

THE RECEPTION OF GENESIS 1-3 IN NGUNI CULTURE

By

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DECLARATION

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY DECLARE THAT THE WORK CONTAINED IN THIS DISSERTATION IS MY OWN ORIGINAL WORK AND HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY IN ITS ENTIRETY OR IN PART BEEN SUBMITTED AT ANY UNIVERSITY FOR A DEGREE.



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ABSTRACT

This dissertation looks at the reception of Gen. 1-3, one of the most controversial parts in the Hebrew Bible. How was it interpreted by the Nguni speaking communities (e.g. Xhosa, Zulu, siSwazi and siNdebele) taking into consideration their background, culture and religious belief system?

The *reception approach* is followed in the research because of its emphasis on the role of the reader in understanding texts. Sources that are utilized are Nguni Bible translations, selected preached sermons (which the researcher attended himself), Nguni stories and folk tales and reviews undertaken among selected Nguni groups.

A *close-reading* of the texts under discussion is undertaken in order to determine the basic content and issues of interpretation involved. The central concepts of cosmogony as contained in Gen. 1-2 are studied, as well as the story of the Garden of Eden and the concept of the “fall” in Gen. 3.

The map of the Nguni language group is described and the culture and belief system of the Nguni speaking communities. Central concepts to this belief system are the worship of ancestors, marriage, circumcision, and among the Swazis the *incwala* (annual national feast). Legends and folk tales were used as sources for the Nguni belief system. It was determined that the Nguni speaking people worshipped one God in their traditional way, but always through their *ancestors* as a sign of respect.

The role of the *missionaries* is analyzed by describing the history of the various missionary societies and their influence on the Nguni peoples. A very short discussion is devoted to *preached sermons* by Nguni pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Bible translations have always played a very important role among Nguni speakers (both Christians and non-believers). The need for translations using understandable contemporary terms is emphasized. This is the challenge to the Bible societies and Bible translators.

Qualitative reviews were undertaken under selected Nguni speaking groups (Xhosa, Zulu, siSwati and siNdebele). Some of the results obtained from these reviews (full transcripts are included) are:

- (1) that there is a common understanding of the origin of the universe between the Hebrew Bible and the Nguni religious culture.
- (2) Serpent (Gen. 3): among the Zulus this concept is understood in terms of sexuality, but it can also be linked with the ancestors.
- (3) Both communities (Hebrew Bible and the Nguni) were tainted with the concept and ideology of patriarchalism.

The crucial question in the research was: “what happens when a cosmogonic myth is transferred from one community to another?” In the case of Gen. 1-3 an ancient Hebrew text was transmitted to African cultures via missionaries and Bible translations. Nguni people react differently. Whereas some accept Gen. 1-3 (cosmogonies and the “fall”) as a detailed explanation of how creation and the “fall” came about, others reject it.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie proefskrif kyk na die resepsie van Gen. 1-3, een van die mees kontroversiële dele in die Hebreeuse Bybel. Hoe word dit geïnterpreteer deur die Ngunisprekende gemeenskappe (Xhosas, Zoeloes, Swazi's en Ndebele-groepe), met inagneming van hulle agtergrond, kultuur en stelsel van godsdienstige oortuigings?

Die *resepsiebenadering* word in hierdie navorsing gevolg weens die klem op die rol van die leser in hoe tekste verstaan word. Die bronne wat aangewend is, is Ngunibybelvertalings, geselekteerde preke (wat die navorser self bygewoon het), Ngunistories en -volksverhale, en onderhoude wat met geselekteerde Ngunigroepe gevoer is.

'n *In-dieptestudie* van die betrokke tekste is onderneem ten einde die basiese inhoud en interpretasiekwessies te bepaal. Die sentrale konsep van kosmogonie, soos vervat in Gen. 1-2, is bestudeer, asook die storie oor die Tuin van Eden en die konsep van die "sondeval" in Gen. 3.

Die kaart van die Ngunitaalgroep word beskryf, asook die kultuur en geloofstelsel van die Ngunisprekende gemeenskappe. Sleutelkonsepte in hierdie geloofstelsel is die aanbidding van voorvaders, die huwelik, besnydenis, en onder die Swazi's, die *incwala* (jaarlikse nasionale fees). Legendes en volksverhale is gebruik as bronne vir die Ngunigeloofstelsel. Daar is vasgestel dat die Ngunisprekende mense altyd een God aanbid het op hulle tradisionele manier, maar altyd deur *voorvaders* as 'n teken van respek.

Die rol van die *sendelinge* word ontleed deur die geskiedenis van die verskeie sendinggenootskappe te beskryf, asook hulle invloed op die Ngunimense. 'n Baie kort bespreking word gewy aan preke gelewer deur Ngunipastore in die Sewendedaagse Adventistekerk.

Bybelvertalings het nog altyd 'n baie belangrike rol gespeel onder Ngunisprekers (beide Christene en nie-gelowiges). Die behoefte vir vertalings wat verstaanbare, kontemporêre terme gebruik, word beklemtoon. Dít is die uitdaging wat aan die bybelgenootskappe en bybelvertalers gestel word.

Kwalitatiewe onderhoude is afgelê onder geselekteerde Ngunisprekende groepe (Xhosas, Zoeloes, Swazi's en Ndebele-groepe). Resultate wat verkry is van hierdie evaluering (waarvan volledige transkripsies voorsien word) sluit in:

- (1) dat daar 'n gemeenskaplike begrip is van die oorsprong van die heelal by die Hebreeuse Bybel en die Ngunigeloofskultuur;
- (2) dat die konsep van die slang (Gen. 3) onder die Zoeloes in terme van seksualiteit verstaan word, maar dat dit ook met die voorvaders in verband gebring kan word; en
- (3) dat beide gemeenskappe (Hebreeuse Bybel en die Nguni) tekens dra van die konsep en ideologie van patriargisme.

Die kernvraag in die navorsing was: “Wat gebeur wanneer 'n kosmogoniese mite oorgedra word van een gemeenskap na 'n ander?”. In die geval van Gen. 1-3 is 'n ou Hebreeuse teks oorgedra na Afrikakulture via sendelinge en bybelvertalings. Ngunimense reageer verskillend. Waar sommige Gen. 1-3 aanvaar (kosmogonieë en die “sondeval”) as 'n gedetailleerde verduideliking van hoe die skepping en die “sondeval” plaasgevind het, word dit deur ander verwerp.

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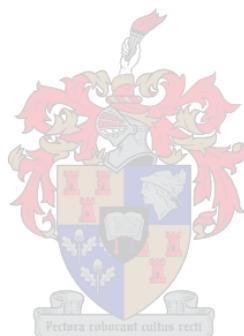
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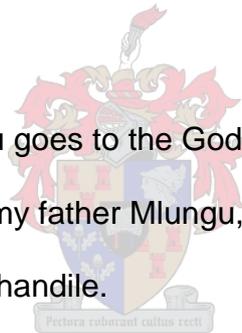
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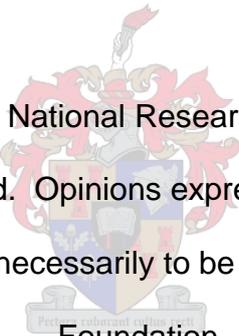
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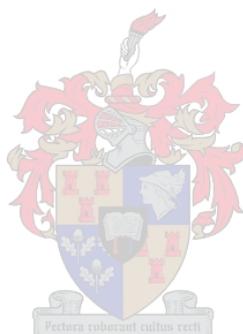


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THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
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ABBREVIATIONS

Am.:	Amos
A.N.E.:	Ancient Near East
Cor.:	Corinthians
Dt.:	Deuteronomy
Eccl.:	Ecclesiastes
Eph.:	Ephesians
Exo.:	Exodus
Ezek.:	Ezekiel
Fig.:	Figures
Gen.:	Genesis
GNB.:	Good News Bible
Hab.:	Habakkuk
Hos.:	Hosea
Isa.:	Isaiah
JB:	Jerusalem Bible
Jer.:	Jeremiah
Judg.:	Judges
KJV:	King James Version
Mal.:	Malachi
Matt.:	Matthew
MT:	Masoretic Text



NAB:	North American Bible
NEB:	New English Bible
NIV:	New International Version
NJB:	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV:	New King James Version
NRSV:	New Revised Standard Version
Nu.:	Numbers
OT:	Old Testament
Pet.:	Peter
Ps.:	Psalms
Rev.:	Revelations
REB:	Revised English Bible
Rom.:	Romans
RSV:	Revised Standard Version
RRT:	Reader Response Theory
Sam.:	Samuel (I or II)
Tim.:	Timothy
TNEB:	The New Encyclopaedia Britannica
Zech.:	Zechariah



DEFINITION OF TERMS

Nguni: The term “Nguni” in this research has been limited to four nationalities, i.e. Xhosa-speaking, Zulu-speaking, siSwati-speaking and finally the Ndebele-speaking nationalities; these nationalities are found here in the Republic of South Africa, the Kingdom of Swaziland and Zimbabwe (southern Matebele area).

Qamatha: This word was used by the Xhosa-speaking communities before the missionaries came into the picture. This word referred to the sovereign Lord.

Thixo: This is the name the Xhosa-speaking communities use to describe God. This name was used after the Xhosa-speaking people met the missionaries and after the African Nguni speaking communities were Westernized by the missionaries.



Mvelinqangi: This is the word that was used by Zulu-, siSwati- and Ndebele-speaking communities before the missionaries came into the picture. Mvelinqangi was used in the same sense as Qamatha.

Mvelinqangi: This is a Xhosa word for God and it is equivalent to Qamatha.

Nkulunkulu: The Zulu-, siSwati- and Ndebele-speaking communities use this word. They began to use this name after encountering the missionaries who tried to Westernize them. This word means “the great great one”.

Izinyanya/Amadlozi/Abezimu: Nguni-speaking communities believed that one can only approach God through a medium called **ancestors**.

Myth: A myth is a story that is sacred to and shared by a group of people who find their most important meanings in it; it is a story believed to have been composed in the past about an event in the past, or, more rarely, in the future, an event that continues to have meaning in the present because it is remembered; it is a story that is part of a larger group of stories (O'Flaherty 1988:27).

Zimu: This is the Ndebele traditional God.

SiSwati and Swazi are used interchangeably in this doctoral work.

The terms “creation” and “cosmogony” will be used interchangeably.



All English Bible quotations are taken from the NIV, unless stated otherwise.

INTRODUCTION AND METHOD



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND METHOD

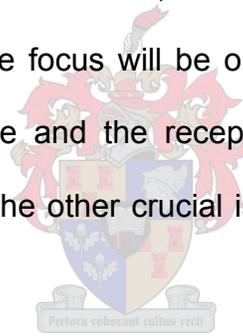
1.1 PROBLEM, METHOD, DESIGN AND VALUE

1.1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Comparing Egyptian and Hebrew/Israelite (Gen. 1-2) cosmogonies in my MA study (Gwala 1996); I was struck by the similarities and differences between these cosmogonic stories. My conclusion was that the differences in the cosmogonic views could be attributed to cultural differences between the Egyptians and Ancient Hebrews (Israelites). This raised another question: what happens to a cosmogonic myth when it is transferred from one culture to another? The proposed study will be looking precisely at what happens when an ancient text like the Hebrew Bible is read by people from a different culture with different languages and religious values. The main question that will be addressed in this research is: what happened to the text (Gen. 1-3) when it was read and interpreted by the Nguni communities? In addressing this central question the researcher undertakes to explore the following:

- The relationship between the Nguni-speaking communities, missionaries and the Hebrew Bible text; how have the Nguni speaking communities received Genesis 1-3 as a result of this relationship?
- To what extent do the Nguni Bible translations reflect the Hebrew text; does the Nguni text convey the meaning of the Hebrew text?
- Does the Nguni text reflect the same imagery, symbols, figures of speech, etc. which are in the Hebrew text?

The reason that the first three chapters of Genesis are worth examining closely is because they raise so many key issues. Firstly, Genesis 1-3 deals with “creation” and “the fall”, which are central to religious dogma in most churches. Secondly, in society, the church and academic circles there is the question of the relationship between the idea of creation and the scientific concept of evolution. Thirdly, in our society women have established movements to promote their rights. What does Gen. 1-3 contribute to the issue of female rights? Finally, the protection of our natural habitat is currently under global discussion; what do the creation texts in Gen. 1-2 say about these issues? These issues make Genesis 1-3 a very significant text, because it addresses many current issues in contemporary society. However, it would be impossible to address all these vital issues and in this study the focus will be only on “creation” and the “fall” as they relate to both the Hebrew Bible and the reception and understanding of the Nguni-speaking communities, leaving the other crucial issues raised above for future research projects.



This study looks at the way in which Nguni-speaking people have read and “received” the first three chapters of the Hebrew Bible. The reason for choosing *Nguni culture* is that the researcher himself is part of this community and is well acquainted with the ways in which Nguni speakers read and understand the texts under discussion. The Nguni language group includes Xhosa, Zulu, SiSwati and Ndebele. This might sound too large a group of languages to be handled by one person in one study. However, the researcher knows two of these languages (Xhosa and Zulu) very well and has worked many years in both these two communities. He also has a fair understanding of the other

two languages (SiSwati and Ndebele). It is also necessary to deal with all the Nguni language groups together in order to obtain a broader perspective and a get a fairly conclusive of the way in which Nguni-speaking communities in general read, understand and interpret the text under discussion. The researcher may not be well versed in the other two Nguni language groups, but he is familiar with major cultural activities in these communities.

1.1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Any method that one adopts has its own limitations. Choosing a method or an approach is not always an easy task and yet the success of the entire research project depends on the choice of the research approach. The concern in this study is to show how the verses from Genesis are interpreted in the Nguni communities. The *traditional historical-critical method* is not used as it is not my purpose to date Genesis 1-3 or to determine who wrote Genesis and what sources were used. What is the focus of interest is the historicity of the reader/interpreter and not the history of the text (*historicism*). The structural (*text-immanent*) approach, with its emphasis on the text alone, is also not followed because it does not adequately take into account the interpretative role of the *reader*. The intention in this research project is to employ the *reception* method known as *reader response theory*, as it is advocated by the German scholars Jauss and Iser¹. This method has been chosen because the research deals with the transfer of cultural and religious ideas from one community to another. It is argued that this method allows

¹ For a short description of their approaches cf. Holub (1984:53-82) and Fokkema (1978:136-164) on Jauss and Holub (1984:82-92) on Iser.

the best possibilities for the **reader** or the **recipient** of these ideas to be taken seriously. It has to be admitted that there are various other contextual approaches which can be followed such as liberation theology and a feministic approach, each having its own merits.

The similarities and differences between “text”, “reader” and “interpretation” will have to be explained. For this purpose reception theory, more specifically **reception history**, will be applied. What has to be determined is the contribution of Nguni culture (e.g. Nguni cosmogonic concepts and views) to Nguni interpretations of the Genesis stories. **Reception** theory is discussed in detail under 1.2.

In addition, interviews will be conducted to determine how Nguni speakers read the texts. It is evident that very little has been written on this subject; therefore, the interviews will provide a corpus of fresh information. The interviews will afford the researcher an opportunity to interact with Nguni speakers in their various communities. The interviews will deal specifically with those areas that will help to conjure to show how Gen. 1-3 have been received among the Nguni-speaking communities. More detailed information on the approach followed in the interviews is given in Chapter 6.

On the one hand, Nguni Bible readers will be interviewed; among those to be interviewed will be the church leaders (since they represent the official view of their Christian communities), the church members, Nguni academics and politicians. On the other hand, written and oral sources – e.g. Nguni Bible *translations* and preached *sermons* –

will be studied and be dealt with in Chapter 7, dealing with Nguni interpretation, distinguishing between interpretations by white missionaries and that of the indigenous Nguni pastors/preachers.

1.1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to detect possible shifts in the meaning of the Genesis stories when they are interpreted by Nguni people, the first step will be to determine the meaning of these stories in their Hebrew/Israelite context. This will entail a **close reading** of the text of Gen. 1-3 to determine:

- (i) The content and information available; and
- (ii) The main issues involved which have led to various interpretations and/or forms of reception (chapters 1-3).



The second step will entail collecting examples of Nguni interpretations of the Genesis creation stories. The researcher will ascertain to what extent Nguni culture has played a part in their reading, understanding and interpreting the Bible texts. Nguni-speaking people were nomadic as they had to find pastures for grazing for their livestock. Ancestral worship is central to everything that Nguni-speaking people do, e.g. marriage ceremonies, circumcision, thanksgiving ceremonies, bearing children, etc. Nguni-speaking communities believe that there is a God in heaven and that God is *Qamatha/ Mvelinqangi/ Mvelinqangi/ Mvelicanti*; the relationship between this God and the Nguni-

speaking people will be looked at. The role of the missionaries will also be explored and this will be dealt with in Chapter 5.

Finally, a comparison will be made between the Genesis material (in its own cultural setting) and the Nguni interpretations in order to determine the way in which a transfer of meanings has occurred between two cultures. The interviews will be conducted, analyzed and interpreted accordingly.

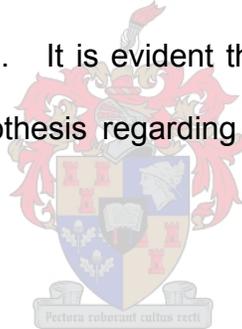
1.1.4 VALUE OF THE STUDY

Even though much has been written on the reception of Genesis 1-3 in Western culture (e.g. Cornelius 1997a), very little of it comes from an African perspective. Some African theologians like Mbiti (1970), Mosala (1989), Maluleke (1995), Masenya (1990 & 2002), Keteyi (1998), Buwa (1985), Mngqibisa (1992) and so on have written on other general issues in the Bible, but none deal specifically with Genesis 1-3.

A reception-historical study involving African interpretations of these stories is a *desideratum*. Such a study will shed some light on the “African interpretation” of biblical material, and be of value for Bible translators in Africa, more specifically Nguni translators. This study can also make a contribution towards the study of Nguni culture and literature in general. The reception approach allows the recipients to “rewrite” the text for themselves, hence making it relevant for them. Needless to say, this study can serve as a model for such studies with regard to other language/cultural groups.

1.2 RECEPTION/READER RESPONSE THEORY

As said before, the nature of this study makes *reception theory* the appropriate approach. The researcher will draw heavily from reception history as outlined by Jauss and Iser. Lategan (1993:169) states clearly that both the phenomenon and the concept of reception (the concentration on the receiver of human communication, i.e. reader and the role he/she plays in the process), is nothing new in the study of the Bible. In the description of reception theory one often finds phrases such as “cultural grid”, “receptor language” and “target audience”. It is evident that in reception theory the focus is the listener/hearer and his/her hypothesis regarding the rational intentions of the speaker (Lategan 1993:16).



Reception theory is a coherent movement that is prominently represented by the School of Konstanz, with Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser as its principal exponents. Reader response criticism approaches biblical literature in terms of the values, attitudes and responses of readers (cf. McKnight 1993:230). McKnight argues that the reader plays an integral role in the “production” or “creation” of meaning and significance. Reader response theory has two important aspects, i.e. historicity – the quality or fact of existing in history, or of being part of history (Deist 1984:115) - and value judgment (Fokkema 1978:137). In the reception theory perspective facts are reinstated into their historicity and the historicity of the researcher/recipient is acknowledged as well (Fokkema

1978:136). The relationship between the researcher/recipient and the object is expressed in three stages such as a *document*, a *monument* and a *signal/appeal structure* (Fokkema 1978:136). McKnight states that the following questions are common in reader response approaches (as in Haynes and McKenzie 1993:230 and 231): -

- What are the characters like?
- Are they real?
- What do they want? (Motivation).
- Why do they do what they do? (Motivation).
- Do their actions logically follow from their natures? (Consistency of characters).
- What do their actions tell about their characters?
- How are the individual pieces of action – the special incidents related to each other? (Plot development).
- How are the characters related to one another? (Subordination and emphasis among characters; conflict among characters).
- How are the characters and incidents related to the theme?

McKnight (1993:231) agrees with Stanley Fish (1976 and 1980), who argues that it is the reader who “makes” literature and defines readers as members of interpretative communities that determine the attention given by readers and the kind of literature made by readers.

The work of Wolfgang Iser may be seen as mediating two positions:

- (i) That meaning is purely and simply a content of texts; and
- (ii) That meaning is essentially a product of the reader (McKnight 1993:232).

Iser advocates strongly that the text is the product of an author's intention, with the reading of the text involving not only the intention of the author, but also the intention of the reader. The difference between Iser and Fish is that Iser argues that the necessary creative activity of the reader does not indicate that literature and meaning are essentially dependent upon subjective perception, as Fish claims (McKnight 1993:232). Iser emphasizes that not only the actual text but also the actions involved in responding to that text must be considered in literature. He further makes the "gaps" and the closing of the gaps by the reader the central factor in literary communication. Iser speaks of a "basic force" in literary communication and he calls it "negativity", which has three different aspects, i.e.

- (i) The "frame" within which the relevant textual material is organized and subsumed;
- (ii) The cause underlying the questioning of the world in the text; and
- (iii) The unwritten base that conditions the formulations of the text by means of the gaps.

The historical conditions of interpretations do not enter the picture for Iser, hence he is regarded as one of the older school of intrinsic interpretation [*Werkimmanente Interpretation*] (Jauss 1970:241). Hannelore Link (1973:539-548) criticizes Iser constructively in the following manner:

- (i) Iser employs the criterion of indeterminacy in terms of reception aesthetics as well, i.e. the more places of indeterminacy there are in a text, the greater the participation of the reader in the actualization of meaning – this viewpoint makes him appear as a representative of a new paradigm;
- (ii) Iser relies primarily on the potential meaning embedded in the text – this viewpoint makes him representative of the older paradigm.

Hans Robert Jauss (1982:145) shares Iser's conception of indeterminacy or openness and fundamentally inconclusive meaning in general. Jauss (1982:145) deal with this concept differently, i.e. as the condition for the varying constitutions of meaning in the course of history. Jauss (1978:146) concurs with Hannelore Link, who conceives of openness/ indeterminacy as a characteristic of their texts. Jauss's "text" refers to Roland Barthes and his concept of *critique*, which describes the individual relation between the reader and the text (Jauss 1982:69-70). Iser concurs with Barthes on the issue of legitimized subjectivity, whereas Jauss asks whether this subjectivity "or series of interpretations of a work is not itself once again 'institutionalized' by history and whether therefore it cannot form a system in its historical sequence" (Jauss 1982:69-70). Jauss borrowed and developed a concept called "horizon of expectations" from Karl Popper and Karl Mannheim, and it was further developed by Karl Robert Mandelkow as follows:

- (i) Expectations regarding the period;
- (ii) Expectations regarding the work with the following presupposed factors (Jauss 1982:24):
 - Through familiar norms or the immanent poetics of the genre;

- Through the implicit relationships to familiar works of the literary-historical context;
 - Through the opposition between fiction and reality between the poetic and the practical function of the language, which is always available to the reflective reader during the reading as a possibility of comparison; and
- (iii) Expectations regarding the author (Fokkema 1978:148 and 149).

He also placed a strong emphasis on deviations from the horizon of expectations because of the influence of the Russian Formalists (especially their concepts of a new perception and differential quality and the production of modern literature). Jaus (1973:39) introduces one more supplementary concept, that of *actualization*, i.e. the reflected mediation of past and present meaning.

Reception theory is not discussed in isolation. Before this theory came into existence, there were other related developments. A philosophical hermeneutics was also developed and its emphasis was on the concept of the effective history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) of a text. The concept of effective history opened the way for the idea of writing a history of literature in terms of the reception of texts. The last development was the maintenance of the clear distinction between the text as stable structure and the realization of that structure by the reader. Latagan (1992:626) states that the *sociology of knowledge* emphasized the historical relativity of knowledge, i.e. the effect which the position of the observer (the observer's place in history and in the social network) has on the observer's perception of reality. Straton (1995:18) notes that readers and hearers have been responding to texts and stories ever since there have

been texts and stories, so in some ways the history of reader-response criticism is the entire literary history of interpretation of a text; this point is also echoed by Malina (1986:63). Straton (1995:19) organizes reader-response methodologies into categories: experiential, psychological, social cultural and textual. In experiential theories the emphasis is on what readers actually think and do while they are reading and they also take the reader's feelings into account. The focus in psychological theories is on reader's psychological and cognitive development, which may include the reader's identity formation, as scholars such as Norman Holland (1975:118-33) would advocate. Social theories include the notion of 'interpretative communities' that both shape and constrain reader responses and interpretations (Fish 1976:465-485). The textual theories address the following matters as they relate the reader to the text:

- Phenomenology
- Narrative and genre conventions
- Rhetoric
- Semiotics
- Intertextuality and
- Postmodernism.

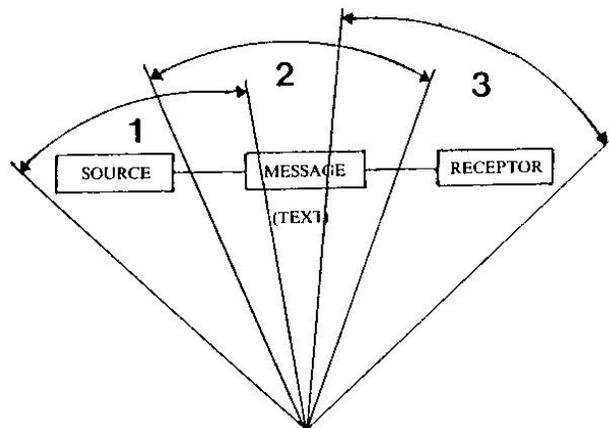


Straton (1995:21) advocates that a second way to categorize reader-response theories is in terms of how they understand the roles of text and reader in the reading process. Mary Louise Pratt (1982:207) puts it this way: “[T]he text produces (operates on, transforms, and interprets) ideology; the reader produces (operates on, transforms, and interprets) the text.” She adds that such a formulation avoids redefining either the text

or the reader, and captures our sense of reading as a creative, making activity rather than a simple process of re-ception, re-production, and re-presentation.

Reception theory (**reader response theory**) as part of a communication process by means of texts can be described in terms of the basic relationships between sender, message and receiver (see Figure 1.1 below).

FIGURE 1.1



The Reader Response Theory Diagram (Lategan 1993:177)

In the above diagram Lategan (1993:170) focuses on three levels of transmitting a text.

These levels are:

- Source – the focus (as in historical-critical studies) was on the origins of the text, its tradition history and the role of the author;
- Message – structural exegesis with the emphasis on the medium or the text itself;

- Receptor – the approach of reception history which is interested in the interaction between the medium or text and its receptor(s) and the role of the receptor.

Historical critical studies as a general rule tended to concentrate on the relationship between the original sender and message, structural studies focused on the text itself, whereas reader response theory concentrates on the interaction between text and receiver/reader (Lategan 1992:626). On the other hand, the definition of relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986:166) sheds more light on the theory itself. A given interpretation is consistent with the principle of relevance if and only if a rational speaker might have foreseen that the interpretation of that utterance would furnish the hearer with an adequate range of contextual effects in return for the minimum use of justifiable processing effort. Lategan (1993:169) points to two important elements in this definition, which are typical of a reception interest:

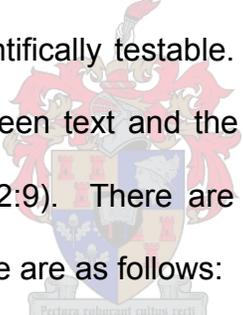
- (a) The anticipation of the speaker of the hearer's reaction and the influence of this anticipation on the formulation of the communication;
- (b) The fact that the subject of relevance is the receiver, what the receiver would consider relevant in terms of his/her cognitive assumptions is the deciding factor.

Lategan, Iser and Jauss have written extensively on reception theory. As these reception proponents have written, an environment has been created for the reader to interact with the text. In order for a text to have a relevant meaning, this interaction becomes necessary. The researcher, therefore, fully supports Lategan, Iser and Jauss

in their theory of reception. This reception theory, therefore, will establish a firm foundation in this research work.

1.2.1 THE EMPIRICAL STUDY OF RECEPTION

A study of lyric poetry is a contemporary rather than a historical analysis. According to Fokkema and Ibsch (1978:157), the difference has an important consequence: the reception analysis can be conducted on an empirical basis. And therefore it can take into account as large and varied a readership as is desired. Bauer (1972:21) states that in addition it is at every point scientifically testable. The process of reception of a text is conditioned by the relation between text and the reader's syndrome of expectations at the time of reading (Bauer 1972:9). There are three components that constitute the syndrome of expectations. These are as follows:

- 
- (a) linguistic experience;
 - (b) experience in dealing with texts (especially literary texts); and
 - (c) individual experiences (emotional, socially determined and cultural).

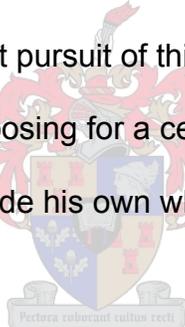
One has to take into account that the type of reader assumed by this study is an average reader who satisfies a few minimum requirements. Fokkema (1986:158) states that the real and potential components of meaning contained in the text provide the reader with diverse and yet not unlimited possibilities for response and for the actualization of the text. Bauer (1972:12) and his associates have in mind the average reader from whom

they demand the fulfilment of minimal requirements as far as linguistic competence and receptive ability are concerned. Bauer (1972:23) says that this historical approach is dependent on an accidental and possibly incomplete tradition that constitutes an additional factor of imprecision. Various interpretations of the text cannot be reduced to a unified scheme with universal validity. Bauer (1972:23) determines three clusters of interpretations:

- (i) evocation of images;
- (ii) interpretation from the dynamic angle; and
- (iii) An anthropological approach to interpretation with metaphysical components.

The value of Fadensonnen's reception analysis lies in the exact limitation of its aim and in the consistent pursuit of this aim.

He adds that the reader, when choosing for a certain interpretation in general, knows that there are other interpretations beside his own which are not less correct.



According to Fokkema and Ibsch (1978:159), empirical study is exemplary in the explication of its concepts and this does not exclude errors in the formulation of the questionnaire or in the recording of the semantic potential. Fokkema's approach to the empirical study of reception implies that there are many ways to kill a cat. There is no one correct way of looking at something. The interpretation one uses depends on many factors. The researcher concurs with Fokkema in this issue.

1.2.2 THE BASIC CONCEPTS

For the purpose of this study “reception theory”, “reader response criticism”, “audience criticism”, “aesthetics of reception reader studies” and related concepts can be grouped together as expressions of interest in the pragmatic dimension of communication (textual communication). Reception study is interested in the interaction between the medium (which is a text) and its receptor(s), whereas the focus in historical interpretation was mainly on the situation of origin and the role of the author (i.e. 3 on Fig. 1.1). There are four basic concepts:

- the implied reader;
- gaps;
- the indeterminacy of the text;
- the wandering viewpoint.



1.2.2.1 THE IMPLIED READER

Assumptions about the role and function of the Bible are important in reader response criticism. McKnight (1993:238) argues that the role of the Bible as literature is to be distinguished from the role of the Bible as a historical “source” or literary “document.” As literature, the Bible plays a role in the life of society and of individuals in that society and the role of the Bible may be seen as related to knowledge that the text makes possible for the reader (knowledge extended beyond the world of the text to the world uncovered by the text) (McKnight 1993:239). The Bible as religious literature may be distinguished

from other literature in terms of role and function, and it is read in the context of continuing communities of faith and even readers who do not share the faith of those communities are influenced by that fact. McKnight (1993:239) argues that a reader who is also a member of a religious community will operate with schemata from both worlds. The question is: who is the *reader*? A reader is a construct or ideal/idealized reader. A reader is an informed reader who, according to Fish (1980:86):

- Is a competent speaker of the language out of which the text is built up;
- Is in full possession of “the semantic knowledge that a mature listener brings to his task of comprehension.” This includes the knowledge of lexical sets, collocation probabilities, idioms, professional and other dialects, etc.;
- Has literary competence.

The role of the *reader* is crucial to all forms of reception theory. As one takes a closer look at the role of the reader, one discovers two crucial issues, the first one being subdivided into three subcategories, i.e.

- (1a) it has led to the acceptance of the decisive and the creative contribution of the reader to make textual communication possible;
 - (1b) the reader is not a passive receptor of the author or of the meaning of the text;
 - (1c) the participation of the reader is the key to the successful completion of the process of communication;
- (2) Interpreters have been enabled to find a new point of integration for the various directives present in the text.

According to Fokkema (1978:160-161), Iser in this respect developed his well-known concept of the *implied reader*. The basic assumption is that every text presupposes a specific reader, whether it is a concrete person or only a hypothetical receiver. Lategan (1992:626) states that this reader influences the way in which the text is structured and framed, and the author of the text assumes that the reader has the ability required to decode and understand what is written. The reader became an important feature of the methodology for the interpretation of texts. It is evident that the implied reader was devised as a counterpart to the concept of the “implied author”.

It should be kept in mind that the text itself is written from a specific point of view and addressed to a specific reader, who shares a certain minimum amount of knowledge with the author. Lategan (1993:171) claims that the implied author and the implied reader are not the only participants. A further set may be introduced in the form of a narrator and an addressee, e.g. the author of Mark’s Gospel presupposes that his readers will have a reading knowledge of Greek, understand references to tax collectors, etc. The implied reader is a theoretical construct that is a heuristic device to detect and to integrate all the clues given to the reader on many levels of the texts. According to Fokkema (1978:160-161), Iser defines the implied reader both as a textual structure as well as a structured act. Iser (1974:xii) proposes that the term implied reader incorporates both the pre-structuring of the potential meaning by the text and the reader’s actualization of this potential through the reading process. The concept of the reader also presupposes the competency needed to understand the text and this also builds the competency of the

reader as the reading process goes on by supplying relevant information and instructions.

1.2.2.2 GAPS AND THE INDETERMINACY OF THE TEXT

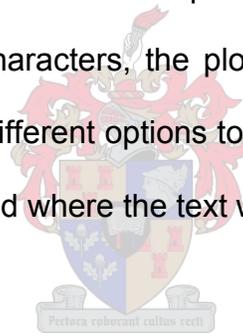
It is evident that on various levels of the text the reader is offered clues such as linguistic indicators. e.g. first-person pronouns, direct commands and the vocative. Another important level is rhetoric, where rhetorical questions or strategies are used to elicit sympathy. According to Lategan (1993:172), a specific value system can be introduced, offering the reader new possibilities of self-understanding; for instance, in Gal 3:28 the status of the believer is redefined in contrast to existing norms of the social system. Lategan (1992:627) indicates that, despite the indicators mentioned above which guide the reader in a certain direction, RRT insists that indeterminacy is a basic characteristic of the literary text. It has become clear that what sets the reading process in motion is what remains concealed between what is explicit and what is implicit as well as the known and the unknown. Iser (1974:38-39, cf. Lategan 1992:627) argues that the text contains certain deliberate *gaps* or *open spaces*; therefore in this way the text requires an input from the reader and makes the reader co-responsible for the creation of the text as meaningful communication.

The role of the Bible as a document of ancient communication does not really bridge the gap (McKnight 1993:239). When the Bible is approached as both an ancient document

with original meaning and a living message with contemporary significance, the bridge to a comprehensive and satisfying biblical hermeneutics may have been found and the reader's final focus is not upon the original circumstances but upon the text in the contemporary context of reading.

1.2.2.3 THE WANDERING VIEWPOINT

It is very important that the reader be present in the text in more than one way. This is what Iser (1978:108-134), according to Lategan (1992:627), means by the so-called "wandering viewpoint" of the reader. All the perspectives of the text are opened to the reader, e.g. the narrator, the characters, the plot and the implied reader. It is worth noting that in presenting these different options to the reader, the text is in fact mediating between the reader's position and where the text would like the reader to be.



1.2.3 CRITICISM OF READER RESPONSE THEORY

One will notice that some critics maintain that the method destabilizes the text. Other critics object that reader response theory is not prepared to accept the consequences of its own position. The text exercises a decisive control over the reader. Reader response theory proponents try to counter the criticism by introducing two elements, i.e. the text immanent - recognizing the text as a closed system of signs; and text transcendent - taking the reader's sign system into account. The reader response approaches also have their own limitations, as cited by McKnight (1993:247 and 248):

- Reader response approaches are not comprehensive. They do not do everything that can be done and ought to be done in biblical interpretation. They do not substitute for conventional approaches. The reader response shift from the text as product to the text as process will create changes in conventional studies.
- Reader response approaches to the Bible may be judged from the perspectives of both religious and historical study as inappropriate because of the literary orientation of such approaches. The Bible is not literature in the conventional sense. A reduction of the Bible to secular literature would seem to be illegitimate. Reader response criticism does not demand the conclusion that biblical writings were composed within “literary” works of arts. The Bible writers are using the language to appeal to readers who will find and create meanings that involve them, that match their needs and capacity at cognitive and non-cognitive levels.
- The fact that reader response approaches to the Bible grew out of the literary study of fictional literature (primarily novels) makes such an approach suspect to some. This fact may enable the readers to reconceive the “reference” in biblical literature as involving a truth that historical writing as such is unable to convey.
- Historical-critical readers will see in reader response criticism a lack of regard for the intention of the author. This perception is not valid. The conventional concern for the intention of the author has, among other things, caused biblical criticism to remain moored at the historical level of questioning authorship and intention. Reader response criticism does not ignore the author and the intention of the author, but the construction of the author and the author’s intention is taken to be only a penultimate strategy in reader response criticism.

- Reader response criticism is very unsettling and overwhelming for “modern” readers who want to control the text and discover the meaning on the basis of a secure foundation.

1.2.4 READER RESPONSE THEORY AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE

Lategan (1992:627) argues that, because of the persuasive nature of biblical literature, which presupposes a response from its readers, RRT is of special significance for this type of material. Biblical scholars have addressed many issues raised by the RRT.

McKnight (1993:239 and 240) raises three important valuable of reader response approaches. These valuable features are as follows:

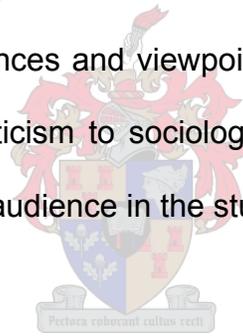
- Serious interaction with the text is facilitated by reader response criticism;
- This reader response approach represents a victory for the reader. Readers are free to make sense for themselves. This method allows readers to interact with the text in the light of their own context, linguistic and literary competence, and needs, as well as in the light of the potentialities of the text;
- Such an approach allows the obvious religious concerns of the text to impinge upon reading in a way appropriate to the concerns of the reader. The world of the reader will be seen as “like” the biblical world in his or her context.

McKnight (1993:239 and 240) also states that whether reader response criticism of the Bible is viewed positively or negatively depends in part upon the worldview of the reader

and the role and function of the Bible in the worldview. The views that McKnight is advocating on the issue of reader response have also been adopted by the researcher as he focuses both on the text and the reader.

1.2.4.1 AUDIENCE CRITICISM

Lategan (1992:627) states that the question of who the addressees of the various books of the Bible were has always been an important theme in biblical interpretation. It has become clear that the underlying assumption is that this material is dialogical in nature, and an adequate understanding of the text is therefore dependent on having sufficient information about the circumstances and viewpoints of the receiving party. A variety of methods, ranging from form criticism to sociological analyses, have been employed in obtaining information regarding audience in the study of biblical literature.

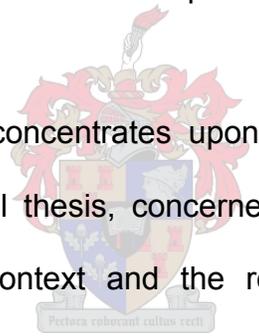


1.2.4.2 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Lategan (1992:628) indicated clearly that the aim of the reader response theory has been to obtain reliable data about the “real” receivers and their circumstances as an aid to a better understanding of the text. Researchers have employed RRT primarily as a literary technique because of the frequent lack of data and methodological problems. Lategan (1992:628) states that the text is understood as a literary entity in the first place, with strict adherence to intratextual categories. Lategan (1992:628) states that the focus reader response theory is, inter alia, on the reader as textual construct and on the world

or symbolic universe created by the text. The importance of historical issues is not denied, but a literary approach is preferred as the primary means of gaining an understanding of the text (Lategan 1992:628).

Having studied the works of Iser, Jauss, Lategan, Fokkema etc. on the issue of reader response theory, the researcher is convinced that the research methodology employed is appropriate for the study undertaken in this doctoral work. It is understood that reader response criticism is not a unified theory, but rather that it encompasses a variety of approaches, all of which emphasize the reader and the reading process in the critical project (Bradford 1996:559). There are two prominent terms used by the adherents of reader response criticism, i.e.

- 
- (i) *Rezeptionästhetik* – concentrates upon the audience response, pursuing a more overtly historical thesis, concerned with the reception of works within their contemporary context and the relationship between the moment of cultural production and consumption. Robert Hans Jauss is associated with this type (Bradford 1996:559);
 - (ii) *Wirkungsästhetik* – defines the ‘effect and response’ engendered by a text and the reading process. Wolfgang Iser is associated with this type (Bradford 1996:559).

Reader response theory is the methodological approach that the researcher will adopt in this doctoral research.

