame of references were not used to illuminate newly introduced concepts. However, missionaries are reported to have performed a remarkable and significant role in their own time and in a difficult environment (Lugakingira 1980:84). They laid the foundation for further

steps towards the interpretation of the Christian concept of God in traditional terms. It was on this foundation that the Haya converts and the post-missionary Christianity built, interpreting and re-interpreting the Christian concept of God. Moreover, it is this foundation that provides the motivation and challenge for this study.

Converts' approach

The converts' reaction to the missionaries' message was echoed in Huyssteen's argument that the Word of God can ultimately be measured by their responses (1989:88). Their traditional experience of God, on a subjective basis, enabled them to interpret and understand the Christian concept of God according to their terms of reference and led ultimately to a construction of a Haya theology of the Trinity. Thus, they contributed towards the fulfilment of the missionary and post-missionary Christianity's goal. Their approach was according to the assertion that it was "not what [the] missionaries did but what [the] Africans did with the gospel [that] has been proved the more enduring element" (Bediako 1995:206-207). Therefore, the converts' contribution to a Christian theology of the Trinity should not be neglected rather should be further applied to re-interpret the Christian concept of God, at the church level, to enable understanding by most, if not all converts. As Bevans puts it, "what we believe and decide to do must be exposed to what others believe and decide to do" (2003:24).

This study has explored possible procedures to be followed. Firstly, those converts who did not undergo a self-interpretation of the Christian concept of God due to the lack of a traditional model are encouraged to seek it. This would be through undergoing a second paradigm shift in responding to the Christian concept of God-Trinity. It implies an attempt at a self-interpretation and understanding of Trinity in one's own traditional terms. As Olupona puts it, "the time has come for a re-thinking of our analysis and interpretations of the central themes contained in the tradition" (1991:26). Consequently, converts would be led to perceive Christianity in general, and the Trinity in particular, as part of the experience of God and not a foreign imposition (Shorter 1978:24-25).

Secondly, those converts who have already had undergone a self-interpretation of the Christian concept of God as a Trinity in traditional terms should be encouraged to go a step further. That is, moving from a subjective, individually-based interpretation to an explicit, collectively-based interpretation. The focus of each category of this approach would mean building "a theology incarnated in the living [experiences] of men and women of our continent" (Ela-Jean 1988:162).

Post-missionary Christianity's approach

Post-missionary Christianity's approach focussed on the re-interpretation of the Christian concept of God into indigenous terms. It involved the use of a traditional model, *Ruhanga,* which was overlooked for identifying the Christian God. A use of it was a step forward in christianising traditional models used for indigenising the Christian concept of God. The gaps following the application of this model were due to the fact that it was applied out of context and led first to an incorrect and later a partial application of *Ruhanga.* While the former resulted in an ambiguous understanding, the latter resulted into a partial understanding of the Christian concept of God- the Trinity.

FUTURE THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

The challenges facing future theological interpretations are approached through the patterning nature of theological interpretation and the future of interpretative approaches.

The patterning of theological interpretation

Any theological interpretation used in the past, present or future in this case the Trinity should not be regarded as final or containing the whole truth about God. On the assertion that "no concept within history is ever final and complete" (Kaufman 1981:xiv). It will always be an unfinished agenda, as man will never finish wrestling with God (Genesis 32:23-32; Lubac 1996:42). This has been described as "faith seeking understanding" (Migliore 1991:3,5) and takes place through the inter-cultural re-examination and re-interpretation of traditional and Christian theology (Hillman 1993:75-76). For Balcomb, this implies an involvement of not only some but all Christian theologians. In his words, "each theologian must interpret the Christian gospel of Jesus Christ" (1991:69). His thesis is that what is important for any theological reflection and interpretation is the gospel which undergoes a continuous interpretation and re-interpretation, leading to growth, change, acquiring new knowledge and witness. His views echoe Bishop Sundkler's. For him, "theology is meant to be an ever-renewed re-interpretation to new generations and peoples...with new thought-forms and cultural patterns" (1960:211). Therefore, any kind of understanding of theology as an unchanging, already finished *theologia perennis* is being challenged in the First World in the name of relevance" (Bevans 2003:9). Hughes maintains:

> ...The Christian mind has been at work upon the thought of God...for almost two thousand years...the Christian doctrine [in this case the Trinity] is the outcome from the entire process. It is not yet complete nor will it ever be. A true doctrine will always be the same and yet ever changing,

> for the human apprehension of the great reality will be altered from age to age and each period will require its own forms of thought for the binding truth. (1936:30)

Any theological interpretation of the Trinity should not be regarded as perfect as it is vulnerable and prone to repetition, errors and mistakes. Even though when engaging in theological reflections and interpretations, mistakes or errors are to be expected. But these are not obstacles to this attempt. Rather, they are challenges and motivation for further theological reflection, formulation and interpretation. Furthermore, can indicate an awareness and readiness to learn through mistakes, leading to greater understanding and more experience in theological interpretation (Bediako 2001:7). It has been claimed that as we continue to interpret and re-interpret the concept of God, future mistakes will be fewer than those in the past (Hillman 1993:75-76).

Theological interpretation should not be limited to a few people, as is currently the case where only church leaders and theologians are involved. It should be an open issue to be freely accessed and interpreted by the laity too (Bosch 1991:467). As Bishop Moshi says, "the church is not influential because our theology is too philosophical for the man in the street' (1955:32).[8] All together have "the task of discovering in what way the Christian faith could be presented in Africa so that African will hear [and believe in God in his own way] (Draft 1979:308).

The study has found that any theological interpretation reached (in this case the doctrine of the Trinity) should not be imposed upon people. Rather, it should be presented to them for self-interpretation, re-interpretation or even a re-formulation into a version comprehensible to them according to their terms of understanding.

Theological interpretation should not be separated from its context since theology always emanates and functions within a given context. Even God is present and acts contextually. For Bouillard and Bevans, a theology that is not somehow reflective of our times, our culture, and our current concerns- and so contextual-is also a false theology (Bevans 2003:5). Theologians should therefore use existing theologies available in their contexts to "secure the roots of Christianity in the full African context which has a basis in traditional concept of God" (Bediako 1995:4). This implies searching, interpreting and applying traditional insights and world-views for interpreting and describing the Christian concept of God in a local context (Mutembei 1993:262). [Therefore] "we need to develop a theology that is based on concrete experience and expressions of specific people's culture, customs and beliefs, so that Christianity stand, not as an imported religion, but as an

8 Moshi, S. The former Bishop of ELCT/Northern Diocese.

authentic expression of the people's response to the gospel in their particular environment" (Trompf 1987:142-144).

Earlier, Hughes anticipated this possibility and its validity. He said, "non-Christian lands will produce Christian thinkers who, having approached Christianity...will bring ideas which being baptised into Jesus, will fertilise and enrich the Christian doctrine of God" (1936:57). Shorter regards it as an African theological contribution to the church's theological health. This does not mean destroying or altering the universal belief but operating as corrective and awakening tools. This implies awakening themes in universal Christianity, which are currently dormant. He argues that the church need not fear what has been termed "the risk of degenerating into syncretism" because syncretism or heresism takes place when there is no real communication or dialogue between religious systems (Shorter 1975:31-32). In Taylor's words, real heresy [or even syncretism] is not getting it wrong but getting it wrong in isolation" (Bevans 2003:24).

The future interpretative approach

How and to what extent have we reacted to past and present theological issues? How can we deal more effectively with them in the future? (Amaladoss 1996:348). These questions highlight the challenges of the future and what has already taken place in the minds of converts (Walls 1976:183). Thus, whatever approach is selected, an interpretation of the Christian concept of God to be applied in the future should not neglect what has taken place in the past. As Kaufman suggests,

> ...all our conjectures about the future will be rooted in experience and wisdom gained in the past. Moreover, it is on the basis of what has been going on, and what we believe to be going on now, that we estimate what will go in the future...so it would be foolish to attempt to cut ourselves completely loose from that past out of which we have come. (1981:180)