PART ONE



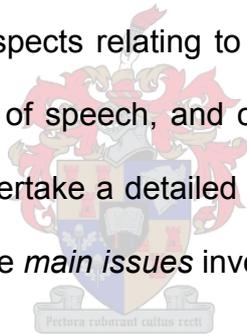
***A CLOSE READING OF GENESIS 1-3
IN ITS CULTURAL CONTEXT***

CHAPTER TWO: GENESIS 1 AND 2 - CREATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew Bible starts with creation (Gen. 1). That creation has been placed at the beginning of the Hebrew Bible was for a particular reason. The name of the first book of the Hebrew Bible itself denotes the “beginning” as it is used in both the Hebrew and Greek traditions.

In this chapter the creation stories of Gen. 1 and Gen. 2 will be studied. In the exploration attention will be given to some aspects relating to the hermeneutics of these passages, vocabulary and grammar, figures of speech, and comparative material from the Ancient Near East. The aim is not to undertake a detailed exegesis, but merely to determine the *content* of the stories as well as the *main issues* involved in a close reading of the texts.



There are eight creation works stretching over six days. These creation works can again be divided into two groups. The first group covers four creation works and the third day two creation works, while the second group has also four works and the last day covers two creation works. In the Hebrew Bible creation day one (creation of light) corresponds with day four (heavenly bodies designated light-bearers). Day two (waters which afterwards formed the seas) corresponds with day five (fish and fowls). Day three (dry land emerges) corresponds with day six (terrestrial animals and man created).

2.2.1 Creation/ Cosmogony in the Ancient Near East¹

To set the tone for the discussion of Genesis 1 and 2, it is important to note that one cannot begin to discuss issues around the Hebrew Bible as if these happened in a vacuum. The original “implied readers” in this instance were not living on an island, but were part of the Ancient Near East. The focus will be on how certain cultures in the Ancient Near East understood the concept of cosmogony or creation.

2.2.1.1 Sumerian creation myth

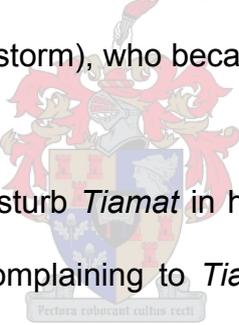
Mesopotamia will be the starting point. It is clear that the Sumerians had no myth of the creation of the world that has survived (Simkins 1994:48). There are only a few scattered references to this effect (Kramer 1972:37). In one creation story Enki - the god of the sweet waters – sets out to attack Kur; however, the text does not indicate the reason for the attack. According to Simkins (1994:49), it appears that the creation of the world in this account involves the separating of a united heaven and the dividing of the respective gods of heaven and earth.

2.2.1.2 Babylonian creation myth²

Babylon and Assyria are considered as the heirs of the Sumerian culture. Their stories on the creation of the world are more detailed. The most elaborate of these creation stories is called *Enuma Elish*, the Babylonian epic of creation, according to Jacobsen (1976:167-169). The creation story describes how Marduk, the chief god of Babylon, rose to

¹ Cf. the studies of Clifford (1994) and Simkins (1994).

prominence among the gods and established his rule; it also details his construction and organization of the world and the creation of humankind. The creation begins with *Apsu*, the fresh water, and *Tiamat*, the salt water, as the two primal forces. It appears that as a result of intermingling of *Apsu* and *Tiamat*, four generations of gods were born and they became more prominent than its predecessor, i.e. *Lahmu* and *Lahamu* (the silt of an alluvial plain), *Anshar* and *Kishar* (the horizons of heaven and earth), *Anu* (the sky), and *Ea* (another name for *Enki*, the subterranean fresh water). *Apsu* could not tolerate the disturbance that was caused by the younger gods and he decided to kill them in order to restore his peace. All other gods were shocked into silence, except *Ea*, who through his wisdom devised a plan to overcome *Apsu*. After killing *Apsu*, *Ea* took the symbols of *Apsu*'s authority for himself and built his dwelling on top of *Apsu*. *Ea* and *Damkina* (his spouse) gave birth to *Marduk* (the storm), who became superior to all other gods.



The younger gods continued to disturb *Tiamat* in her rest. Other lesser gods were also disturbed and now they began complaining to *Tiamat*. *Tiamat* decided to destroy her children. *Kingu* was promoted to be the commander over *Tiamat*'s army and the Tablet of Destinies was handed over to him to make laws. The younger gods requested *Marduk* to intervene and help them. *Marduk* agreed to help only if he would be granted authority to rule over the other gods and a deal was struck. *Marduk* attacked and defeated *Tiamat* and captured *Kingu*. He took the Tablet of Destinies and the macrocosm was secured. *Marduk* arranged stations in the heavens for the gods to serve as stars, moon and sun, and he made them responsible for signalling the days, months and years. It appears that the rest of *Marduk*'s creation focuses on the terrestrial realm. *Marduk* took the spittle of *Tiamat* and formed it into clouds. *Marduk* created rain and placed it under his control. He

² The text can be found in translation in Hallo (1997:390-402). Note that the term "creation" is used as a synonym for "cosmogony".

heaped up mountains and bored two holes into them in order to release the Tigris and Euphrates from her eyes.

The *Enuma Elish* creation story is crowned with the creation of human beings. *Enki* requested *Namma* to create human beings. *Namma* gave birth to a human; *Enki* clothed that human and all the minor gods rejoiced. Humans were charged with the tasks of the minor gods (to relieve them of their labour) and this included maintaining the earth by dredging the rivers and canals.

2.2.1.3 Egyptian creation myths³

The Egyptian creation stories were also important. There are three creation stories in Egyptian cosmogony. The first one is the Heliopolitan cosmogony. It originated in the cult of *Atum* at Heliopolis. In this myth the creation of the world began at Heliopolis as a hillock emerged out of the primeval ocean *Nun*. The lone god *Atum* procreated by himself on this hillock by means of masturbation, and the twins *Shu* (male - who is identified with the air) and *Tefnut* (female – who is identified with moisture) were born. *Shu* and *Tefnut* gave birth to the earth (*Geb*, the male) and the sky (*Nut*, the female). *Geb* and *Nut* gave birth to two sons, *Osiris* and *Seth*, and two daughters, *Isis* and *Nephthys*. The family of nine gods called the Ennead was completed. Morenz (1973:163) argues that these siblings possibly represent the political powers of the terrestrial world; Lesko (1991:93) goes further and argues that they are also identified with natural powers. *Osiris* and *Isis* gave birth to *Horus*, who is identified with the king of Egypt.

³ Cf. the study of James Allen (1988), *Genesis in Egypt*, with texts in Hallo (1997).

The second creation myth focuses on the work of *Ptah* (the chief god of Memphis). In the Berlin *Hymn to Ptah* (Allen 1988:39-40), *Ptah*, who is understood as the self-created one, is praised as the one who created the world like a potter fashioning a vessel. What is significant in this creation is the mixture of both craftsman and birth imagery. The text compares *Ptah* with *Khnum*, the potter god who fashioned gods and humans on his potter's wheel (Allen 1988:40). One will notice that in this creation story, there are no detailed creation activities.

The third creation myth is called the *Memphite Theology*. The text of this creation myth was preserved in a very late and badly damaged inscription (Simkins 1994:66), the Shabaka Stone. Simkins (1994:66) argues that this creation myth stemmed from the Old Kingdom, when Memphis was the capital that united Upper and Lower Egypt. In this creation myth *Ptah* is the creator of even *Atum* and the rest of the Heliopolitan Ennead. However, the mode of creation has been abstracted from the concrete craftsman and birth metaphors to an intangible intellectual creative principle (Simkins 1994:67). In this creation myth the creative principle is actualized through *Ptah's* thoughts and speech. The *Ptah* model of creation appears to be the actual workings of the human mind. In this creation myth the Ennead serve as the agents of creation and human senses serve as the agents of mind (Allen 1988:45).

The Egyptian creation myths mention very little about the creation of humans. In the Egyptian cosmogonic myths the focus is on the creation of the world and the emergence of the gods (Kakosy 1964:205). Lichtheim (1973:106) suggests that humans are compared to god's cattle. The language used in the *Instruction Addressed to King Merikare* suggests that humans are formed through procreation by the god. Lichtheim (1976:160) further argues that the text from the *Instruction of Amenemope* compares

humans to a building that god constructs. In other texts *Horus* is identified as the creator of humans (Morenz 1973:48), while *Aten* is also praised for creating all life, including humans (Lichtheim 1976:91-92). *Khnum* is known as the pre-eminent creator of humans in Egypt. He is portrayed as a potter who fashioned both gods and humans on his potter's wheel. *Khnum* played two roles in creation, i.e. craftsmanship and birth processing (Lichtheim 1980:112); these roles are also confirmed by Morenz (1973:183-84) and Gordon (1982:206).

2.2.1.4 A Canaanite creation myth⁴

Whether a Canaanite myth of creation existed is debatable. However, according to some authors, the creation myth of the Canaanites might be contained in the *Baal* myth from Ugarit.⁵ Levenson (1988:9-10) argues that, because the *Baal* myth lacks a specific description of the process of creation, it cannot properly be classified as a creation myth. Simkins (1994:72) suggests that the Ugaritic myths usually designate *El* as the creator god, rather than *Baal*, the central character of the *Baal* myth. *El*'s creation is classified as theogonic creation, i.e. the birth and the succession of the gods.

Baal's creation might be linked with divine conflict. Wyatt (1985:376-377) states clearly that the fact that the myth contains no reference to the actual process of creation is insignificant, for it is unreasonable to expect a myth to offer a detailed explanation of its own significance. It is clear, though, that the *Baal* myth is concerned with the structures and order of the world. The *Baal* myth begins with all the gods dining at a banquet on *El*'s mountain. *Yam*, the Sea (which was understood as symbolic of the unruly cosmic

⁴ Cf. Fisher (1965:313-324).

powers), sends two messengers to challenge *EI*'s authority. *EI* demanded that *Baal* be kept as a captive. *Baal* did not give in to the Sea, not even to Sea's messengers; instead he rebuked the other gods and assaulted the Sea's messengers. *Kothar-wa-Hasis*, the divine craftsman, prophesied *Baal*'s victory over Sea. *Baal* defeated the sea and restored order; *EI* remained head of the macrocosm's pantheon of gods and *Baal* is proclaimed king over the microcosm or physical world of humans.

Because of *Baal*'s premature boast, the *god* Mot, Death (the chthonic power of sterility, disease and drought) demanded that *Baal* surrender his authority to him. *Baal* is unable to resist his power and submits to Death's ultimatum and death is pleased by *Baal*'s unhappy decision. *Baal* died in the underworld, because of Death's command. *Baal*'s sister and companion *Anat* defeated Death. *Baal* is resurrected and his resurrection is foreseen by *EI* in a vision of a fruitful earth. *Baal* restored his dominion and after seven years Death seeks justice from *Baal* for the shame he suffered at the hands of his sister *Anat*. Eventually, the threat of *EI*'s intervention forces Death to yield to *Baal*.



2.2.1.5 Comparison and Conclusion

The Sumerians had no creation myth that survived; however, creation myths revolve around gods, heavens, earth and river/ water. The Babylonian creation story is more detailed, but it also follows the same trend, i.e. gods, heaven, earth; river/water. In this creation story there is an element that has been added, namely the creation of human beings. In all the Egyptian creation myths the focus is mostly on the creation of the cosmos and there is little if any mention of the creation of human beings. The same

⁵ Translation by Pardee in Hallo (1997:239-273). The unity of the *Baal* myth is also debated; even the order of the six tablets of the myth, two of which are quite fragmentary, is uncertain (Simkins 1994:72).

pattern seems to be followed by these creation myths, i.e. gods, heaven and earth. The Canaanite myths deal with *El*, the same name which is used for God in the Hebrew Bible. However, as in Babylonia, “Creation” occurred through strife among the gods. It is only in the Memphite version that creation occurs through the Egyptian god *Ptah*’s thoughts and speech, and it comes closest to the Hebrew version. In all the creation myths that include the creation of human beings, it is evident that humans are created to serve the gods. By implication, humans seem to be a little lower than gods in all the ancient Near creation myths.

2.2 THE COMPOSITION AND CONTENTS OF GENESIS 1 AND 2

The book of Genesis is designated according to its first word in the Hebrew text בראשית *bērēšit*, which means “in (*the*) beginning”; in the Greek text it is *genesis* “origins”. It was standard practice in the Ancient Near East to call a literary work by its initial word or phrase (Speiser 1978:XVII). Garrett, in his analysis of Doukhan’s work (1978:35-80), puts forward what he calls Doukhan’s proposition of Gen.1:1-2:25 (1991:194). He argues that, according to Doukhan, Gen. 1:1-2:25 is structurally unified and it is made up of two separate heptads (creation stories), each with an introduction and a conclusion. He identifies the two major sections as C (1:1-2:4a) and C¹ (2:4b-25). Gen. 1:1-2:4a contains the repeated words וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים *wayyōmēr ʿēlōhîm* “God said ...”. The waw consecutive imperfect forms in the so-called Yahwistic creation pericope (2:4b-25) have יהוה אֱלֹהִים *YHWH ʿēlōhîm* (“the Lord God”) as subject. C¹ can be delineated into nine divisions: C¹ 1- (2:7), C¹ 2- (2:8), C¹ 3- (2:9), C¹ 4- (2:15), C¹ 5- (2:16), C¹ 6- (2:18), C¹ 7- (2:19), C¹ 8- (2:21), and C¹ 9- (2:22). This proposition makes sense when you look at the literary structure of the passage under discussion.

Doukhan (1978:40) argues that the number of יהוה אלהים *YHWH 'ēlōhîm* “the Lord God” phrases in C¹ parallel the nine occurrences of the phrase (ויאמר אלהים) *wayyōmêr 'ēlōhîm* “and God said”, in division C (cited in Figure 2:2 below). He observes that days 1-3 of Gen. 1 parallel days 4-6 (1978:50 & 51). The first day of creation deals with the creation of light (1:3) and the fourth day deals with the creation of luminaries (1:14). The second day deals with the creation of the firmament (1:6) and the fifth day deals with the creation of birds (1:20). The third day deals with the appearance/ creation of plants (1:11) and the sixth day deals with the plants designed for food (1:29-30). He goes further and says sections 1-3 and sections 4-6 of C' parallel each other. Dust (2:7) parallels death (2:17), a garden for man (2:8) parallels a companion for man (2:18), and dominion over the garden of Eden (2:15) parallels dominion over animals (2:20).

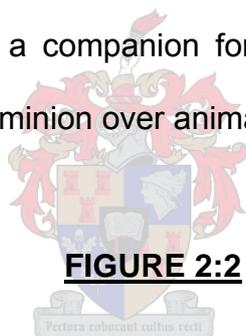


FIGURE 2:2

Doukhan’s analysis of the two heptads (1978:40)

<p>C - ויאמר אלהים - (and God said)</p> <p>(i) 1:3-5 – Light/Darkness</p> <p>(ii) 1:6-8 – Firmament in heaven</p> <p>(iii) 1:9-13 – Water, land and plants</p> <p>(iv) 1:14-19 – Luminaries separate days and seasons</p>	<p>C' - וי- יהוה אלהים - (and the Lord God)</p> <p>(i) 2:7 – Man/Dust</p> <p>(ii) 2:8 – Garden on earth</p> <p>(iii) 2:9-15 – Plants, water and land</p> <p>(iv) 2:16-17 – Tree of knowledge of good and evil separated from other trees.</p>
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<p>(v) 1:20-23 – First creation of animal life</p> <p>(vi) 1:24-31 – Creation of animals and man continued</p> <p>(vii) 2:1-3 – Order of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) end of process (b) divine involvement (c) institution of the Sabbath (d) blessing of Sabbath <p>2:4a – Conclusion</p>	<p>(v) 2:18 - First concern for a companion for man.</p> <p>(vi) 2:19-22 – Concern for a companion for man continued.</p> <p>(vii) 2:23-24 – Order of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) end of process (b) divine involvement (c) institution of the Sabbath (d) blessing of Sabbath <p>2:25 – Conclusion</p>
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2.2.1 ANALYSIS OF GENESIS 1:1-2:4a

Text of Gen. 1⁶

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

⁶ Note: The full translation is given for the convenience of readers who do not have a translation available. The NIV translation is used.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” ⁷ So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

⁹ And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵ and let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and

let the birds increase on the earth.”²³ And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,

in the image of God he created him;

male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

⁴ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

It is actually not without reason that the name of God is made the subject of the very first sentence of the Hebrew Bible, because this word dominates the entire chapter and also appears at every point of the chapter (Gwala 1996:44). In the LXX version of Genesis 1:1-2:3, there is an *inclusio* marked by similar language in 1:1 ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν (*en archē⁷ epoiēsen ho theos/ God created in [the] beginning)* and 2:3 καὶ ἠύλόγησεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ἑβδόμην καὶ ἡγίασεν αὐτήν ὅτι ἐν αὐτῇ κατέπαυσεν ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ θεὸς ποιῆσαι (*..... hōn ērxato ho theos (archomai) poiēsai /..... God who ruled created*) which demarcates this passage as a whole (Brown 1993:26). One will notice that the last verb in 2:3 ἀρχομαι (*archomai*) is related etymologically to the temporal noun in 1:1 ἀρχη (*archē*) and there is no corresponding verb for ἤρξατο (*ērxato*) in the Hebrew Text.

It is clear that the issues at stake here are the syntactical relation of (1) Gen.1:1 to Gen.1:2 and (2) the structural relationship between the first two verses and the formal creation account beginning in Gen.1:3. The first word in the Hebrew

⁷ ἀρχη and ἤρξατο are etymologically related and according to Wenham (1988:210), ἤρξατο and ἀρχομαι are traced back to ἀρχη.

Bible, בראשית (*bērēšīt*) is a combination of a preposition (*bě*)⁸ which could be “at”, “in”, “by”, “from”, “with”, etc. and a noun (*rēšīt*) which means “first” in some respects (Samuelson 1992:8). There is a difference of opinion on the reading of the word, בראשית (*bērēšīt*). Some commentators understood the word as in the absolute state. These commentators claim that the lack of an article is not an issue. They (e.g. Brown 1993:64) quote examples of related words used in the absolute state, but without the article (e.g. *mērōš* in Isa. 40:21; 41:4,26; 48:16; *miqqedem* in Isa. 46:10; *mē^côlām* in Isa. 46:9). The same word (*rēšīt*) is used in the Pentateuch in the absolute state (Lev. 2:12 and Deut. 33:21). Eichrodt and Hasel are strong supporters of this translation. The Bible translations NIV, KJV, RSV, JB, NJB, REB adopted this grammatical translation (Keck 1994:342), and this translation (“In the beginning ...”) has been followed as it is one of the options that are grammatically possible.

There are others who claim that this word is in a construct state and therefore depends on the contents in verse 2. The commentators who advocate for the construct state believe that this first verse is a temporal clause subordinate to verse 3 with verse 2 taken as a parenthesis. The *waw* at the beginning of verse 2 is the *waw apodosis*. After statements of time ו introduces the verb. The verb ברא (*bārā*'), which belongs to the construct chain with *bērēšīt* can, then be understood in different ways:- (a) vocalize as the infinitive of the verb which would provide a clear constructional link; (b) do not vocalize the word *bārā*' as an infinitive and understand that part of the sentence that follows *bērēšīt* as a *genitive of elaboration* (or relative sentence) (Westermann 1984:78). The translation would then

⁸ Van der Merwe *et al.* (1999:189, 147, 157, 236-237, 240, 272, 274-275) deal with the use of the prepositions, ב is dealt with in particular.

Read as follows: In the beginning of God's preparing the heavens and the earth – (Young's Literal Translation 1826, 1898) or When God began to create heaven and earth – (TNK JPS Tanakh 1985). Grammatically this translation is also possible. The Bible translations NRSV, NAB, NEB and GNB have adopted this grammatical translation (Kech 1994:342). It is clear that both grammatical translations are acceptable; however, for the purposes of this research project the acceptance of the word *bĕrēšît* as a construct word and the grammatical translation of Gen. 1:1-3 as a result of this will be preferred.

The Hebrew Bible uses the word בָּרָא (*bārā'*)⁹ that is translated as “to create”. This verb is used in the perfect tense in this first verse. The mere use of the perfect tense denotes two ideas: either (1) the action is completed in reality or (2) it is in the thought of the speaker. The verb (*bārā'*) is the prerogative of God (Ringgren 1977:246) and is never used of humans, whereas in the Hebrew (עָשָׂה) *ʿāsāh* and/or (יָצַר) *yāšar* is used in connection with human activities (Gwala 1996:44; Samuelson 1992:11). This verb (*bārā'*) has its equivalents in the Egyptian language (*iry* – which covers the entire range of meaning from “manufacture, produce”, to a divine “creation”; it also means “to beget”; *qm3* – denotes “to create” and is used synonymously with the first word); and the Mesopotamian Akkadian language (*bānū* – which means “to create”, “to build”, “to set up”, “to make”, and “to beget”) (Ringgren 1977:243 and 244). The verb (*bārā'*) occurs 49 times in the Masoretic Text, i.e. Deutero-Isaiah (17 times), Genesis (10 times), Trito-Isaiah (3 times) Ezekiel (3 times) Malachi (once) and Ecclesiastes (once) (Ringgren

⁹ Mansoor (1999:190) explains that the verb, אָרָא is in a Qal verb pattern expresses the simple or casual action of the root in the active voice.

1977:245). Ringgren (1977:245) shows that the LXX translates (*bārāʾ*) as *ktizeín*¹⁰ 17 times, i.e. 6 times in Psalms, 4 times in Deutero-Isaiah, twice in Ezekiel, and once each in Dt., Jer., Am., Mal., and Eccl.; and with *poieín* “to make” 15 times i.e. Gen. - 9 times, Deutero-Isaiah – 5 times and Trito-Isaiah – once. In the Qumran literature, the concept of creation appears mainly in contexts having to do with the predestination¹¹ of humans and the verb (*bārāʾ*) expresses above all the idea that everything basically has its origin in the will of the creator and has been predetermined by him (Ringgren 1977:249). Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1961:17) agree that this first verse is a general introduction, declaring the great and important truth that all things had a beginning, that nothing throughout the wide extent of nature existed from eternity, originated by chance or from the skill of any inferior agent, but that the whole universe was produced by the “creative power of God”. Even if the etymological equivalence of Hebrew תְּהוֹם *těhôm*¹² (“abyss”) in verse 2 and the Mesopotamian goddess Tiamat can be granted (which has not been accepted by the scholarly world), there is no indication that it is identical to the Babylonian concept (Hamilton 1990:110). Almost all ancient peoples believed in chaos¹³. A closer look at verse 2 repudiates the argument of a gap hypothesis (which proposes that the first two verses describe a perfect creation performed by God). Rather, verse 1 depicts the first act of creation followed by further phases; verse 2 describes conditions prior to these

¹⁰ This word means to reduce from the state of disorder and wilderness, call into being, create (Mounce 1993:293).

¹¹ This concept is actually based on Rom. 8:29-30, Eph. 1:4, 1 Tim. 2:4 and 2 Pet. 3:9 as opposed to the teaching that God has arbitrarily foreordained certain persons to be saved and others to be lost. God does not interfere decisively with the free exercise of man’s power of choice.

¹² In my MA I dealt with this issue in the light of Egyptian cosmogonies (Gwala 1996:45). It is mentioned clearly there that the deep is not personified and it is in no way viewed as some turbulent or antagonistic force.

¹³ Westermann (1984:103) explains this term clearly in his book in the following manner:- (a) It is not a mythical idea but means desert, waste, devastation, nothingness, etc.; (b) When תְּהוֹם and בְּהוֹם occur together there is no real difference in meaning; it is just the rationalization of the mythical idea. תְּהוֹם is added only by way of alliteration cf. Isa. 34:11, Jer. 4:23.

phases and verse 3 narrates the beginning of the seven-day pattern (Keck 1994:342). The use of the verb, היה *hyh* "was" has an active rather than a stative force in the Hebrew language and therefore this indicates that verse 2 is sequential to verse 1.

The use of וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים *ruach ʾēlōhîm* ("spirit of God") in this verse has created some confusion. *Ruach* is often translated as "spirit". However, this translation, though possible, may not be the appropriate one, since it presupposes a radical dualism of the spiritual and the material, which does not fit the ontology of the Hebrew Scriptures (Samuelson 1992:19 and 20). "Wind"¹⁴ is the closest translation, which is not misleading. *Ruach ʾēlōhîm* could easily mean "divine wisdom", which is explicitly affirmed in Proverbs (Prov. 8:22). If one compares this text with the corpus of cosmogonies found in the Ancient Near Eastern world, this expression could mean a composite of the elements *air* and *fire* (Samuelson 1992:20). In his analysis of Zeno of Citium's¹⁵ account of creation, he divides the basic materials of the universe into two, i.e. active elements (their qualities are fire, hot and cold, and the causal effects are both physical and biological in their activity) and passive elements (their elements are dry and moist). In his interpretation God's wind is the active, positive element that transforms the passive, negative elements of earth and water into the actual deep space of our present universe (Samuelson 1992:21). Smith (1980:99-100) presents two views on this issue. The first view takes the idea of *ruach ʾēlōhîm* as a *supernatural phenomenon* and many scholars subscribe to this view, as reflected by the translation of NIV. The second view that Smith (1980:99-100) presents is

¹⁴ Westermann (1984:109-110) translates it as "God's wind". He seems to have the idea of violent/turbulent wind in mind.

¹⁵ This is the account of the origin of the universe by the Stoic, Zeno of Citium, who lived from 332-262 B.C. on Cyprus.

contrary to the one mentioned above. He advocates that *ruach ʿĕlōhîm* should be interpreted as a *terrible storm*, with *ʿĕlōhîm* expressing the *superlative*. Smith further, states that a consideration of some unusual ways of expressing the superlative in Hebrew

FIGURE 2:3

SYNTACTICAL PARALLEL (BROWN 1993:66)¹⁶

<p style="text-align: center;">Gen. 1:1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:</p> <p>In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gen. 2:4b</p> <p style="text-align: center;">בַּיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמַיִם:</p> <p>in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Gen. 1:2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">וְהָאָרֶץ הִיְתָה תְהוֹ וּבְהוֹ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם:</p> <p>And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gen. 2:5-6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">אֱלֹהִים שָׂרֵם יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה שָׂרֵם וְכָל־יֵשֶׁבֶת הַשָּׂדֶה הַמְטִיר יְהוָה יִצְמַח כִּי לֹא־עָלָה אֶרֶץ וְאָדָם אִין אֶת־הָאָדָמָה: ⁶ וְאֵד יַעֲלֶה מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁקָה לְעַבְדֵי אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי־הָאָדָמָה:</p> <p>No shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, the Lord God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.</p>

¹⁶ The English translation of Gen. 2:5-7 according to Brown (1993:66) is as follows: “And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth: and there was not a man to till the ground; but there went up a mist from the earth, and

Gen. 1:3

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אֹרֶךְ וַיְהִי־אֹרֶךְ:

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Gen. 2:7

And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.

could, however, find no single unambiguous instance in the Hebrew Bible where the divine name is used as a mere intensifying epithet. In the light of the argument advanced above, creation in the biblical account has therefore followed/adopted two aspects, i.e. creation through action ברא *bārā* “create” and creation through speech (ויאמר) *wayyōmer* “say”.



Kidner (1976:43) argues that the אור *ôr* “light” which was created on the first day of creation appropriately marked the first step from chaos to order. It also precedes the “sun”, (vs.14), so in the final vision the “light” outlasts the sun (Rev. 22:5). It is clear that both the darkness and the light are used in both a literal and a metaphorical sense. When they are used literally, it is evident that they co-exist and when they are used metaphorically there is no evidence of co-existence. According to the biblical creation account, in a 24-hour day pattern the “dark” part of the day is the first portion that precedes the “light” part, and the *day* is thus the last portion of the 24-hour day. This concept of the 6-day pattern of creation in the Hebrew Bible has generated various theories among the Old Testament scholars. Some of these theories will be highlighted below (Baker 1994:2):

watered the whole face of the ground. And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

- The pictorial day theory – claims that the six days mentioned in Genesis are the six days during which God revealed to Moses the events of creation. Nevertheless, Baker (1994:2) advocates that the Bible relates the creation as clearly, simply and historically as it does any other event, and to interpret the text in terms of the pictorial day theory requires the abandonment of all exegetical principles.
- The gap theory – claims that Genesis 1:1 describes an original creation which was followed by the fall of Satan and the great judgment. Genesis 1:2 is supposed to be a description of the re-creation or restoration that took place. Exodus 20:11 teaches that all the universe, including the heavens and the earth, was created in a six-day period mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis.
- The intermittent day theory – claims that the days mentioned are literal days, but that they are separated by long periods of time. However, this theory seems to contradict Exodus 20:11.
- The day-age theory – claims that the word *yōm*, which is the Hebrew word for “day”, is used to refer to periods of indefinite length, not to literal days. While this is a viable meaning of the word (Lev. 14:2,9 & 10), it is not the common meaning, nor is the meaning of the word sufficient foundation for the theory.
- The literal day theory – accepts the clear meaning of the text, i.e. the universe was created in six literal days. The various attempts to join together the biblical account of creation and evolution are not supportable, even by the various gap theories, because the order of creation is in direct opposition to the views of science (e.g. the creation of trees before light). The phrase “evening and morning” indicates literal days (cf. Dan. 8:14, where the same phrase in the

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”.

Hebrew is translated “day”). In the light of the facts presented above, the researcher is convinced and proceeds from this premise in the discussion of creation in Genesis 1.

The author of Genesis was undoubtedly acquainted with the creation myths of the polytheistic religions of Egypt and Mesopotamia. There are enough indications in Genesis to suggest that he was consciously opposing Babylonian as well as Egyptian creation stories (Vawter 1973:38; Deist 1988:36-40). If one compares the two creation stories mentioned above, one will note that in the Babylonian cosmogony, the gods and matter are co-existent and co-eternal, while in the Hebrew version God exists independently of His creation. In the Babylonian epic there is no mention of the “sun” and “moon”, because these were considered deities. In the Babylonian epic there is no emphasis on the completion of work as well as sanctification and blessing on the seventh day. Below is a table comparing the Babylonian creation account with that of Genesis: -

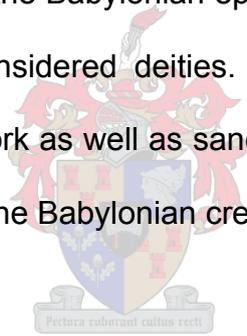


FIGURE 2:4

<u>BABYLONIAN COSMOGONY – ENUMA</u>	<u>GENESIS</u>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ELISH</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gods and cosmic matter are Co-existent and co-eternal. 2. Primeval chaos; Tiamat enveloped in darkness. 3. Light emanating from the gods. 4. The creation of the firmament. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God creates cosmic matter and exists independently of it. 2. The earth a desolate waste, with darkness covering the deep. 3. Light created. 8. 4. The creation of the firmament.

It is very important to note that there is no battle between the gods as in the *Enuma Elish*, although some scholars have argued that there is strife in Genesis. Light was necessary as a symbol of the divine presence and a visible form of energy, which by its action in plants transforms inorganic elements and compounds into food for both men and beast, and also to control many other natural processes which are necessary to life (Gwala 1996:46).

The **רָקִיעַ** *rāqīaʿ* "firmament" is a separation that brings the water under control. A livable world needs water under control as well as a limit to darkness (Roop 1987:28). The Hebrew word **שָׁמַיִם** *šāmayim* used in this passage designates the heavens, both as the place where God dwells and the place where birds fly. However, in the context of this passage heaven refers clearly to the atmospheric heaven where birds fly (Gwala 1996:46).

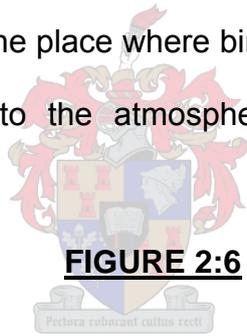
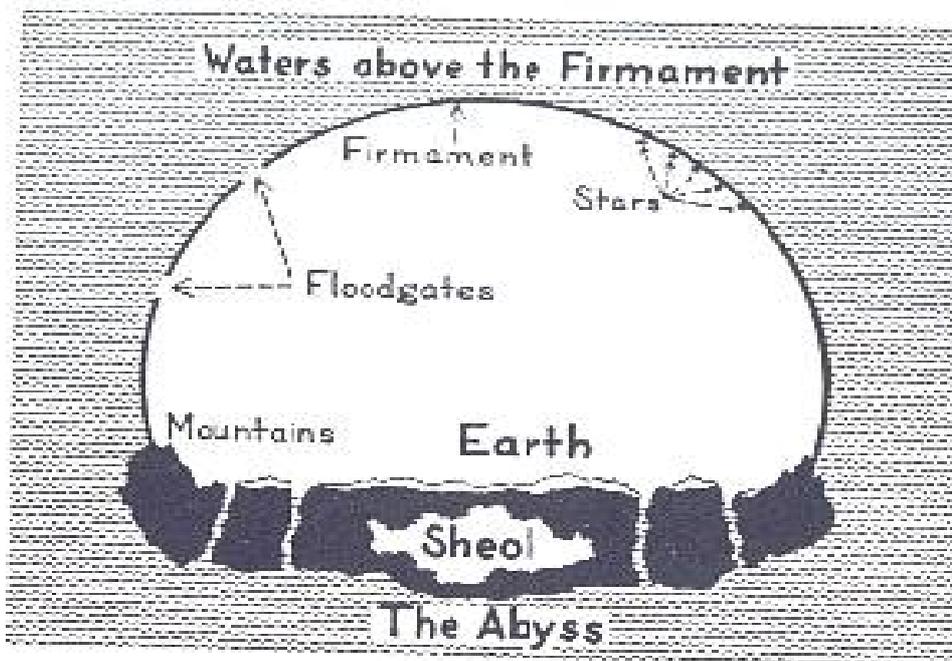


FIGURE 2:6



Semitic Cosmology (Vawter 1973:40)

The firmament divides the heavenly waters from the terrestrial or primeval waters. The author of Genesis itemizes one by one the most important elements of his world, calling the roll of all that God has made (Vawter 1973:39). An illustration of how an ancient Hebrew might have thought of the world he lived in follows below, and at the end of this chapter there are various thoughts on certain worldviews.

The 9th verse is a command in a jussive form; the report of its fulfilment follows shortly and God continues to give form to the world by the process of differentiation. Nichol (1978:212) argues that this phenomenon must have been a grand spectacle to any heavenly observer, who saw hills rise up out of the water that had so completely covered the face of the earth. Kidner (1976:48) maintains that the emphasis begins to shift towards the theme of fullness - וַיְהִי, *wayyehi* “and it was so”, which will be prominent in the rest of the chapter.



A second divine order was passed on the same day and God empowered the earth to bring forth what is proper to it. The bare soil was clothed with verdure. It is noticeable that the trees, plants and grasses, and the three great divisions of the vegetable kingdom mentioned here, were not called into existence in the same way as the light and the air. They were made to grow and they grew as they do still out of the ground, but not by the slow process of vegetation. They grew up through the divine power without the rain, dew, or any process of labour, i.e. sprouting up and flourishing in a single day (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown 1961:17).

This passage mentions three characteristics of fruit-bearing trees:

1. The bearing of fruit;
2. The enclosing of seed within the fruit; and

3. The bearing of this fruit upon or above the earth.

The activities of the fourth day described in verses 14–19 are as follows:-

The record tells that on this day “two lights” were created. Most scholars conclude that this passage has a strong antimythical/ demythologizing feeling. The interesting thought that arises is a consideration that stars are creatures and they also depend upon God’s ordering, creative will. The lights in the dome have specific functions, i.e. (a) separating day and night, (b) marking seasons and special times, and (c) giving light to the earth. These lights are not divine beings (as the case may be in other ancient cultures), capable of controlling or revealing human destiny (Roop 1987:29). Their “ruling” is in reality the most sensible service to which as created objects they are commissioned by their creator’s will. There is symmetry in this unit in the flow of each of the six-day sectors tabled in Figure 2:7:

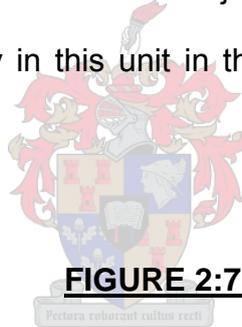


FIGURE 2:7

Day one – light	Day four – Two great lights
Day two – Waters controlled by firmament	Day five – Water and air animals
Day three – dry land and plants	Day six – land animals and humanity (eating plants and fruit)

It is clear that even the structure of the text affirms the consonance and symmetry, the harmony and balance in God’s created world.

Verses 20 –23 describe the activities of the fifth day in the manner described below:

- on this particular day water and air animals come into existence. The Hebrew Bible uses the phrase *nephesh chayyah* to describe living creatures. The use of this verb in creation by the word *wayyōmer* (ויאמר) points without doubt to a direct relationship between creature and creator. The phrase – עֲרַבָּאֵי־וַיִּבְרַךְ "way**bāreḵ** "and blessed" is now introduced. Gwala (1996:49) states that the pattern that is now followed has a twofold aspect, i.e. God-created and God-blessed. The sequence of creation on this day is the winged creatures according to their kind first and then follows the sea or water creatures according to their kind. Verse 22 states clearly that animals are blessed. Westermann (1978:15-29) points out that a blessing constitutes the power of life: fertility and vitality, health and success.

The activities of day six are chronicled in verses 24-31 as discussed below: -

The earth is summoned to bring forth the land animals. These land animals can be categorized into three groups:



1. Domesticated animals e.g. cattle;
2. Wild animals e.g. lion and antelopes;
3. Creeping or crawling animals (reptiles), e.g. snake.

The concept “clean” and “unclean” (as in other biblical passages, e.g. Genesis 7:2; Leviticus 20:25, etc.) does not occur in this passage. The reason is that animals were never intended to be food. The biblical injunction points to plants as food. Gwala (1996:49) states that the structure of the first part is distinguished as follows: -

- Verse 24 is a command – God clearly says, “let the earth bring forth” and it concludes with the phrase “and it was so”;

- Verse 25 is an action – it begins with “and God made”. Nichol (1978:215) argues that the order of creation of living creatures here given (Gen. 1:25) differs from that of verse 24, the last group of the previous verse being the first one here enumerated. This arrangement in Hebrew speech is called “inverted parallelism”.

The major focus of day six is the creation of humankind (vs. 26). This event represents the peak of the seven-day pattern. The interpretation of vs. 25 has led to two major debates regarding (1) the phrase, God said, “Let us” and (2) the concept of the image of God. Before dealing with the two aspects mentioned above, one needs to look at the structure of this passage. Verses 26-29 can be divided as follows: -

26ai – Introduction

26aiib – Decision to create human beings together with their
determination

27 – Creation of humans with two more detailed characteristics

28 – Blessing of humans and the commission

29 – Provision for the people

Verse 26b corresponds to verse 28b. The early Church theologians regarded the plural “us” as indicative of the three persons of the Godhead (Gwala 1996:50). The other view would be to see the use of “we” as “royal use” or merely a grammatical form, which is characteristic of decisions (Westermann 1978:10), and there is no indication of a partner (Samuelson 1992:119). Skinner (1976:30) argues that there are three distinctive features in this last creation work:

1. Instead of the simple jussive, there is the cohortative of either self-deliberation or consultation with other divine beings;
2. In contrast to the lower animals, which are made each after its kind or type, man is made in the image of God;

3. Man is designated as the head of creation, being charged with the rule of the earth and all the living creatures hitherto made.

The word, **בְּצַלְמֵנוּ** *běšalmēnû* (construct state, masculine singular – suffix 1st person plural) used in this passage comes from the word **צֶלֶם** *š'elem* meaning image or something cut out [image of heathen gods or image of a picture of man]. White (1958:45) points out that man (a human being) was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Baker (1994:5) argues that men (human beings) resemble God in certain respects (Gen. 1:26) without being equal to Him (Is. 40:25). In the likeness of God, man (a human being) is a personal being with the power to think, feel and decide. It should be noted that men (human beings) have the ability to make moral choices and the capacity for spiritual growth or decline. Nichol (1956:216) says this nature reflected the divine holiness of its Maker until sin shattered the divine likeness. Allen (1969:124-125) compares the animals and human beings in terms of the image of God in the following manner: -

- The animals live by instinct, but men (human beings) are made for better things;
- The animals are told only to procreate while men (human beings) have the additional assignments of establishing dominion, and subduing;
- Animals must adjust to the environment within the limits of their instincts; they cannot change while men (human beings) can change it for better or worse.

The relationship of men (human beings) to the rest of the creation was to be one of rulership (Gwala 1996:51). Nichol (1953:216) discusses the account of the accomplishment of the divine purposes as expressed in a form of Hebrew poetry (chiasm) in which the thought expressed in the first part of a stanza is repeated with slight

variations in words but not in meaning in the second or even in the third part of the stanza, as in this verse:

A B
 “So God **created** man in his own *image*;
B A
 in the *image* of God **created** him;
A
 male and female **created** he them”.