For Bujo, "the future of Christianity in Africa depends on the resonance as well as the balance between the old and the new" (1992:69). Previous interpretations function as a bridge uniting past and future experiences of God. Ellerberk, following his research on church history among the Nyambo/Haya in the area of study contends that "the future of the church in north-western Tanzania will depend on whether or not she is able to fill the vacuum that currently prevails" (1987: 8-59). A similar question has been raised in other African areas. Mc Veigh says:

> The future of Christianity in Africa is contingent on its willingness to access realistically God's present position...If Christianity is to speak meaningfully to Africa today, it must take seriously the challenge of addressing itself to the problems created. (1974:175)

Reactions to the challenge of the future should involve all categories of Christians that have been involved in theological reflections and interpretations of different approaches. All are urged to help fill the gap brought about by past interpretative approaches. The stages reached in the past are expected to shed light on present interpretative approaches (Ela-Jean 1988:13-14). This entails interpreting past and present experiences of God, which paves the way for future approaches. Such an approach will reduce fear and "future shock" arising from conceptual changes, mainly following the use of traditional terms for describing the Christian faith. Any future interpretative approach should aim at a correct and effective interpretation, which meets the needs of the people (Mwombeki 1997:3). Such an approach should not merely echo past interpretations. Rather, as Bosch's says, "the future we hope for is not simply a repetition or a return to the origin. Instead, it is an open attitude toward a new beginning that will surpass the first beginning" (1991:499). Or as Ela-Jean argues, "Christian communities in Africa have no future unless they can trust their own internal dynamics, their ongoing ability to respond to past, present and future challenges" (1988:60). Okure states:

> Christian faith is essentially unstable, searching and dependent upon constant renewal and development. The Christian faith never grows up; it is always growing. To keep [it] growing, we must always search and search everywhere. (1990: 114)

CONCLUSION

This chapter focussed on a Haya theology of the Trinity. It discussed the scope of the chapter as well as a brief summary of other chapters in the thesis. It dealt with questions revolving around the social and theological methodological models that suit an interpretation of the Christian concept of the Trinity in traditional terms.

The study determined that some converts were enabled to carry out a subjective interpretation of the Trinity. Symbolic interaction methodologies were found to have played a key role as they offered chances to participate in getting the message delivered, derived and understood. With these methodologies, converts constructed a Haya version of the Trinity. This version involved defining the Persons in terms of the Haya threefold perception of *Ruhanga* or his aspects in the Haya frame of reference. This includes the link and relation between the aspects, which can be used to illuminate an understanding of the link and relation among the Persons.

Moreover, the study addressed the question of the function of each of *Ruhanga's* aspects. It found that while the traditional threefold perception of *Ruhanga* and his aspects play an active continuity, the perception of classical persons implies a passive continuity.

Finally, the chapter addressed the question of the interaction of each person or aspect with other aspects and the believer/s in terms of the Haya threefold perception of the Deity. It found that each christianised person continued to interact with the believer in terms of a christianised *Ruhanga*.

For a further interpretation and understanding of the Trinity, the church is urged to apply a methodological interpretative approach, which gives the converts a chance to respond, rather than applying a method that leads to the imposition of the doctrine upon believers. A similar approach has been done since the start of Christianity of which the classical and the contemporary interpretations of the Trinity offer exemplary models. Along this approach, in general and a subjective interpretation of the Trinity in particular, converts were led to a re-formulation of a new version of it and a better understanding, that is the construction of a traditional Haya- Christian theology of the Trinity. It may be regarded as an answer to the claims that the Haya and other Africans have never properly understood the Christian message in general and the doctrine of the Trinity in particular.

It is suggested that such an approach be applied at church level for acquiring a local interpretation and understanding of the Trinity for all converts. This implies applying appropriate methodology as well as creating and allowing a free and open arena for a self-interpretation. Therefore, the church should not fear or hesitate once a methodological approach, like symbolic interactionism, has been found, responded to and applied by converts to interpret and construct the Trinity in their own way. Thus the church is urged not to ignore the traditional-Haya version of the Trinity, rather should be used for further investigations and a better understanding of the Trinity in traditional terms. Because it is not against the Christian faith as long as its core content is maintained. However, we may choose either to reject or accept any or all of the answers proposed about it in this study. But the question itself may not and should not be ignored if we are to understand the Trinity in Haya-African idiom (Kaufman 1981:127-128). It was in responding to this question that some of the Haya converts had experienced the Trinity in their frame of reference. Consequently, they were enabled to achieve a better understanding of it an indication of its significance. Therefore, there is no reason not to apply this method as it has already proved useful. Hence

an ancient Greek saying: There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horation, than are dreamt of in your philosophy. This means that there are more unknowns than can be encompassed by any worldview.

APPENDIX I LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Name	Sex	Denomination	Place	Profession	Date
Aida, G.	F	R. Catholic	PMG	Student	12.01.2000
Aligawesa, G.	M	Lutheran	Ruhija	Assistant Bishop	08.02.2000
Amos, K.	M	Lutheran	Bwagura	Pastor	13.12.1998
Ayubu, B.	M	Moslem	Kishojo	Teacher	10.01.1999
Babyeyaka, E.	M	Lutheran	Biirabo	Farmer	27.11.1998
Bahemuka, B.	M	Lutheran	Ihangiro	Pastor	14.02.2000
Bakakyemahi, E.	M	Lutheran	Biirabo	Evangelist	07.03.2000
Bakena, D.	M	Lutheran	Ihangiro	Pastor	19.01.2000
Balambirwa, R.	F	Lutheran	Mushumba	Farmer	18.12.1998
Balinda, N.	M	Lutheran	Nyakahama	Farmer	29.12.1999
Bangereza, J.	M	Lutheran	Makongora	Evangelist	10.01.1999
Bashami, B.	M	Traditionalist	Katobago	Healer	15.03.1999
Basibira, R.	M	Lutheran	Mafumbo	Teacher	05.01.1998
Bavakule, J.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	14.02.1999
Bategereza, E.	M	Lutheran	Rusharunga	Farmer	22.02.2000
Batungika, P.	M	Lutheran	Ndolage	Teacher	14.02.1998
Bediako, K.	M	Presbyterian	PMG	Professor	22.03.1999
Biita, T.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Pastor	20.02.2000
Bilikwija, S.	M	Baptist	Bugarama	Pastor	29.03.1999
Binomutonzi, N.	M	Traditionalist	Kihanga	Herbalist/Healer	26.11.1998
Bishota, G.	M	Lutheran	Bihata	Farmer	01.12.1998
Bitaro, E.	M	Pentecostal	Kakoma	Farmer	07.01.1999
Borterbach, G.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Missionary	20.02.2000
Bugazi, M.	F	Traditionalist	Kishuro	Farmer	29.11.1998
Bugenzi, B.	M	Traditionalist	Kyeibumba	Rainmaker	29.11.1998
Bugurano, J	M	Lutheran	Kanyinya	Evangelist	18.12.1998
Bujulu, B.	F	Lutheran	Igabiro	Farmer	29.01.1998
Bulakuba, H	M	Traditionalist	Kabuteigi	Farmer	05.12.1998
Bulaura, R.	F	Lutheran	Ihembe	Seminarian	12.02.2000
Byaki, A.	M	R.Catholic	Bihija	Carpenter	03.03.2000
Byamungu, G.	M	R.Catholic	Kishuro	Padre	17.01.1999
Byarugaba, F.	M	Lutheran	Ruhanga	Teacher	18.02.1988
Dauda, A.	M	Moslem	Bihija	Businessman	04.12.1998
Ek Berit	F	Lutheran	Ilemera	Missionary/Sr	07.02.2000
Folmersen, R.	F	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Missionary	15.02.2000
Forlmersen, H.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Missionary/ Sr	15.02.2000
Gatege, F. Sr	F	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Sister	20.02.2000
Gati, P.	M	Lutheran	Bumilo	Farmer	22.01.1999
Gilman, E.	M	R.Catholic	Bihija	Farmer	10.12.1999
Ihemura, Z.	M	Lutheran	Kiyebe	Pastor	29.01.2000
Ikambura, M.	M	Lutheran	Kibanga	Evangelist	30.01.1998
Isaah, Z.	M	Moslem	Muhutwe	Teacher	13.01.1999
Ishebabi, J.	M	Lutheran	Mafumbo	Secretary	11.01.1999
Kabakenga, S.	M	Lutheran	Muturage	Farmer	13.01.2000
Kabikabo, J.	M	Lutheran	Buganguzi	Seminarian	08.02.2000
Kabunga, A.	M	Lutheran	Kamachumu	Teacher	08.12.1998
Kabyangira, B.	M	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	07.12.1998
Kafumu, M.	M	Traditionalist	Lwabinywa	Priest	19.01.1998
Kagaruki, A.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Pastor	20.02.2000
Kahungya, J.	M	Lutheran	Rukajange	Pastor	17.02.2000
Kahwa, S.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Pastor	20.02.2000
Kaijanante, V.	M	Apostolic	Rushwa	Farmer	10.04.2000