The mere mention of the words, “male” and “female” indicates the institution of a family, which is discussed in more detail in the second chapter of Genesis (Gwala 1996:51). Simkins (1994:200) argues that the context of Gen. 1:26-28 suggests that the “image of God “ is closely connected to human dominion and rule over the earth; however, the exact connection between humans being in the image of God and having dominion over the earth is not specified. Two important words have been used here, **כִּבְשָׁה** *kivšuhā* (Qal. Imperative masculine plural, suffix 3rd person singular), which comes from the word **כָּבַשׁ** *kavaš* which means (in its Qal form) “subdue”, “bring into bondage”, “dominate the earth”, etc., and **וַיִּרְדּוּ** *ûrēdû* (particle conjunction, Qal. Imperative masculine plural), which means (in its Qal. form) “have dominion”, “rule” and “over”. Humans have a measure of control like God; they are not just subjected to fixed orders of creation. Simkins (1994:2001) states that these two terms used above are derived from the royal and military sphere, where the king conquers and control the territory of the enemy.

The use of the Hebrew word *yereq* in verse 30 indicates clearly that animals are entitled to eat all plants. However, verse 29 uses the word *ēšeb* to indicate distinctly what man

should eat. Westermann (1984:161) suggests that there is a difference in the vegetarian food provided for humans and for the animals, which echoes the classification in 1:11f; to humans are assigned mainly grain and fruit, to the animals grass and plants. The last verse (v. 31) closes with the divine approval טוב מאד *tōv meʿod* “it was very good”. In the following table, Hyers (1984:69) summarizes creation in a more profound manner.

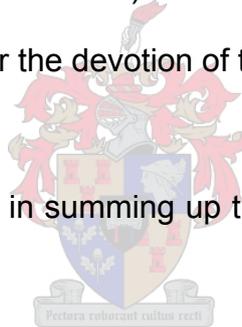
Problem (v. 2)	Preparation (days 1-3)	Population (days 4-6)
Darkness	1(a) Creation of light (day) (b) Separation from darkness (night)	4(a) Creation of sun. (b) Creation of moon and stars.
Watery Abyss	2(a) Creation of firmament. (b) Separation of water above from waters below.	5(a) Creation of birds. (b) Creation of fish.
Formless earth	3(a) Separation of earth from sea. (b) Creation of vegetation	6(a) Creation of land animals. (b) Creation of humans.
“Without form & void”	Tōhû is formed.	Bōhû is formed.

Genesis 2:1-4a is understood as part of the Genesis 1 creation story. This is because this passage deals with the activities of the seventh day, which is a continuation of the seven-day pattern creation. Westermann (1984:168 and 169) outlines the structure of Gen 2:1-3 as follows: -

- (a) The first verse is a self-contained conclusion to the work of the creator, which goes back to a stage in the tradition when the works were not yet part of the seven-day structure;
- (b) Verse 2a – and on the seventh day God finished his work, which He had done;

- (c) Verse 3a – So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it;
- (d) Verse 2b – And He rested on the seventh day from all his work
Which He had done;
- (e) Verse 3b - Because on it God rested from all his work, which He
had done in creation.

Kidner (1976:53) suggests that God’s finished task is sealed in the words, “He rested”, and this is the rest of achievement, not inactivity, for He nurtures what He creates. This first verse does not mean that God completed his still unfinished work on the seventh day, but the work was by now (seventh day) completed (Gwala 1996:52). Gwala (1996:52) states that the notion of blessing as well as that of sanctification must be viewed in relation to the Sabbath. Nichol (1953:221) claims that the Sabbath calls for abstention from common bodily labour and for the devotion of the mind and heart to holy things.



There are seven significant points in summing up the narration of Genesis 1-2:4a (Gwala 1996:52): -

- (a) Creation is fiat or instant;
- (b) “And it was so” occurred seven times (in connection with all the works except the sixth);
- (c) The execution of the fiat activities in creation is recorded seven times (NIV) except in MT where it is recorded six times. In Hebrew context, “blessing” and “sanctifying” is not considered as work, while in Greek context it is work (Septuagint);
- (d) The sentence of divine approval (and God saw it was good) is pronounced over each work, except in the second and in the last instance it has a significant variation;
- (e) The naming of objects created is peculiar to the three acts of separation;

- (f) The term “and God blessed” is mentioned on the sixth and eighth acts and also on the Sabbath day;
- (g) The division of the day is marked by a closing formula, “and it was evening and morning”, and occurs six times, although it is omitted after the third (and here it shows that two works were performed on the same day), and the seventh creation acts. The scheme of work covering several days in Genesis 1 has no analogy in the Ancient Near East, although the order is comparable to other cosmogonies.

2.2.2 ANALYSIS OF GENESIS 2:4b-25¹⁷

4b When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵ and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground ⁷ the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸ Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹ And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. ¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) ¹³ The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire

¹⁷ The English translation is given only for the benefit of those who might not have the Bible at their disposal when they are looking at this section. This translation is taken from the New International Version.

land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

¹⁸ The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

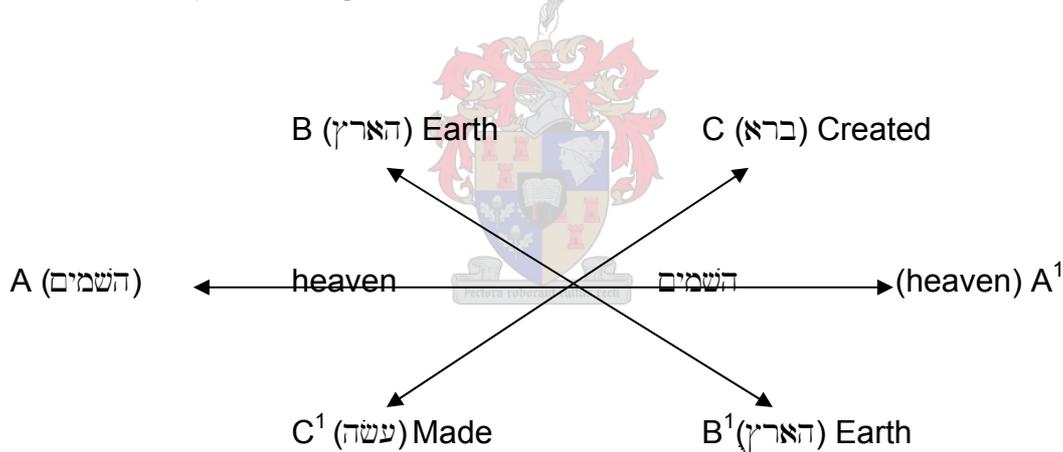
²³ The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”

²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Genesis 2:4b–9 deals with the prologue and the making of man. Westermann (1984:197) argues that the structure of this first part is clear and easy to explain, i.e. verses 4b to 6 comprise the antecedent; verse 7 is the main statement, which is continued in verse 8. The phrase "When" (NIV) "In the day" (NKJV) introduces the creation account of Genesis 2 (Gwala 1996:53). Nichol (1953:222) argues that verses 4-6 anticipate the creation of man in verse 7 by describing briefly the appearance of the surface of the earth, particularly with respect to vegetation, just prior to the time when he was brought into being upon the sixth day of creation week. The first and second halves of verse 4 are tied together with deliberate use of a chiasmus: A – "heaven" (הַשָּׁמַיִם), B – "earth" (הָאָרֶץ), C – "created" (בָּרָא), C¹ – "made" (עָשָׂה), B¹ – "earth" (הָאָרֶץ) and finally A¹ – "heaven" (הַשָּׁמַיִם), (Wenham 1987:55). The diagram below illustrates this deliberate use of chiasmus.



This kind of word order is rather unusual in the Hebrew Bible, where the word "earth" precedes the word "heaven" it is only alluded to in Psalm 148:13. The word – *ēd* translated as mist is compared by many scholars to an Assyrian word, *ēdû* meaning flood; however, this Assyrian word does not fit the context of Genesis 2 (Gwala 1996:53). The fact that people in Noah's time scoffed at the idea that rain from heaven could bring destruction to this earth indicates that rain was unknown to the antediluvians (White 1958:97). The interpretation of verses 5-6 is difficult; however, some commentators

(Gunkel, Driver, Zimmerli, Schmidt, etc.) regard verse 5 as describing the whole earth as a desert, an equivalence of chaos in Gen. 1:2 (Wenham 1987:57). This passage uses three geographic terms – plain, earth, land – and two vegetation terms – shrub (שִׁיחַ), and plant (עֵשֶׂב). This indicates that Gen. 2:5 distinguishes two types of land, i.e. an open, uncultivated plain or field, the wilderness fit only for animal grazing, and the dusty land where agriculture is possible with irrigation and human effort (Wenham 1987:58). Kidner (1976:60) explains that this verse (7) with profound simplicity matches and completes the classic 1:27. According to Von Rad (1972:74), chapter 2 of Genesis is man’s world and the world of his life, which God establishes around man, and this forms the primary theme of the entire narrative ’*ādām*-’*ādāmā* (man–earth). There is a play on the words here, אָדָם (*’ādām*) and אֲדָמָה (*’ādāmā*) “earth”, which emphasizes man’s relationship to the land. It is suggested that both words are derived from אָדָם, which means “red” (Wenham 1987:59). The word *yāṣār* “to form” implies an act of moulding and fashioning (i.e. making pottery) into a form corresponding in design and appearance to the divine plan. Westermann (1984:203) argues that the formation of human beings from the dust of the earth in Genesis 2:7 is often explained with reference to the potter’s craft. In the final analysis man became a living soul (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה) *nefeš chayyâ*. It is clear that the phrase נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים *nishmat chayyim* “breath of life”, is different from the word for “spirit” (רוּחַ) *ruach*, even though there can be synonymity sometimes (Wenham 1987:60).

Genesis 2:8 and 9 describe the *Garden of Eden* and the trees in the garden. Genesis 2: 10-17 further explains the Garden of Eden and the activities performed in the garden; this will be discussed at length in the following chapter.

Genesis 2:18-24 deals with the formation of a woman who is a helper. A woman is someone serving the man's needs and also complements him. Even before Adam felt a need for a partner, God saw a need; in verse 18 He says that it is not good for a man to be alone. Adam realized that "one" was a lonely number, when he saw that all the animals have been formed in pairs. After naming each animal (this means/shows control over them), Adam discovered that there was no helper for him (Gwala 1996:57). The word (עֹזֵר) *ezer* "helper" usually refers to divine assistance; however, it is also used in three prophetic passages of military aid (Isa. 30:5, Ezek. 12:14 and Hos. 13:9). Wenham (1987:68) advocates that to help someone does not imply that the helper is stronger than the helped, but simply that the latter's strength is inadequate by itself. The word translated "matching him" in Hebrew is כְּנֻדוֹ *kenegdô* (and the literal translation is "like opposite him"), suggesting the notion of complementarity rather than the identity, because the Hebrew writer did not use the word כְּמֹדוֹ *kēmûhō* meaning "like him". God formed a woman out of a צֵלַע *ṣēlâ^c* "rib" that was taken out of Adam while he was in a deep sleep. The crucial issue nowadays is that, when a man takes a wife, is that woman taken from his rib? If one's wife dies, does that mean the man may not take another wife; if he does, whose rib will that woman be? It is the conviction of the researcher that during the creation week, a woman was taken from the man's rib; however, after that there is no mention of this concept relating to marriage. The concept that is used most consistently is that of cleaving to each other and the oneness. Verse 23 of Genesis 2 follows the naming of Eve. There seem to be two opinions about verse 23; some commentators claim that verse 23 is a prophetic utterance made by Adam, while others claim that the words of verse 23 come directly from God. Verse 24 does not promote a forsaking of filial duty and respect towards father and mother, but refer primarily to the fact that a man's

wife is to be first in his affections and his first duty is towards her (Gwala 1996:57). In Matt. 19:5 Christ uses this passage in His strong condemnation of divorce.

According to Gen. 2:25 Adam and Eve were both *naked, but were not ashamed*. Von Rad (1972:83) explains that shame is the correlative of sin and guilt.

2.3 REFLECTION ON GENESIS 1 AND 2

The Hebrew Bible cosmogonies studied here differ from each other in terms of three factors, i.e. the symbolic form, the dominant socio-historical location, and the intention. God created the entire cosmos and all life within it and everything was structured in an orderly way according to the divine plan (Gen. 1:1-24a, Ps. 104, 74:12-17). Here this cosmogonic picture intends to call the believers to worship and to praise this deity who has been responsible for creating the whole well-structured world (Gwala 1996:41). According to Gen. 2:4b-25, 3:1ff, Ezek. 28: 12-19, God focused His attention on the creation of humanity. Knight (1985:135) says that the story's intention is to probe the nature and meaning of human existence, both the beauty and the brokenness of it. Proverbs, Job, Qoheleth, Psalms and both the prophetic as well as the narrative collections state clearly that God created a just system of cause and effect in the world, according to which any given action will necessarily lead to its appropriate consequence, depending on whether the act maintains or subverts the created harmony of all reality (Gwala 1996:42). This typology finds its roots in the wisdom school, which has deep roots in Ancient Near Eastern culture. The intention here is both didactic as well as contemplative. A belief in a creator is the main legacy, which Christianity has received

from the Israelites, who made a confession from early times of YHWH's power over nature, especially during the time of the plagues in the land of Egypt (Gwala 1996:41).

According to Von Rad, creation theology plays a secondary and supportive role in Hebrew religion, because the people viewed the land as the gift of God, the great blessing which YHWH bestowed on them not as a creator, but as redeemer in specific historical events (1972:131-43). In his opinion the Exodus tradition is older than creation. He continues to argue that the stories of Gen. 1-3 show the closeness, deliverance, uniqueness and the superiority of Hebrews compared to other nations. However, this view is regarded as one-sided because, among the Hebrews, cosmogony was a central idea. It is evident that the notion of creation is interspersed throughout the Hebrew Bible (cf. Isa. 37:16; Ps. 71:12-17; Job 12, 38:4ff).



It is fascinating to note that the ancient Hebrews were constantly convinced of the close bond between God (Creator) and humans. This fact has been highlighted in the first chapter of the first book in the Hebrew Bible in various ways, i.e. man [human being] is the purpose and crown of creation. The creation of man was a deliberate act and the creation of man [human being] is aimed at showing that each individual is unique and important in the eyes of God (Gwala 1996:58).

The creation of the first woman appears to be described as a direct, personal act of God (Gwala 1996:58). The point of contact between God and man is one original creature – Adam, hence the idea of second Adam in the person of Christ (I Cor. 15:45-47) is introduced by Paul in the New Testament. According to Gen. 2:7 and 22, man received his wife from God's hand and he therefore owes his whole living existence to Him. According to the Hebrew Bible's understanding, human beings are more than the other

earthly beings and even the neighbours of the Hebrews were aware of the difference. In the book of Genesis man is not only viewed as partly God (having some of God's attributes), but as the "image", the "likeness", of God. Van Zyl (1989:18) suggests that being created in the image and likeness of God means that God made man a creature that has the possibility to enter into fellowship with Him. There is communication between God and man on a rational-moral level; hence the Hebrews can be drawn into a covenant with God (Gwala 1996:58). In the Ancient Near Eastern understanding, man was made to release or relieve the gods from their routine work (e.g. Atrachasis epic). However, in the Hebrew Bible service to God thus becomes an unmistakably integral part of the task of man and thus part of the purpose of his creation. It is clear that the ancient Hebrews always regarded this fellowship in communication, love, worship, adoration, trust and obedience, as the purpose of the creation of man, and therefore man becomes truly man (Gwala 1996:58).



The Garden of Eden plays a very important role in the history and origin of man. The use of the *waw-consecutive* in Gen. 2:8 $\text{וַיִּצַט} \text{ wayyitta}^c$ suggests that the garden was "planted" after man was formed, (Wenham 1987:60). The second chapter of the book of Genesis devotes a section to deal with this important issue, (Gen. 2:9-17). Much attention is given to the description of the *garden* as a beautiful home of the created being(s) (Gwala 1996:54). The garden is planted in the east in Eden, and the word *éden* appears to be a specific place, the exact location of which is unfortunately unknown, but whose meaning is *delight* (Cornelius 1997c). It is therefore assumed that the name was intended to evoke a picture of idyllic delight and rest. The notion of *eastward* in Genesis is associated with judgement and separation from God; the same picture is depicted by the placing of the cherubim when the man and the woman were expelled from the garden

(Gen. 3:24). It seems the garden was not the Garden *of* Eden but rather the garden *in* Eden (Gwala 1996:54). Therefore, it should be understood that the phrase, “in the east” is taken with reference to Eden itself, that the garden was on its eastern side.

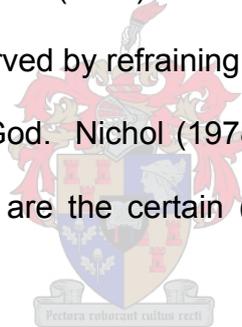
In Gen. 2:10-14, the rivers in the Garden in Eden are discussed in full. It is uncertain as to whether the river takes its source from inside or outside the garden, although it can be assumed that it began in Eden and passed through the garden, watering it in its course (Gwala 1996:55). Westermann (1984:216) states that the difficulties that arise in this passage disappear when one realizes that the author does not want to describe in detail any geographical area, but the transition from the river of paradise to the four rivers of the world; they begin at the point where the river of paradise divides. It is almost impossible to identify the antediluvian geographical terms with the present day surface features of the earth (Gwala 1996:55). Four rivers are mentioned in Gen. 2:11-14, i.e. Pishon, Gihon, Heddekel/ Tigris and Euphrates.



Pishon is the first river mentioned in this passage. All the Bible commentators agree on one thing and that is the name Pishon is unknown from any non-biblical sources as well as in the Bible itself, and nowhere else has it been mentioned except in this passage (Skinner 1976:59-60). Some say it is just a descriptive name, which does not appear anywhere and at the same time does not represent any river (Gwala 1996:56).

Gihon is also unknown and follows exactly the trend of Pishon. The word, “Gihon” means the “turbulent one” (Westermann 1984:218). The other two rivers Heddekel/Tigris and Euphrates are well known. Von Rad (1972:77) argues that this interpretation presupposes that Eden lay somewhere in the north, high in the mountains from whence the great rivers come.

The passage in Gen. 2:15-17 states that man's command is to work the garden and it includes a warning not to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There is mutual agreement between verse 8b and 15a; verse 15 is actually a necessary link with verses 16 and 17, and the prohibition (Westermann 1984:219). Nichol (1978:225) suggests that the commandment related in these verses presupposes that man understood the language God spoke and the distinction between "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; the command begins positively, granting permission to eat freely from all the trees of the garden with exception of one. Westermann (1984:223) highlights that the form of both sentences in verse 17 confirms that this is what is meant – prohibition has the form of the ten commandments of the Decalogue and the second sentence that of apodictive law consisting of *condition* (case) and *consequence* (punishment). There was no other purpose evident to be served by refraining from eating the fruit of this tree than to give clear proof of allegiance to God. Nichol (1978:225) claims that the same principles are valid, punishment and death are the certain (sure) results of man's free choice to indulge in rebellion against God.



2.4 SUMMARY

The Hebrew cosmogonies in Gen. 1 and 2 have been discussed in this chapter. It became clear that in Gen. 1 God is central, with man as the goal, and in Gen. 2 man is central, with God as the end. Yahweh was understood by Albright (Anderson 1984:4) as meaning, "He causes to be" and this is clearly understood in the context of Ex. 3:14 – "He causes to be what comes into existence". This divine name can be understood also in a litanic formula where praise is given to the Creator.

One is compelled to agree with Skinner (1976:8) in his summary of the important facts in Genesis 1 and 2. He summarizes these in the following manner:

- The fiat (and God said, Let ...) introduces each of the eight works of creation, i.e. verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, and 26;
- “And it was so” occurs 7 times in the MT, e.g. verses 3, 7, 9, 11, 15, 24 and 30;
- The execution of the fiat (And God created/ made) is recorded 6 times in the MT, i.e. verses 7, 12, 16, 21, 25 and 27;
- The sentence of divine approval (And God saw that it was good) is pronounced over each work except the second e.g. verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21 and 25, though in the last instance with a significant variation, e.g. verse 31;
- The naming of the objects created (And God called) is peculiar to the three acts of separation, e.g. verses 5, 8 and 10;
- And God blessed ... is mentioned three times, i.e. verses 22, 28 and 2:3;
- The division into days is marked by the closing formula (and it was evening and it was morning) and it occurs 6 times, e.g. verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23 and 31.

In the first two chapters God is still in perfect harmony with His creation, hence the divine approval, “God saw that it was good”.

Chapter 3 introduces another dimension of God’s creation, a paradigm shift when “paradise” is lost.

PART ONE

***A CLOSE READING OF GENESIS 1-3
IN ITS CULTURAL CONTEXT***



CHAPTER THREE: GENESIS 3 – PARADISE LOST

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Gen. 2:4 the narrator lead the readers into the paradise narrative with what scholars call the *tôledôt* formula: ‘these are the generations’. God blessed human beings to be fruitful and multiply. But though the command for procreation was given and humankind was specifically made male and female in order that it might have this reproductive capacity, creation in that story seems to end with God resting and specifically without any generation (Straton 1995:28). The comment about being naked that closes the second chapter also serves as a gateway to the next part of the story, where the narrator introduces a new character, the serpent, described by means of a pun on the couple’s nakedness (Straton 1995:41). If one takes a closer look at the words **naked** ^{ca}*rûmmîm* and **crafty** ^c*rm*, one will discover that they share the same three consonants ערם (^c-*r-m*). The narrator in verse 1 clearly indicates that the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals which the Lord God had made. Then by way of implication, the statement indicates that this animal (the snake) would have been formed from the ground, it would have been brought to Adam to give it a name and unfortunately it was deemed inappropriate as a helper or a partner for man¹. However, now the man has the helper who is a woman, not a snake. It appears that the beginning of chapter 3 does not begin with the conversation of the woman and the serpent as strangers or engaged for the first time in a conversation and it leaves the reader with the impression that they have talked for some time, even though the narrator does not explicitly say so. The tree of

¹ Straton (1995:41-43) discusses this issue at length.

knowledge of good and evil occupies the centre of the stage in the great tragedy. The gist of the whole story of the fall appears to be an attempt to explain man's mortality, to set forth how death came into the world (Frazer 1923:16).

It is evident that the first two chapters of Genesis deal with the creation of the universe and everything in it. In these chapters there are no opposing forces; it is only God who is in control. There was perfect harmony between God and His creatures. Now in chapter 3 we see a "third force" coming in. A third force is always brutal and destructive. In the political arena, if there is a third force, it destabilizes, distorts and destroys the legitimate order. In the same way a perfect universe was made ungovernable and unmanageable. Chapter 3 introduces the fall of humankind. If one looks closely at this chapter, it will be discovered that the main actor is really Eve, the *woman*. The *woman* is conversing with the serpent, the *woman* brings the fruit to her husband, and the *woman* and the man heard that God was walking (Gen. 3:8), the man accuses the *woman* for bringing the fruit to him, and the *woman* is punished accordingly. This spotlight on the woman is contrary to Hebrew thinking, which maintains that within the Hebrew culture a woman is a piece of property (Ex. 20:17). But it was through the woman's punishment that hope for the hopeless and helpless was embedded. Gen. 3:15 gives gleams of this hope as it tells that the seed of the woman is going to crush the head of the snake. Sin came through a woman and a way out from sin also came through a woman. Adam in verse 20 states clearly that the woman's name is Eve, because she would become the mother of the living. Frazer (1923:17) **already advocated** that God apparently intended to give man the option, or at least the chance of immortality, but man missed his chance by choosing to eat of the other tree, which God had warned him not to touch under pain of

immediate death. Frazer (1923:17) therefore calls the tree of knowledge of good and evil, a “tree of death”.

Text of GENESIS 3²

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

⁴ “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

¹⁰ He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

² This text is included for those who may not have the text at hand and it has been taken from the NIV translation.

¹¹ And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

¹² The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴ So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,
“Cursed are you above all the livestock
and all the wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly

and you will eat dust

all the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity
between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel.”



¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing;
with pain you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you.”

¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’
“Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat of it

all the days of your life.

¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow
you will eat your food
until you return to the ground,
since from it you were taken;
for dust you are
and to dust you will return.”

²⁰ Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the
living.

²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

²² And the LORD God said, “the man has now become like one of us, knowing good
and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of
life and eat, and live forever.”

²³ So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from
which he had been taken.

²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden
cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of
life.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF GENESIS. 3

The serpent introduces an argument with a pausal word, “well” or “really” or “indeed”,
and his question immediately catches the mind of the reader and forces the reader to
look back in the story. In the opening verse of chapter 3 the נחש *nachash* (serpent)

begins with a suggestion rather than an argument, “Did God really say, you must not eat from any tree in the garden?” Note the difference between what the serpent is asking and what God commanded in Gen 2:16 and 17. God begins by giving permission to eat “of every tree in the garden” and the serpent questions the availability of any tree for eating purposes. God suggested that death would follow from eating the forbidden tree (named by God as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), the serpent mentions neither the name of the tree nor the potential consequences of eating from it. Some scholars (Straton 1995:43) have suggested that the serpent knew God’s words, even though the animals had not yet been created in the story when God spoke in Gen 2:16-17, and there is no direct indication that God or anyone else told the serpent³ or any animals of the permission and prohibition. It is interesting to note that the woman knows something about God’s permission to eat from the trees and the related prohibition; after all she was a rib in the man’s side (i.e. she was not yet created) when God made this speech (Straton 1995:44). The issue at stake here now is how and what she knows. One cannot help but raise the following questions:

- Did the man tell her?
- Did God tell her?
- How (if at all) did what she heard differ from what the narrator describes God speaking originally?
- Did the woman’s interlocutor make the alterations in the command as she reports it to the serpent?
- Did she interpret what she heard, making her own modifications?

³ According to White (1990:32), Satan assumed the form of a serpent and entered the Garden of Eden. The serpent was a beautiful creature with wings, and while flying through the air his appearance was bright, resembling burnished gold. He did not go upon the ground but went from place to place through the air and ate fruit like man. Satan entered into the serpent and took his position in the tree of knowledge and commenced leisurely eating of the fruit.

This became a favourite device, which was dangled before Eve to draw her into debate on her opponent's terms (Kidner 1976:67). If one looks at verse 3, one sees that Eve was really drawn into the discussion, for she uses phrases like "in the midst of the garden". This phrase is implied by the narrator (Gen. 2:9); however, a woman could not have heard because God did not in Gen. 2:17 say "You must not touch it" (an expression which God did not use, however commentators differ on whether the woman heard the prohibition this way from the man or whether she alters God's words) and "or you will die". One will notice that the serpent had already made a deadly attack on the artlessness of obedience. The inclusion of the "You must not touch it" phrase in the conversation shows clearly that there was a slight weakness in the woman's position. The serpent's suggestion could have two possible translations, which the Hebrew text allows, i.e. (1) "Has God really said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" or (2) "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden". The woman here is using a word, כִּי "lest" (KJV) that further weakens her position. The prohibition was made in their favour, because God said that if you eat from the tree, which is in the middle of the garden, you will die. The issue of trust was at stake here; however, man was free to choose any direction. The serpent's approach allowed God to be evaluated and judged by human beings. The serpent here asserts with unusual stylistic emphasis that what God said was not true at all. However, the narrator does not report the serpent's remark as a contradiction; instead readers are told merely what the serpent said in Gen. 3:4. The remark may either be deemed as a contradiction or simply the serpent's perspective on how eating and living work. The serpent is also speculating as to what would happen as a result of the forbidden eating and it gives its thought the credibility of what 'God knows'.

The serpent charged God with the following:

- (1) Envy of His creature's happiness – God fears that you may be His rivals;
- (2) Falsehood – death will not follow the eating of the fruit.

The serpent did not end there, but continued to offer a promise, “Your eyes shall be opened”. This promise actually implied a present limitation of sight that could be removed by following the tempter's advice (Nichol 1978:230). Brueggemann (1982:47 and 48) suggests the following interpretation of this passage: -

- The prohibition which was a given fact now turns to be an option. The serpent engages in a scrupulous scrutiny in order to relativize the rule of God;
- God is treated as a third person. The discussion is not with God but about God. The serpent seems to be knowing and critical about God. It is the first creature to practise theology in the place of obedience in the Bible;
- The matter of death had been mentioned in Gen. 2:17 by God, not as a threat but a boundary to life. But the serpent alters the boundary now to imply a threat and death becomes the primary issue;
- This subtle theological talk turns out to be a distortion of the realities and the serpent grossly misrepresents God, especially in Gen. 3:1.

The grammatical construction in verse 5 is uncertain. The phrase, “As God knowing good and evil” is more logical to understand as a second predicative designation (as God or divine beings – and knowing good and evil). In Hebrew ידע *yd'* “know” means experiencing or becoming acquainted with, or even an ability rather than purely intellectual knowing. The woman saw the tree differently. The tree actually appealed to the woman's eye, taste and finally to her longing for the increased knowledge/wisdom. The tree was really desirable to the woman. The desire to partake of the fruit of the tree was a submission to the serpent's inducements. Being

near the tree and perhaps just at it when the serpent first attacked her, she looked more wistfully at it, but could discern nothing in the fruit of the tree which showed it to be bad and unfit to be eaten, or why it should be forbidden for food; on the contrary, it seemed to promise to be as delicious, nourishing and salutary as any other fruit in the garden.

Straton (1995:45 and 46) suggests that the explanation given for her decision to eat the fruit is not based on a yearning for open eyes (while it mentions eyes) or a desire to be like deities. The text does not describe it as an act of ambition, pride or hubris, and the woman is not trying to overstep the bounds of her creatureliness.

The sequence of transgressions in this passage is as follows:

- (1) The woman covets – breaking the 10th commandment;
- (2) The woman stole God's property – breaking the 8th commandment;
- (3) The woman ate and gave to her husband – breaking the 6th commandment;
- (4) The woman placed the serpent before God – breaking the 1st commandment.

After eating, the narrator mentions that she gave some to her man. The following questions flood the reader's mind:

- How long did she wait?
- Did she stop to see what would happen to her or did she quickly try to involve him?
- What happened to her or did nothing happen to her?
- Did she have any particular motives or intentions in giving the fruit to her man?

- Did he ask for it?
- Did he want it?
- Did she explain to him the advantages that the narrator suggests made her decide to eat it?
- Did the man argue against eating it (after all he heard the prohibition directly from God)?
- Did the couple talk with each other at all?
- Did the man have mixed feelings about eating the fruit?
- Did he feel anxious or guilty about doing it?
- Would he even do it?

The question now is, how did the man get into the picture if his presence came as a surprise. To a Hebrew reader verse 6 is not surprising, if the serpent's statements are followed clearly, for it uses the pronoun "you" in a plural form. Needless to say, it also leaves no doubt even for the English reader, because it states that "the man was there with her"⁴.

⁴ Nichol (1978:231) disputes the fact that Adam was with Eve and he describes the scenario this way: 'the statement that "she gave also to her husband with her," does not imply that he had been with her all the time, standing mute at the scene of temptation. Instead, she gave him of the fruit upon rejoining him that he might eat it "with her" and thus share its presumed benefits'. White (1980:32-35) argues that Eve, unconsciously at first, separated from her husband in her employment. This argument may be correct; however there is no biblical justification for such a position. She does not even attempt to deal with the phrase, "she gave also to her husband with her". However the preposition $\text{בְּ}(\text{בִּימ})$ expresses the concept of inclusiveness, togetherness, company. When one deals with this preposition the following points should be considered: - (1) The basic conception conveyed is that of fellowship, companionship, common experiences of suffering, prosperity, etc. (2) The term can emphasize a common lot regardless of social status, location, etc. (3) The term as all other prepositions may have theological implications and this preposition in particular stresses close relationship (Harris 1980:676 and 677). The Septuagint translation (Brenton 1975:4) can be translated as follows: And the woman saw that the tree was good for food; and that it is delightful to see with the eyes; and that to exercise understanding is comely, so having taken some of the fruit thereof, she ate and gave also to her husband with her.

The Hebrew Bible Jewish readers infer from this that Adam was with her all the while and heard the discourse between the serpent and Eve, yet he did not interpose nor dissuade his wife from eating the fruit and was being prevailed upon by the arguments used; or, perhaps, through a strong affection for his wife, that she might not die alone, he did as she had done. After they had eaten, their innocence disappeared and they became aware and afraid of their nakedness; they then wove aprons from fig trees for themselves (v. 7). The following questions occupy the reader's mind:

- Was the couple ashamed of their nakedness?
- What about the knowledge of good and evil?
- Did the couple get that knowledge and wisdom?
- Did they become like God?
- How did the couple respond to the new vision and the new knowledge?
- Did they like what they now saw and knew?
- Did the couple gain new knowledge that suggested they should cover themselves?
- Did new knowledge reveal that nakedness was 'bad' and that clothing was 'good'?
- Did the man and woman cover themselves because they were somehow newly aware of sexual differences?
- Were they differently aware of the significance of sexual differences?
- Was the couple aware of their disobedience and was this awareness related to their clothing of themselves?

Unfortunately the narrator is silent about the couple's thoughts and feelings after their action. In verse 21 God Himself made garments of skin for them. Their conscience began to work. Perhaps, if one asks what death did God threaten man with – i.e.

whether bodily, spiritually or a second death – the answer will be, “It was all” (Kidner 1976:69). The serpent mentioned to the woman that her eyes were going to be opened; yes, their eyes were opened, but it appears that their eyes were opened to *destruction*. If Eve only had eaten of the forbidden fruit, it would only have affected her personally and only she would have died. Had this been the case, God would have formed another woman for Adam for the propagation of mankind. Since he fell as well as she, it is needless to inquire. The passage discussed above clearly portrays the testing and the fall of humankind.

3.2.1 THE TREES IN THE GARDEN

Gen. 2:9 describes the Garden in Eden. The Hebrew Bible does not use the term *paradise* (a Persian term: Cornelius 1988:41-85 and 1997b:676); it only mentions the trees that were planted in the Garden. According to Gen 2:15 and 22, Adam and Eve lived in this Garden. A Flemish painting from the 17th century depicts Adam as a farmer (Cornelius 1997c:222). Moyers (1996:13) believes that the Garden in Eden was a garden of bliss, with a strong sensual element. In Gen. 2:9 three kinds of trees are described, i.e.:

- (1) the trees that bear fruit for everyday food;
- (2) the tree of *life* which was in their midst; and finally
- (3) the tree of *knowledge* of good and evil.

The question that one may pose, referring to the tree of life and that of knowledge of good and evil, is: does one have two or one tree and secondly are these/ is this tree(s) figurative or literal? According to the Hebrew text, there seem to be two trees joined together by ׀, “and” (Gwala 1996:55). Westermann (1984:213) states that the tree of life appears in the introduction – chapter 2:9, and in the conclusion – chapter

3:22-24. The phrase, “the knowledge of good and evil”, can stand for moral or aesthetic discernment, yet Adam and Eve are already treated as morally responsible and generally percipient before they touch the tree (Kidner 1976:63).

It appears that the trees of paradise have been related with the cross in the Christian tradition. There is a tradition linking paradise scenes with redemption and also that the rivers of paradise are connected with baptism and the Adam-Jesus typology. The cross is actually seen here as the tree of life. According to Christian tradition, Adam was buried at Golgotha. This idea of Golgotha will be picked up under the section entitled, “The significance of a discipline administered to Eve”. The east (as the location of the Garden in Eden) was to the ancients, as it still is to us, the land of mystery. Vawter (1973:54) suggests that the “tree of life” without question tells us that we are in the realm of symbols and that the author of Gen. 1-3 has borrowed this figure of speech from Mesopotamian literature, where it frequently occurs as a legendary plant. This is portrayed on Figure 3.9 on the following page, which represents the “sacred tree” on an Assyrian seal (Vawter 1973:54).

FIGURE 3:9



The “Sacred Tree” on an Assyrian Seal (Vawter 1973:54)

3.2.2 THE SERPENT⁵

The focus will now be on the serpent. The serpent is a creature that was created by God (v. 3:1). The use of the Hebrew word נָחָשׁ *nachash* refers to the generic term, which is normally referred to as a reptile. One has to ask a question, “How is the serpent used in Genesis 3”? There are three interpretations of the serpent:

1. The serpent in Gen. 3 could be a real snake as God created it Gen. 3:1.
2. It could also be a fable/ myth where animals do speak (cf. Numbers 22:28) or the serpent of the Egyptian tale of the shipwrecked sailor (cf. Lichtheim 1973:212-214).
3. Some believe that this serpent was not a real animal, but a supernatural being. The text, however, does not give us any indication of a supernatural being.

The serpent that enters this narrative is marked as one of God’s created animals; the only characteristic distinguishing it from other animals was its greater cleverness עָרוֹם מִכָּל “more crafty”. This can be understood in a negative “sly” and positive “intelligent” sense.

Many Jewish and Christian interpretations have seen in “the serpent” the ancient enemy of man whom later Jewish writers called “Satan” and who is identified as a fallen angel in the book of Revelation (Vawter 1973:64).

⁵ On the representations of the serpent in art and their interpretation cf. Cornelius 1997c:224ff.

FIGURE 3:10



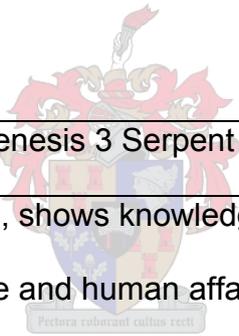
Egyptian form of a serpent-deity (Vawter 1973:65)

Davidson (1990:39) argues that the serpent plays a prominent role in the religious mythology of the ancient world such as serpent gods; serpents are closely associated with the tree of life and a variety of fertility rituals and in the Gilgamesh epic a serpent robs Gilgamesh of the plant whose name is 'man becomes young in old age'.

Some argue that Satan is in a figurative sense occasionally called a "serpent", because he used a serpent as a medium in his attempt to deceive mankind (Nichol 1978:229). A Muslim tradition has it that Satan sat in the mouth of the serpent (Cornelius 1997c:225). Satan/ the Devil is sometimes called a snake, e.g. Rev 12:9, cf. also in Wisdom of Solomon 2:23-24 in the Apocryphal books. Vawter (1973:64) argues that the reason why the author chose the symbol of a serpent was that serpent-worship was common among the Canaanites and other gentile peoples, for whom he wished to express his contempt. Some kings as well as people were also identified as snakes (metaphorically). There is no clear indication for arguing that the

serpent in Gen. 3 is the Devil. The serpent is the only animal capable of speaking as part of the story, but that does not make it the devil or a mythical being in a literal sense.

The identity of the **serpent** in this chapter is a crucial issue. The passage itself is giving some clues on this issue. Gen. 3:22 indicates that “man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil”. In verse 24 a cherub or cherubim are placed on the east side of the Garden. Seraphim in Isaiah 6 are often compared to Cherubim mentioned in Gen. 3:24 and these are part of God’s heavenly court. The following table compares the characteristics of the serpent in Gen. 3 and the Seraphim in Isaiah 6.



Characteristic	Genesis 3 Serpent	Seraphim of Isaiah 6
Difference from natural serpents	Speaks, shows knowledge of divine and human affairs	Speak, show knowledge of divine and human affairs
View of God	He is a liar	He is holy, holy, holy
Attitude to God	Brazen, insolent	Cover their faces
Relation to man	Agent of corruption, death	Agent of purification, life
Instrument used	Fruit which is eaten	Burning coal which touches lips
Physical attribute	After curse, must crawl on belly, being without feet or wings	Having feet, hands, and wings, can stand or fly

It is, therefore, important to note that the identity of the serpent lies in the category of the Cherubim or Seraphim, as indicated in the table above.

3.2.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENESIS 3:15

In this passage the reader is confronted with a situation where God is unhappy with what His creatures have done. On the other hand, these two creatures do not clearly understand the consequences of their disobedience. One thing they recognized was that as soon as they had eaten from that tree their nakedness was revealed. The question that one may ask is: when they were given the freedom of choice at the beginning, was it an ultimate freedom, or a limited freedom? If it was an ultimate/complete freedom, why is God disciplining them when they have made their choice? If their choice was limited, why did God not communicate this from the very onset?

In this verse the word זרע *zera*^c must be given a context. This word is used both of the snake and the woman. This word has never been used for animals to mean offspring; it is always used to mean seed (Woudstra 1971:195-196). There are biblical passages that explain this concept further, i.e. Gen. 7:3, Gen. 19:32 & 34. Gen. 3:15 has been linked to “virgin birth” (because the seed here is the seed of a woman without the participation of a man). There are other passages, though, that talk about a woman’s seed, but these passages do not suggest a virgin birth, because of the implied involvement of men (Gen. 4:25; 16:10; 24:60).

The narrator’s portrayal of divine evening strolls suggests that these may have been a common occurrence. Since the couple did not die instantly, the following questions occur to the reader:

- Will God now kill them?
- Does God even know what they have done?
- Will the man and woman tell God?

- How will God respond?
- And when they hid themselves were they feeling guilty or ashamed?

Now that the couple has disappeared from the view, God takes the initiative, asking, “Where are you?” And this question is asked for the first time in the history of mankind and it is a rhetorical question in this case. According to the Hebrew text, God is speaking to the man and not to the woman. Why? Is He shy around women? The only one the readers know of who had a conversation with the woman was the serpent. In Gen. 2:23 the man exclaimed in her presence, but there is no record that he talked with her. God spoke to the man in Gen. 2:16 and 17; however, there is no record of God speaking to the woman. The readers can easily assume that God spoke to the man alone, because it was the man alone who heard the initial prohibition. Perhaps none would have been needed in ancient Israelite culture if men were assumed to speak on behalf of their families (Stratton 1995:51). The question that God asked them afterwards is: “Who told you that you are naked?” The characters that one has in the story are: God himself, humankind and the serpent. It appears that God is interested in the agent of man’s knowledge. God seemed to be more concerned with carrying out an investigation and the narrator does not give us a clue about the tone of God’s queries. God followed with another question: “Did the man eat from the forbidden tree?” The man’s response does not seem to presume God’s foreknowledge. The man responded to both questions: the ‘who’ part, in the answer: “the woman whom you have given to be with me” and a confessional part: “and I ate”. Then God turned to the woman and asked what is this that she had done. The woman took responsibility and she responded: “the serpent deceived me”. This indicates that she had been persuaded into doing it. Readers might raise some questions such as:

- What does the woman think now about her previous actions?