Name	Sex	Denomination	Place	Profession	Date
Kakiziba, J.	M	Lutheran	Muturage	Farmer	27.03.2000
Kalemera, S.	F	Lutheran	Kamachumu	Farmer	12.01.1999
Kalibajuna, C.	M	Lutheran	Rubya	Farmer	09.04.2000
Kamalweki, P.	M	Lutheran	Ilemera	Evangelist	13.03.2000
Kampuli, B.	M	Traditionalist	Morole	Farmer	21.02.1999
Kameli, S.	M	Lutheran	Nyabugera	Pastor	10.02.2000
Kamulari, G.	M	R.Catholic	Nyakahama	Farmer	04.12.1998
Kamwesigire, K.	M	Lutheran	Nyalugando	Farmer	27.03.2000
Kanana, A.	M	Lutheran	PMG	Pastor	15.01.2001
Kandaga, T.	M	Lutheran	Rwantege	Teacher	17.01.2000
Kangeizi, T.	M	Lutheran	Kalengo	Seminarian	14.02.2000
Kaningo, C.	M	Lutheran	Rushwa	Farmer	12.02.1999
Kanono, J.	M	Lutheran	Rushwa	Farmer	03.03.2000
Kanyaburago, S.	M	Lutheran	Kishuro	Farmer	27.11.1998
Kashaija, M.	F	Lutheran	Bihija	Famer	15.01.1998
Katabaro, H.	M	Lutheran	Kayanga	Pastor	17.02.2000
Katainamwaya, S.	M	Lutheran	Kabale	Farmer	19.01.1999
Katoto, F.	M	R.Catholic	Bihija	Farmer	08.01.1999
Kigembe, M.	M	Lutheran	Kamachumu	Pastor	15.02.2000
Kikoito, A.	M	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	10.01.1999
Kisuka, B.	M	Traditionalist	Kakoma	Diviner	20.01.1998
Kitumbo, F.	M	R.Catholic	Bihija	Catechist	20.01.1999
Kyakajumba, W.	M	Lutheran	Bugarama	Pastor	10.02.2000
Kyamulesire, E.	M	Lutheran	Nyalugando	Farmer	11.01.1999
Kyanda, I.	M	Apostolic	Bihija	Farmer	20.12.1998
Kyangenyenka, A	F	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Theologian	21.02.2000
Kyatafuti, M.	M	Traditionalist	Kakoma	Diviner	05.03.2000
Kyelimpa, C.	M	Lutheran	Muturage	Farmer	11.01.1999
Lubatana, K.	M	Traditionalist	Bihija	Farmer	09.12.1998
Lufulani, E.	M	Lutheran	Nkwenda	Pastor	21.02.2001
Lugabandana, E.	M	Lutheran	Kamachumu	Farmer	10.01.1999
Lugabera, V.	M	R.Catholic	Kamachumu	Businessman	17.02.1999
Lugenge, D.	F	Lutheran	Ndolage	Church Elder	28.01.1999
Luhamiliza, S.	F	Traditionalist	Bihija	Herbalist/Healer	22.03.2000
Luhasha, S.	M	Lutheran	Kagondo	Evangelist	07.12.1999
Lujumbi, P.	F	Traditionalist	Ihangiro	Farmer	08.02.1999
Lutosha, M.	M	Lutheran	Kamachumu	Pastor	15.02.2000
Lwakalasha, R.	M	Moslem	Bihija	Farmer	18.01.1999
Lwakalasha, A.	F	Moslem	Bihija	Farmer	18.01.1999
Lwengongo, C.	M	Lutheran	Nyabugera	Farmer	07.01.1999
Machume, G.	F	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	30.03.2000
Magayane, K.	M	Traditionalist	Kajuguto	Farmer	10.05.2000
Magezi, G.	F	Lutheran	Ruhanga	Farmer	26.03.2000
Mahano, F.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	30.01.1998
Mahitane, C.	M	Lutheran	Kakoma	Farmer	21.12.1998
Malindo, H.	F	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	19.01.1999
Manunga, B.	M	Traditionalist	Kamushenya	Farmer	07.04.1998
Manwa, A.	M	Lutheran	Ihangiro	Evangelist	13.12.1999
Martin, K.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	31.03.1998
Mashako, G.	F	Traditionalist	Nyamilamba	Seer	06.03.1999
Mashankara, G.	M	Apostolic	Bihija	Farmer	04.02.1999
Mbekenga, C.	M	Lutheran	Katoke	Evangelist	10.03.2000
Mborogi, J.	F	Lutheran	Rwantege	Secretary	04.12.1998
Meja, M.	M	Lutheran	Ntungamo	Evangelist	09.01.2000
Melensiana, B.	F	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	02.11.1998

Name	Sex	Denomination	Place	Profession	Date
Moila M.P.H.	M	Lutheran	PMG	Professor	08.05.2003
Mpolera, B,	M	Traditionalist	Bihija	Farmer	13.12.1999
Mufuruki, D	F	Lutheran	Biirabo	Pastor	03.03.2000
Mugamba, D.	M	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	20.02.2000
Muhoza, L.	M	Traditionalist	Mutulage	Evangelist	10.01.1999
Mujuni, K.	M	Lutheran	Igabiro	Farmer	27.03.2000
Mukailuga, K.	F	Traditionalist	Kabwoga	Farmer	20.04.2000
Mukasa, A.	M	Lutheran	Bumpande	Evangelist	03.12.1999
Mukamungu, K.	F	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	10.04.2000
Mukotani, A.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Evangelist	18.02.2000
Mukuta, A.	F	Lutheran	Nyakahanga	Farmer	17.02.2000
Mukuta, P.	M	Lutheran	Nyakahanga	Bishop	17.02.2000
Muluga, G.	M	Lutheran	Nyalugando	Evangelist	29.12.1998
Mulyakazi, M.	F	Lutheran	Nyabugera	Nurse	07.01.1998
Munshozi, T.	M	Traditionalist	Kakindo	Diviner	04.12.1998
Mushemba, S.	M	Lutheran	Bukoba	Bishop	14.02.1995
Mushoke, F.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	09.01.1999
Mushuli ,P.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	30.11.1999
Mushuti, F.	M	Lutheran	Mulera	Teacher	20.01.2000
Musingakyaro, C.	M	Lutheran	Bwoga	Evangelist	30.11.1998
Mutakyamirwa, M	M	Lutheran	Bwoga	Evangelist	07.12.2000
Mutalemwa, T.	M	Lutheran	Makongora	Farmer	16.01.2000
Mutembei, D.	M	R.Catholic	Nshamba	Padre	08.02.2000
Mutiganzi, R.	F	Lutheran	Nyalugando	Farmer	22.01.1998
Mutwara, B.	M	Lutheran	Igabiro	Evangelist	07.01.1998
Mwebesa, J.	M	Anglican	Biharamulo	Pastor	16.12.1998
Mwehonge, A.	F	Baptist	Kakindo	Farmer	08.12.1999
Ndaluhera, C.	M	Lutheran	Rusharunga	Farmer	18.01.1999
Ndekezi, H.	M	Apostolic	Rushwa	Pastor	02.02.2000
Ndibuye, K.	M	Traditionalist	Bihija	Diviner	29.11.1999
Ndyamukama, J.	M	Lutheran	Ndolage	Evangelist	27.11.1999
Niyerenga, J.	M	Lutheran	Ihangiro	Secretary	06.02.2000
Nkoba, T.	M	Lutheran	Rwigembe	Pastor	20.03.2000
Nsiima, F.	F	Lutheran	Ndolage	Farmer	18.02.1999
Ntimba, A.	M	Lutheran	Runyaga	Pastor	18.02.2000
Ntungwa, W.	M	Lutheran	Biirabo	Evangelist	27.12.1998
Nyakabazi, K.	F	Traditionalist	Kamushenya	Physician	01.12.1999
Nyamwiza, L.	F	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	27.01.2000
Nyinawe, B.	M	Traditionalist	Kibilizi	Rain Maker	27.02.2000
Nyinengabo, S.	M	Lutheran	Rushwa	Evangelist	05.12.2000
Nzogera, K.	M	Traditionalist	Kihanga	Farmer	09.02.2000
Pesha, J.	F	Lutheran	Ruhija	Seminarian	08.02.2000
Rashid, O.	M	Moslem	Kishuro	Farmer	08.04.2000
Ruguma, J.	M	Lutheran	Ilemera	Pastor	25.01.2000
Rujumbi, F.	M	Traditionalist	Ihangiro	Rain Maker	11.02.2000
Rutabanzibwa, S	M	R.Catholic	Rutabo	Padre	20.02.2000
Rwabukwisi, B.	M	Lutheran	Bihija	Farmer	01.12.1998
Rwamushonge, E.	M	Lutheran	Igabiro	Farmer	04.01.1999
Rwanduruko, J.	M	Lutheran	Kasenga	Evangelist	16.01.1998
Rwechungura, E.	M	Lutheran	Buyego	Evangelist	02.02.1999
Tibakilana, P.	F	Lutheran	Kabale	Farmer	19.12.1999
Timanywa, N.	M	R.Catholic	Bukoba	Bishop	19.03.2000
Tinkaligayile, D.	M	Lutheran	Rukajange	Pastor	18.02.2000