- What effect does listening to God’s interrogation of the man have on her?
- Does she have a guilty conscience or feel remorse at having disobeyed God or simply feel a tinge of regret at having been deceived?
- The narrative pattern of talking to the man first and then to the woman might suggest that we should expect God to turn to the serpent for an explanation, but God does not do this and that surprises the readers. Now God launches into what turns out to be a lengthy monologue.

The writer of this passage has deliberately used the words “curse” and “judgment”. This word play emphasises what is being communicated. Bible commentators in their various commentaries have tried to look at this passage (Nichol 1978; Gaebelein 1990; Jamieson 1961; Kidner 1976; Stratton 1995; Davidson 1990). The following discussion reflects some of the ideas they put forth as they discuss this passage. The disciplinary measure administered to Eve is actually mentioned in Gen. 3:16; however, there is a fascinating thought portrayed in Gen. 3:15 which is actually the core of both disciplinary measures (i.e. one to the serpent and the other to Eve). This disciplinary measure involves both the woman and the serpent. In condemnation of the serpent the author is playing on a Hebrew idiom. Having used the serpent to symbolize the evil one, he adheres to the figure in putting on God’s lips words which obviously refer to the way a serpent has of slithering about the earth. In Micah 7:17 these expressions signify contempt and loathing (“crawling on the belly” and “eating dust”) when he says: “they shall lick the dust like serpents ... like creeping things of earth”.

The focus in this section is the latter part of verse 15, which reads thus: “he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (NIV). This portion of the verse is taken in

context with the entire verse. But the “he/ his” can be read collectively which is closer to the Hebrew הוּא (hû’). In the Mariological interpretation of the Catholics it is feminine (*ipsa*) and refers to Mary (Cornelius 1997c:227). Nichol (1978:233) argues that it is evident that crushing of the head is more serious than crushing the heel *even though a snake has poison* (emphasis is mine). The enmity that is mentioned in verse 15 is between the offspring of the woman and the seed of the serpent; however, the head of the serpent and not its seed shall be crushed. This statement addresses the metaphorical usage of the snake and not necessarily the literal usage.

Nichol (1978:233) argues that the “seed” is in the singular, indicating not that a multitude of descendants of the woman jointly shall be engaged in crushing the serpent’s head, but rather that a single individual will accomplish this. The crushing of the serpent’s head mentioned in verse 15 and this Christological interpretation is known as the ***protoevangelium***. Though the “enmity” may lie between the two “seeds”, the goal of the final crushing blow is not the “seed” of the snake but rather the snake itself; his head will be crushed (the author treats the snake and his seed as one) (Gaebelein 1990:55). Cornelius (1997c:226) shows that it was interpreted as referring to Christ who killed the serpent on the cross. It has been mentioned that Adam was thought to be buried at Golgotha as Christ was buried at Golgotha (the Adam–Jesus typology). What God wanted to achieve through Adam was accomplished in Christ. The “fall” leading to death (Gen. 3) is contrasted with the cross of Jesus, which brings life (228). The sense of the divine condemnation of the serpent is, then, a prophecy of Satan’s defeat and it is the corollary of mankind’s hope (Vawter 1973:67).

When it comes to Adam and Eve, the actual curse is not upon them, but the earth suffers the consequences. God made man to rule over the earth, but henceforth the earth will be restive under his rule and will yield itself to his uses only reluctantly and through his strenuous toil (Vawter 1973:69). Gen. 3:16 brings a dimension into a woman's life which was not there before. Now all of a sudden a woman will have pains in childbearing and this is witnessed even today. When one looks back at all the women who in the process of giving birth lost their lives or became crippled, one cannot stop but think of this turning point in Gen. 3:16. However, the word אַרְבָּה אַרְבָּה *harbâ ʿarbê* (greatly increase) does suggest that the pain was going to be greatly increased; this therefore presupposes that there was a minimal pain. The other factor is that of her desire for her husband and the husband ruling her. Some men as a result of v.16 think that their wives are slaves and sex objects. The word for longing or desire here is תְּשׁוּקָה *těšûqâ*; it is interesting though to note that this very crucial statement is uttered to a woman alone. Childbearing was actually at the centre of God's blessings in Gen. 1:28. After the fall childbirth will once again be the means to defeat the devil. Childbirth always reminded a woman of the hope that lies in God's promise and the futility of the fall. The woman and her husband were supposed to enjoy the blessing of children (1:28) and enjoy their partnership in marriage (Gen. 2:18 and 21-25). The word used in Gen. 3:16 for rule is מָשַׁל *māšal*. This same word can be used as *similar* or *to be like* or *speaking in parables*.

3.2.4 EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN

God here once again is the sole actor/ player and man is only passive. There is a deliberate word play with "reach" in v 22 as the same root (שָׁלַח) is used in v 24

(Wenham 1987:85). The term, “He drove out” is often used in the Pentateuch for the expulsion of the inhabitants of Canaan (e.g. Num. 21:32; 32:39; Deut. 2:12,21 and 22). The use of the verb “stationed” שָׁכַן *škn* in the Qal form is associated with God’s camping in the tabernacle among His people. This word is used in parallel with יָשַׁב *yšv* “to inhabit”⁶. The word יָשַׁב *yšv* is always used to refer to human beings, unlike שָׁכַן *škn*, which refers only to God (Harris 1980:925).

Cherubim are mentioned with the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden in Eden. They are also described when Moses was commanded to provide furniture for the tabernacle (Exo. 25:17-20) and God promised to commune with Moses “from between the cherubim” (Exo. 25:22). The expression “from between the cherubim” was later understood as denoting the “presence / abode of God” (Nu. 7:89, 1 Sam. 4:4, Isa. 37:16 and Ps. 80:1; 99:1). In the vision of Ezekiel, they appear as living creatures supporting the throne of God (Ezek. 20:1-20). Two cherubim were placed on the mercy-seat of the ark; two of colossal size overshadowed it in Solomon’s temple (Ezek. 1:4-14). The cherubim are sometimes depicted as angels in later art (Cornelius 1997c:227-228).

The functions of the cherubim as portrayed in the Hebrew Bible were:

1. On the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, to prevent all access to the tree of life; and

⁶ Harris (1980:925) further explains how this word has been used in relation to God’s dwelling. He also mentions that the word שָׁכַן is used 129 times in the OT. It is used 111 times in the Qal, 12 times in the Piel and 6 times in the Hiphil. He states that שָׁכַן underscores the idea not of loftiness but of closeness.

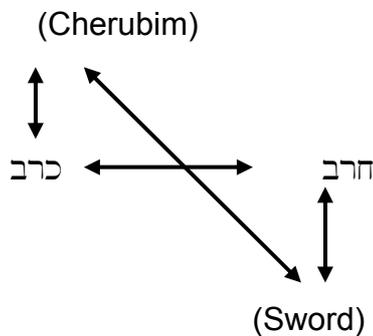
2. To form the throne and chariot of God in his manifestation of himself on earth. He dwells between and sits on the cherubim.

Ezekiel 1:5-28 describes the cherubim as four living creatures, each with four faces, lion, ox, eagle, and man, having the figures and hands of men and the feet of calves⁷. In Israel pictures of cherubim adorned the walls of the tabernacle and the temple, a pair of solid cherubim formed the throne of God on the ark, and a very large pair guarded the inner sanctuary of the temple (Wenham 1987: 86, Exo. 25:18-20).

The writer mentions the “flame of a revolving sword” (Gen. 3:24). The “fire” symbolizes the presence of God, especially in judgment (e.g. in Am. 1:4,7,10,12,14; 2:2,5; 4:11; 5:6 and 7:4). The word revolving is the *hithpael*⁸ participle of חָרַב *hpk*



meaning to “turn”. Cherubim needed no sword to prevent Adam and Eve from getting into the garden. However, the writer of this passage decided to have this word play on cherubim – sword probably for purposes of emphasis.



⁷ They were winged protective beings in the ANE, like the examples found in Assyrian art (e.g. Cornelius 1997c:228).

⁸ Hithpael verb pattern primarily expresses a reflexive action of Qal or Piel and secondarily a reciprocal action. It is also clear that some verbs are translated as a simple action and the reflexive action is understood (Mansoor 1999:190).

This indicates the extent of God's anger towards what His creatures have done. Vawter (1973:70) states that these awesome beasts, symbols of divine protection, were quite as mythical as Alice's Cheshire cat, of course, though no more so than the simpering winged things that sometimes pass for angels in our art. He further indicates that it appears that the author is thinking of the Assyrian and Babylonian temples and palaces, whose gates were flanked by these carved creatures; between them is a fiery sword with a twisted blade, the conventional sign of a thunderbolt and also a divine symbol. It also appears that it was only much later, through a transfer of ideas, that the Jews began to call the members of the angelic court by the name cherubim (Vawter 1973:71). Why should the cherubim be stationed in the East? Evidently the entrance was in the east to the garden and the entrance to the temple and tabernacle was also on the eastern side (Wenham 1987:86). Figure 3.11 on the following page shows a picture of an Assyro-Babylonian Cherub.

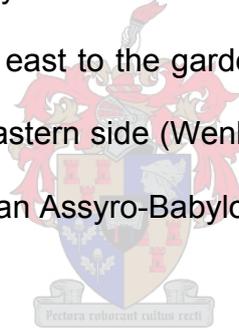
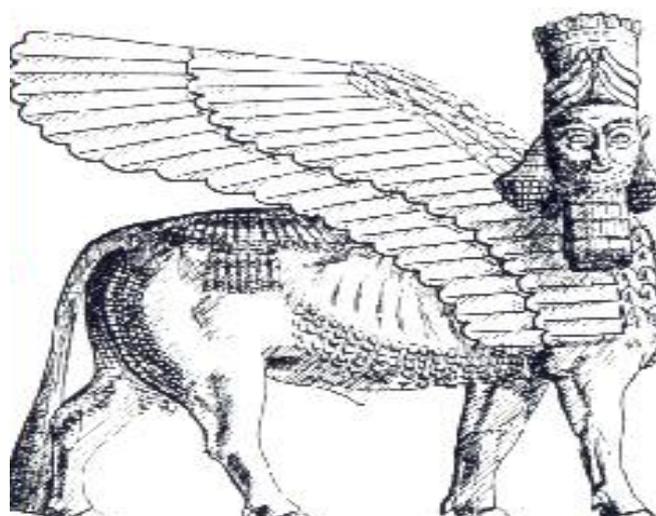


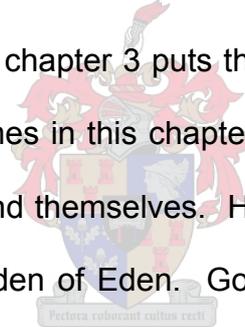
FIGURE 3:11



An Assyro-Babylonian Cherub (Vawter 1973:71)

3.3 SUMMARY

In Gen. 3 it is evident that God is supreme and He is omniscient. This narrative highlights the realities of life. In life there is pain and order. In life there is a blessing and a curse. In life there is freedom and discipline. Genesis 3 contains vital issues in the life of Adam, Eve and humankind. It is in this chapter that they lost their connection with their creator, their home, animals, themselves and nature. It is here where they learnt the first lessons of disobedience. It is in this chapter where curses (sin and its suffering) and expulsion are evident. Here Eve experienced what is called a bitter-sweet experience. It is in this chapter that the earth produces thorns and thistles. In this chapter Adam accuses Eve and in turn Eve accuses the serpent. It was mentioned at the start that chapter 3 puts the spotlight on women. Judgment is also one of the prominent themes in this chapter. God still cared for them, under whatever circumstances they found themselves. He gave them clothing (v.21) when they were expelled from the Garden of Eden. God did not destroy them nor curse them, as He did the serpent (v.14).



PART TWO
THE NGUNI INTERPRETATION OF
GEN 1-3



CHAPTER FOUR: THE ANCIENT BELIEF SYSTEMS OF THE NGUNI

4.1 INTRODUCTION

First the identity and the origin of the Nguni-speaking peoples have to be described.

In South Africa there are three different groupings/ language groups:

1. The Nguni who are now found in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Cape (Eastern, Northern and Western), Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The Nguni languages are spoken by about 14 million people belonging to many tribes living mostly in the south-eastern part of the subcontinent, a broad coastal belt of 1000 km from Swaziland in the north through Kwa-Zulu into the Eastern Cape (Webb 1995:91).



Danziger (1983:11) states that the Nguni filtered eastwards as they moved south from the Great Lakes of East Africa. The lands which they occupy enjoy the highest rainfall in Southern Africa. In fact this explains the stock-farming as well as crop-farming nature of the Nguni communities. It is believed that Nguni did not eat fish, although they lived along the coast. The Zulu knew how to melt iron ore and the Xhosa used wooden ploughs. The Nguni-speaking communities are divided into two main groups i.e. the northern Nguni, (Ndebele- as well Swazi-speaking communities) and the southern Nguni (Xhosa- and Zulu-speaking communities). The Southern Nguni communities (Xhosas in particular) picked up the click sounds from the Khoi people with whom they had made contact (Danziger 1983:11).

In KwaZulu-Natal Zulu with 9.2 million speakers (and with 24.2 million people who know Zulu) predominates, while Xhosa with 7.2 million speakers (and with 18 million

people who know Xhosa) is the main language of the (former) Cape Province (Webb 2000:50). A numerical superiority of more than 6 million speakers and its use as a colloquial language in many multilingual industrial centres in the Republic has put Zulu well on its way to becoming Southern Africa's prime lingua franca.

Map 4:1



Kwa-Zulu Natal Province

Xhosa is one of the country's most heterogeneous languages, with numerous dialects, many of which are not immediately related to Xhosa, on which the written form is based. Xhosa is mainly spoken in three provinces in South Africa, i.e.

Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape; however, in some parts of the Northern Cape, Tswana is spoken. Below are three maps of each Province that has Xhosa-speaking communities.

Map 4:2



Map 4:3



Western Cape - Xhosa

Eastern Cape - Xhosa

Map 4:4



Northern Cape - Xhosa

Swazi, the language of the neighbouring Kingdom of Swaziland, has about 3.4 million speakers (2.5% of 40.5 million use Swazi as their first language) in South Africa (Webb 2000:50). In Swaziland there are 864 500 first-language Swazi speakers. It is spoken mainly in and around *KaNgwane* in the Mpumalanga Province. Zulu was used for literary purposes for many years, but a distinctive Swazi literary medium has been developed recently. It appears that, of the four Nguni languages, Zulu and Swazi are undoubtedly the most closely related with only minor phonetic, grammatical and lexical differences between them (Webb 1995:92). See Figure 4:5 for the Swazi-speaking area.

Map 4:5

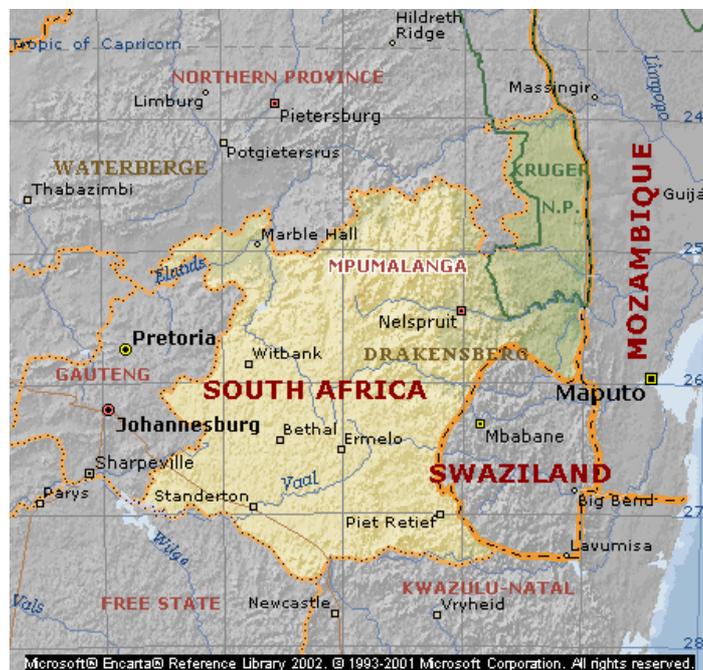


Swaziland – eSwatini

Southern Ndebele is another Nguni language, with about 2.2 million speakers living in KwaNdebele in Mpumalanga. In spite of the influence exerted by neighbouring Sotho

tribes who speak Sepedi, Southern Ndebele remains an Nguni language with strong ties to both Zulu and Swazi. It is understood that in the past the Ndebele used Zulu for their literary needs; however, just recently Ndebele was introduced into all Ndebele schools, where it will eventually replace Zulu as a school subject (Webb 1995:92). See map 4:6 for the Ndebele-speaking area.

Map 4:6



Mpumalanga – Kwa-Ndebele

2. The second grouping is Sotho (Gauteng, the Free State and Lesotho).
3. Finally there is a Tonga grouping (Northern KwaZulu-Natal and East Africa).

Bryant (1929:4) states that, of all the African language groups, probably no single group has produced so many great and famous political stars, conquerors, statesmen, social organisers, wise and progressive high-minded rulers as the Nguni family did. Durban seems to be the place where the Nguni-speaking

people claim their origin in South Africa. Bryant (1929:12 and 13) states that way back in 1593 the Nguni were already settled somewhere in the vicinity of Durban. The Nguni are descendants of East African tribes, people who during the last thousand years moved southwards through the eastern part of the continent from the highlands of Ethiopia and the lake region (Sales 1971:11). See the distribution of language groups in the Southern Africa region in map 4:7

Map 4:7



Language Map of Southern Africa

Nguni people believe that there is a Supreme Being. One will notice that in all Nguni groupings there is always a medium through which the Supernatural Being is approached. In all four Nguni cultural groups there is a belief in ancestral mediation.

Xhosa-speaking communities talk of *izinyanya*, the Zulu of *siSwati* and Ndebele-speaking communities talk of *amadlozi/ amathongo*. The meaning of the term “ancestors” has changed over a period of time. In early times this term referred to the most senior citizens of that particular clan/family who were still alive. However, there has been a gradual shift from this understanding in order to accommodate dead people.

Earlier this term referred to the most senior citizens of that particular clan dead or alive. However, in our time this term is limited to the dead (people) in a particular clan. There is no one explanation as to why such a change came about. The question that arises is: what has brought this change about? A number of issues might have played a role in this change including the following:

- Firstly, socially there has been a move from a rural setting to an urban setting in a way has polarised the belief systems;
- Secondly, education is also another factor. As people became more exposed to other religious belief systems, a shift from the indigenous belief system was inevitable;
- Thirdly, the political structures actually associated the religious belief system with the “oppressor”¹ in the South African context and automatically people crossed over from religion to politics and no one cares whether the indigenous belief system is preserved or not.

¹ This term was commonly used before 1994 when South Africa first achieved its democratic status. The word “oppressor” does not necessarily refer to a white person; instead it referred to the system of governance in South Africa before the 1994 democratic elections.

Obviously this stance had a great impact on Nguni religious belief systems. One will notice that three trends of thought have developed among the Nguni-speaking communities such as: -

(i) The first group believes that there is no God apart from their traditional God. This traditional God would have an Nguni name. This view is held dearly by the African Indigenous Traditional Religious movement led by *Nokuzola Mndende*, who is currently, among other things, representing this group in the South African Parliament. On the 13 April 2003 the researcher attended a meeting at Uluntu Centre in Gugulethu in Cape Town. The claim made by the African Indigenous Traditional Religious movement was that the ancestors play a very important role. They even went to the extent of saying “Christianity is a movement of gangsters”. Their reasoning is Christians always claim that they were criminals before their conversion, hence the description.



(ii) The second group prefers mixing the traditional belief system and the Christian belief system. This group is not yet convinced that the God of the Bible can actually perform alone. They also do not want to be seen as outdated following only the ancient traditional African God. This means that while they worship the God of the Bible, but they still believe that the ancestors will sort out some issues. They attend church regularly and at the same time they visit the *sangomas* (traditional healers), *amagqirha* (diviners), and *amaxhwele* (traditional healers) for assistance. This view is held dearly by the majority of people in the rural areas, where attending church does not necessarily cut one off from ancestral worship.

(iii) Finally, the third group state that, in the absence of adequate knowledge, they formerly believed in the traditional belief system. However, when the new light/full

knowledge of the Gospel and the Bible came, they grabbed it with both hands and they never turned back. They believe that the God of the Bible was their God from the outset and when the Bible came, it shed more light on the God they had already accepted and worshipped. It is very clear that this stance was adopted after the missionaries came to South Africa and to minister to the Nguni communities in particular. This group of people reject the original religion, since they believe that it dilutes the supremacy, sovereignty and the omnipotence of God. A relatively large group of people in the urban areas hold this view. In terms of percentages², the second group is probably in the majority i.e. approximately 50% or 60% would be a reasonable guess in the cities and the percentage may be higher in the rural setting.

This chapter is devoted to various issues around the Nguni belief system. The cultural understanding of God among the Nguni-speaking communities is one of the most important issues, since the premise is that each community is unique. The notion of creation and the fall of human beings (Gen 1-3) is clearly articulated by those Nguni-speaking people who have actually adopted Christianity as their way of life. The issue of the fall (Gen 3), which will be discussed in this chapter, refers to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. These issues will be addressed focusing on the pre-modern period.

The other important aspect is the development of the Nguni belief system in the pre-modern era. Were these beliefs institutionalised or were they just spontaneous? It is evident that each is dynamic; no culture can remain static in a fast changing world. It

² These percentages are approximate and are based on observations, not necessarily on empirical data.

is also a given fact that even religious beliefs undergo some transformation as time goes by. This dynamism is evident even in the Nguni belief system.

4.2 THE NGUNI CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD

The pre-modern³ Nguni communities had a monotheistic⁴ religion (all the groups believe that God was a Supreme Being, even if some of them still regarded the ancestors as mediators between God and man). They never tampered with the supremacy of God, even if they did engage in ancestor worship. Nguni have a conception of a Supreme Being clearly defined by Soga (1931:150), “a God who is the creator of all things, who controls and governs all, and as such is the rewarder of good and the punisher of evil”. According to the Nguni-speaking people *Qamatha* (God) / *Nkulunkulu* (Great great One) / *Mlimu* (The Farmer) / *Mkhulumnqande* (Grand Father Stop him/her) lived way up there, but pointing upwards with a straight finger was deemed disrespectful or irreverent. To prove that the Nguni-speaking people had a high regard for God, they taught their children that God lives in heaven and as a sign of respect no one was allowed to point a finger upwards. This concept/custom has been handed down from generation to generation. Because of the

³ Pre-modern here refers to the period before 1900.

⁴ Monotheism is the belief in one, and only one, God; it is to be distinguished from *polytheism* (belief in a plurality of gods), *henotheism/monolatry* (belief in a supreme god, although not to the exclusion of lesser deities) and finally *atheism* (disbelief in the existence of any gods altogether) (Douglas 1991:567; see also Deist 1990:161). Both Douglas and Deist concur with the assumption of the entire Bible that there is only one God, which is contrary to *materialism* (which holds that matter is eternal), the creation account teaches that God created nature and the cosmos and is above it (Creator-creature distinction), against *pantheism* (which maintains that God is in everything), against *dualism* (which posits an ongoing struggle between the principles of good and evil); the contemporary view of God is basically *theism* [God is said to participate in the cosmos (as opposed to *naturalism*) and finite (as opposed to *finitism*)] (Douglas 1991:567).

awesomeness of this God, Nguni communities believed that one needs mediation between God and her/himself.

In Nguni communities worship was never directly offered to God, but through the medium of the *izinyanya/ amadlozi/ amathongo* (the ancestral spirits), who in the unseen world are nearer to God and know more than people on earth.

The ancestors are seen as having the ability to heal, protect, bless, help procreation, etc. When they are angry, they also have the ability to kill. To them *Qamatha* was regarded as remote and transcendent and not so much interested in individual lives. It was only in extreme cases when appeals were made to him, and this is one reason why there is so little known about worship of him. Pauw (1975:98) points out that the spirits of the Nguni ancestors mean more to them than their *Thixo, Nkulunkulu, Mlimu*, etc. and it is to them that they look for blessings, prosperity and protection. Offerings and sacrifices are made not to the impersonal and distant God, but to the departed heads of the family, who remain interested in them as individuals and relatives. According to Schapera (1946:262), the ancestor spirits are the most intimate gods of the Nguni-speaking peoples; they are part of the family or tribe and are considered and consulted on all important occasions. It is true that the entire African community, including Nguni-speaking peoples, place a high regard on the ancestors. The kraal was the place believed to be frequented by the ancestors. The top of the mountain was a cathedral from where petitions to *Qamatha* were made (e.g. the mountain called *intaba kaNdoda* (the mountain of Man) in the Eastern Cape).

The Nguni names of God are *umDali* (Creator), *Thixo* (God), *Qamatha* (God, Mvelengqangi (The first to appear), *Nkulunkulu* (Great Great God), *Mkhulumnqande* (Grandfather stop him/her), *Mlentengamunye* (One Leg), *Mlimu* (Farmer) and *Nomkhubulwane* (female God). The term *umDali* denotes that God is the sole creator. *Nkulunkulu* (the old old one/ the great great one) broke away from the bed of reeds (*uhlanga*) first and he then came into being; the term *Nkulunkulu* is also used to denote an original ancestor (Krige 1962:280). All families or clans have their own great-great-grandfathers by their orders of succession, and their *uNkulunkulu*. In Nguni religion it is believed that God instituted the present order and gave men *amathongo* (spirits of ancestors), doctors for treating diseases and diviners. In siSwati culture, *Mkhulumnqande* is a Supreme Being. This Supreme Being is neither worshipped nor accepts sacrifices offered to Him. *Mkhulumnqande* is a distant God who does not involve himself in the affairs of the people. *Mlentengamunye* is *Mkhulumnqande*'s messenger. *Nomkhubulwane* is a female deity and has no relations with *Mkhulumnqande* or *Mlentengamunye*. In Zulu culture *Nomkhubulwane* is the daughter of *uNkulunkulu*. She is the "queen of Heaven" and not an ancestral spirit. Both *Thixo* and *Qamatha*¹¹ are said to be of alien origin; they are a legacy from the Khoi or possibly the San (Soga 1931:150).

In Xhosa culture these names are used interchangeably. *Qamatha* is the name that was used in ancient times. Whenever there was drought, it was believed that *Qamatha* was responsible. He was known as "a god superior to the ancestors, and

¹¹ Nguni people believed in a deity referred to as *Qamatha*. Some think that the Nguni Xhosa speakers borrowed the term from the Khoi. There is no evidence for this, however, especially if one considers that it is unlikely that by the time the Whites came to the Cape, the Nguni speakers had not as yet met the Khoi (Buwa 1985:1). In the absence of the evidence, as Buwa (1985:1) puts it, I still concur with Soga that these names are a legacy from the Khoi or possibly the San.

He could cause misfortune.” He was the most feared, honoured and revered sovereign and above everything believed to be supernatural. In the olden days all Nguni people were classified as “red” people [*abantu bembola/ ababomvu*] and they worshipped *Qamatha*. The name *Thixo* was developed later after the missionaries came to South Africa. There was a gradual shift from *Qamatha* to *Thixo* and today *Thixo* is the name that is mostly used. There is no exact information as to how *Qamatha* was worshipped. Pauw (1975:76) states that he heard “vague references to pagans going to a hilltop where they danced and sang songs used by their forefathers to petition for rain in time of drought”.

Soga (1931:39) in commenting on the work of Neil MacVicar who worked with Nguni-speaking people for a long time (Lovedale, 1902 – 1937), came to the conclusion that MacVicar was convinced that they inherited indispensable virtues from their forefathers, including, he wrote, the following:

- ❖ A sense of religion - they believed in the unseen, and they are not idol-worshippers.
- ❖ Courtesy – they conducted their ordinary social intercourse with a certain formality and dignity that impressed all European observers.

The idea of the *trinity*⁵ is *foreign* to Nguni culture. One will notice that even the idea of Satan as the author of evil is foreign or alien in Nguni culture. In all Nguni cultures God is understood as the Supreme Omnipotent Being. When they look at God they look at someone holy, Sovereign and distant. They see God as a Creator. Even

⁵ The threefold divine personality existing in one being or substance, namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Deist 1990:265).

though they are fond of ancestors, it is crystal clear in their minds that the entire universe came into existence through the Mighty Hand of God. It is a fundamental belief among Nguni-speaking peoples that God is omniscient. He knows everything and He then responds via the ancestors.

Hexham (1987b:40) claims that the Zulu do not have a religion, no idea of Deity and no knowledge of a future state. He argues that they cannot even comprehend the mystery of creation. The argument presented by Hexham does not have any basis; his samples are too limited to warrant such a statement. He seems to believe that there are communities that are more superior to others and the right religious values should come from a particular community. Hexham seems to deny the fact that each community is unique. Each community has its own understanding of God and His activities. Hexham is an outsider to Nguni culture and has a problem comprehending their ancestral belief system. The issue really is not the rightness or the wrongness of ancestral worship. It is not about theological or religious correctness or incorrectness. The issue is that in their belief system, *ancestral worship*, plays a major role and is of paramount importance. Therefore Hexham's approach is very subjective and fails to portray the true picture of Zulu religion.

Hexham (1987b:160) argues that the use of the word *uThixo* does not have a meaning. The Xhosa speakers found it there in the translated Xhosa Bible (Gen 1:1). The correct word should be *iTongo* meaning a power of universal influence (a Being under whom all around were placed). If one looks at the etymological background to

the word *uThixo*, Hexham's view is acceptable, even though this word may not carry any meaning in itself.⁶

4.3 THE NGUNI CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF COSMOGONY

Cosmogony in the Nguni perspective can be viewed in different ways. However, in all the different Nguni ways of describing cosmogony, there is one thing common – the tripartite arrangement of creation. They believe that God created the heavens as a first component. Heaven is where the deity stays. It is believed that God and His holy angels live in heaven. He then continued to create this world with its inhabitants as a second component. The human beings are classified into two categories. The first category is the royal family i.e. kings, paramount chiefs, chiefs princes, princesses, headmen, etc. The second category is just ordinary people whether educated or illiterate, rich or poor. Finally, there is the underworld where the ancestors live. In the Nguni communities only the “witch doctors”⁷ (*amagqirha*) have direct contact with the ancestors. The other section of the community communicates with the ancestors through the blood of a slaughtered animal and homemade sour milk/homebrewed traditional beer (nowadays).

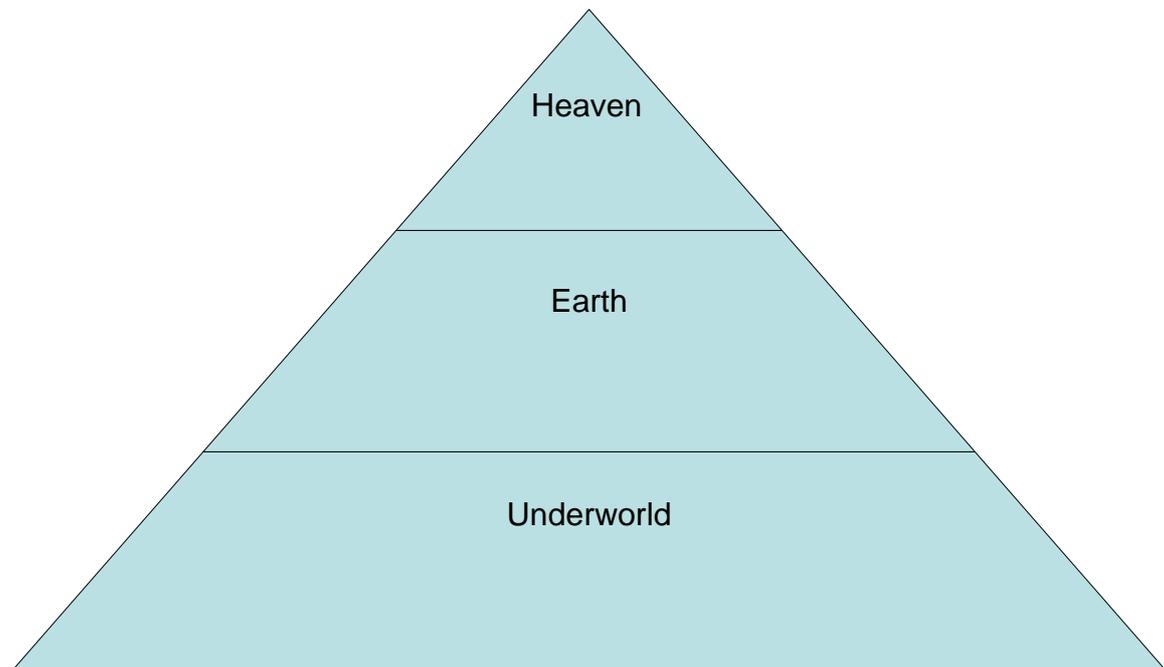
When they explain this underworld, they believe that there is normal life there and all the activities that are carried out in this world are actually done there too. As has been mentioned above, they firmly believed that no one can approach God except

⁶ The repeated use of the word “Kafirs” in Hexham's work makes one wonder if he did not see these poor Nguni-speaking peoples as inferior or perhaps created by a lower God. This word can no longer be tolerated and is not accepted in South African society.

⁷ A tribal magician of primitive people. This kind of a doctor is able to heal and bring blessings and at the same time he/she has an ability to bring disaster, calamity and catastrophe.

through the ancestors⁸ who sort of pave the way for you. See Figure 4:12 below on this tripartite arrangement. There is no clear indication as to how God created the universe, plants vegetation and animals. Penny Miller (1979:98) states that the Nguni-speaking peoples believed that it was this supreme deity who made the heavens and earth and brought forth the people and animals.

Figure 4:12



The Tripartite Arrangement - Universe

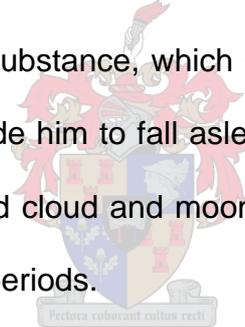
Pauw (1975:76) states that the belief in *Qamatha/ Nkulunkulu/ Mlimu* had a place in the Nguni view of the universe at the time of their first contact with missionaries, and

⁸ An ancestor is a medium through which God is approached in the Nguni culture. This term assumes different meanings in different periods i.e. in the pre-modern an ancestor was a very senior member of the family who was still alive; in the modern era it referred to both the very senior members of the family who are alive and also the senior members of the family who are dead, and nowadays this term refers to the dead members of the family regardless of their status.

present-day Nguni, both Christian and non-Christian, regard it as part of their own tradition.

There are also some stories about the creation of man and woman. One of the theories is outlined by Janet Hodgson (1982:110 &111) as follows: There were four people in the beginning, i.e. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit and Satan. God was the Chief and Satan was the cook. There were four houses, that is, one for the Chief, one for Satan, the other one was where the Chief worked, and, finally, the last one was a round house made up of grass in which two people lived.

A man was created first. He was made of earth and a cloud mixed together by means of which man became a substance, which did not wither as trees do. When God had completed man, He made him to fall asleep on His right side, and took out the short rib, with which He mixed cloud and moon⁹ and made woman, which is the cause of women having monthly periods.

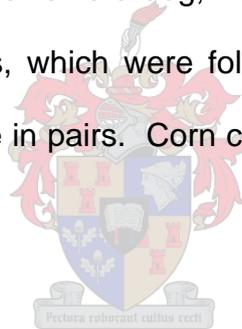


Janet Hodgson (1982:18, 19 and 22) also records the second myth as follows: Nguni myths, like most African myths, are primarily concerned with the origin of man and the world around him. These stories may not be creation stories, but part of the socialisation process. This myth describes how the first man and woman, together with their animals, appeared on earth from a previous existence. The so-called “Creator” or rather the originator, is conceived as enabling them to emerge. Common to the different versions of Nguni cosmogonic myth is the idea that men and animals formerly existed in the caverns in the bowels of the earth. It is said that they have

⁹ I do not know what the Nguni had in mind when they spoke about a moon; however, a moon is a sign of hope. It is light and the brightness of the night. There is no night without a moon and the moon is connected to the times/periods. Probably these may have been the considerations when the Nguni spoke about the “moon”.

come forth out of this underworld through an immense hole, the opening of which was either in a cavern or else in a marsh overgrown with reeds. The place of origin for these people is called *umhlanga* (meaning the place of reeds). Mabona (Hodgson 1982:18) says the *abantu bomlambo* (mythical river people) remained in the place of origin when mankind came out of the hole and they, therefore, are reputed to be very wise and powerful; they are associated with ancestors. All the Nguni cosmogonies seem to have this one element in common, the *uhlanga* (the reed).

The other myth of creation is described by Hexham (1987:207), who states that a male sprang from *uhlanga* followed by a woman. After the woman came the cow walking with the bull, followed by a female dog, which was followed by a male dog. After this, came the little animals, which were followed by elephants, and then all other animals came into existence in pairs. Corn came into being and this served as staple food .



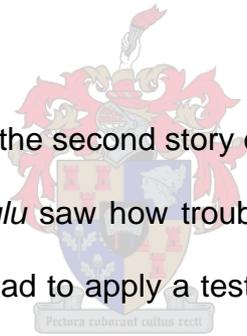
The emphasis is not on creation, but what happened when everything was created. As a result, there is no one unified account of creation that people identify with. One gets pieces here and there. Another important aspect of this issue of creation is that all the Nguni stories of creation seem to refer to the narrative of Gen. 2, the creation story. The kind of God portrayed in Gen. 2 is interspersed throughout the Nguni creation stories/myths. The concept of “man formed¹⁰ out of the ground” is very common in all the creation stories. There is a belief that the clay that moulded the first parents is said to have been “red”.

¹⁰ The concept of the potter's clay is found the Hebrew Bible. What is also interesting here is that animals and human beings were formed from the ground. This means that in terms of flesh and blood, there is no difference between the animals and human beings. Probably this explains why God gave almost the same diet to both animals and human beings in Gen. 1:29 and 30.

4.4 THE NOTION OF THE FALL

The notion of the fall and the entering of death into human life are used interchangeably. There are few Nguni stories on this issue. Hodgson (1982:110 &111) deals with the first “myth” on the notion of the fall. According to this “myth”, a man went to the field to take care of the cattle. It is believed that the Chief set the cattle aside for food. On returning, he went to the left side of the house with a log of wood on his shoulder, when he found that Satan (*Sathana/e*) had been in the house with the woman, and he endeavoured to win her to his purposes. She rejected his advances, saying that the Chief said she was only to live with the man whom she has, but she had no instruction concerning this. Satan said he would have shown her the tree of which the Chief God eats, by which he is so wise. The woman said: “Tell me, do show me”, but Satan suggested that they first “lie together”. The woman refused and Satan went away to find the tree. He returned with the fruit of the tree and said “What do you say now? Satan has the tree, now do you consent to lie together with me?” The woman consented and they lay together. He only made her long for the fruit without permitting her to taste it, till at last he put some in her mouth as if it were particles of ants and said: “The man who walks with the chief says this is the tree of which he eats”. It was delicious and she kept some for her husband. When the husband came, he looked in at the door and said: “Why does the woman today for the first time cover herself? Why is it that she is naked and not ashamed?” The woman said: You are a man who talks too fast, sit down and listen to me” He sat down, and she told him how Satan had been there and showed her the tree of which the Chief God ate. She took out the piece she had saved for him, saying here it is, taste how delicious it is. The man refused, saying this is the tree of which the Chief said it should not be eaten. “What is this you have done?” She urged him saying:

“Do taste but only one mouthful”. At length he took one mouthful and swallowed it. It stuck fast in his ‘Adam’s apple’, where it remained. This is the cause of man having an ‘Adam’s Apple’ and a loud voice. After this the Chief came and looked into the door. They were alarmed and hid themselves. He left and returned next day, and called them out to the front and said; “What is this you have done?” They denied saying: “No, we have done nothing”. The Chief said: “Although I ask you, I am not one who requires to be told by any one for I see all things of myself”. They said: “Yes Chief, we have eaten the tree of which you said we were not to eat. Satan tempted us”. He said to them: “Today having eaten it you will suffer pain, you shall work in order to obtain food, you, woman, you shall suffer pregnancy, and death following. This is fixed and it is your lot”.



Vilakazi (1983:147-151) writes on the second story on the notion of the fall and death. It is believed that when *Nkulunkulu* saw how troublesome the human race was, he decided to relax his control. He had to apply a test, to find out whether people were grown up enough to make a good choice between two things. The source of human troubles had been seeking joy and happiness at any cost. *UNkulunkulu* having created the human race from the *uhlanga*, some years later sent a messenger to inform the people that they were to have unending life on the earth. He chose a chameleon (*unwabu*) to deliver this message, but it was very slow in fulfilling its errands. This chameleon saw some attractive ripe berries (*ubukhwebezane*) of which it was very fond, and spent a long time climbing up the shrubs, picking and eating the ripe fruit. The chameleon thought that there was no need to hurry on with the message, for the people could wait. *Nkulunkulu* became impatient and decided to

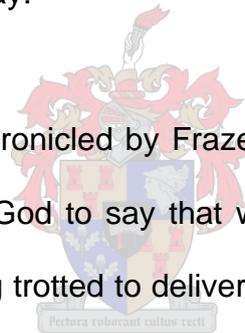
dispatch the fast salamander¹¹ (*intulo*) with a directly opposite message, declaring that the people would eventually die. The *intulo* moved very fast and it arrived in the world of men long before the chameleon had even thought of leaving his berries. The *intulo* proclaimed to men that *uNkulunkulu* says people must die (*uNkulunkulu uthi abantu mabafe*). The people listened and heard the message, but they continued in their engagements. After the *intulo* had run back to *Unkulunkulu* with a report, the slow chameleon arrived on earth with the message: *uNkulunkulu* says people must not die (*uNkulunkulu uthi abantu mabangafi*). The people laughed at the chameleon saying: “Why did you delay when sent by *Nkulunkulu*, you detestable, slow, crawling creature? We shall hate you forever, for *sesibambe elentulo*” (we have accepted the first message).

The third story is chronicled by Frazer (1923:22)¹². He narrates that the moon wished to send a message to men of the early race, to tell them that as the moon died and came to life again, so they would die and come to life again. So the moon called the tortoise and said to him, “Go over to those men there and give them this message from me. Tell them that if I ‘die’ I will live, so they too will die and live again.” Now the tortoise was very slow and he kept repeating the message to himself, so as not to forget it. The moon was very vexed with his slowness and with his forgetfulness; so she called the hare and said to her, “You are a swift runner. Take this message to the men over yonder: ‘As I died and live again, so you will die

¹¹ In many African tales the instrument of bringing death to men is a lizard. The serpent as well as the lizard (in Sumerian the snake can be a lizard; cf. Sjöberg 1984) both cast off their skin periodically (Frazer 1923:31).

¹² The stories as retold by Frazer should not be accepted uncritically. He has been criticised for being only an “armchair anthropologist” and not someone who really knew the cultures that he wrote about; cf. J. Rogerson (1984).

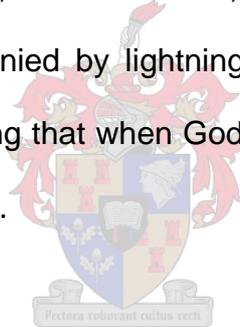
and live again.” So off the hare started, but in her great haste she forgot the message, and as she did not wish to show the Moon that she had forgotten, she delivered the message to men in this way, “As I died and live again, so you will die and die for ever.” Such was the message delivered by the hare. In the meantime the tortoise had remembered the message, and he started off a second time. “This time”, he said to himself, “I won’t forget.” He came to the place where men were and delivered his message. When the men heard it, they were very angry with the hare, who was sitting at some distance. She was nibbling the grass after her race. One of the men ran and lifted a stone and threw it at the hare. It struck her right in the mouth and cleft her upper lip; hence the lip has been cleft ever since. That is why every hare has a cleft upper lip to this day.



The fourth story is once again chronicled by Frazer (1923:24). He writes that once upon a time men sent a dog to God to say that when they died they would like to come to life again. So off the dog trotted to deliver the message. But on the way he felt hungry and turned into a house, where a man was boiling magic herbs. So the dog sat down and thought to himself, “He is cooking food.” Meantime the frog had set off to tell God that when men died they would prefer not to come to life again. Nobody had asked him to give that message; it was a piece of pure officiousness and impertinence on his part. However, away he tore. The dog, which still sat hopefully watching the broth brewing, saw him hurrying past the door, but he thought to himself, “When I have had something to eat, I will soon catch froggy up.” However, the frog came first and said to the deity, “When men die, they would prefer not to come to life again.” After that, up comes the dog, and says he, “When men die, they would like to come life again.” God was naturally puzzled and said to the dog, “I

really do not understand these two messages. As I heard the frog's request first, I will comply with it. I will not do what you said."

The Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi indicate clearly that when the people of the earth had chosen death by their passive acceptance of the salamander's message, on that day disease, plagues and all human troubles began. Because the people had failed to make a choice, then *Nkulunkulu* (God) became angry. There is a theomachy of phenomenal personification when it comes to the fall of mankind. On the death of a prominent person like a "king", "headman" or "queen", the heavens thunder and the Nguni-speaking people say *uNkulunkulu*, *uMlimu*, *uThixo* (God) is playing in the sky. He is playing because a great one, one of His own, has come home. There are times when the thundering is accompanied by lightning which could kill a man and the Nguni people explain this by saying that when God receives back one of his own, he must be accompanied by servants.



4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has sketched a brief historical background of Nguni speaking communities; the creation stories/myths discussed are common to all Nguni-speaking communities. Nguni-speaking peoples were nomadic and they were also crop-farmers. It is fascinating to note how Nguni and other nations/ communities around them have influenced each other on various issues such as the language (sounds in particular) from the Khoi¹³ people, a religion that is characterised by the belief in the ancestral system, circumcision, etc. It is also obvious that even the creation stories

¹³ Khoi people and San people spoke a similar language; they had the same religion; and their weapons and clothing were much the same. It is therefore believed that both Khoi people and *San* people sprang from the same stock (Danziger 1983:8).

they told sound similar. If one takes a close look at the various creation stories, one will realise that in the Nguni-speaking communities, there is no clear unified understanding as to how this world came into existence. The main concern in their creation stories is how humans came into being. It seems that it is common knowledge that a supernatural being created the universe; however, they do not have the details of such a creation.

The question is why were they so concerned about the creation of a human being? If one examines the creation stories in Nguni communities, one comes to the conclusion that in Nguni creation stories man is the key factor in creation; hence only man is the centre and key to their creation. Concerning the notion of the fall, there is no common understanding.

The one with a message of eternal death comes first, even though it was sent later. The people decide to take the first message they receive regardless of the consequences. Nowhere is it stated in the stories that the sender of the two messengers has decided that people will die, but the people themselves chose to die. They had a right to reject the first message and in the process the second messenger would have come with good news. (A picture of Khoi as well as San people follows below).



FIGURE 4:13



Khoi people grinding their corn (Danziger 1983:8)

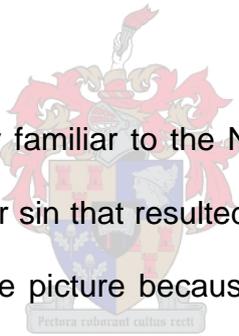
FIGURE 4:14



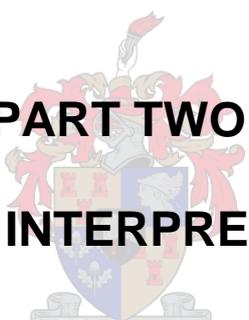
San people in the desert areas of Namibia and North-West Cape (Danziger 1983:8)

One of the most fascinating things is to look at how a certain cultural group and its religious belief system develop through various filters in life as the years go by. It is obvious that Nguni cultural norms as well as religious norms have a very rich

heritage. The ancient belief system of the Nguni-speaking people played a very prominent role in shaping Nguni thought about the origin of the world (cosmogony). As one looks at various issues pertaining to the understanding of Nguni creation as well as the fall, one is compelled to say that all Nguni communities have the same understanding of creation and – needless to say –their understanding of the fall is also the same. Nguni-speaking communities have always treasured their creation stories. It is interesting to note that in Nguni cosmogonies the emphasis is not on the actual creation; in a way it is understood that a supernatural being created the heavens and the earth some time ago. However, Nguni communities were more interested on how *humankind* came into existence as opposed to how the universe came into existence.



The concept of the fall is not very familiar to the Nguni communities. According to them, there was no moral failure or sin that resulted in a fall. To them the fall (which is equated to death) came into the picture because of the chameleon that delayed instead of bringing God's message of life in time. There is no rational understanding as to why they could not change their minds (even if they had already accepted a message of death) and accept the message from the chameleon even if the chameleon came late. Life is much better than death. It was a bad choice that led to the fall. It is clear that creation has to do with God and how He is worshipped as a result of His creation. The Nguni creation stories have also indicated that each community has its own uniqueness.



PART TWO
THE NGUNI INTERPRETATION OF
GEN. 1-3

CHAPTER FIVE – THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES IN THE NGUNI COMMUNITIES AND THEIR BELIEF SYSTEM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with how the concepts of Christianity were introduced to the Nguni-speaking communities. It is really amazing to note that the early Nguni-speaking people did not understand English, but the missionaries still managed to penetrate into each community and some even learned some of the Nguni languages. Different denominations sent their missionaries to open mission stations in South Africa, where the Nguni communities were located. These missionaries were largely respected in these communities and established mission schools, Bible Societies, mission hospitals and clinics and churches.

It is the intention of the researcher to look at various stages of the missionaries' involvement in Christianising¹ the African Nguni-speaking people. The missionary work among Nguni-speaking communities gains its importance from the following points, as noted by Danziger (1983:32):

- It was through the influence of the missionaries that the Nguni-speaking communities were converted to one kind of Christianity or another;
- Most of the missionary societies did make a sincere attempt to teach the black populations how to earn a living in a Western economy;

¹ The cry today in almost all the churches is that the church in Africa has been Westernised in thought and in practice. One of the contributing factors towards the state of the church is that Nguni people received the message from missionaries coming from Western countries and therefore for the Nguni it was more a matter of assimilation than an issue of reception.

- Almost all of the African² languages were first put down in writing by missionaries;
- Above all, the missionaries provided almost the only schools open to non-whites until the twentieth century;
- Missionaries set up the first African printing presses;
- The mission station was often the advance guard of trade, government and agricultural development.

The missionaries brought the Bible and its concepts of creation and the Fall to the Nguni-speaking communities. These concepts were foreign to Nguni communities.

5.2 THE EARLY MISSIONARIES

When missionaries came from various countries to preach the gospel in Africa and South Africa, the Nguni-speaking communities of South Africa were also affected. Whatever change affected South Africa, obviously, that change also affected the Nguni-speaking communities. Unfortunately the missionaries undermined Africans and their belief system; they, therefore, measured the Nguni-speaking people's religion in terms of their religion and culture (Danziger 1983:30). One of the problematic areas was that the missionaries expected the converts to wear Western dress, live in square houses and adopt Western work habits, e.g. sharing work equally amongst men and women as opposed to leaving it all to the women (Danziger 1983:30 & 31). The figures below reflect something of the Nguni converts' and the missionaries' expectations.

² Danziger (1983:9) states that "*Bantu*" refers to languages not race and he therefore comfortably and correctly uses the term "*Bantu*" languages. In South Africa that is not what people generally understand, therefore in the thesis the term "African" is used instead of "*Bantu*".

FIGURE 5:15



Western housing and Lovedale educational centre (Danziger (1983:31)

The Moravian Missions aimed to teach their people Western habits of life and work in model villages like Wuppertal in the Northern Cape (above). Presbyterian missions stressed the value of education. The famous schools which they set up, such as the one at Lovedale (right), were attended by both black and white children (Danziger 1983:31).

5.2.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Robert Moffat was one of the great missionaries that came to South Africa. He was born in Scotland on December 21, 1795 and in 1816 sailed for South Africa with five companions and reached Cape Town in January 1817 (Mueller 1975:25). He was affiliated to the Methodist Church, which sent him to South Africa as a missionary.

The Cape Colony³ was then in its infancy, the British having taken it over four years (1806) before the arrival of Moffat in Cape Town (Mueller 1975:26). Prior to that it had belonged to the Dutch (Mueller 1975:26). The then war-loving *Zulus* under the leadership of their famous chief, Chaka, carried on incessant warfare with whatever tribe they happened to clash (Mueller 1975:26). In 1835 Moffat visited the *ma-Ndebeles* who were chased by Chaka from Zululand⁴, which was under the leadership of Mzilikazi. Since then missionary work has never stopped among the Ndebele-speaking communities.

The South Africa General Mission was founded in 1889 and worked in Swaziland, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape until the turn of the century (Gerdener 1958:42). The South Africa General Mission was conducted on a faith basis and had 215 missionaries and 59 African workers (Gerdener 1958:43).

The South African Compounds and Interior Mission, which was founded in 1896, focused its work in KwaZulu-Natal. Mr Baker pioneered this work. The Africa Inland Mission was another missionary operation which eventually focused on the Western Cape, and Cape Town in particular (Gerdener 1958:47). The Dorothea Mission, founded by Mr and Mrs Hans van Staden, focused its attention on *KwaNdebele* and KwaZulu-Natal. They conducted home visitations and tent meetings; however, the converts were distributed to the churches of their own choice (Gerdener 1958:49).

³ This area is now known as the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Western Cape.

⁴ Now known as KwaZulu-Natal.

The Seventh-day Adventist missionaries came to South Africa after Pieter Wessels⁵ became concerned about the question of spiritual healing in 1885. G.J. van Druten took his stand through contact with William Hunt, a miner from Nevada. Hunt heard J.N. Loughborough preaching in California and then went to Kimberly for diamond digging. In 1886 Wessels, Van Druten and Hunt wrote a letter to Battle Creek⁶ appealing for a Dutch minister to come to South Africa. In 1887 D.A. Robinson and C.L. Boyd were sent to South Africa. (Van Zyl 1990:84a)

FIGURE 5:16



Richard Moko (The first Nguni Minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church) (Van Zyl 1990:84a)

⁵ Pieter Wessels was an Afrikaans-speaking person who was one of the European settlers of Dutch descent in South Africa.

⁶ This was the name of a place in Michigan in the United States of America.

The work then started in Kimberly, came down to Cape Town, and then to the Eastern Cape (around 1905) under the guidance and direction of the first black minister, Richard Moko.

FIGURE 5:17



George van Druten

FIGURE 5:18



The family of Pieter Wessels

The message moved from the Eastern Cape to KwaZulu-Natal around 1910 under the guidance of F.B. Armitage and finally to Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. In 1920 the Seventh-day Adventist movement began in Swaziland. A government employee and his wife, and the sister of the Swazi queen accepted it. The Adventist message was built around the messages of the three angels in Revelation 14:6-12. The Seventh-day Adventist missionaries established medical missions, mission schools and publishing houses.

The Salvation Army missionary work commenced approximately 1700 and focussed on KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. The London Missionary Society and the Congregational Union of South Africa focussed on the Cape Province⁷ around the years of 1870s and onwards. The Methodist Church of South Africa which began as early as 1899 in South Africa focussed on the Eastern Cape, Kwa-Zulu-Natal, the Western Cape and Swaziland. The Presbyterian Family was established in 1897 (The Presbyterian Church of South Africa) and 1900 (The Scottish Missions) and their focus was the Eastern Cape as well as KwaZulu-Natal.

The Anglican missionary group consisted of two groups, i.e. The Church of the Province of South Africa, established around 1650, and the Church of England, which was established in 1883. They both focussed on Kwa-Zulu-Natal, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo. The South African Baptist Missionary Society was established in 1892 and its focus was the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. The Plymouth Brethren were established in 1893 in the southern part of

⁷ Now known as the Eastern Cape, the Northern Cape and the Western Cape. See footnote 3.

Kwa-Zulu-Natal (Port Shepstone). Its mission was directed at KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

The Roman Catholic Church Missionary activities began in 1848 in South Africa in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The Norwegian Free Evangelical Mission was established in 1914 and in 1915 their missionary work began in Swaziland.

5.2.2 MISSIONARY WORK AMONG NGUNI PEOPLES

5.2.2.1 Missionary work among Xhosa-speaking Nguni communities

The very first missionary that came to the Xhosa-speaking communities was Dr Vanderkemp in 1799 and was later granted a site by chief Ngqika (Sales 1971:45). Sales (1971:41) thinks that not many Xhosa-speaking people showed any permanent interest in the message of Dr Vanderkemp; instead the Khoi women who were married to Xhosa men became faithful listeners and eventually they felt the power of conversion. Dr Vanderkemp worked in the following areas: Ciskei, Graaf Reinet, Port Elizabeth⁸, King William's Town⁹, Lovedale, Mount Coke, etc. Ntsikana is a prominent figure in the missionary work among Xhosa speakers, and it is believed that he heard the messages of Dr Vanderkemp when he was a teenager. In fact, he was quoted as saying: "The thing that has entered within me directs that all should

⁸ Port Elizabeth was known in those days as Algoa Bay (Sales 1971:47).

⁹ King William's Town was known as *Qonce*.

pray; no one understands it in this country as yet except *Ngcongolo*¹⁰ (Sales 1971:69). When Ntsikana was converted, he released his second wife and gave her some of his property. Another prominent figure was Tiyo Soga, whose father was a follower of Ntsikana. Tiyo Soga became the first ordained minister among the Xhosa-speaking people. The Methodists at Mount Coke published the first complete Xhosa Bible in 1859 (Sales 1971:71).

5.2.2.2 Missionary work among Zulu-speaking communities

A group of traders came from Grahamstown in 1824 and opened up businesses in Durban. King Chaka and Dingaan were still alive during this period. One of the traders apparently had a Xhosa interpreter from Grahamstown who told the Zulu chief that the experience of the Xhosa-speaking people had been that the first white man who came talked about a book and about God, but that other men who followed after were soldiers who took away the land (Sales 1971:109). Captain Allan Gardener, a retired British naval officer, became a missionary and arrived in Natal¹¹ in 1835 (Sales 1971:109 and 110). He felt that permanent success in mission work could not be accomplished until some kind of law and order was imposed on the white traders in Durban. Upon his request to colonise Natal under the British government, he was appointed as a magistrate with no back-up for his authority. Missionaries continued to come to various areas in Natal such as Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Ixopo, Umzinto, Marianhill, Nongoma, Vryheid, etc.

¹⁰ *Ngcongolo* (which means reed in English) was a Xhosa name given to James Read, who preached around 1811 (Sales 1971:69).

¹¹ Now known as KwaZulu-Natal.

5.2.2.3 The missionary work among Ndebele-speaking communities

The missionaries started their work among Ndebele-speaking communities around 1831 and the focus was to build a mission at Mosega¹². Mzilikazi destroyed Mosega in 1832, when some of his emissaries were killed. Then in 1836 the American Board missionaries attempted to rebuild Mosega, which has been completely destroyed by Mzilikazi. After this incident the Ndebele were scattered and at present there are some in Mpumalanga Province and others in Zimbabwe.

5.2.2.4 The missionary work among Swazi-speaking people

Swaziland was virgin territory until the 1880s; however, in the 1890s small mission groups entered Swaziland. In 1892 the Scandinavian Alliance Mission and the Seventh-day Adventists entered Swaziland (Sales 1971:134). Malla Moe and Johannes Gumede are prominent figures among the Swazi-speaking people. A number of missionaries and their churches have entered Swaziland since 1890s.

5.2.3 APPROACH OF THE MISSIONARIES

- The missionaries first attacked the local belief in the work of the ancestors in their approach. They preached that there is one God and one does not need a mediator in order to communicate with this God. This was the greatest challenge, because to the Nguni-speaking people this was the crux of their belief system.

¹² Mosega was near the present-day Zeerust.

- The second attack was launched at girls' initiation ceremonies (*intonjane*), the female rite marking the passage from girlhood to adulthood and eligibility for marriage. This rite was considered important by Nguni-speaking communities for the purpose of child-bearing and sexual fulfilment. The missionaries brought the idea that a child is a blessing from God. One needs to surrender everything to God; one does not need to depend on a particular ritual in order to be blessed with a child.
- The third attack was levelled at circumcision (*ulwaluko*), i.e. initiation for males into adulthood. The missionaries did not see the significance of circumcision even though Nguni-speaking people later based their concept of circumcision on the Bible (it was practiced before the Bible came into existence among Nguni communities). (See the *abakhwetha* dance in Figure 5:19).
- The fourth attack was levelled at the diviner (*igqirha*), who was called a religious specialist.
- The fifth attack was on polygamy, which was an acceptable norm among Nguni-speaking communities.
- The final attack was launched at *lobola* (bride price) and its significance. Nguni-speaking people believed that *lobola* was the foundation of all Nguni marriages; however, the missionaries did not see any significance in the *lobola*. The problem with the missionaries was that they wanted to Westernise the thinking of the Nguni-speaking people. They wanted to destroy everything the Nguni believed in without taking into account the fact that not everything the Nguni-speaking peoples believed in was opposed to Christianity.

At least three of the issues raised and covered above have a definite link to Gen. 1-3

i.e.:

- The attack on the belief on ancestors – in the Gen. 1-3 there is a direct link between God and man alone (no mediator or go-between).
- The second attack was against the rite performed for child bearing – this also a link to Gen. 1-3 because in Gen. 1-3 child bearing is a blessing from God, not a result of a particular rite (cf. Gen. 17:19-22, Judges 13:2-4, 1 Samuel 1:1-20).
- The third attack was on the practice of circumcision – this has no reference in Gen. 1-3, but in other sections in the Bible (Joshua 5:2-7, Acts 7:9).
- The fourth attack was on the diviner – this has no reference in Gen. 1-3 but some texts make mention of it (1 Samuel 28:1-24).
- The last attack was on the bride price – this has a link to Gen. 1-3, because when the woman was created, she was handed over to her husband with no expectation of any exchange; however, in some portions of the Bible this issue is dealt with in detail (Gen. 30:20, 34:12, Exo. 22:16 & 17). Obviously these issues dealt with above have definitely influenced the reading and reception of Gen. 1-3.

The *abakhwetha* dance is a dance by the young recently circumcised men in their celebration when they come home from the circumcision school.

FIGURE 5:19



Abakhwetha dance by J.E. Middlebrook, c. 1900

5.3 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NGUNI NAMES OF GOD



In any cultural group the names of its traditional God/gods always have a significant value for its members. Nguni-speaking communities have something comparable to the Hebrew understanding of God and His different names. In Gen. 1-3 there are two names for God, i.e. *Elōhîm* (gods literally, but translated as God in the singular) and *YHWH* (Lord)¹³. The first one indicates the sovereignty of the deity, the holy and omnipotent God. The second one indicates a relational deity. In the Nguni communities one finds *Qamatha* (God)/ *Nkulunkulu*¹⁴ (Great great One)/ *Mkhulumnqande* Grandfather stop him/her), names which are similar to the Hebrew

¹³ For a discussion of these names cf. in Botterweck and Ringgren (1977 and 1986).

¹⁴ Hermanson (2001) deals with the names of God in Zulu.

name of the God of the Israelites, *YHWH*, and this name signifies a highly respected God. In the olden days one was not at any time allowed to point one's finger upwards, for that was viewed as being disrespectful to the holy God. The name *Qamatha* is viewed by many Nguni-speaking people as a name used by the most conservative Xhosa-speaking Nguni communities. Some even go to the extent of saying that *Qamatha* is different from the God of the Hebrew Bible. The name used in the place of *YHWH* in the Nguni Bible translations is *Yehova*¹⁵. The name *Qamatha* does not appear anywhere in the Xhosa Bible translation. This is probably due to the way missionaries perceived the Nguni ways of doing things and understanding. The missionaries presumably associated *Qamatha* with paganism and this name could therefore not be used in the translations.

The Hebrew word *YHWH* cannot be translated directly; instead the English uses "Lord" as its equivalent. *Nkosi, Mlimu, Thixo, Ndikhoyo*¹⁶ these names are similar to "Lord". In the Nguni context *Nkosi* has the connotation of a headman/king. The concept of *Nkosi* deals with the idea of relationship and the king always had a relationship with his subjects. He was the protector and when things went wrong and people ran to him for solutions. The king was a very important figure in the traditional Nguni communities. This is exactly what is meant by the names *Nkosi* and *Mlimu* in Nguni culture.

¹⁵ This name is translated in English as Jehovah. This is a misreading of the vowels in Biblical Hebrew which added the Aramaic name שְׁמָיָהּ (*shema* – "the name") or Hebrew Adonai (Lord). The more acceptable pronunciation would be "Yahweh".

¹⁶ Hermanson (2004) discusses some of the names of God among Xhosa-speaking communities.

5.4 SUMMARY

The role of a missionary is that of a messenger. The message that was brought by the missionaries was that of God in a foreign culture. This is exactly where the challenge lay, because Nguni people were used to their own God who was understood in their own cultural context. Nevertheless, the missionaries improved the conditions of the Nguni-speaking people in the following areas:

- Writing and reading;
- Printing houses;
- Provided employment opportunities;
- Provided the necessary infrastructure – medical and educational facilities.

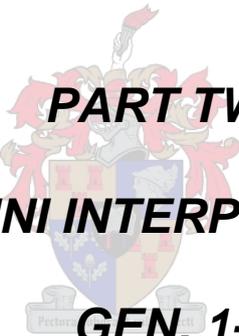
The missionaries came to South Africa and entered the Nguni-speaking communities as early as 1799. Various religious institutions were established, e.g. missionary churches, missionary hospitals, missionary schools, etc., and because of this many Nguni-speaking people were converted to Christianity. What led to a setback in the work of the missionaries was their approach. They attacked the ancestral worship and Nguni traditions, e.g. *intonjanel iqhude* – girls' initiation; *ulwaluko* – circumcision; *igqirha* - the diviner; *lobola* – dowry/bride price, etc.

The important question that arises now is: how does one address or respond to this challenge? The fact is that the Nguni communities are not so different from what they used to be when the missionaries came. The same problems that the missionaries encountered are still the same problems that preachers and ministers of various religious persuasions are struggling with. Gen. 1-3 gives some clues towards

handling this situation. God and not gods created the universe and human beings. Adam and Eve had an open and free-flowing communication with God. They would hear God walking in the Garden in Eden. There was no go-between. But after sin entered, then humankind could no longer enjoy that open communication with God, because sin separates God and His creation. As a way of restoring the relationship that God and human beings had enjoyed, the sacrificial offering system was instituted. This, however, was a temporary provision that pointed to Christ as the solution to the problem. God must be central in Nguni-speaking communities and not ancestors.

The missionaries were confronted with these issues as they began to do their missionary work, and unfortunately the way they dealt with some of these issues derailed their work.





PART TWO
THE NGUNI INTERPRETATION OF
GEN. 1-3

CHAPTER SIX: INTERVIEWS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this day and age gathering information/data is essential. However, *how* one gathers that data (and, needless to say, interprets it) becomes extremely important. There are various ways of gathering data and the question that arises is: how credible is that information? In this chapter the focus will be on gathering data using the qualitative interview technique. Qualitative interviewing falls under the interpretative paradigm, which deals with the interpreter, the coherence of truth and understanding the context of discovery. Interviewing is getting other people's stories. It is evident that when people tell stories, they *select* details from their stream of consciousness. Seidman (1998:1) suggests that the root of the word *story*¹ is the Greek word *history*, which means one who is "wise" and "learned" [so it describes a *person*]. The fact is that what makes telling stories a meaning-making experience is the process of selecting the essential details of an experience, reflecting on them, giving them order and thereby making sense of them. Vygotsky (1987:236 and 237) once said that every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness, which gives something to the most complicated social and educational issues, because social and educational issues are abstractions, based on the concrete experience of people.

¹ The Greek word *history* means *research* (as in Herodotus) as opposed to Seidman's (1998) explanation of the word.

The purpose of interviewing² is not just to obtain answers to questions, nor is it a tool to test or evaluate hypotheses. Rather it is undertaken in the interest of understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. Seidman (1998:4) offers a fascinating point that an interview allows the interviewers to put behaviour in context and provides access to understanding their action. It is also the purpose of the researcher in this chapter to look at the strengths and weaknesses of this technique. The interpretative approach always stresses subjectivity, showing that it is very difficult to remain neutral on issues. However, when one gathers the data, objectivity is expected as far as possible so as not to influence data obtained from the researcher's respondents.

6.2 THEORY AND STRUCTURE OF INTERVIEWS

It is evident that regardless of the type of interview, there is always an image of the research subject lurking behind persons placed in the role of interview respondent (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). In traditional approaches subjects are basically conceived as passive vessels of answers for experiential questions put to respondents by interviewers. If one wants to obtain accurate experiential information, one then has to formulate questions and provide an atmosphere conducive to open and undistorted communication between the interviewer and the respondent. The subject behind the respondent is construed as active, and constructively adds to, takes away from, and transforms the facts and details, which the respondent is, in

²I concur with Seidman (1998:3) in his description of the purpose of interviewing in general.

effect, subjectively creating. Silverman (1997:117) argues that objectivity or the epistemology of an interview is assessed in terms of the following:

- (a) Reliability – the extent to which questioning yields the same answers whenever and wherever it is carried out;
- (b) Validity – the extent to which inquiry yields the “correct” answers.

When the interview is seen as a dynamic, meaning-making occasion different criteria apply and the focus is on *how* meaning is construed, the circumstances of construction and the meaningful linkages that are made for the occasion (Silverman 1997:117). The validity of answers derives from the ability to convey situated experiential realities in terms that are locally comprehensible. The interviewer must shake off self-consciousness, suppress personal opinion and avoid stereotyping the respondent. To make sure that the respondents are speaking directly from their pool of possible answers, the interview must be conducted in private. Creative interviewing³ is a set of techniques for moving past the mere words and sentences exchanged in the interview process and this can be achieved by mutual disclosure⁴ (Silverman 1997:119). Douglas offers a set of guidelines for creative interviewing:

- (a) Genius in creative interviewing involves 99 percent perspiration (Douglas 1985:27), this means that getting the respondent to disclose in detail requires much more work than obtaining mere opinions;
- (b) “Researcher know thyself” (Douglas 1985:51), a continual self-analysis on the part of the interviewer (researcher) is necessary, lest the creative

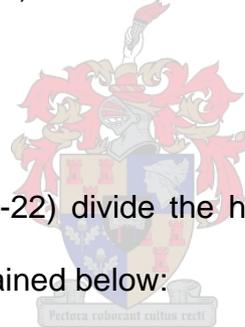
³ Creative interviewing, as we shall see throughout, involves the use of many strategies and tactics of interaction, largely based on an understanding of friendly feelings and intimacy, to optimize cooperative, mutual disclosure and a creative search for mutual understanding (Douglas 1985:25).

⁴ The interview should be an occasion that displays the interviewer’s willingness to share his or her own feelings and deepest thoughts (Silverman 1997:119).

interviewer's own defence mechanisms work against mutual disclosure and understanding;

- (c) Show a commitment to disclosure by displaying an abiding interest in feelings, i.e. the creative interviewer is driven by friendly, caring and admiring feelings (Douglas 1985:29).

Silverman (1997:121) argues that the meaning is constituted at the nexus of the *hows* and the *whats* of experience, by way of interpretive practice (the procedures and resources used to apprehend, organize and represent reality). Active interviewing is a form of interpretive practice involving respondent and interviewer as they articulate ongoing interpretive structures, resources and orientations with practical reasoning (Silverman 1997:121).



Denzin and Lincoln (1999:13-22) divide the history of qualitative research into five phases which are briefly explained below:

- (a) The Traditional Period – covers the period between the early 1900s and the World War II. The focus in this phase is validity, reliability and objective interpretations;
- (b) The Modernist Phase – builds on the canonical works of the traditional period. The focus in this phase is social realism, naturalism and slice-of-life ethnographies. This period covers the years between World War II and 1970s. It is in this phase where new interpretive theories were encountered i.e. ethnomethodology, phenomenology, critical theory and feminism. In this phase post-positivism functioned as a powerful epistemological paradigm;

- (c) Blurred Genres – covers the years between 1970 and 1986. Qualitative researchers in the phase had a full complement of paradigms, methods and strategies to employ in their research. It is surprising to see how theories have developed in this period; they range from symbolic interactions to constructivism, naturalistic inquiry, positive and post-positivism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, critical (Marxist), semiotics, structuralism, feminism, etc.;
- (d) Crisis of Representation – It ruptured in the mid-1980s with anthropology as cultural critique (Marcus and Fischer 1986), the anthropology of experience (Turner and Bruner 1986), writing culture (Clifford and Marcus 1986), works and lives (Geertz 1988), and the predicament of culture (Clifford 1988). These works call into question the issues of gender, class and race. Validity, reliability and objectivity, which had been settled in earlier phases, are once more problematic in this phase. Writers continue to challenge older models of the truth and meaning, and interpretive theories are now more common;
- (e) A Double Crisis – a double crisis of representation and legitimisation confronts qualitative researchers in the social sciences. Poststructuralism and postmodernism are associated with interpretive, linguistic and rhetorical turns in social theory. The double crisis presents two assumptions, i.e.
- The qualitative researchers can directly capture life experiences and this is the *representational crisis*;
 - The second assumption makes the traditional criteria for evaluating and interpreting qualitative research problematic and this is the *legitimisation crisis*.

This necessitates a serious rethinking of such terms as validity, generalizability and reliability, which are already retheorized in post-positivist, reconstructionist-naturalistic (Lincoln and Guba 1985:36), feminist (Fonow and Cook 1991:1-13, Smith 1992) and interpretive (Atkinson 1990, Hammersley 1992, Lather 1993) discourses.

The research process is defined by five phases (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:24-30) which are discussed below: -

(1) The Researcher – must confront the ethics and politics of research.

(2) Interpretative Paradigms – qualitative researchers are philosophers guided by highly abstract principles, which combine beliefs about ontology⁵, epistemology⁶ and methodology⁷. These beliefs shape how the qualitative researcher sees the world and acts in it. A paradigm may be defined as the net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises (Guba 1990:17).

The Positivist and Post-positivist paradigms work from within a realist ontology and objective epistemologies and rely on experiential, quasi-experiential, survey and rigorously defined qualitative methodologies (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:27). The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:27). In this paradigm credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. Finally, feminist, ethnic and cultural studies models privilege a materialist-realist ontology.

⁵ What kind of being is the human being? What is the nature of reality?

⁶ What is the relationship between the inquirer and the unknown?

⁷ How do we know the world, or gain knowledge of it?

The real world makes a material difference in terms of race, class and gender; subjectivist epistemologies and naturalistic methodologies (ethnographies) are also employed, while empirical materials and theoretical arguments are evaluated in terms of their emancipatory implications (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:27 & 28).

Table 1 presents these paradigms and assumptions including their criteria for evaluating research and the typical form that an interpretive or theoretical statement assumes in the paradigm.

TABLE 6:1

Paradigm/Theory	Criteria	Form of Theory	Type of Narration
Positivist/	internal, external validity	logical-deductive	scientific report
Post-positivist		scientific, grounded	
Constructivist	trustworthiness, credibility	substantive-formal	interpretive case
	Transferability, confirmability		studies, ethnographic
			Fiction
Feminist	Afrocentric, lived experience,	critical standpoint	essays, stories.
	Dialogue, caring, accountability		experimental writing
	Race, class, gender, reflexivity		
	Praxis, emotion, concrete		
	Grounding		
Ethnic	Afrocentric, lived experience	standpoint, critical	essays, fables, dramas
	Dialogue, caring, accountability	historical	
	Race, class, gender		
Marxist	emancipatory theory, falsifiable	critical, historical	historical, economic
	Dialogical, race, class, gender	economic	sociocultural analysis
Cultural studies	cultural practices, praxis, social	social criticism	cultural theory as
	Texts, subjectivities	criticism	

INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:27)

It appears that the criteria from gender and racial communities in Table 6:1 above (African American, South African, etc.) may be applied (emotionality and feeling, caring, personal accountability, dialogue). The cultural studies paradigm is multifocused, with many different strands drawing from Marxism, feminism and the postmodern sensibility and the focus is on how race, class and gender are produced and enacted in historically specific situations (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:28).

(3) Strategies of inquiry and interpretive paradigms – they describe a flexible set of guidelines that connects theoretical paradigms to strategies of inquiry and methods for collecting empirical material and they also situate the researchers in the empirical world and connects them to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material, including documents and archives (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:28)



(4) Methods of collecting and analysing empirical materials – the researcher has several methods for collecting empirical materials ranging from the interview to direct observation, to the analysis of artefacts, documents and cultural records, to the use of visual materials or personal experience (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:29). In this phase the researcher may use a variety of different methods of reading and analysing interviews or cultural texts, including content, narrative and semiotic strategies, and the investigator seeks ways of managing and interpreting these documents.

(5) The art of interpretation – Qualitative research is endlessly creative and interpretative. The researcher first creates a field text consisting of field notes and documents from the field by “indexing” (Sanjek 1990:386) and “filework” (Plath

1990:374). Denzin (1999:30) advocates the interpretive practice of making sense of one's findings as both artful and political, and programme evaluation is a major site of qualitative research.

Below is a graphic overview of qualitative research types. Table 2 deals with the research interest in the characteristics of language. Table 3 deals with the research interest in the comprehension of the meaning of text/action. Table 4 deals with the research interest in the discovery of regularities and, finally, the researcher has compiled Table 5 based on the research types dealt with in Tables 2-4.