APPENDIX II

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters of reply to the Author

Name	Title	Place	Date
Bakinikana, I.	Teacher	Bukoba, Tz	10. 2. 2001
Buberwa, E.	Bishop	Bukoba, Tz	09. 01.2001
Balira, H.	Pastor	Minziro, Tz	14.02.2001
Kayungi, G.	Pastor	Nyabugera, Tz	23.12.2000
Kazoba, N.	Bishop	Karagwe, Tz	02. 03.2001
Lugakingira, W.	Dean	Bukoba, Tz	29.01.2001
Lwenteme, A.	Pastor	Mabira, Tz	05. 07.2000
Mutashobya, F.	Missionary	Gabrone	18. 01.2001

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions are arranged according to the category of respondents under six groups-A-F. Respondents are assumed to espouse traditional values.

Group A – Theologians & church leaders : (Bishops, Missionaries, Pastors, Evangelists, Seminaries)

sample size = 30.

1. What happened following the encounter between the Haya and the missionaries?

How did each side participate in the interaction?

What impact did the interaction of each side have on religion and the Haya concept of God?

2. What do you understand about the Haya concept of God? Do they have a true knowledge of God?

3. What do you know about an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form?

a) Is there a parallel between it and the Christian trinitarian model?

b) If yes, how?

c) What was its impact on the identification and understanding of the Christian Triune God?

d) Could it be used to illuminate, indigenise and understand the Christian concept of God according to the trinitarian model?

e) If yes, how?

4. What consequences following the use of non-indigenous or indigenous but partial concepts and names for identifying the biblical God among the Haya?

5. What factors contributed to people's positive or negative response to Christian conversion?

a) In which area did they have the greatest impact?

6. What was the impact of the Haya belief in spirits, divinities and ancestors on traditional and Christian concepts of God?

Group B - Lay Christians: sample size = 20.

1. How did you make contact with the Christian message?

2. Did the traditional concept of God have any impact on your understanding of the biblical God?
   a) If so how and to what extent?