TABLE 6:2

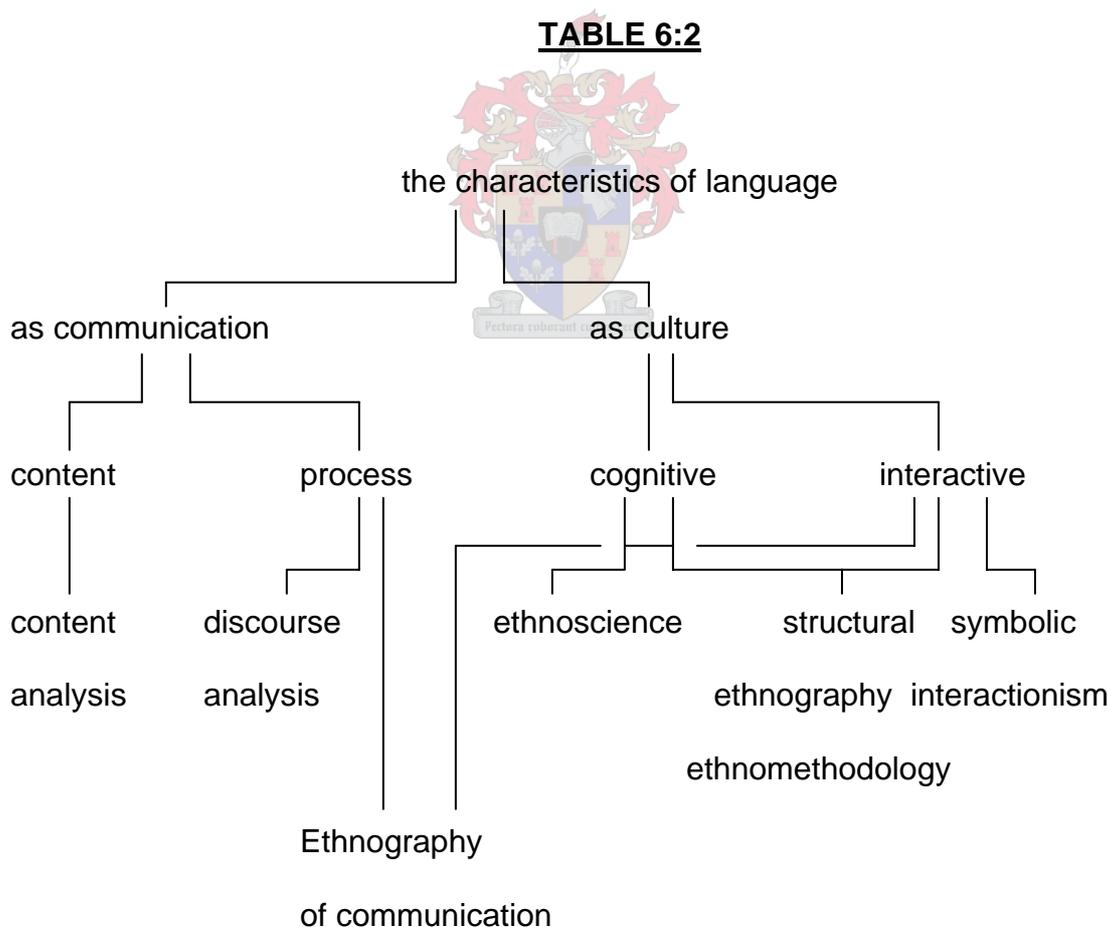


TABLE 6:3

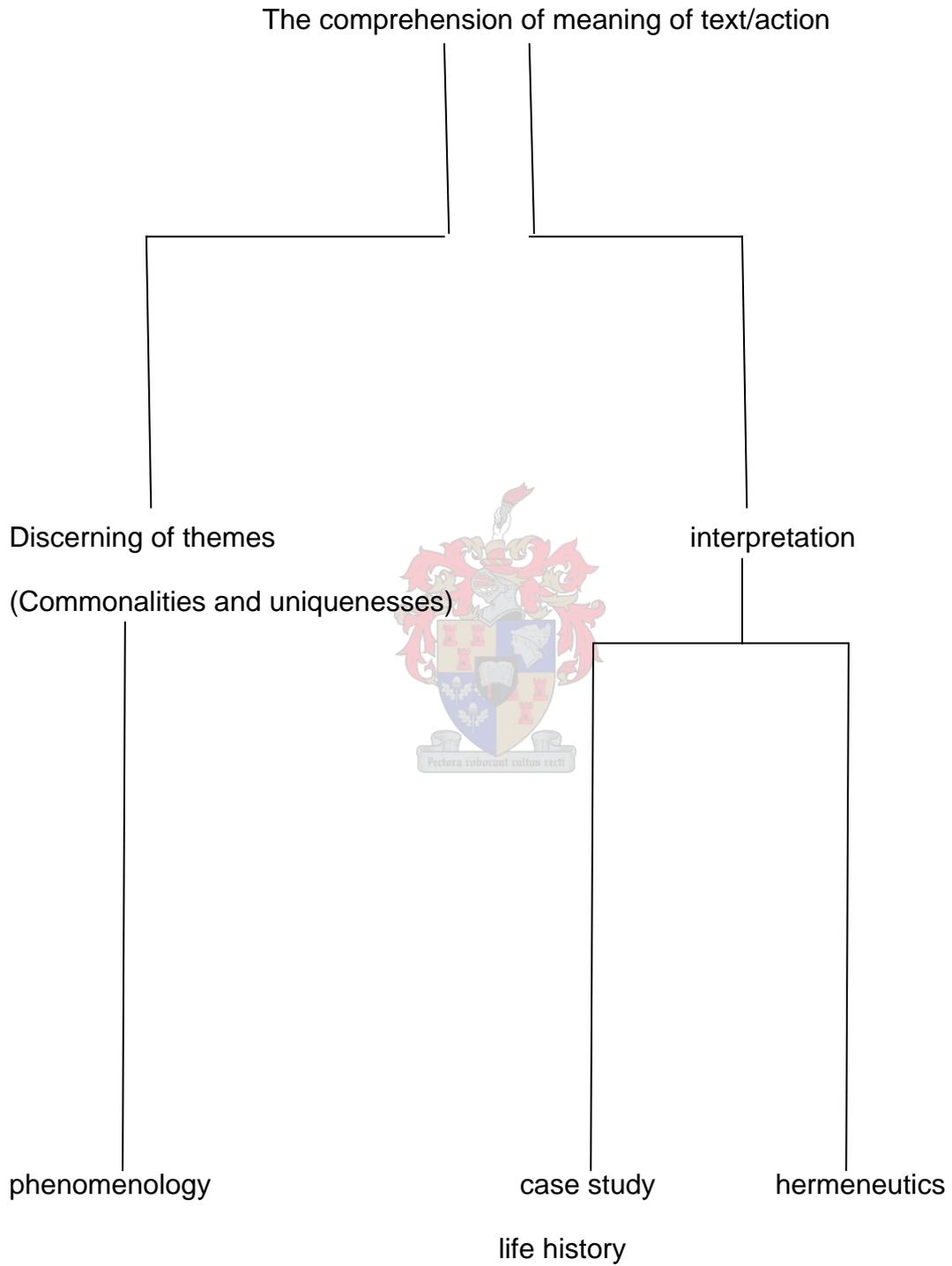
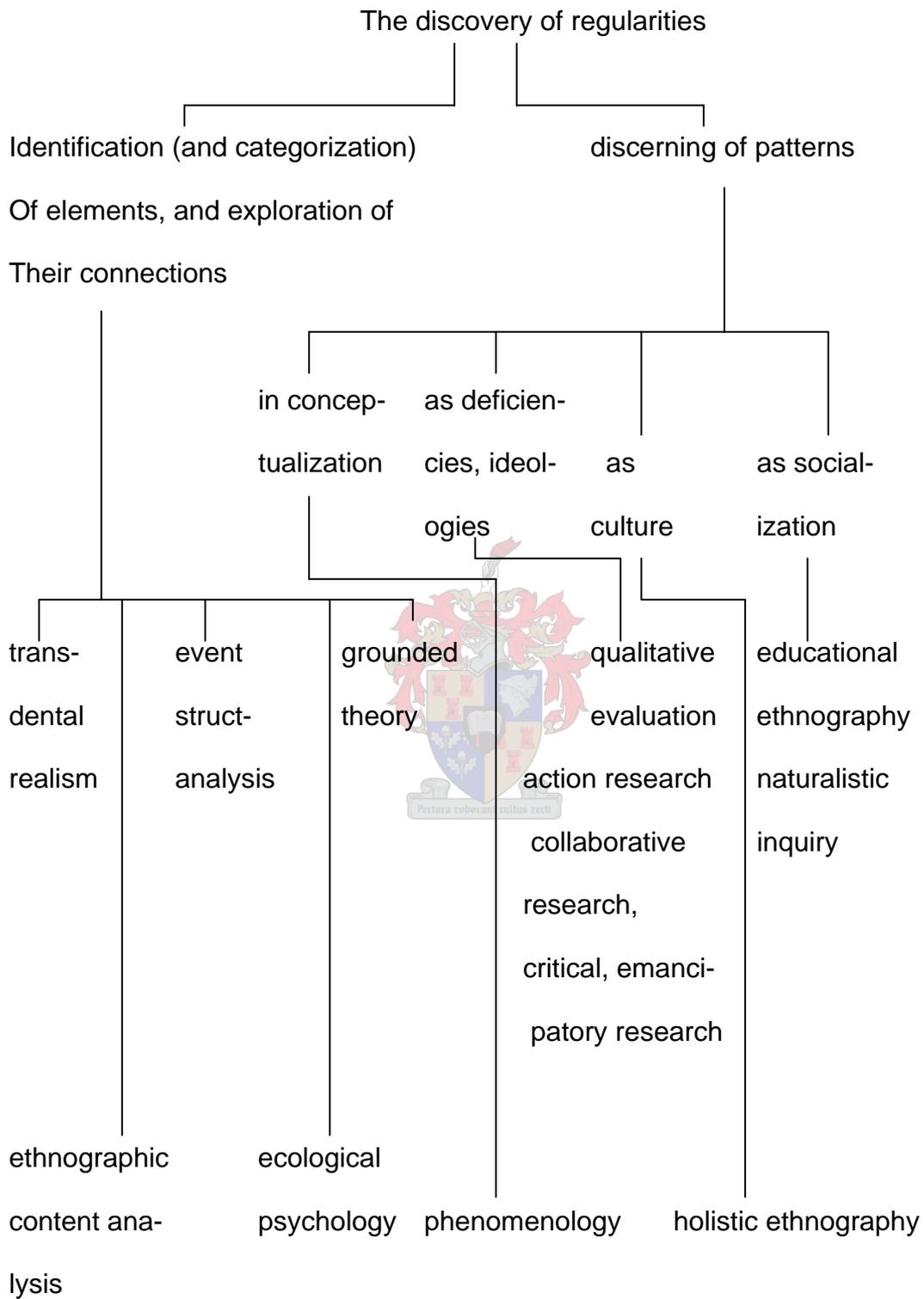


TABLE 6:4



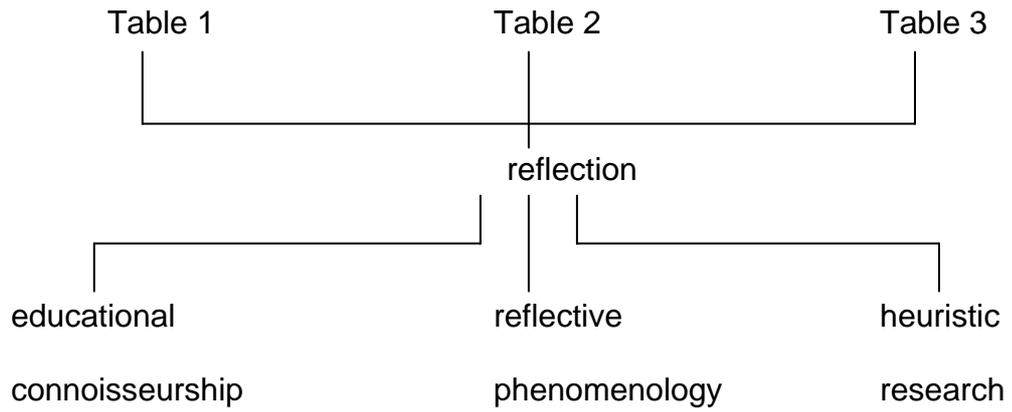
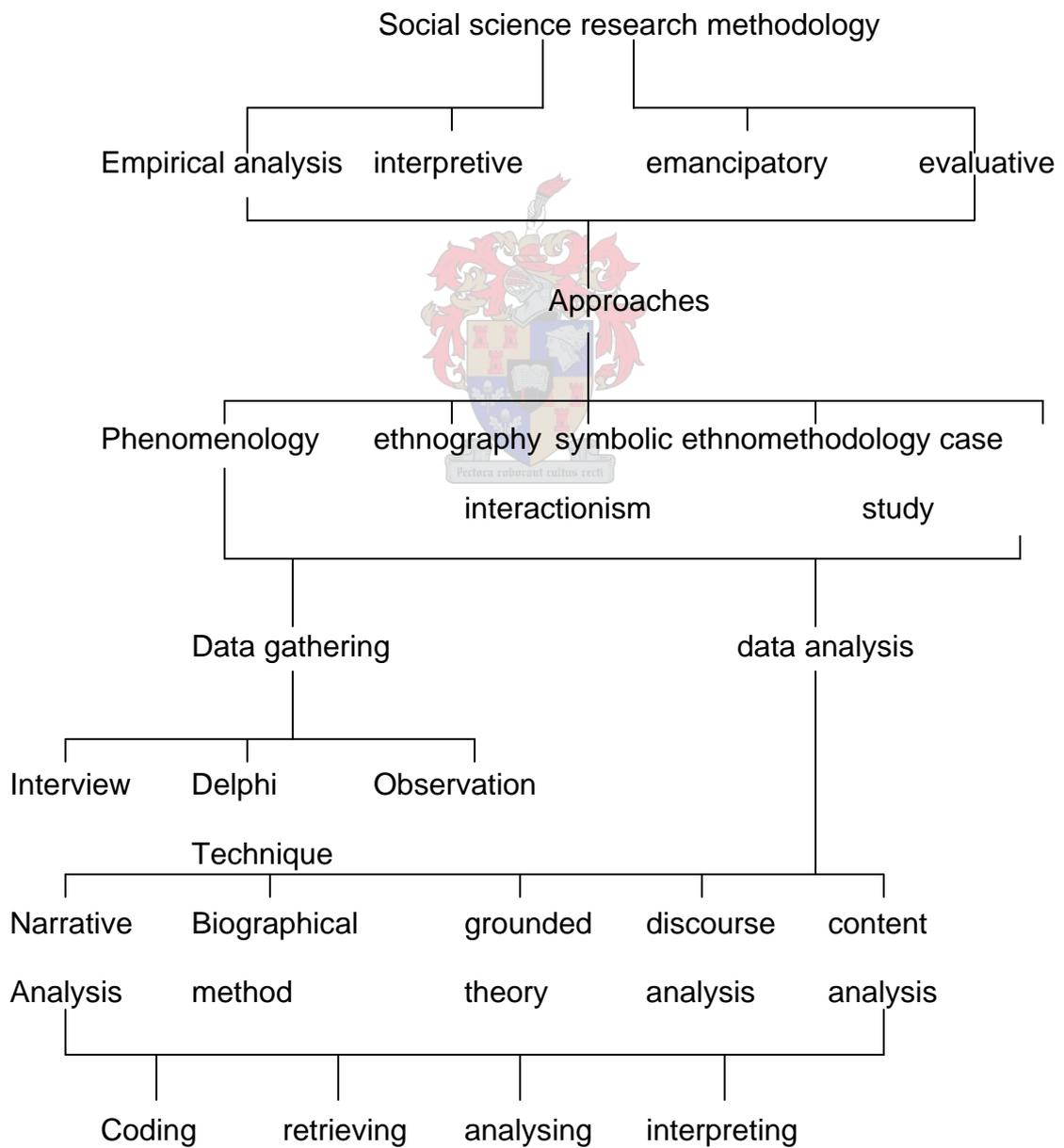


TABLE 6:5



6.3 THE CREDIBILITY OF INTERVIEWS

At the end of any research the researcher presents a report, article or book to share what she/ he has learned. The vital question is: why should anyone believe what the researcher says or writes? Therefore the research should be well designed; it should convince both the researcher and the readers that what the researcher has concluded is valid. It is clear that the standards for good and convincing research of quantitative research (validity and reliability) are different to those of qualitative research.

The researchers judge the credibility of qualitative work by its transparency, consistency/coherence, and communicability. A brief description of each of these standards is outlined below: -

- Transparency – a reader of a qualitative research report should be able to see the basic processes of data collection (Rubin & Rubin 1995: 85). The reader is able to assess the intellectual strengths and weaknesses, the biases and the conscientiousness of the interviewer. Rubin & Rubin (1995:87) argue that the original records of notes or recordings of the interviews should be kept in ways that others can read or play back and it is also best to prepare a transcript⁸. It is also advisable to keep a record of how the researcher has organized and analysed the transcripts. The researcher should keep a notebook separate from the rest of the interview notes in which she/he indicates the process of research interviews.

⁸ A transcript is a written version of an interview and even in this research work interviews will be in the form of a transcript.

- Consistency – a credible final report should show that the researcher checked ideas and responses that appeared to be inconsistent (Rubin & Rubin 1995:87). The difference between the quantitative research and the qualitative research is that in qualitative research the goal is not to eliminate inconsistencies as is the case with quantitative research, but instead to make sure the researcher understands why they occur. The issue of consistency covers the areas mentioned below:
 1. Coherence of the themes – it means that one can offer explanations for why apparent contradictions in the themes occurred and what the contradictions mean (Rubin & Rubin 1995:87);
 2. The consistency of individuals – readers might doubt the credibility of what was learned, if the report shows that an interviewee was saying things that did not matter and the researcher failed to examine why (Rubin & Rubin 1995:89). The researcher can deal with the contradictions by asking gently about them;
 3. Consistency across cases – credibility is increased when the researcher can show that core concepts and themes consistently occur in a variety of cases and in different settings (Rubin & Rubin 1995:90). To show credibility across cases one has to think through the implications of a proposed theme and then check to see if the implications occur as expected.
- Communicability – the portrait of the research arena that one presents should feel real to the participants and to readers of one's research report (Rubin & Rubin 1995:91). The researcher must create an environment where the readers who never have been in his/her research setting should feel confident

that they now can find their way around the arena that the researcher describes. As a way of increasing the research communication, the researcher should encourage the interviewees to talk about their first-hand experiences rather than acting as informants on the experiences of others.

Rubin (1995:91) advocates research that is designed to garner lots of evidence; that is vivid, detailed and transparent; that is careful and well documented; that is coherent and consistent, and that is going to be convincing. Transparency, consistency and communicability are the standards through which qualitative interviewing studies gain credibility.

6.4 INTERVIEWS

Among methods of collecting data is an *interview*, which is the favourite methodological tool of the qualitative researcher. There are four major forms of interviews i.e. structured, semi-structured, unstructured and open-handed open-ended interviews. The interview is a conversation, which involves the art of asking questions and listening; the interviewer creates the reality of the interview situation (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:36). The interview then produces situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes and it is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, ethnicity and gender (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:36). Interviews follow a variety of forms such as individual, face-to-face verbal interchange, face-to-face group interviewing, mailed or self-administered questionnaires and telephone surveys. Interviews vary from 5 minutes to spanning in life history interviews not sure how this should read. Rubin & Rubin (1995) state that

some form or another of interviewing has been with us for a very long time, as even ancient Egyptians conducted censuses of their population. The ancient Sumerians already kept records on clay tablets by this time. Charles Booth is credited as being the first individual to develop a social survey relying on interviewing (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:48). It is also understood that opinion polling was another early form of interviewing. Qualitative interviewing was practised with participant observation methods. Below is a brief discussion on the various forms of interviews.

(a) Structured interviewing – refers to a situation in which an interviewer asks each respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:52). In this form of interview, the interviewer controls the pace of the interview by treating the questionnaire as if it were a theatrical script to be followed in a standardized and straightforward manner. In the structured form of interviewing there is very little flexibility in the way questions are asked or answered in the structured interview setting and instructions to interviewers often include some of the following guidelines (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:52):

- Never get involved in long explanations of the study; use standard explanation provided by supervisor;
- Never deviate from the study introduction, sequence of questions, or question wording;
- Never let another person interrupt the interview; do not let another person answer for the respondent or offer his or her opinions on the question;
- Never suggest an answer, agree or disagree with an answer. Do not give the respondent any idea of your personal views on the topic of the question or survey;

- Never interrupt the content of a question; just repeat the question and give instructions or clarifications that are provided in training or by supervisors;
- Never improvise, such as by adding answer categories, or make wording changes.

The interviewer should play a neutral role and not interject his or her opinions of the respondent's answers; and the interviewer should also establish a "balanced rapport"⁹. Even though the guidelines minimize errors, they do occur and they stem from three sources:

- (1) Respondent's behaviour¹⁰;
- (2) The type of questionnaire or the wording of the questions; and
- (3) An interviewer with flawed questioning techniques or who changes the wording of the interview.

In the light of the fact that there is no single interview style that fits every situation, the interviewer therefore must be aware of respondent differences and must be flexible enough to make proper adjustments for unanticipated developments (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:53). It is something to understand the mechanics of interviewing and yet another to understand the respondent's world and forces that may stimulate or retard response.

(b) Semi-structured interview is suggested by Groeben (cf. in Flick 1997:82) as a method for reconstructing subjective theories¹¹. The interview guide mentions

⁹ An interviewer on the one hand must be casual and friendly but on the other hand he/ she must be directive and impersonal (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:52).

¹⁰ It is when the respondent gives a "socially desirable" response to please the interviewer or omits relevant information to hide something from the interviewer (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:53).

several topical areas and each of these is introduced by an *open question*,¹² e.g. Could you please tell me briefly what you understand by the term “Nguni”? This is the first type of question in the semi-structured interviews. The second type of question is *theory-driven* as well as *hypothesis-directed*; these are based on the researcher’s theoretical presuppositions. The relations formulated in these questions serve the purpose of making the interviewee’s implicit knowledge more explicit (Flick 1997:84). The third type of question is *confrontational* questions. Flick (1997:84) argues that the confrontational questions respond to the theories and relations the interviewee has presented up to that point in order to critically re-examine these notions in the light of competing alternatives.

(c) The focused interview – this kind of an interview has been designed to meet the following needs:

(1) Non-direction – this is achieved by asking several forms of questions such as unstructured questions, semi-structured questions and finally the structured questions. It appears that problems may arise if questions are asked at the wrong moment and the interviewee is thus prevented from rather than supported in presenting his or her view, or if the wrong type of question is used at the wrong time (Flick 1997:77);

(2) Specificity – this means that the interview should bring out the specific elements, which determine the impact or meaning of an event for the interviewee, in order to prevent the interview from remaining at the level of general statements (Flick

¹¹ The term, “subject theory” refers to the fact that the interviewee has a complex stock of knowledge about the topic under study and this knowledge includes assumptions that are explicit and immediate and which he/she can express spontaneously in answering a question (Flick 1997:83).

¹² Open questions might be answered on the basis of the knowledge the interviewee has immediately at hand (Flick 1997:83).

1997:77). Retrospective inspection should be encouraged as a way of increasing specificity;

(3) Range – this aims at ensuring that all aspects and topics relevant to the research question are mentioned during the interview. Both the interviewee and the interviewer should be allowed to introduce new topics of their own;

(4) Depth and personal context – the interviewer has the task of ensuring that emotional responses in the interview go beyond simple assessments like “pleasant” or “unpleasant”. Flick (1997:79) advocates that a concrete task for the interviewer stemming from this goal is to continuously diagnose the current level of depth, in order to ‘shift that level toward whichever end of “depth continuum” he finds appropriate to the given case’. It is common knowledge that focusing in the interview is understood as related to the topic of study rather than to the use of stimuli such as films;

(5) Group interviews – this form of interviewing can be implemented in structured, semi-structured and unstructured formats. This form of interview is gaining popularity, especially among social scientists. The group interview can be defined as the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in formal or informal settings (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:53). This kind of interview is not a replacement of the individual interviewing, but a provision of another level of data gathering which might look at a certain perspective on the research problem that may not be available through individual interviews. Political parties, candidates interested in voter reactions to issues and politics, and sociological researchers have used the group interview format successfully. Denzin & Lincoln (1999:54) state that the group interview is essentially a qualitative data-gathering technique that finds the interviewer/moderator directing the interaction and inquiry in a very structured or very

unstructured manner, depending on the interview’s purpose. It is also important to note that the group interviews can be used for triangulation¹³ purposes or can be employed with other data gathering techniques. Table 6:6 below indicates the types of group interviews and their dimensions.

TABLE 6:6

Type	Setting	Role of interviewer	Question Format	Purpose
Focus Group	Formal-preset	Directive	Unstructured	Exploratory pretest
Brainstorming	Formal or informal	nondirective	very unstructured	exploratory
Nominal/Delphi	formal	directive	structured	pretest exploratory
Field, natural	informal	moderately	very unstructured	exploratory
	Spontaneous	nondirective		phenomenological
Field, formal	preset, but in field	somewhat directive	semi structured	phenomenological

Type of group interviews and dimensions (Denzin & Lincoln 1999:55)



Denzin and Lincoln (1999:55) state that the group interview has the advantages of being inexpensive, data rich, flexible, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding, and cumulative and elaborative over and above individual responses. Group interviewing is still a viable option for qualitative interviews.

(6) Unstructured interviewing – this kind of interview provides greater breadth than the other types, given its qualitative nature. The different ways and attempts to “get in” vary tremendously, but they all share the common goal of accessing the setting or gaining access to setting. The following issues are very important in this kind of interview:

¹³ In triangulation, a researcher uses multimethod approaches to achieve broader and often better results (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:73).

- Understanding the language and culture of the respondents – it is very dangerous to depend on interpreters as some researchers do and unfortunately they become vulnerable to an added layer of meanings, biases and interpretations that may lead to disastrous misunderstanding;
- Deciding on how to present oneself – one is confronted with many questions before deciding as to how he/she will present him/herself. Some of those questions are as follows:
 1. Is the representation from a certain organisation or academic institution?
 2. Is the interview going to be approached as a woman-to-woman or woman-to-man or man-to-man discussion?
 3. Do the researchers dress like the respondents?
 4. Do the researchers represent the colonial culture or present themselves as learners?

This decision is very important in order to help the researcher to decide on how to present him/herself;

- Locating an informant – it is very important for the researcher to find an insider, a member of the group studied, willing to be an informant and to act as a guide to and translator of cultural mores and at times jargon or language (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:59). A good informant helps the researcher to minimize and avoid unnecessary mistakes;
- Gaining Trust – there are issues in life that one can ask about and a person may be willing to respond, e.g. what is your opinion on the air pollution or how can one shape the education in the public schools in such a way that it focuses on the current needs of the various communities? However, there are

also issues that require the gaining of trust, e.g. are you sexually active or what is the frequency of your sexual intercourse? Gaining trust is essential to an interviewer's success and it is very fragile; hence the researcher should be aware that any *faux pas* may destroy days, weeks, months or years of painstakingly gained trust;

- Establish Rapport – the nature of an unstructured interview should establish rapport therefore it is of paramount importance for any researcher to establish rapport (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:60). The researcher must put him/herself in the role of the respondents and attempt to see the situation from their perspective, rather than impose the world of academia and its preconceptions upon them (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:60). The researcher should also be careful, because it is easy for him/her to have a close rapport with the respondents, which may create problems as he/she may become a spokesperson for the group and lose his/her academic role.



(7) Other types of unstructured interviewing – some of these types will be briefly looked at below: -

- Oral History – these types of interviewing differ from the unstructured interview in purpose. They have the same methodology. Oral history is a way to reach groups and individuals who have been ignored, oppressed and/or forgotten (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:61). Oral history has also found popularity among feminists as a way to understand and bring forth the history of women in a culture that has traditionally relied on masculine interpretations (with mostly male authors, such as the Bible);

- Creative Interviewing – this is used more conventionally as a sociological tool. The interviews as well as the interviewer must be creative, forget the “how-to” rules and adapt themselves to the ever-changing situations they face (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:62). Forgetting the rules allows research subjects to express themselves more freely and a great voice in both research process and research report is guaranteed.
- Postmodern Interviewing – polyphonic in postmodern interviewing is one way of doing postmodern interviewing. The voices of the subjects recorded with minimal influence from the researcher and that are not collapsed together and reported as one through the interpretation of the researcher (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:62). According to Denzin (1989:15), the interpretive interaction follows in the footsteps of creative and polyphonic interviewing but adds a new element, that of epiphanies (this is described as those interactional moments that leave marks on people’s lives and have the potential for creating transformational experiences for the person). Critical ethnography relies on critical theory; it is the ethnography that accounts for the historical, social and economic situations (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:62 and 63). The concept of “oralysis” is also introduced here and refers to the ways in which oral forms, derived from everyday life, are, with the recording powers of video, applied to the analytical tasks associated with literate forms (Ulmer 1989:xi).

(8) Gendered interviews – the problem of gender applies to the ethnographic interviews and it occurs in both anthropological as well sociological fieldwork. Some problems are traditional and may be heightened by the sex of the interviewer. A solution to the problem might be to view the female anthropologist as androgyne or to

grant her honorary male status for the duration of her research (Denzin and Lincoln 1999:65). What Denzin has just mentioned here may be true in certain sectors of the community; however, in other sectors of the community this may not be necessary. Denzin (1999:65) brings up a very important point in that feminist researchers have suggested ways to circumvent the traditional interviewing paradigm. It is has been suggested that interviewing is a masculine paradigm embedded in a masculine culture and stressing masculine traits, while at the same time excluding from interviewing traits such as sensitivity, emotionality and others that are culturally viewed as feminine. Oakley (1981:49) stresses that there is no intimacy without reciprocity. Methodologically, this new approach (showing the human side, answering questions and expressing feelings) provides a greater spectrum of responses and a greater insight into respondents or participants to avoid the hierarchical pitfall (Reinharz 1992:22).



(9) Framing interviews – it is very important for the researcher to decide how to link the main questions to each other and determine the strategy for following up on what he/she hears (Rubin and Rubin 1995:159). They state that there are two patterns of structuring the interviews:

- The tree-and-branch model – it is likened to a tree. The trunk of the tree is the core topic and the branches are the main questions. In this model the main questions establish the overall sequence of what is asked. The purpose of this model is to help when the interviewer has an overall topic worked out and wants to paint a complete picture by exploring the separate parts that go together

- The river-and-channel model – it is likened to a major river that merges different currents into a single stream and then breaks into separate channels, possibly combining again later into a single stream. This model is based on the follow-ups, each building on the previous one, all tied together with one interest in a single theme. The purpose of this model is to help the interviewer to explore one theme in depth and detail, to understand it well, and be willing to explore the issue to the exclusion of other themes.

6.5 SUMMARY

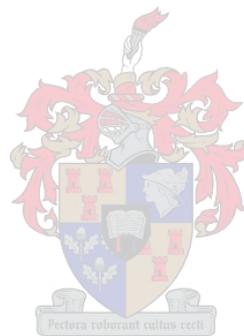
Interviewing technique is one of the most important aspects of a successful interview. The interview questionnaire, which plays an integral part of this chapter, is included as Appendix 2. The theory and practice have been discussed at length in this chapter, with a special emphasis on types of interviews. Interviewing needs discipline, especially on the part of the interviewer. When one processes the information, one needs to keep in mind one's audience. In most interviewing methods (Silverman 1997:54-69) the following elements play a crucial role:

- Greeting – “Hi” or “It is good to see you” serve as verbal markers to start the conversation
- Lack of explicit purpose – there are three important elements in this area i.e. (1) ethnographic explanation, (2) explicit purpose and finally (3) ethnographic questions. Without being authoritarian, the ethnographer gradually takes more control of the talking, directing it in those channels that lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant;

- Avoiding repetition – this is one of the clearest rules in friendly conversations; however, this assumption is not part of the informant interview;
- Asking questions – helps one to enquire about the other person. These questions allow talking about personal matters within the framework of interviews;
- Expressing interest – the questions themselves should indicate interest in the other person with expressions such as “Really”, “That sounds great”, etc.;
- Expressing ignorance – functions in the same way asking questions and expressing interest e.g. “We have never been to that part of the country” may be an expression of ignorance and an important means to encourage the other person to go on talking;
- Taking turns – helps keep the encounter balanced. Turn-taking allows people to ask each other the same questions, such as “What did you do this summer?”;
- Abbreviating – friendly conversations are filled with references that hint at things or only give partial information. It is as if both parties are seeking an economy of words; they are avoiding filling in all the details on the assumption the other person will fill them in;
- Pausing – may function to indicate the parties wish to discontinue talking, i.e. they may be thinking in order to answer a question or may wish to change the topic of conversation;
- Leave taking – occurs just before actual physical separation when the parties will not be able to talk further, e.g. “I think I’ll read a little now”.

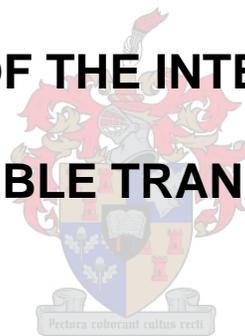
The interviews in this research will follow the approach depicted in Table 6:5. Delphi techniques will be used. As a means of interpreting the data, coding, retrieving, analysing and interpretation will be employed.

Qualitative interviewing opens broader worlds to study. It offers a good place to start learning how to hear others. Qualitative interviewing is a great adventure and in every step of an interview brings new information and opens windows into the experience of the people that one meets.



PART TWO

THE ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS, SERMONS AND BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



CHAPTER SEVEN: ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS, SERMONS AND BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at the interviews which were conducted among Nguni-speaking people. They reflect how the Nguni-speaking people “received” the first three chapters of the Hebrew Bible. The interviewees or informants were chosen from various categories in Nguni communities ranging from the religious, academic and political spheres. Since there is very little published material available in this regard, interviews play a very important role.

Nguni-speaking preachers have preached sermons extracted from the passages under discussion. These sermons reflect the thinking in Nguni communities when it comes to the concepts of “cosmogony”, “God” and “the fall”. Some of the Nguni preachers are black liberation theologians whose approach is theo-political¹. These sermons are preached either in Nguni languages or in English, but the intended audience is Nguni-speaking communities. Even in this area one will notice that in Nguni culture oral tradition is the most important tradition. Most sermons are preached with no written scripts. Therefore, spoken preached sermons will be analysed.

¹ This is the theology of liberation which is based upon the conviction that God is always on the side of the oppressed and the have-nots, and that He will see to it that such people are delivered from their oppressors, just as He freed the Israelites from their bondage (Deist 1984:259).

The Nguni printed Bible translations are also important because they bring the Hebrew Bible to the Nguni communities in languages that the people can identify with. The question that one needs to look at is: how relevant and accurate are these translations? Is the wording used in the translations conveying the same message as appears in the Hebrew Bible? Are Nguni-speaking people involved in these translations? Do these translations fill in the “gaps” in the Hebrew Bible, if there are any? The Bible translations are very helpful to the Nguni communities; what may be important is to improve the quality of the translations. For the purpose of this study, the terms “culture/s” and “language groups” will be used interchangeably.

7.2 THE ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS



Conducting interviews was one of the most important avenues that needed to be explored. Touring South Africa and Swaziland was a very demanding but enriching experience. It is fascinating to see how these four language groups in the Nguni communities understand, perceive and interpret some religious issues. The targeted groups in these interviews were politicians, church leaders, academics and ordinary people on the street. A sample of the interviews in questionnaire form appears at the end of this research as Appendix 2. The analysis and the interpretation of these interviews will follow the following format:

- The data will be interpreted from one language group to another;
- The data will be interpreted according to certain target groups within a culture where possible
- The data will be interpreted as one unit from the Nguni language groups.

7.2.1 Swazi belief system

The point of departure will be Swaziland. Generally all Swazi-speaking people believe that God² created the universe and everything in it. None of the interviewees was able to give a detailed explanation on the question of creation in the Nguni belief system. There are details as to how this happened and this is spelt out clearly by the words that almost all the interviewees [traditional leaders] used: *akusimcoka kutsi sadalwa njani* [it is not important to us as Swazi-speaking people to know how we were created] (Interviewees 3C:354 Q1D, 4D:362 Q1D and 3E:369 Q1D). The concept of God creating man in His own image and after His likeness is foreign; it is only known as a biblical concept. It appears to some of the interviewees that this supreme God created and immediately after that distanced himself from the creation and, as such, there is no clear connection between God and His creation (Interviewee 3B:347 Q1G). In biblical terms the sun and the stars function as season and time markers; the same concept is part of Swazi belief system. This is clearly marked by the following words: *“impeka bafati”* [time to cook – usually in the afternoon, etc.] (Interviewee 3B:347 Q1H).

There is a predominant view among the Swazi-speaking communities that the worship of God revolves around two important issues, i.e. ancestors and monarchy (Interviewees 3A-G:340 Q2B, 347 Q2B, 355 Q2B, 363 Q2B and 370 Q2B). Even before the missionaries came, Swazi-speaking people were worshipping God. The

² *Mvelincanti* is the Swazi traditional God. *Mvelincanti* is a compound noun. *Mveli* – means “appear” and *ncanti* means “first or prior to someone else” (Interviewee 3B:345 Q1A).

reason why the interviewees believe that monarchy plays a vital role in worshipping God is that any new belief system that comes must first be introduced by the king (Interviewee 3C:357 Q3B). It is believed that what the Hebrew Bible condemns as sin had already been condemned in Swazi ancestral worship (Interviewee 3C:355 Q2). Swazi-speaking people had this belief that God is sovereign and holy, therefore no one can approach God. He can only be approached through a medium, i.e. ancestors. According to one of the interviewees, the mediation of the ancestors³ between people and God is a mystery so as is the incarnation of Jesus (Interviewee 3C:355 Q2B). Both God and the ancestors are invisible. *Mvelincanti* was on a mountain and the king would summon people to worship Him there. Worshipping God to Swazis is a public act, hence the monarchy plays a dominant role; furthermore the ancestral worship is personal, hence each family would have a cow for ancestors which will be a holy cow in the family. The Western concept of evolution is a very foreign concept among the traditional Swazi-speaking communities (Interviewees 3A:341 Q2D, 3B:347 Q2D, 3C:355 Q2D, 3D:363 Q2D, 3E:370/1 Q2D, 3F:377/8 Q2D and 3G:384 Q2D), even though in the institutions of learning there is a growing concern that more and more young people are exposed to these Western concepts.

When the missionaries came to Swaziland, they gained access through the king;⁴ however, the problem then was that missionaries were communicating in English.

³ The only way to worship or speak to the ancestors is through blood. It is also believed that the ancestors have the blood of the living through the process of procreation.

⁴ King Somhlolo who had a vision and in the vision he was advised that the *Ngwane* [Swazi] sons and daughters must choose *umculu* [Bible – for knowledge and learning] and not *kinobho* [money – silver]. King Somhlolo was king Sobhuza I, the first king of the siSwati-speaking people. King Sobhuza I reigned in Swaziland in the 19th century A.D. era.

The missionaries made a positive contribution in that they brought infrastructure and education (Interviewees 3A:342 Q3D, 3B:349 Q3D, 3C:357 Q3D, 3D:365 Q3D, 3E:372 Q3D and 3G:386 Q3D). Schools, hospitals, clinics, churches, etc. were established. Schools helped the Swazi-speaking people to write their language and even their names. The missionaries faced challenges among the Swazi-speaking people; some of those challenges will be briefly outlined below.

- The problem of enculturation⁵ - the missionaries undermined the culture of the Swazi-speaking people. The missionaries came with the idea that there was nothing good in the Swazi culture. As a result there are three ecumenical bodies in Swaziland, (Interviewee 3B:349 Q3B), i.e. 1. Conference – [Evangelical and Pentecostal], 2. Council – mainline/ orthodox churches. These two bodies are called missionary churches, and 3. the League – [all the indigenous churches]. These churches have kept the Swazi culture as it is and they have also adopted the gospel presented by the missionaries and this group is in the majority.
- When missionaries came to *kaNgwane* (this is the siSwati word for Swaziland), they did not find people dying, because there were traditional healers (Interviewee 3C:357 Q3D). These traditional healers were not accepted by the missionaries and yet they were well accepted in the communities. Hence the Swazis have a belief that missionaries were not the first people to deal with health issues.

⁵ Enculturation here has to do with getting into the culture as a baby (that means the removal of preconceived ideas), as well as the indigenization of the gospel among the Swazi-speaking people.

- The assumption that the Swazi-speaking people were “heathens” resulted in a criticism which was based on ignorance and a superiority complex.

In Swazi culture there is a positive link between the patriarchal system and Swazi society⁶. In the Swazi mind there was no time when people were innocent and, by the same token, there is no concept of the original sin. The concept of *ubuntu* is the epitome of recognizing upright living and connected with social responsibility (Interviewee 3B:350 Q4B). The snake in Swazi culture is understood in two ways: (a) as an enemy – it represents negativity, untruthful and undependability; (b) as a friend – it can be a symbol of the presence of an ancestor (Interviewees 3A-G:343 Q4C, 350 Q4C, 358 Q4C, 366 Q4C, 373 Q4C, 380 Q4C and 387 Q4C).

When it comes to Bible translations, the Swazi-speaking communities did not have a Bible in *siSwati*, instead they were using an old Zulu translation. The Zulu translation did not meet all the Swazi-speaking people’s language demands, hence there is a need for a *siSwati* translation. Certain terms, concepts and imageries have not been put across to the satisfaction of the Swazi mind, especially the ordinary person on the street⁷. One of the interviewees stated categorically that some concepts in the

⁶ This concept of patriarchalism came through and through, especially from both the religious leaders as well as the academics.

⁷ It was a surprise to discover that all the interviewees highlighted this point as one of the issues that hinder the fast spreading of the gospel in Swaziland even in this era (Interviewees 3A-G:338-388).

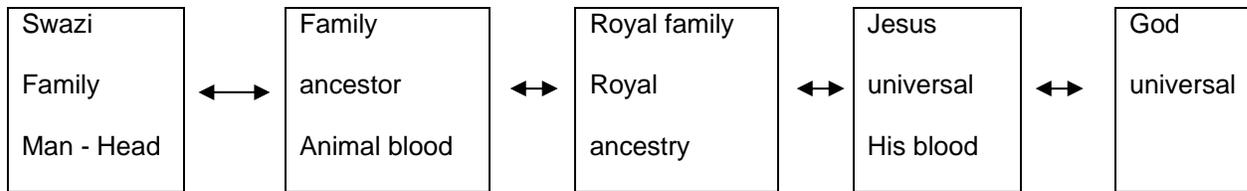
siSwati Bible (1996) are heavily coloured by Hebrew societal thinking⁸ (Interviewee 3B:349 Q4 and 351 Q5).

7.2.1.1 Analysis of certain target groups

There seems to be a gap between academic Swazi-speaking people and other target groups in certain aspects. One of the interviewees in the academic category stated categorically that even though the Hebrew Bible deals with the concept of the image of God, among Swazis there is a different concept (Interviewee 3B:346 Q1F). That concept is that man came out of a reed plant which was swollen and burst into two people, i.e. a man and a woman, and this has no direct connection with the superpower. However, this view has been heavily criticized by all other Swazi-speaking people in other categories. In the academic category, it has been stated clearly that there is no connection between God and the people, because after creation this God distanced Himself from the people (Interviewee 3B:347 Q1G), while all other categories believe that God is active through the mediation of the ancestors (Interviewees 3C-G: 355 Q2B, 363 Q2, 370 Q2B, 377 Q2B and 384 Q2B). In the religious sphere confusion is noted when it comes to the role played by ancestors and Jesus in mediation, Jesus's mediation is labelled as the "new theology", while other categories have not identified this confusion (Interviewees 3A, E: 340 Q2B and 370 Q2B).

Instead, they see the ancestors and Jesus complementing each other, i.e.

⁸ The idea of the woman as inferior or as the property, and of the man as the head of the family and his status elevated compared to that of the woman.



7.2.2 Ndebele belief system

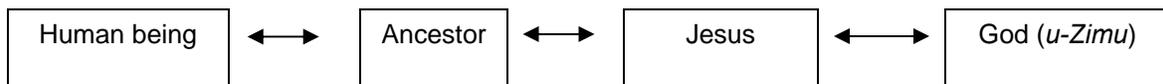
Ndebele-speaking people believe that *u-Zimu*⁹ created the universe, but details of this creation are not known. However, there is an understanding that a man/woman came from *umhlanga*¹⁰ (Interviewee 4A:390 Q1D). The Ndebele call themselves *abantu abanzima* (Black people) (Interviewee 4A:389,390 Q1A). *u-Zimu* in Ndebele communities is regarded as a most powerful male God (Interviewee 4B:397 Q1B). It is a common belief among Ndebele-speaking communities that humankind was fashioned after *Zimu's* likeness, but the details of the concept are not known (Interviewees 4A-E:390 Q1F, 397 Q1F, 405 Q1F, 412 Q1F, 419 Q1F). Ndebele-speaking communities understand evening and morning in terms of time as opposed to a 24-hour day (Interviewee 4B:398 Q1H). Worship in an Ndebele community revolves around ancestors (Interviewees 4A-E: 390 Q2, 398 Q2, 405/6 Q2, 412/3 Q2 and 420 Q2). One of the interviewees put it like this: "*Abezimu*¹¹ deal with life issues and success while Christ deals with spiritual issues which are a church concept", (Interviewee 4C:406 Q2B). Ndebele-speaking people believe that *u-Zimu* created a communication line through rituals between Him, ancestors and human beings. The

⁹ *U-Zimu* is a personal name of God in the Ndebele context.

¹⁰ This is the reed that burst and brought out two people.

¹¹ This is the term used by Ndebele-speaking people for ancestors.

following are important for a ritual, i.e. (a) a white goat, sheet or chicken; (b) traditional beer/ sour milk; (c) the kraal (Interviewee 4B:398 Q2). *Abezimu* are understood in the context of a local or family deity and *u-Zimu* communicates well with *Abezimu*, while the God of the missionaries did not gain ground in kwa-Ndebele. It appears that based on the responses of Ndebele-speaking interviewees on various questions on the interviews, the following line of protocol could then be suggested:



Ukuphahla,¹² as Ndebele-speaking people would say (Interviewee 4C:406 Q2), was always done at the kraal where the ancestors always visit. In Ndebele communities rituals such as circumcision, *intonjane*¹³ and *iqhude*¹⁴ etc. are always associated with *Abezimu*.



The missionaries did not come with a new religion; rather they came with a structured belief system (Interviewee 4B:399/400 Q3). The messages of the missionaries mostly had a negative impact among the Ndebele-speaking communities because (Interviewees 4A-E: 372 Q3D, 379 Q3D, 386 Q3D, 393 Q3D and 400 Q3D):

- They looked down upon the Ndebele culture;
- They looked down upon the Ndebele traditional attire;
- The language they used was a barrier to their message;
- They also undermined the Ndebele belief system.

¹² A term used for speaking to the ancestors.

¹³ A female circumcision.

¹⁴ The celebrations conducted during and after the female circumcision is done.

However, the negatives highlighted above do not mean that there was nothing positive (interviewees' 4B-E: 400 Q3D, 408 Q3D, 415 Q3D and 422 Q3D):

- Educational facilities;
- Health system;
- Infrastructure;
- Economic development; and
- General worldview;
- A different perspective of belief system.

To date most Ndebele-speaking people are members of the African Indigenous churches, who recognize fully the ancestral worship and the worship of *u-Zimu* in a traditional manner. Even though the missionaries used kwa-Ndebele for the Berlin mission in Vaalman, they had very little impact (Interviewee 4A:392 Q3). They used Sotho-speaking ministers to penetrate the Ndebele-speaking communities, but that also was in vain (Interviewee 4A:392 Q3). The law of God was kept even before the missionaries came, hence the word *ubuntu* (Interviewee 4B:400 Q3B).

It appears that in Ndebele-speaking communities a woman is viewed as someone who played a dominant role in Gen. 3. It is argued that part of the problem is that a woman gains her identity through a man; therefore in the absence of a man a woman may easily go off track (Interviewee 4C:408/409 Q4B).

The issue of sickness and suffering is attributed to two aspects (Interviewees 4A:393 Q4B):

- The witchdoctors¹⁵ who would bewitch people [this is sometimes called black magic or black science];
- The ancestors show their unhappiness.

To rectify the situation one has to visit the traditional healers for sickness and suffering as a result of being bewitched or the traditional doctors [*amagqirha*] for sickness and sufferings as a result of angry ancestors. Generally, Ndebele-speaking women are obedient, respectful and, finally, their value is associated with marriage. Ndebele-speaking communities are generally known as polygamous societies.

In their context polygamy elevates the status of a Ndebele woman [*umntu wasesibuyeni*] and a Ndebele man, e.g. *u-Nzimande upheka ngomlilo omunye* – that means *Nzimande* has one wife¹⁶] (Interviewees 4A:393 Q4B, and B:401 Q4B).

In Ndebele communities a snake is viewed as (Interviewees 4A-D:394 Q4C, 401 Q4C, 409 Q4C and 415/416 Q4C):

- Dangerous and cunning; and
- It is also seen as a friend of the family, i.e. those snakes that represent the ancestors of a particular family or families.

The Ndebele language is still a developing language in South Africa. As yet there is no complete Bible in Ndebele, but only the New Testament and some translated portions of the Hebrew Bible. Therefore, the Ndebele-speaking interviewees have

¹⁵ This term here is used in the negative sense, i.e. someone who does not heal but have an ability to kill or cause a calamity among families.

¹⁶ This is not acceptable and they justify their position using some of the Bible characters.

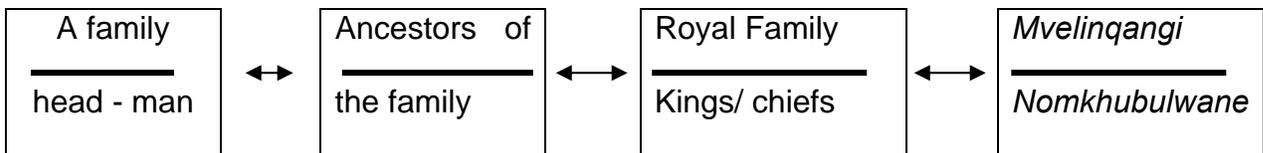
commented on the Zulu Bible, which they are still using as their language is still developing. The translation is a challenge as the Zulu translation does not communicate to the ordinary person on the street. In Ndebele culture the kings/chiefs are the custodians of the Bible and religious beliefs (Interviewee 4A:395 Q5D). All the Ndebele interviewees have the same understanding of Ndebele culture and its belief systems, as it is reflected on the interview transcripts.

7.2.3 Zulu belief system

In Zulu-speaking communities the creation of the universe is attributed to *Mvelinqangi* [a self-existent God who appeared first]. How, when and how long is not an issue of concern. Zulu-speaking people see themselves different from God instead their likeness is associated with the ancestors (Interviewees 2A:303 Q1F, and D: 325 Q1F). It is an accepted norm among Zulu-speaking people that the worship of God cannot at any given time be divorced from ancestral worship. There is an understanding that God is worshipped mostly in times of crises (Interviewee 2C:319 Q2). There were rivers and mountains identified for the worship of *Mvelinqangi*. Royalty would also play a very dominant role. The worship of God is divided into two (Interviewee 2D:326 Q2C) i.e.:

- Locally – through sacrifices made to the family/ clan ancestors;
- Nationally – through the king's command at the time of the need.

If the problem has to do with agriculture, *Nomkhubulwane*¹⁷ is appeased, while all other requests would be directed to *Mvelinqangi* (Interviewee 2D:327 Q2E). Having heard and read various areas of the interviews conducted among Zulu-speaking interviewees, one is tempted to suggest the adoption of the following line of protocol in terms of worship (Interviewees 2A-D:304/305 Q2A-E, 311/312 Q 2A-E, 318/319 Q2A-E, 326/327 Q2A-E and 333/334 Q2A-E):



At first the missionaries and their messages were accommodated by the Zulu-speaking people, because all Nguni-speaking people are supposedly syncretistic in nature (Interviewee 2C:320 Q3A). However, later the missionary influence was reassessed, especially now that it had to do with the crucial issue of land¹⁸. The missionaries were now considered as colonialists who colonized people in their own land (Interviewee 2A:306 Q3D). It appears that the missionaries could have done more work among Zulu-speaking people, if they had changed their approach. Their challenge was the concept of enculturation, which was foreign to them because of cultural differences and different worldviews.

¹⁷ *Nomkhubulwane* is the queen of heaven [*inkosazana yeZulu*]. A field would be ploughed for her and the produce will be eaten first before any field is harvested.

¹⁸ The land is seen as a blanket that covers ancestors hence the land is communal among all Nguni-speaking groups.

In traditional Zulu-speaking communities, sin is understood as doing something wrong against God as well as against the norms of society. A certain percentage of the Zulu interviewees brought a perspective that the concept of sin (i.e. the original sin) is sex and this was the “forbidden fruit” (Interviewees 2A:307 Q4E, 2E:386 Q4E). This concept is popular even today and it does carry weight among the Zulu-speaking communities. There are two concepts related to this issue, (Interviewee 2C:321 Q4B) i.e.:

- Suffering and sickness are understood in terms of someone casting a spell;
- Sickness and suffering are brought by the angry ancestors and this is considered as a medium through which unhappy ancestors communicate.

Zulu-speaking communities understand a snake as (Interviewees 2A-E:307 Q4C, 314 Q4C, 321 Q4C, 329 Q4C and 336 Q4C):

- A symbol of the ancestor – an ancestor visiting the living;
- Dangerous, a double-crosser, etc.

A certain percentage among the Zulu interviewees emphasized the fact that “hard work” is associated with the pronouncement of the judgment as a result of the sin that was committed by Adam and Eve

It appears that some argue that the old Zulu translation is not easily understood, but even though the new Zulu translation may not be the best, it is at least easier than the old Zulu translation (Interviewee 2B:315 Q5C). Others (Interviewees 2D:330 Q5C, 2E:337 Q5C) argue that the new Zulu Bible translations are understood better than

the old one and make texts clear. There is a need for dynamic and literal translations because people live in different areas (Interviewee 2C:337 Q5D). A strong recommendation is that the Bible must use the language of the people (Interviewee 2D:330 Q5D).

7.2.4 Xhosa belief system

The Xhosa-speaking communities believe strongly that *Mvelingqangi* is responsible for creation. This concept is also highlighted by one of the African writers, James J. R. Jolobe (1988). *Mvelingqangi* is also known as *Qamatha* among the Xhosa-speaking communities. *Qamatha*¹⁹ was a very respected deity among Xhosa; one was not even allowed to point one's finger upwards, because that was considered as disrespectful (Interviewees 1A:248 Q2, 2D:271 Q1A). It is not clear to Xhosa-speaking people how long *Qamatha* took to create the universe. The idea of *indzondzobila*²⁰ [bottomless pit] does not necessarily link up with nature in Xhosa-speaking communities. It is seen as a dark place with no hope at all (Interviewee 1E:271 Q1C). All Xhosa interviewees agree that man was created by *Qamatha*; however, there is no detailed information (Interviewees 1A-G:246/247 Q1 & 1A, 255/256 Q1 & 1A, 263/264 Q1 & 1A, 270/271 Q1 & 1A, 278/279 Q1 & 1A, 286/287 Q1 & 1A and 294/295 Q1 & 1A). It appears that this creation was spontaneous and it did not follow any set pattern (Interviewees 1A-G:247 Q1E, 256 Q1E, 264 Q1E, 271 Q1E, 287 Q1E and 295/296 Q1E). The Xhosa believe that they bear the image of God

¹⁹ One of the interviewees (1A:248 Q2 and 1D:271 Q1A) emphasised how *Qamatha* was respected.

²⁰ This is the concept highlighted in the Hebrew Bible in Gen. 1:2.

through the ancestors, i.e. they are like the ancestors and the ancestors are like God (Interviewee 1D:271/272 Q1F). In Xhosa culture the sunset always marks the beginning of a new day (Interviewees 1A:248 Q1H, 1D:272 Q1H & 1F:288 Q1H). There seems to be congruency between the Xhosa concept of a day (evening and morning) and that of the Hebrews. The Xhosa knew times and days, e.g. *ukukhala kwenkukhu zokuqala* [at dawn], *ukuphuma kwekhwezi* [just after the dawn], *ekuseni* [in the morning], *entlazane* [mid-morning], *emini enkulu* [mid-day], *ngorhatyha* [in the evening] and *ebusuku* [at night] (Interviewee 1D:272 Q1H). Important issues and events are marked by years, months or days, e.g. circumcision month is June and all circumcised men count their years in *Silimelas* [*Silimela* is a star that is visible only in June or winter time].



Among the Xhosa-speaking communities, a heap of stones along the way/road would be called *isivivane*; this was for protection. Xhosa would worship by throwing a stone on this heap [*ukuphosa ilitye esivivaneni*] (Interviewee 1D:272 Q2). The main reason for this worship was to **explain one's journey and ask for travelling mercies** [*ukubika uhambo nokucela indlela*].

Worship in the Xhosa communities was twofold, i.e.:

- Collective – the king would summon his subjects to gather either on the banks of the river or on top of a mountain; there were rivers and mountains identified for this purpose;
- Individual – ancestral worship was the gateway to the worship of *Qamatha*.

The Xhosa believe that God is present and actively involved in the affairs of human beings; this is also echoed by Ngani (1964), an African writer, in his book, *Umkhonto kaTshiwo*²¹. In spite of the fact that ancestors are mediators/ intercessors between God and man, both God and ancestors are overseers, and both God and ancestors are supernatural. It is very clear, though, to all the Xhosa interviewees that the ancestors are not God. It appears that even though ancestors may not be God, they serve as the local deities, while God remains the national or universal deity. Xhosa-speaking people use the following names in identifying or describing God (Interviewees 1A-G:249/250 Q2E, 258 Q2E, 266 Q2E, 273 Q2E, 281 Q2E, 289 Q2E and 297 Q2E):

- *Qamatha*- God;
- *Mvelingqangi* –God who appeared first;
- *Sonini nanini* – [ever present];
- *Duma barhwaqele* – [awesome God];
- *Somandla* – [all powerful];
- *Thixo* – God.



It appears that, based on the interviews conducted among Xhosa-speaking communities, the following line of protocol is suggested in their worship of *Qamatha* (Interviewees 1A-G:248/249 Q2A & B, 257 Q2A & B, 265/266 Q2A & B, 273 Q2A & B, 280/281 Q2A & B, 288 Q2A & B and 296/297 Q2A & B), i.e.



²¹ Ngani deals with this issue in the chapter entitled *Qamatha opheZulu ndinike ukubona* [heavenly God grant me insight] in this book (*The Spear of Tshiwo*).

head - man

the family

Kings/ chiefs

Qamatha

The Xhosa had kings and the law even before the missionaries came; this fact is also echoed by S.E.K. Mqhayi (1937), an African writer, in his book, *Ityala lamawele*²². The missionaries did not achieve their goals, even though they targeted important and well-respected people in the community, and as such a great percentage of Xhosa-speaking people was not reached (Interviewee 1A:251 Q3C). It appears that missionaries were more interested in the land and therefore, with hindsight they are perceived by the Xhosa as people who misrepresented the Bible.

The following are the challenges that impacted negatively on the Xhosa-speaking communities (Interviewees 1A-G:251 Q3D, 259 Q3D, 267 Q3D, 274/275 Q3D, 282 Q3D, 290 Q3D and 298 Q3D):

1. They looked down on the Xhosa culture
2. They looked down upon the traditional health care system,
3. They looked down on the traditional attire.

But it is also evident that the missionaries brought schools [formal education], publishing houses and some of the infrastructure that is seen today (Interviewees 1A-G:251 Q3D, 259 Q3D and 267 Q3D).

The Xhosa communities had a law and kings and the breaking of that law was not accepted. However, the word “sin” was not yet in their vocabulary. There is no equivalence of the Garden of Eden in the Xhosa setting (Interviewees 1A:251 Q4A,

²² The case of the twins and various issues.

1D:275 Q4A). The woman is viewed as subservient but important²³ to man. There are instances (especially when times are difficult) where women are blamed for the bad fortune they brought upon the human race. Xhosa-speaking people look at bad fortune in four different ways (Interviewees 1D:275 Q4B, 1F:291 Q4B):

1. Looking and laughing at a disabled person results in a bad fortune;
2. One's life style may result in bad fortune;
3. Doing something wrong or not doing something deemed important and legitimate may also result in bad fortune;
4. Failure to listen to senior people and ancestors may result in suffering and sickness.

Snakes among the Xhosa-speaking can be divided into two types (Interviewees 1A-G:252 Q4C, 260 Q4C, 268 Q4C, 275 Q4C, 283 Q4C, and 299 Q4C):

- Family snakes – these snakes are always symbols of ancestors visiting the family;
- Dangerous snakes – these snakes are poisonous [they represent dangerous people, untruthful people, etc.].

The kraal [*ubuhlanti*] is a no-go area to an outsider (non-family member) because this is where the family ancestors interact with the family members. Names of the parents-in-law are forbidden to be mentioned by a young married woman in the family. Premarital sex was also forbidden area in Xhosa communities (Interviewee 1A:252 Q4E). In certain funerals [as a result of unnatural death], women are allowed

²³ A woman is the manageress at home; she decides when to work in the fields. She gives permission even for selling a cow in the kraal. She is a support system, a source of strength at home.

to attend the funeral up to a certain point, but are not allowed to go to the cemetery (Interviewee 1B:261 Q4E).

It is clear to most Xhosa interviewees that the translated Xhosa Bible is not relevant to the communities it serves (Interviewees 1A-G:253 Q5a & B, 261/262 Q5A & B, 269 Q5A & B, 276 Q5A & B, 284 Q5A & B, 292 Q5A & B and 300 Q5a & B). The language used is problematic and some words are not descriptive, e.g. in Xhosa the word *ukufa* [death] is not accepted when it refers to a human being; the most acceptable word would be *ukubhubha* or *ukusweleka* (Interviewee 1A:253 Q5). The new Xhosa translation has not made things better; instead it has complicated things for the language used in it is not an acceptable form of Xhosa, but an informal “slang” Xhosa. A plea to the Bible society of South Africa: generally accepted principles of translation should be followed. The dignity of the Bible should be maintained (Interviewee 1B:262 Q5D).



7.3 THE ANALYSIS OF NGUNI SERMONS

Sermons have always played a very important role in dealing with the reception of passages in the Bible. The preachers conveyed to their congregations/audience how they have “received” the Gen. 1-3 text. Among the great Nguni preachers are Z.N.S. Fosi, O.T. Mngqibisa, I. M. Buwa, M. Dandala, D. Tutu, N. Ndungane, J. Papu, J. Mani, V. V. Mthini, V.S. Wakaba, M. B. Shugu, R. Khahlana, R. Bartman, L. Mantini, M. Makhathini, P. Ngwenya, N. Sibanda, T.W. Moshani, N. Gamedze, P. Mahlangu, A.Z. Gumede, etc. These preachers have stood up in critical times in the history of

Nguni-speaking communities. Many people in Nguni communities – including the researcher himself – have had the privilege of listening to these preachers and others who are not mentioned by name²⁴ above.

On 4 January 2003 Pastor Moshani was preaching in Mount Frere at Lubacweni church in the Eastern Cape Province. This area is predominantly Xhosa. He brought out the very important aspect that even Nguni-speaking people knew that God created the universe by word of mouth. He argued that there should be a beginning of the universe and God is the only powerful supernatural being known by the Nguni-speaking communities.

Pastor Petros Mahlangu preached in the North West Province at Kuruman on 17 May 2002 and in the Gauteng Province at Katlehong on 28 December 2002. These areas have mixed cultural or language groups. His point was that the ancestors are not self-existent; surely someone created them and that someone can only be God. He went on pointing out that almost everything that this universe has owes its existence to God.

Pastor Nkanyiso Gamedze preached in Swaziland at Manzini Church on 5 April 2003. Swaziland is predominantly a siSwati-speaking area. He preached a sermon on Genesis 1 and 2 and he highlighted the fact that the Hebrew Bible closes the gap in Nguni cosmogony. In the Nguni cosmogony it is clear that *Mvelincanti*, *Qamatha*,

²⁴ I wish to reiterate that the information discussed below is based on sermons which I attended in various churches as well as provinces.

Zimu or *Mvelinqangi* created the universe, but the details of His creation are missing and the Hebrew Bible complements that aspect.

Nguni perspective before the Hebrew Bible

God created	The details of creation are not known	Universe and everything in it
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Nguni perspective after reading the Hebrew Bible

God created	The details of His creation are supplied	Universe and everything in it
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Pastor A. Z. Gumede preached a sermon in Kwa-Zulu Natal at Manyuseni church on 12 February 2001. This is a predominantly Zulu-speaking area. He identified that all Zulus believe that they are created by *Mvelinqangi*. The other aspect that is important is that names, land and domesticated animals have a great significance among Nguni-speaking communities, as the case is with the patriarchs in the Hebrew Bible.

7.4 THE ANALYSIS OF THE NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

All the Nguni translations seem to follow the same pattern. However, they differ in a few areas. The first verse in the Hebrew Bible carries the same message even in the Nguni translations; however, the old Xhosa translation in this verse sticks to the Hebrew Bible concept of the *heavens* and the earth while the new Xhosa translation, Zulu and siSwati translations have the *heaven* instead of the *heavens* as portrayed in the Hebrew Bible. Probably this is because in Nguni religious culture there is only one heaven and therefore it does not make sense to a Nguni-speaking person to speak about heavens when he/she knows only one heaven. In the second verse of the Hebrew Bible the Xhosa translation (both the 1975 and 1996) adheres closely to the Hebrew Bible. However, the Zulu and siSwati translations bring out another dimension in the use of the word, “bottomless pit”. They use the word *ehlane*²⁵ which actually describes the state of the earth in the beginning and is not limited to the idea of the “bottomless pit” described in the Hebrew Bible. Both the Xhosa and the other Nguni translations (Zulu and siSwati) complement each other and are not necessarily contradictory. Once again, if one compares the translations themselves and the Hebrew Bible, one will notice that the Xhosa and the Hebrew Bible are very close in chapter 2 verse 17. The Zulu and siSwati translations bring another dimension to this verse, i.e. *kepha ungadli kuwo umuthi wokwazi okuhle nokubi, ngokuba mhla udla kuwo uyakufa nokufa*²⁶ (but you must not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die or you will die with death). This

²⁵ *Ehlane* is an uninhabited country, wilderness, a solitary place, deserted place, and quiet corner where there is no fear of being seen (Doke *et al.* 1990:318).

²⁶ Genesis 2:17

translation leaves one with two interpretations i.e. either surely die or die together with death which does not necessarily mean the same thing. It is very interesting to note that even some of the Nguni Xhosa-speaking people actually use the second interpretation when they explain the origin and the concept of death.

Chapter 3 deals with the “fall”. All the Nguni translations follow the Hebrew Bible in narrating what happened in the Garden of Eden. However, the challenge is to see to it that the imagery used in the Hebrew Bible fits well. Unfortunately, in the Nguni communities, it may not carry the same message as it should. For instance, if one looks at the myths and folklore in Nguni culture the fox (or even a hare sometimes) is considered as the most brilliant and crafty animal of all other animals. In Nguni culture the snake has never been used as the symbol of brilliance or craftiness; instead in some clans a snake is seen as a family symbol that will always be around the family. In other Nguni communities a snake is identified with witchcraft and therefore a snake is always considered an enemy. No one in their right mind would begin to talk to, let alone converse with, a snake. The Gen. 3 story of the fall, though important, may be easily misinterpreted and misunderstood because of the imagery used. This compels the reader to pose the question: was the translation done by Nguni-speaking people who knew the culture and the traditional values of the communities, or by someone who knew the language, but not necessarily the culture and tradition behind the language? These translations are not contextualized, rather they are a word-for-word translations without taking into consideration the readership. It will not be acceptable, though, to replace the snake with a fox in the translation, but it would help if the matter can be explained by way of a footnote.

When it comes to the names of God in chapter 2, the new Xhosa translation is rather confusing when it deals with the name YHWH. It uses Moses' experience of the burning bush when he asked if the people are asking, "What is God's name?" what he should say, and the answer was: "Say 'I am who I am'" (or perhaps better translated as "I shall be what I shall be") has sent you (Exodus 3:13 &14). Now because of this expression, the new Xhosa translation has replaced YHWH with "I am" *Ndikhoyo*²⁷. However, this name bears a meaning compared to YHWH which is meaningless in terms of the actual name. In siSwati translations the name used for YHWH is *Simakadze* (Eternal). In the same chapter the new Xhosa translation has used a word which does not necessarily reflect what the Hebrew Bible has reflected.

The word, 'êd in Gen. 2:5 means "fog" i.e. "mist" or "vapour"; it does not mean "steam" as the new Xhosa translation puts it. The new Xhosa translation also brings another dimension when it comes to the creation of man, instead of "dust" it uses the word "ground" or "earth", which is also reflected by the Hebrew word 'âphâr. The Nguni readers can easily identify with this translation as opposed to the earlier translations. The new Xhosa, Zulu and siSwati translations reflect a beautiful alliteration in verse 24 of chapter 2; *mfo-mfazi, ndoda-ndodakazi, ndvodza-ndvondzakati* for the Hebrew *iš – Iššâ* (*man* and *wo-man*), which is not reflected in the old Xhosa translation.

²⁷New Xhosa translation, 1996.

The Bible Society of South Africa has done good work through the translations; however, some of the issues raised in this chapter might help them to improve the quality of translations in the Nguni languages. Copies of Gen. 1-3 in Xhosa, Zulu, and siSwati are included in the Appendices (3A-5) for perusal and referencing. The Ndebele Bible is still in the process of being translated in South Africa.

7.5 SUMMARY

This is the core chapter in this research and the intention was to look at three important aspects i.e. interviews, sermons and the role of Nguni Bible translations.

The interviewees were identified from at least four different categories, i.e.

- Religious background;
- Academic background;
- Political background; and
- Non-religious background.



The interviews themselves were structured to cover five specific areas, i.e.

- God and His creation – looking at how He created, and the importance of creation;
- God and His worship – how God was worshipped in the Nguni communities before the missionaries came into the picture;
- The role played by the missionaries – how they influenced the beliefs of the Nguni-speaking communities;

- The concept of creation and the fall – how did sin come in to the picture and what is the Nguni perspective of sin; and finally
- The Nguni Bible translation – how effective and efficient are these translations?

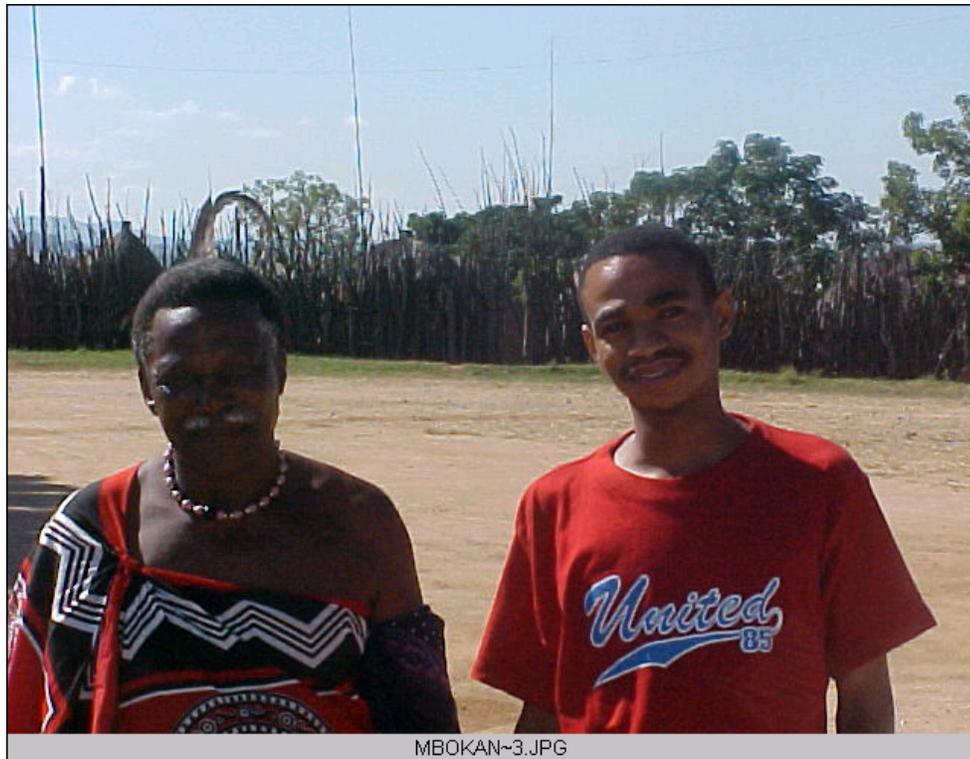
Twenty-one different interviews on a one-to-one basis were conducted. Two focus groups were also conducted, with each group having at least four people.

In all the interviews there is a common trend, i.e.

- Nguni cosmogony is not detailed, but the Hebrew Bible is;
- The Nguni cosmogony does not concern itself with other things except human beings. As opposed to the Hebrew Bible, the human beings are created after the ancestor's likeness, not God's;
- The ancestors play a dominant role among Nguni-speaking people and this does not bother the majority of the Nguni-speaking people, since they do not believe that there is a clash between worshipping their ancestors and worshipping God;
- In all Nguni communities the royal families played a very significant role when it came to accepting the missionaries and their new belief system.

The kraal was central in ancestral worship and it played a very significant role in Nguni communities. See the picture below of a kraal that was taken in April 2003 in Swaziland:

Figure 7:20



Behind the picture of Honourable J. Gama and Ronald Seikaneng is a Swazi traditional kraal at Ludzidzini in Swaziland

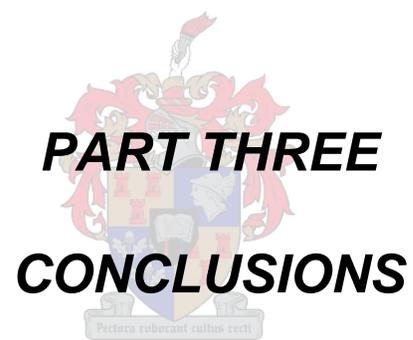
Nguni preachers come from the background highlighted above. Preachers themselves are divided into at least two groups, i.e. those who are syncretistic in nature (believing both the ancestors and God) and those who see no relationship with ancestors and hold firmly to the beliefs in the Hebrew Bible. Needless to say, these preachers reflect or represent the diversity among Nguni-speaking people in religious issues. In this chapter four sermons have been analyzed. Nguni speakers claim that creation had always been credited to God.

As far as Nguni Bible translation is concerned, the Bible Society has done a splendid job; however, there are some challenges that should be looked into, e.g.

- The relevance of the translation to the Nguni communities in the 21st century and beyond;
- The language used in the Nguni translation must take account of the dynamic changes in the everyday use of the language in Nguni communities;
- The background of the translators is very important since it informs what kind of translation one will get at the end.

The three components that have been examined in this chapter are all vital to the understanding of the Nguni reception of Gen. 1-3.





CHAPTER EIGHT: THE RECEPTION OF GEN 1-3 IN NGUNI CULTURE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The reception of Gen. 1-3 in Nguni communities is not just the mere assimilation of information from one community by another. The Nguni-speaking people received and interpreted Gen. 1-3 in a unique way. They made their own contribution in their understanding of Gen. 1-3.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to indicate how the Nguni-speaking communities received Gen. 1-3 by analyzing and clarifying the question: What happens to a cosmogonic myth when it is transferred from one community to another? The first aspect that constitutes the core of this chapter is Gen. 1-3 in its Hebrew context and the interviews conducted amongst the respected members of the community. These interviews included ordinary people, religious leaders, as well as community leaders. The second aspect is Nguni Bible translations. The researcher will be looking at the use of language, imagery and the impact of the translation in these communities.

The secondary purpose is to respond to some of the analysis and clarification of the questions posed above by suggesting possible ways forward. The possibilities to be suggested emerge from the dialogue in the Nguni-speaking communities and as a result are far from being prescriptive. This study challenges the ideology of a

superior culture in the religious sphere. West (1995:6) states clearly that it is impossible to understand theologies from a different context unless one is willing to challenge the basic presuppositions of one's own context. Unfortunately, when the missionaries came to the Nguni-speaking communities, they instilled in the people's minds the idea that God is expecting each convert to be Westernized in thought and in practice. Perhaps this experience will help other researchers who will pursue the same trend of thought in future.

8.2 WHAT HAPPENS TO A COSMOGONIC MYTH WHEN IT IS TRANSFERRED FROM ONE COMMUNITY TO ANOTHER?

In addressing this question, one needs to look back at what the researcher followed as a guide in the introduction. The researcher explored the following essential elements: -



- The relationship between the Nguni-speaking communities, missionaries and the Hebrew text; as a result of this relationship, how have the Nguni-speaking communities received Genesis 1-3?
- To what extent do the Nguni Bible translations reflect the Hebrew text? Does the Nguni text convey the meaning of the Hebrew text?
- Does the Nguni text reflect the same imagery, symbols, figures of speech, etc. which are in the Hebrew text?

These are crucial questions and the responses to them can open avenues for those involved in those communities. The point of departure is that each community is unique, and that there is no community that exists in isolation. This hypothesis or presupposition indicates that, even though a community has its own culture and traditions, there is a possibility that a community can borrow certain aspects of another community's culture or tradition and mould them to suit its needs. Based on the approach this research has followed, it is clear that the Nguni-speaking communities received the Hebrew religious ideas documented in Gen. 1-3 in a particular way.

When one receives something, obviously four things happen:

- One assimilates everything and forgets about what one had in the past.

When the missionaries brought the message of God the creator who created the universe and everything in it, they brought another dimension, which was this message or nothing. This kind of an approach led to a particular way of thinking in Nguni communities: their culture and tradition was diabolic and, as such, many people followed their example forsaking everything that they had cherished and loved before. Many people even today still hold this view.

- One would still continue to keep the Nguni culture and tradition in all respects, and at the same time grab the message of Gen. 1-3 as presented by missionaries with both hands. This person therefore will continue to live this double life, i.e. when he/she is with Bible-believing people he/she holds to new

ideas, but when he/she is with Nguni traditionalists, he/she keeps to the old tradition. For instance, if one looks at Gen. 1-3 there is no mediator or go-between God and His people, but because in the Nguni religious belief system the pillar is ancestral worship, one will notice that there are people who would accept the Bible and its teachings, but at the same time continue to offer sacrifices to the ancestors.

- One chooses what one wants to fit into what one already has.

As has been mentioned before, there is no superior culture. All cultures and traditions have their strengths and weaknesses; needless to say, Hebrew culture (as it is portrayed in the Hebrew Bible) had its strengths and weaknesses. Each culture has something good in it. There is no such a thing as a “bad” culture. Some Nguni communities looked at what they grew up with as good and looked at the Hebrew culture that was presented to them and after comparing the two, they picked up what they considered good in this new culture. They then began to mould their own religious belief system that would reflect their identity, that is as Nguni Bible-believing people.

- One has an opportunity to *compare* what one has with what is being given to one and ultimately one has a right to reject the new information. One of the motivating factors for the Nguni people in this group is that they identify themselves with a statement by Takatso Mofokeng (1988:34), which indicates that when the white man came to South Africa, he had the Bible and people

had the land. Then the white man asked everyone to pray and after the prayer, the white man had the land and the people ended up with the Bible. This kind of an approach leaves one with a historical crisis in mind in the South African context. This approach compromises the stance taken by the missionaries and leaves people thinking that the missionaries were tools in the hands of the colonialists. Hence Muzorewa (1985:35) states that there is a thin line between the missionary intention and the intentions of the colonizer.

In short, when a cosmogonic myth is transferred from one language group to another, the following happens:

- That cosmogonic myth is *accepted*, and those who accept it will be influenced by it;
- Only those portions that do not conflict with their cosmogonic myth are accepted. This is called *selective acceptance*. There is not much benefit or influence that one gets here;
- Some will just *reject* every bit of the cosmogonic myth transferred to them and they will continue to resist it at any cost. There is no influence at all, instead hostility is created.

Statements like these have actually created a perception that the Bible was both oppressive as well as liberating. The purpose of this study does not require an in-depth study on this issue. However, there are **distinctive** grounds but in the same vein there are **common** grounds. This perspective leaves one with the idea that

there will always be similarities and differences. The idea of each community being *unique* has to be emphasized.

It is important to note that the Hebrew Bible has enriched the Nguni readers, while the Nguni readers also brought some perspectives to make sense out of the Hebrew Bible. Nguni-speaking people cherish and hold on to the oral tradition; the Hebrew Bible was able to provide Nguni-speaking people with a detailed cosmogony. In the Nguni creation myths, there is no detailed explanation as to how human beings were created, but the Hebrew Bible fills that gap. There is no detailed creation of the universe, including vegetation, in the Nguni cosmogonic myths; however, the Hebrew Bible gives a detailed account of the creation of the universe and everything in it. The Hebrew Bible gives a detailed explanation of how a perfect paradise was marred by sin, but in all the Nguni cosmogonic myths there is no detailed explanation of this. There are similarities, though; in both the Hebrew Bible and Nguni-speaking communities there is a belief in a supernatural being and that being is God. There is also a concept that God is in charge of the human affairs. People are created in the image of God according to the Hebrew Bible, therefore, human beings have some of the attributes that God has, e.g. the concept of “*ubuntu*” (humanness); the freedom of choice; the ability to procreate, etc. Communities or cultures complement each other and do not necessarily compete with each other.

8.3 NGUNI INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS 1-3

The issue of the Nguni interpretation is a very important aspect, when it comes to the reception of Gen. 1-3. Proper interpretation will have to look at three important areas, i.e. the similarities and differences; sermons preached by Nguni speakers and finally the light shed on these issues by the interviews. To begin with, one needs to look at common issues between the Hebrew Bible understanding of cosmogony and the “fall” and that of Nguni-speaking communities. Here is the discussion of these issues:

1. There seems to be a common understanding between these two cultures on the issue of the *origin* of the universe. The Hebrew Bible has a detailed clear account of how this world came into existence, including the creation of humankind. There seems to be an admission that, due to the lack of documentation by Nguni speaking communities, it is not clearly understood how this world came into existence in their culture. However, most of the interviewees were certain that God (*Qamatha*, *Mvelincanti*, *Mvelinqangi* or *u-Zimu*) created the universe [refer to the interview transcripts: question 1A under Appendix 7:246, 302, 338 and 389].
2. The *monotheistic* understanding of God is something common in both cultures. Both cultures can relate to one God who reflects two aspects i.e. (1) the sovereign, awesome, most holy God. In Gen. 1-3 the name used to portray this is אֱלֹהִים (*elohîm*) and in *Xhosa*, *Zulu*, *siSwati* and *Ndebele* it is *Qamatha*, *Mvelinqangi*, *Mvelincanti* or *Zimu* respectively. (2) The other aspect is that of being relational, kind, loving, etc. The name used in Gen. 1-

3 to portray this is יהוה (Yahweh) and the Nguni name/s that portray/s this aspect is/are *uThixo* and or *uNkulunkulu* or *uMlimu*.

- Both cultures agree that human beings are not self-existent, but that a *supernatural* power/ force created them. In the Hebrew Bible that superpower would be understood as God, and in the Nguni communities that would be understood as some traditional God. Humans owe their allegiance to God. Knight (1985:138) puts it in another perspective; the cosmos and humanity did not come into existence by chance or without intention, for some creator God or gods is/are directly responsible for their existence. This is also reflected by the interviews [the interview transcripts: question 1D in Appendix 7:256, 310, 346 and 397 echo the same].
- The *tripartite arrangement* of the universe i.e. heavens, earth and the underworld, is interspersed throughout Gen. 1-3 and also in the history of all Nguni-speaking communities (Ch. 7:97). The Hebrew Bible and the Nguni communities agree that heaven is a home for God, the earth is home to all living creatures including human beings; and finally the underworld in the Hebrew Bible is home for the dead and in Nguni communities it is also the home for the dead¹.

The issues now at stake are those issues that are *distinctive* to each of the communities in question. These issues will be discussed so as to ascertain their impact on the interpretation of Gen. 1-3. These issues are as follows:

¹ The dead in the Nguni culture eras are associated with the ancestral system.

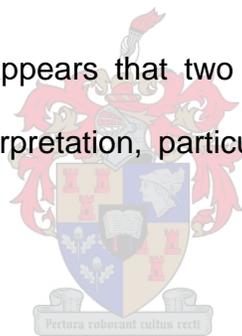
1. The *worship* of the creator God – this remains a big challenge. In the Hebrew Bible it is clear that God is not approached through a medium; there is a direct link between God and the people. However, in Nguni communities, there are those who believed that one cannot approach God directly; one must go through the ancestors. In this regard there is a direct contrast between what the Hebrew Bible presents and what Nguni-speaking people believe [refer to the interview transcripts: question 2B in Appendix 7:265, 3256, 355 and 420).
2. The institution of *marriage*, its functions and the conjugal rights involved in it, have actually posed a big threat to Nguni-speaking communities because polygamy was an accepted norm. Gen. 1-3 is in confrontation with that kind of thinking and practice (Interviewee 3B:350 Q4B).
3. The notion of the *fall* in Gen. 3 is an unfamiliar idea in Nguni-speaking communities. If one follows how death came into existence in Nguni communities, one will notice that human beings did nothing, but God chose for them. However, in the Hebrew Bible the *fall* and death are the results of a choice of a human being. That is why the idea of predestination² is central in many people's minds.

West (1995:105-107) discusses Dworkin's typology which consists of three types of judicial interpretation approaches in the political arena: -

² The God decide syndrome.

- Conventionalism – this is a school of judicial adjudication in which decisions are made based on precedents. This approach assumes that appropriate legal precedents can be identified in a fairly straightforward manner.
- Naturalism – assumes that judicial interpretations must be based on past decisions and precedent is never determinative in isolation but should be interpreted in as wide a context as possible.
- Instrumentalism – concedes that there may be strategic reasons for considering the past in making judicial decisions. Judicial decisions are based upon what will facilitate a more just society and the past has only a pragmatic role in determining the justified decision.

In the Nguni communities it appears that two of these three types presented by Dworkin fit their model of interpretation, particularly that Nguni communities were colonized and oppressed.