3. What is your attitude towards an invocation of the Deity in a threefold form before and after your conversion to Christianity?
a) Did it contribute to a deeper understanding of the Triune God?

4. What is your attitude towards the belief in spirits and ancestors before and after your conversion to Christianity?

Group C - First and second generation Christians: Sample size = 25.

1. How was Christianity presented in the Haya religious-cultural context?
   a) What was your reaction?
   b) Did you or other indigenous people participate in the process?
   c) How would you describe Christianity in traditional Haya terms?

2. What factors motivated you or your family/clan to convert to Christianity?
   a) What happened after your conversion?
   b) Did you respond further to the Christian concept of God after conversion?

3. Did a traditional understanding of God promote or hinder an understanding of the biblical God?

4. How do you understand the Triune God?

Group D - Christians of other denominations: Sample size = 25.

1. Which names/concepts do you use to interpret and identify the biblical God?

2. How did you identify and understand the biblical God from your denomination viewpoint?
   a) What is your opinion about the identification of the biblical God in other denominations?

b) In your opinion, do they believe in the same God?

3. What is your attitude to a traditional understanding of God before and after your conversion?

Group E - non-Christian traditionalists and Moslems: Sample size = 30.

1. How did you personally and other Haya people get to know God?

2. How do you address or invoke the Deity?

3. Is the invocation '*Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire'* related to a belief in the Deity?

a) How does it relates or contrasts to another invocation of the Deity of *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire Omukuru agambwa mbele?*

b) Who are the name bearers mentioned in each version of an invocation, namely *Kazoba*, *Ruhanga* and *Ntangaire*?

c) Why they are all invoked together in addressing the Deity?

d) How is each of them linked and related?

e) What is the role of each?

f) Does a belief in them assume the idea of three gods?

4. Did the Haya have a traditional notion of the Son and the Spirit of the Deity?

a) How was each perceived?

5. How do the spirits, divinities and ancestors relate to a belief and worship of the Deity?

a) What is their place in the Haya concept of God?

b) How are tokens and offerings used by the Haya in communicating with ancestors?

6. Why do you still adhere to a traditional religion after the introduction of Christianity?

Group F - specialists: (priests, diviners, physicians, rainmakers and seers) sample size = 30.

1. How do you perceive and identify God in your ministry?

2. Where and how did you get the knowledge of your ministry?

a) What is the source or power behind your ministry?

b) Does it relate to spirits and ancestors and the Deity?

c) How?

3. How is the knowledge of and belief in the Deity practised and maintained in your ministry?

Sample questionnaires put to some respondents in their respective groups (A to F) mainly Christians

Respondents were asked to indicate their address, sex, religion, profession and age.

The majority of questionnaires were in the True/False format. Only the last but three questionnaires required a ranked, multiple-choice response.

1. Before the advent of Christianity and Islam, did the Haya believe in a true God? True/False

2. *Ruhanga* is the God of Abraham and Father of Jesus in Christianity and the God of Moslems (Allah). True/False

3. The Haya had a threefold notion of the Deity before the advent of Christianity. True/False

4. A traditional invocation of the Deity (*Kazoba aka Ishe Ruhanga aka Tata Ntangaire* or *Kazoba Lububi lwa Ntangaire Omukuru agambwa mbele*) portrays the notion of one Deity. True/False

5. An invocation of the Deity in a threefold form could be used to illuminate the Trinity. True/False

6. *Kazoba* and *Ntangaire* are not spirits. True/False

7. Before the advent of Christianity, the Haya hadn't the notion of the Son and Spirit of the Deity. True/False

8. The Haya do not worship their ancestors. True/False

9. The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be re-interpreted into Haya traditional thought. True/False

10. The Haya traditional understanding of God contributed a great deal/somehow/hadn't contributed at all/hindered the process of conceptualising Christianity and Islam.

11. A traditional understanding of God is essential/ helpful/ not needed at all in propagating Christianity in our time.

12. The doctrine of the Trinity was completely understood/ ambiguously understood/ misunderstood by the Haya people.

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