In dealing with the interpretation of Gen. 1-3, it is very important that the *feminist interpretation* should also be borne in mind, since chapter 3 of Genesis highlights specific issues about a woman. West (1995:108) argues firmly that in the feminist approach one cannot absolutize the culture in which the Bible was written. He continues to call for a distinction between what is “for an age” and what is “for all time”. Masenya (2002:100) advocates that women were, and mostly still are, passive recipients of male interpretations of the Bible. This is a challenge and an issue that needs to be addressed. In this day and age all sectors of the community must play a prominent role especially in issues like the interpretation of the Bible. However, the

way in which women in the Nguni communities read Gen. 1-3 is a project in itself, rather to be undertaken by women themselves.

The way of worshipping God is always a contentious point in religious interaction. The problem that some people have is that when one becomes a believer one is expected to adopt even the culture of that person who helped one to believe [this is like taking a foreign tree with its foreign soil and planting it in a strange land]. Nguni-speaking people believe that Gen. 1-3 does not take them out of their culture; instead it enhances their culture with a new dimension. The Hebrew Bible has actually filled in the gaps about the identity of God and how He should be worshipped in the culture of the Nguni-speaking people. There are two main views among Nguni-speaking people on the issue of the worship of God.

- Those who *rejected* the ancestral system and accept the teachings of the Hebrew Bible as it is on this issue. The Hebrew Bible clearly indicates that God was in constant communication with mankind in the Garden of Eden and therefore the people can enjoy the same privilege of talking directly to God (Interview 1A:249 Q2B).
- Those who felt that it *seems disrespectful* to come boldly before God - they then decided to marry the ancestral system and the Hebrew Bible teaching on this issue. Their approach is that God is too holy, majestic, sovereign, and therefore ancestors are the best people to communicate through (Interviewee 4A:391 Q2).

In terms of percentages one might guess that the first group has few adherents, while the second group has a lot of supporters and followers. If one visits the Nguni-speaking communities, both views discussed above prevail.

The second area that challenged Nguni-speaking people was the area of *marriage*. Polygamy in the Nguni communities was an accepted norm; however, the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 1-3) does not condone the practice. This issue divided the community into three categories: -

- Those who accepted the Hebrew Bible and its teachings on the matter. They believed that if polygamy was God ordained, it should have been included in the institution of marriage in Gen. 2 (3B:350 Q4B);
- Those who felt that abandoning polygamy is an admission that man is weak and controlled by a woman. Men in the community have a big challenge when it comes to this issue, because the community allows them to have many women and yet women are not allowed to practice the same. This group then decided to marry the polygamist idea and the Hebrew Bible teaching, i.e. one official wife and a number of secret girlfriends/custom-sanctioned wives (3C:357 Q3C);
- If polygamy is accepted, it must also allow women to have more than one husband. Because Nguni communities do not accept this proposition, women find it beneficial to adopt the Hebrew Bible stance in this issue (3B:350 Q4B).

In terms of percentages, one will discover that a large group of people subscribe to the middle view. A small percentage would advocate the first view in this issue. Finally, in view of the discussion above, women would automatically advocate the adherence to the Hebrew Bible, since polygamy does not feature in Gen. 1-3 e.g. Interviewee 3B:350 Q4B.

The third area is the issue of *death and the “fall”* in Gen. 3. The concepts put forth by the Hebrew Bible are in a way foreign to the Nguni-speaking communities. The imagery used does not necessarily carry the same message to an ordinary Nguni-speaking person. A talking snake is something new in Nguni culture and furthermore snakes are considered dangerous in Nguni culture, except those that represent ancestors. If one speaks about a fox or a jackal in Nguni culture, then one begins to talk about animals that are known for their ability to deceive and their craftiness. Even in the Nguni fairy tales these are animals that are known for wisdom, craftiness and talking like a hare. This issue is a direct challenge to the Bible Society of South Africa. It would be advisable if the Bible Society would take into consideration the people’s culture and background to make the Bible more user-friendly.

The following are some of the crucial issues that come up from the Hebrew Bible and have an impact on some of the Nguni perspectives about God and human beings: -

1. The concept of the “image of God” plays a very important part in the Hebrew Bible. This concept is not explicitly explained in the Nguni religious or belief system. Even if this has been mentioned in some of the interviews, there are

no details as to what that really means (Interviewees 1-4 Q1F:247, 256, 264, 271/2, 279, 287, 295/6, 303, 310, 318, 325, 332, 339, 346, 354, 362, 369, 376, 383, 390, 397, 405, 412 and 419). Actually, Nguni communities have adopted this concept from the Hebrew Bible. The concept of the “image of God” gives human beings their identity and their roots. God is not in the “image of human beings”, but human beings are created in the “image of God”. God does not look like human beings; it is human beings that look like Him. It is human beings that emulate God and not God emulating human beings (Baker 1994:5). God remains the Supreme Being, hence human beings have a sovereignty³ covenant. To be created in the “image of God” means to bear God’s image in outward resemblance and inwardly in character (White 1958:45). The concept of “likeness of God” clearly indicates that man is a personal being with the power to think, feel, decide and worship; and man has the ability to make moral decisions and the capacity for spiritual growth or decline.

2. The role of the woman in the Hebrew Bible and Nguni culture and Nguni belief system. The Hebrew Bible is very clear on how a woman was created. Gen. 1 describes both a man and a woman as created in the image of God. Gen. 2 gives some details as to how a woman was created. Both chapters in Genesis do not reflect any idea of patriarchy. One seems to get the idea that both the man and the woman are equal. The woman is given a helper status in Genesis 2:18, but someone who is helping other person does not necessarily

³Sovereignty is a covenant between a superior being and an inferior being.

3. mean that this person has less strength than the person he/she is helping. By implication it can mean that the person who is helped does not have adequate strength alone. Therefore, a woman completes a man; she is not an after-thought. The crucial question arises in Gen. 3, where God does not ask the whereabouts of Eve but of Adam, as if He is holding Adam accountable for what both Adam and Eve did. As indicated in the Hebrew Bible, God gave Adam a command not to eat the fruit of tree in the middle of the Garden in Eden before the creation of Eve (Gen. 2:16-17). Therefore, God was fair in holding the man accountable. There are no obvious indicators that Gen. 3 advocates patriarchy.
4. Genesis 3:15 is another crucial point in the Hebrew Bible. It is important to note that in the Hebrew Bible the Hebrew word זרע *zera'* can mean offspring of human beings, while it is limited to seed in animals (Woudstra 1971:195-196). The enmity is between the woman and the snake and between the seed of the snake and the offspring of the woman, but the crushing is between the offspring of a woman and the snake, not the seed. The woman will once again be instrumental in restoring "the image of God" which sin marred. None of the Nguni creation myths discussed in Chapter 4 have this redemptive aspect.

Secondly, the focus should also be directed to the *sermons* preached by Nguni-speaking people. There are two groups of Nguni religious preachers, i.e. those who take the Hebrew Bible and preach it literally. In addition, there are those who are contextualizing the Hebrew Bible in order for it to be effective in addressing various

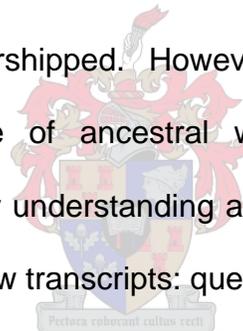
situations in which the Nguni-speaking people find themselves. It has been mentioned in Chapters 1 and 4 that Gen. 1-3 have never been a real point for consideration in Nguni-speaking communities. If one follows the content of Nguni preaching, one will notice that it mostly reflects the thinking of the Nguni communities as discussed in the previous chapter.

Among the preachers highlighted above, there are also Black Liberation theologians whose interpretation of the Hebrew Bible supports a particular view in the community; and that view is that at the end of the tunnel there is light and hope for liberation, people must not lose hope. One might be tempted to think that that kind of interpretation does not have any relevance at all in post-apartheid South Africa and among Nguni-speaking communities. However, the opposite is true because the minds of the people are not yet liberated. Gen. 1-3 to the Nguni-speaking communities stands for equality, justice and fairness, which are basic principles that people should live by.

Thirdly, the *interviews* have also shed some light when it comes to how Nguni-speaking communities have interpreted especially the first three chapters of Genesis. It is fascinating to note that all the Nguni interviewees have similar views. The questionnaire highlights five major areas: the first area that the interviews deal with is God and the universe. If one looks at this question closely, one will find that the origin of God is something beyond the Nguni-speaking people's comprehension. When it comes to creation, the focus is on the creation of humanity. All interviewees

agree that the Hebrew creation gives more clarity and understanding on this issue as opposed to the traditional Nguni concepts and understanding when it comes to creation. Even those who would be understood as non-religious people, when it comes to this issue they think the Genesis creation story closes a gap in the Nguni concept of creation [refer to the interview transcripts: question 1 in Appendix 7].

The second major question, which deals with the worship of God, has brought some interesting views in revealing that the religious interviewees have followed almost the same trend and these interviewees do not belong to the same religious entity. Their view about the worship of God is that He is holy, sovereign, and majestic and therefore should reverently worshipped. However, some religious interviewees also lean towards the importance of ancestral worship. Nevertheless, the other interviewees have a fairly clear understanding as to who God is and how He should be worshipped [refer to interview transcripts: question 2].



Thirdly, whether one likes it or not, *missionaries* were part of the process of interpretation. It is clear that when missionaries came, some of them were manipulated by the governments of the day and therefore their messages had a very negative impact on the Nguni communities. However, there were also missionaries who came purely for one reason and that was to help the Nguni people see the value of the Christian gospel. The thoughts highlighted above are very apparent when one reads the responses. On the other hand, when missionaries brought the gospel, it was wrapped in their own culture. Now the Nguni-speaking people were expected to

accept the gospel as well as the foreign culture, for the Nguni communities' culture was seen as barbaric and unreligious. The interviews (Q3 in all the interviews) reflect that the role of missionaries is important; however, God, His creation and the fall should be understood within the context of the culture of those people who accept that new teaching or gospel. This means that reading the Gen. 1-3 passages in the Nguni context is preferred. For instance, for one to be formal one does not necessarily have to wear a suit and a tie; one may be formal in one's own way [refer to interview transcripts: question 3].

Fourthly, the issue of the "fall" is a foreign issue in Nguni culture. According to the interviewees, Gen. 1-3 has opened the Nguni-speaking people's eyes and has helped to give clarity on issues that are confusing. However, it was also evident in the responses from the respondents that some do not clearly understand or capture what the Hebrew Bible says about the origin of death and the fall. This failure to understand some of the concepts in the Hebrew Bible reflects a challenge that the Bible Society of South Africa has to address.

The other issue is that those who are more politically orientated have a different understanding of all the concepts that Gen. 1-3 highlights because every concept is interpreted in the context of liberation [as long as there are poor people liberation theology will always play a dominant role] (West 1995). West (1995:131-162) argues that there are three modes of looking at the *text* i.e.

- (a) Reading the text (hermeneutics functioning within the scripture);
- (b) Reading behind the text (Bible and the recipients' experience within appropriate historical contexts);
- (c) Finally reading in front of the text (how does a message expressed in another age, for a people of another cultural and social milieu, become effective in the present time and place).

Interpreting Gen. 1-3 in Nguni culture is one of the most important ventures that Nguni communities can venture into. The interpretation in Nguni communities is not necessarily the same, it reflects the diversity cited above [refer to interview transcripts: question 4 in the Appendix 7].

An obvious observation is that some of the interviewees who were young had difficulties in answering some of the questions and there are areas where their answers are dominated by responses such as, "I have no idea" or "I do not know".

8.4 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Looking at Gen. 1-3 from a Nguni perspective has been a most fascinating venture. It has become more evident that cultures have similarities and differences. It is also needless to say that cultures complement each other through their differences. It has also been noted that the similarities are always greater than the differences. There is no culture that will understand another culture perfectly. Each culture's

understanding and interpretation is unique. It may even be within the same church where the understanding and the interpretation of the fundamental beliefs may differ from member to member.

For a Nguni-speaking person a Xhosa/ Zulu/ Ndebele or siSwati Bible translation plays a very crucial role in helping that person to understand the intended message. Therefore, the Bible Society plays an important role in this regard. In the previous chapter the role and function of the Bible Society were discussed in the light of the Nguni Bible translations. The function of the Bible Society of South Africa should be examined so that the translated Bibles take into consideration the cultures behind the translation.

8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES



The issues involved in this study lead to the following approaches:

- The first approach is that those who *believe* that what the Bible puts forth should be respected regardless of the legitimacy and correctness in terms of cultural as well as traditional backgrounds. This kind of an approach is actually challenged by some Nguni-speaking people because the snake imagery does not make any sense to them.
- The second approach is that the translators of the Bible should use relevant and appropriate illustrations and *imagery* so that people can understand the language and the world of the Bible. As it is, the Bible in some areas remains

unclear to an ordinary Nguni-speaking person on the street because of the inappropriate translation of figures of speech and imagery from the Hebrew Bible into Nguni. This area is a real concern, and the Bible Society of South Africa should consider it.

- The third approach is those who *reject* the Bible because they feel it does not necessarily address their specific needs. They believe that it is a product of a foreign and ancient community and therefore they feel that the Bible is not relevant to their current situation and circumstances.

A lot of work still needs to be done in various areas when it comes to the study of the reception of Hebrew Bible concepts in Nguni culture. The reception of Gen. 1-3 is just a drop in the ocean. The reception of other Biblical texts in Nguni culture needs attention. The area which appears to be unexplored is the reception of the Bible among specific religious groups, like Nguni speakers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There are approximately 80 000 members in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Southern Africa Union Conference, with about 50 000 of these members being Nguni-speaking congregants.

It has to be admitted that in this study the Nguni communities were approached in the sense of a broad generalized group. It is necessary to look at one particular Nguni-speaking group, like the Zulu speakers or Xhosa speakers, etc.

8.6 FINAL CONCLUSION

The reception of Gen. 1-3 in Nguni-speaking communities is an issue that is not static but progressive. Nguni-speaking people are not the only people living in Africa and to be more specific in South Africa. Therefore, the research done in this aspect will also shed some light on other African communities who might share common cultures and traditions. Taking a stand in issues is one of the most difficult things to do; neutrality is not possible. In this research it has clearly been outlined that the Nguni-speaking communities are divided into at least three different groups on the issue of receiving the Hebrew Bible message. Reception theory as method has been of great value in unearthing some of the issues, concepts, and views.

The first chapter gives the reader direction as to what he/ she must expect from the research. It proposes a way to discuss, dialogue and reach some consensus on the issues under discussion. This chapter elaborates more on research methodology. Reception theory does not require one to show how the text came into existence; instead one works with the text which is already there. This study does not enquire how Nguni-speaking communities came up with their culture and belief system, nor does it ask the same question of the Hebrew Bible.

The second chapter deals with the cosmogonic stories in the Hebrew Bible. Gen. 1-2 deals with two stories. Some Bible scholars believe that these stories are taken from

two separate sources, i.e. the Elohist source and Yahwist source because of the different names of God used in each creation story. Some scholars believe that Gen. 1-2 is one story, but, in chapter one, God mentions everything He created in seven days, while in chapter 2 He outlines how each creation activity took place⁴. In Gen. 1 God is central with man as the goal and in Gen. 2 man is central with God as the end.

In Chapter 3 *fall* and *death* are introduced and the woman is in the spotlight. One idea that comes out clearly is that Eve was with Adam when she was tempted, contrary to some beliefs that Eve was alone when she was tempted. It is on record in this chapter that God spoke with the woman for the first time and that happened after the woman had spoken to the snake.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the Nguni communities and their belief systems. Nguni communities just like any other communities are unique and even though they might have similarities they also have differences with other cultures' religious beliefs and culture. It is also clear that the Nguni culture is not static, instead it is progressive. This means that if someone engages in the same assignment after 5 or 10 years from now, a lot will have changed in terms of understanding and even interpretation.

Chapter 5 deals with the missionaries and their influence. It is evident that missionaries and their mission were perceived in different ways, i.e. there are those who were happy and accepted their messages without any hesitation, there were

⁴ The arguments put forth in the discussion of this issue in chapter 2 indicate that the second belief is a premise on which the researcher stood.

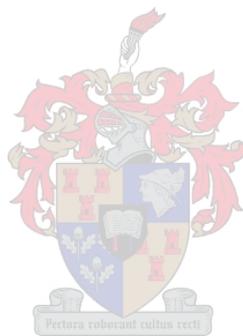
others who accepted the messages, but had qualms about the culture presenting the gospel, and there are also those who felt that the missionaries were working hand in glove with the colonialists and as such they were neither trusted nor accepted. Thanks to some missionaries, something of the God of the Hebrew Bible became known in Africa, South Africa and in the Nguni communities.

Chapter 6 engages with people at grassroots level. It looks at procedures to be followed in gathering the relevant information from the Nguni-speaking people. It deals with techniques of interviewing and data collecting models.

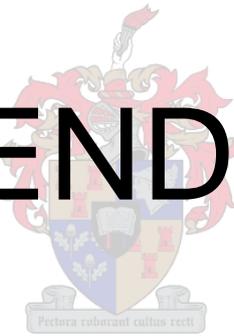
Chapter 7 deals with the issues more empirically. It tells the reader how the Nguni-speaking communities received and interpreted Gen. 1-3.

Chapter 8 deals with conclusions and observations in the Nguni-speaking communities receiving the Hebrew Bible.

The conclusion of the matter is that this research is just a drop in the ocean when one looks at many areas in the Hebrew Bible which are dealt with in the Nguni communities. However, the question left for the reader is: if you as the reader were given an opportunity to look at this issue, what areas would you have touched, what approach would you have used and finally what conclusions would you have come to?



APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

Setting up an appointment

Dear Sir/Madam _____

I am a student working on my dissertation at the University of Stellenbosch on the topic of how Nguni-speaking people read and understand Genesis 1-3 in the Bible. As you are a Nguni speaker, I want to talk to you about how Nguni-speaking people understand the biblical concept of creation and the garden of Eden (the “fall”) in Genesis 1-3.

I shall be talking to a number of other people who belong to the Nguni-speaking tribes and some who are also practising Christianity. Would you be willing to see me sometime this year or in the first quarter of next year (2002)? Ideally I would need about an hour of your time. Any time at your convenience, morning, noon or night would be fine. **Your identity will always remain anonymous.**

If you have any questions about the project or about me, please give me a call at 083 7498 675.

Sincerely yours,

Mzonzima Gwala

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEWS

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching how Nguni-speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how you think they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be on four different aspects: i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

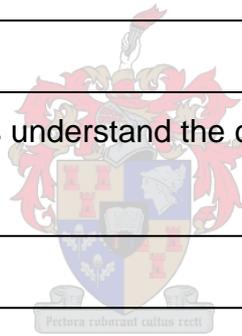
Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in the Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?



GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

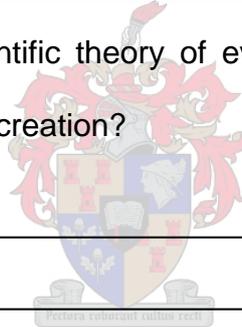
Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?



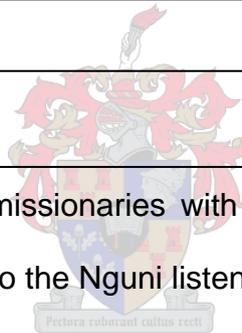
Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?



Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

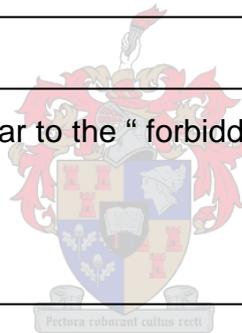
Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall? _____

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? _____

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the snake in the Bible narrative story has?

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?



NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

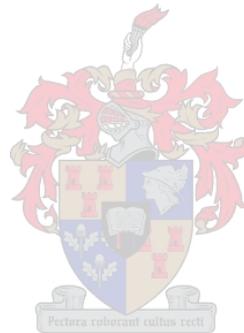
Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?



Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and **your identity will not at any given point be disclosed.** Thank you



APPENDIX 3A

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INCWADI YEZIQALO (IGENESIS)

1 ekuqaleni uThixo wadala izulu nomhlaba. ²kwakuselubala nje emhlabeni, kungekho nto ikhoyo. Inzonzobila yamanzi eyayigubungele konke yayithiwe gqume sisithokothoko sobumnyama. Umoya kaThixo wafukama phezu kwaloo manzi. ³wathi uthixo makubekho ukukhanya. Kwabakho ukukhanya. ⁴wakholwa ke uThixo koko kukhanya, waza wakwahlula ukukhanya nobumnyama. ⁵wathi ukukhanya yimini; wathi ubumnyama bona bubusuku. Kwahlwa, kwasa; yangumhla wokuqala ke lowo.

⁶Wabuya uThixo wathi makubekho amajukujuku, awahlule kubini amanzi. ⁷Abakho ke amajukujuku. Wawenza ke uThixo amajukujuku, wawahlula amanzi angaphantsi kwawo kumanzi angaphezu kwawo. ⁸Wathi uThixo amajukujuku lawo sisibhakabhaka. Kwahlwa, kwabuya kwasa; yaba ngumhla wesibini ke lowo.

⁹Wandula uThixo ukuthi amanzi angaphantsi kwesibhakabhaka makaqokeleleke ndawonye, kuze kuvele indawo engenamanzi. Kwaba njalo ke. ¹⁰Wathi uThixo loo ndawo ingenamanzi ngumhlaba, waza wathi loo manzi andawonye wona lulwandle. Wakholwa ke yiloo nto uThixo. ¹¹Ubuye wathi umhlaba mawuvelise zonke iintlobo zezityalo, ezo zithwala iinkozo kwanezithwala iziqhamo, zonke ngokweendidi zazo. Kwaba njalo ke. ¹²Umhlaba ke wavelisa zonke iindidi zezityalo, ezo zithwala iinkozo kwanezo zithwala iziqhamo ngokweendidi zazo. UThixo ke wakholwa yiloo nto.

¹³Kwahlwa ke, kwaza kwasa. Lowo ke yaba ngumhla wesithathu.

¹⁴Kwakhona uThixo wathi: “Makuvele izikhanyiso esibhakabhakeni, zahlukanise imini nobusuku, zibe yimiqondiso yamathuba, imihla, neminyaka.” ¹⁵Wathi: “Mazivele esibhakabhakeni, zikhanyise elizweni.” Kwaba njalo ke. ¹⁶UThixo wenza izikhanyiso ezibini ezikhulu: esikhulu sibe sesasemini, esincinane sibe sesasebusuku. Wenza neenkwenkwezi. ¹⁷UThixo wazibeka esibhakabhakeni ezo zikhanyiso, ukuze zikhanyise elizweni, ¹⁸zongamele imini kunye nobusuku, nokuze zahlule ukukhanya nobumnyama. Wakholwa uThixo nazizo. ¹⁹Kwahlwa, kwasa, yaba ngumhla wesine.

²⁰UThixo wathi: “Makubekho inyambalala yeendidi zezinto ezinobomi emanzini, kubekho neentaka eziphaphazelayo esibhakabhakeni.” ²¹Wabadala ke uThixo oominenga nezinye iintlobontlobo zezilo zamanzi, neentlobo zonke zeentaka. Wakholwa ke uThixo zizo. ²²Wazithamsanqelisa zonke, wathi: “Mazande izilo zamanzi, zinyakazele elwandle. Neentaka nazo mazande emhlabeni.” ²³Kwahlwa, kwasa, yaba ngumhla wesihlanu lowo.

²⁴Kwakhona uThixo uthe umhlaba mawuvelise iintlobo zonke zezinto ezinobomi: oozinkomo, izinto ezirhubuluzayo nezinambuzane, nazo zonke iindidi zamarhamncwa. Kwaba njalo ke. ²⁵Wawenza zonke ke uThixo izilo ngokweendidi zazo, noozinkomo

ngokweendidi zazo, nezilwanyane ezirhubuluzayo nezinambuzane ngokweendidi zazo. Waza ke uThixo wakholwa zezo zinto.

²⁶Waza ke uThixo wathi: “Masenze umntu abe ngumfuziselo wethu, afane nathi. Makabe negunya, alawule iintlanzi elwandle, iintaka ezibhabha esibhakabhakeni, iinkomo, nazo zonke izilo nezinambuzane elizweni.” ²⁷Wamdala ke uThixo umntu. Wamenza wangumfuziselo wakhe. Wadala umntu oyindoda kwakunye nomntu obhinqileyo. ²⁸Wabathamsanqelisa uThixo wathi: “Yandani, inzala yenu ilizalise ilizwe, nilongamele. Ndininika igunya phezu kweentlanzi, iintaka, nazo zonke izilo elizweni. ²⁹Ndininika zonke izityalo ezithwala iinkozo elizweni, kunye nemithi ethwala iziqhamo. Zoba kukutya kwenu ezo zinto. ³⁰Ke zona iintaka nezilo zonke ziya kutya uhlaza.” Kwaba njalo ke. ³¹UThixo wakholwa kakhulu yiyo yonke indalo yakhe. Kwahlwa, kwasa; yaba ngumhla wesithandathu ke lowo.

2 Aba ke ngoko agqityiwe ukudalwa amazulu nehlabathi liphela. ²Ngomhla wesixhenxe uThixo wayeselekugqibile konke awayekwenza, waza ke waphumla.

³Wawuthamsanqelisa umhla wesixhenxe, wawumisa wangumhla okhethekileyo, kuba ngaloo mhla wayeselegqibile ukudala.

Umyezo waseldeni

⁴Nanga amagqabantshintshi ngokudalwa kwezulu nehlabathi: Ekudalweni kwezulu nehlabathi nguThixo uNdikhoyo ⁵kwakungekho zityalo emhlabeni. Kwakungekho nambewu intshulayo, kuba kaloku wayengekayinisi emhlabeni imvula uNdikhoyo; kwakungekho namntu wakuwulima umhlaba lowo. ⁶Kwagqabhuka amanzi emhlabeni, awunyakamisa umhlaba.

⁷UNdikhoyo uThixo wacaphula umhlaba emhlabeni, wabumba umntu ngawo. Waphefumlela umoya obubomi emathatheni akhe, yaba ngumntu ophilayo lowo.

⁸Emva koko uNdikhoyo uThixo wenza umyezo eIdeni empumalanga, wambeka apho loo mntu wayemenzile. ⁹Wahlumisa iindidi zemithi emihle eneziqhamo ezinomtsalane apho eIdeni. Phakathi esidikidikini somyezo kwakukho umthi onika ubomi, nomthi wokucalula okubi nokuhle.

¹⁰Kwakukho umlambo owawuphuma apho eIdeni, unyakamisa umyezo lowo. Wawusahlukana ube yimilambo emine wakuyishiya iIdeni. ¹¹Owokuqala umlambo, okuthiwa yiPishoni, ngulo ujikeleze ilizwe lakwaHavila. ¹²Kulapho kufunyanwa khona igolide, kunye namakha avumba limnandi, kwakunye namatye exabiso. ¹³Owesibini umlambo yiGihoni; wona ujikeleze ilizwe lakwaKushe. ¹⁴Owesithathu umlambo yiTigre; wona ucanda ngasempumalanga yeAsiriya. Owesine yiEfrati.

¹⁵Umntu wabekwa nguNdikhoyo uThixo emyenzweni waseIdeni ukuze awulime, awulondolozwe. ¹⁶UThixo wathi kuye: “Ungatya nakuwuphi na umthi osemyenzweni; ¹⁷kodwa uze ungatyi kumthi wokucalula okubi nokuhle. Mhla watya kuwo ngenene uya kufa.”

¹⁸Uthe ke uNdikhoyo uThixo emva koko: “Akukuhle ukuba le ndoda ihlale ililolo. Kuhle ndiyenzele umlingane onokuncedisana nayo.”

¹⁹UNdikhoyo uThixo wayethathe umhlaba wabumba zonke iinyamakazi neentaka, wazisa kuloo ndoda ukuba izithiye amagama. Zawafumana njalo ke amagama azo ezo zinto. ²⁰Yazithiya amagama zonke iintaka neenyamakazi loo ndoda, kodwa akubangakho nanye kuzo eyafanela ukuba ngumlingane wayo.

²¹Usuke uNdikhoyo uThixo wayihlisela obunzulu bona ubuthongo obu indoda leyo. Ithe isalele njalo wakhupha ubambo kuyo, wabuya wayivala loo ndawo. ²²UNdikhoyo uThixo udale umfazi ngolo bambo waluthathayo endodeni, wamsa kuyo. ²³Ithe ke indoda: “Nanku ke oyena-yena! Lithambo lamathambo am, nenyama yeenyama zam. Kuya kuthiwa ngumfazi, kuba uthathwe kumfo.” ²⁴Yiyo ke loo nto indoda imshiya uyise nonina, inamathele kumkayo, baze babe mntu mnye.

²⁵Loo ndoda nomkayo babehamba ze, bengenazintloni. Foto

Ukuwa koluntu

3 Inyoka yayisesona sidalwa sinobuqhetseba kunazo zonke izidalwa zikaNdikhoyo uThixo. Yambuza umfazi inyoka yathi: “Ngaba kuyinyani na ukuba uThixo uniyalele ukuba ningatyi kuyo yonke imithi ekulo myezo?”

²“Hayi, singatya nakuwuphi na umthi osemyezweni,” utshilo umfazi ukuphendula.

³“Ngumthi ophaya esidikidikini somyezo qha esingenakutya kuwo. UThixo uthe maze singazityi iziqhamo zawo, singaziphathi nokuziphatha oku, ukuba asifuni kufa.”

⁴Ithe ukuphendula inyoka: “Hayi, anisoze nife. ⁵Nto nje uyazi uThixo ukuba xa nizityileyo iziqhamo zawo novuleka amehlo, nibe njengaye, nikwazi ukucalula okuhle kokubi.”

⁶Watsho waqonda umfazi ukuba singamnandi eso siqhamo: siyanqweneleka, yaye sifanele ukunika ulwazi. Wakha, watya; wanika nomyeni wakhe owayekho, naye watya. ⁷Bathi bakugqiba ukutya kwatsho kwee dlwe, avuleka amehlo, baziqonda ukuba bahamba ze. Bathunga amagqabi omkhiwane, bazambhathisa.

⁸Emva koko beva isandi sokuhamba kukaThixo uNdikhoyo emyezweni ukujika kwelanga. Bazimela ematyholweni emyezweni apho. ⁹UNdikhoyo uThixo wayibiza indoda, wathi: “Ùphi?”

¹⁰Yaphendula yathi: “Ndive isandi sokuza kwakho, ndaza ndoyika ndazimela, kuba ndihamba ze.”

¹¹Uthe uThixo: “Ùve ngabani ukuba uhamba ze? Utyile kulaa mthi bendithe uze ungatyi kuwo?”

¹²Ithe indoda ukuphendula: “Ngulo mfazi ùndinike yena lo ùndiphileyo, nam ke ndatya.”

¹³UNdikhoyo uThixo wambuza umfazi esithi: “Ùyenzele ntoni into enje?” Uphendule umfazi wathi: “Ndikhohliswe yinyoka, nam ke ndatya.”

UThixo uwisa isohlwayo

¹⁴UNdikhoyo uThixo uthe kuyo inyoka: “Ngenxa yesi senzo uqalekisiwe wena kuzo zonke izilo. Ukususela ngoku uya kurhubuluza ngesisu, utye uthuli bonke ubomi bakho.

¹⁵Ndiza kudala ubutshaba phakathi kwakho nomfazi. Inzala yakho neyakhe ziya kuhlala zithiyene. Yona yokucumza intloko; wena woyiluma isithende.”

¹⁶Waza wathi kuloo mfazi: “Wena uza kuthwala ubunzima ngakumbi xa ukhulelwe, udliwe yinimba xa uzalayo. Noko kunjalo umyeni wakho ùya kumlangazelela, lo gama ayinkosi yakho.”

¹⁷Uthe endodeni uThixo: “Wena uve umkakho, watya kumthi ebendithe kuwe uze ungatyi kuwo. Ngenxa yento oyenzileyo ke ùqalekisiwe ngoku umhlaba. Ùya kusebenza nzima bonke ubomi bakho, ukuze umhlaba uvelise ukutya.

¹⁸Kohluma ukhula nenkunzane. Uya kufa yindlala, utye umfino.

¹⁹Uya kutya ukubila kwakho ude ubuyele kwakuloo mhlaba wawuthathwe kuwo. Wênziwa ngomhlaba; ke uya kubuya ube ngumhlaba.“

²⁰UAdam wamthiya igama umkakhe, wathi nguEfa, kuba kaloku luzalwa nguye lonke uluntu. ²¹UNdikhoyo uThixo wabenzela izambatho zesikhumba senyamakazi, wabambesa zona ooAdam noEfa.

Ukugxothwa kuka-Adam noEfa emyezweni

²²Wathi ke uNdikhoyo uThixo: “Umntu ngoku unjengathi, uyakwazi ukucalula okuhle kokubi. Kuya kuthini ke xa athe wakha, watya kumthi wobomi, aze aphile angaze afe?”

²³UNdikhoyo uThixo wangxothela ngaphandle komyezo umntu, wamenza umlimi womhlaba avele kuwo. ²⁴Kwicala elingasempumalanga lomyezo uThixo wabeka izithunywa ezimaphiko nekrele elidangazelayo, elijika-jika lijonge kwiimbombo zonke. Zazilinde ukuba kungabikho bani usondelayo kumthi wobomi. 1



1, *Xhosa Bible (IBhayibhile)*, (Cape Town: Umbutho Webhayibhile Womzantsi-Afrika) 1996.

APPENDIX 3B

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INCWADI YOKUQALA KAMOSSES EKUTHIWA

YIGENESIS

(INCWADI YEZIQALO)

YIGenesis

Indalo

1

¹ Ekuqalekeni uThixo wadala amazulu nehlabathi.

² Ke ehlabathini kwakusenyanyeni, kuselubala; kwakumnyama phezu kwamanzi enzonzobila. UMoya kaThixo ³ wafukama phezu kwamanzi lawo. Wathi uThixo: <<Makubekho ukukhanya.>>

⁴ Kwabakho ke ukukhanya. Wakubona ke uThixo ukukhanya ukuba kulungile, wahlula uThixo phakathi kokukhanya ⁵ nobumnyama. Wathi uThixo ukukhanya yimini, wathi ubumnyama bubusuku. Kwahlwa, kwasa: yangumhla wokuqala.

⁶ Wathi uThixo, Makubekho isibhakabhaka phakathi kwawo amanzi, sibe ngumahlulo wokwahlula amanzi kumanzi. ⁷ Wasenza uThixo isibhakabhaka, wawahlula amanzi angaphantsi kwesibhakabhaka kuwo amanzi angaphezu kwesibhakabhaka. Kwaba njalo. ⁸ Wathi uThixo isibhakabhaka ngamazulu. Kwahlwa, kwasa: yangumhla wesibini.

⁹ Wathi uThixo, Amanzi angaphantsi kwamazulu makahlanganiselwe ndaweni nye, kubonakale okomileyo. Kwaba njalo. ¹⁰ Wathi uThixo okomileyo ngumhlaba, wathi intlanganisela yamanzi ziilwandle. Wabona uThixo ukuba kulungile.

¹¹ Wathi uThixo, Umhlaba mawuphume uhlaza, imifuno evelisa imbewu, imithi yeziqhamo, eyenza iziqhamo ngohlobo lwayo, embewu ikuyo, emhlabeni. ¹² Kwaba njalo. Umhlaba waphuma uhlaza, nemifuno evelisa imbewu ngohlobo lwayo, nemithi eyenza iziqhamo, embewu ikuyo, ngohlobo lwayo. Wabona uThixo ukuba kulungile. ¹³ Kwahlwa kwasa: yangumhla wesithathu.

¹⁴ Wathi uThixo, Makubekho izikhanyiso esibhakabhakeni samazulu, zibe ngumahlulo wokwahlula imini kubusuku; zibe zezemiqondiso, zibe zezamaxesha amisiweyo, zibe zezemihla neminyaka; ¹⁵ mazibe zizikhanyiso esibhakabhakeni samazulu, zikhanyise ehlabathini. Kwaba njalo. ¹⁶ Wenza uThixo izikhanyiso ezikhulu zazibini, esona sikhulu isikhanyiso ukuba silawule imini, esona sincinane isikhanyiso ukuba silawule ubusuku; wenza neenkwenkwezi. ¹⁷ Wazibeka uThixo esibhakabhakeni samazulu, ukuba zikhanyise ehlabathini, zilawule imini nobusuku, zahlule ukukhanya kubumnyama. Wabona uThixo ukuba kulungile. Kwahlwa, kwasa: yangumhla wesine.

²⁰ Wathi uThixo, Amanzi la makanyakazele inyakanyaka, imiphefumlo ephilileyo; zithi neentaka ziphaphazele ehlabathini, esibhakabhakeni sezulu. ²¹ Wadala uThixo oominenga mikhulu, nayo yonke imiphefumlo ephilileyo enambuzelayo, awanyakazela ngayo amanzi ngohlobo lwayo, neentaka zonke ezinamaphiko ngohlobo lwazo. Wabona uThixo ukuba kulungile. ²² Wazisikelela uThixo, esithi, Qhamani, nande, niwazalise amanzi aselwandle; zithi iintaka zande ehlabathini. ²³ Kwahlwa, kwasa: yangumhla wesihlanu.

²⁴ Wathi uThixo, Umhlaba mawuphume imiphefumlo ephilileyo ngohlobo lwayo: izinto ezizitho zine, nezinambuzane, nezinto eziphilileyo zomhlaba ngohlobo lwazo. ²⁵ Kwaba njalo. Wenza uThixo izinto eziphilileyo zomhlaba ngohlobo lwazo, nezinto ezizitho zine ngohlobo lwazo, nazo zonke izinambuzane zomhlaba ngohlobo lwazo. Wabona uThixo ukuba kulungile.

²⁶ Wathi uThixo, Masenze umntu ngokomfanekiselo wethu ngokufana nathi. Mababe nobukhosi ezintlanzini zolwandle, nasezintakeni zezulu, nasezintweni ezizitho zine, nasemhlabeni wonke, nasezinambuzaneni zonke ezinambuzela emhlabeni. Wamdala ke uThixo umntu ngokomfanekiselo wakhe; wamdala ngokomfanekiselo kaThixo; wadala indoda nenkazana. Wabasikelela uThixo, wathi kubo uThixo, Qhamani, nande, niwuzalise umhlaba niweyise; nibe nobukhosi ezintlanzini zolwandle, nasezintakeni zezulu, nasezintweni zonke eziphilileyo ezinambuzelayo emhlabeni. ²⁹ Wathi uThixo, Yabonani, ndinikile yonke imifuno evelisa imbewu, esemhlabeni wonke, nayo yonke imithi

eneziqhamo zemithi evelisa imbewu: yoba kukudla kuni. ³⁰ Nezinto zonke eziphilileyo zomhlaba, neentaka zonke zezulu, nezinambuzane zonke ezisemhlabeni, ezinomphefumlo ophilileyo, ndizinike yonke imifuno eluhlaza ukuba ibe kukudla. ³¹ Kwaba njalo. Wakubona uThixo konke akwenzileyo, nanko, kulungile kunene. Kwahlwa, kwasa: yangumhla wesithandathu.

2

¹ Agqitywa ke amazulu nehlabathi, nawo wonke umkhosi wezo zinto. ² Wawugqiba ke uThixo ngomhla wesixhenxe umsebenzi wakhe awawenzayo; waphumla ngomhla wesixhenxe kuwo wonke umsebenzi wakhe awawenzayo. ³ Wawusikelela uThixo umhla wesixhenxe, wawungcwalisa; ngokuba waphumla ngawo kuwo wonke umsebenzi wakhe awawudalayo uThixo, wawenza.

UAdam noEva emyezweni wase-Eden

⁴ Yiyo le ke inzala yamazulu nehlabathi ekudalweni kwezo zinto, mini wenza uYehova uThixo ihlabathi namazulu, ⁵ onke amatyholo asendle engekaveli emhlabeni, nayo yonke imifuno yasendle ingekantshuli; kuba uYehova uThixo ebengekanisi mvula emhlabeni; kwaye kungekho mntu wokuwusebenza umhlaba. ⁶ Kwaye kunyuka inkungu iphuma ehlabathini, yawunyakamisa wonke umhlaba. ⁷ UYehova uThixo wambumba umntu ngothuli lwasehlabeni, waphefumlela emathatheni akhe imphefumlo yobomi; umntu ke waba ngumphefumlo ophilileyo. ⁸ UYehova uThixo watyala umyezo e-Eden ngasempumalanga; wambeka khona umntu abembumbile. ⁹ UYehova uThixo wantshulisa emhlabeni yonke imithi enqwenelekayo ngokukhangeleka, nelungele ukudliwa; nomthi wobomi emyezweni phakathi, nomthi wokwazi okulungileyo nokubi.

¹⁰ Kwaphuma umlambo e-Eden wokuwunyakamisa umyezo; wahluka apho, waba ziimbaxa ezine. ¹¹ Igama lowokuqala yiPishon; nguwo lowo ujikeleze lonke ilizwe laseHavila, apho ikhona igolide. ¹² Igolide yelo lizwe intle, ikhona ibhedolaki* nelitye lebherilo.* ¹³ Igama lowesibini umlambo yiGihon; nguwo lowo ujikeleze lonke ilizwe lakwaKushi. ¹⁴ Igama lowesithathu umlambo yiHidekele; nguwo lowo uya phambi kwelakwa-Asiriya. Owesine umlambo ngumEfrati.

¹⁵ UYehova uThixo wamthabatha umuntu, wambeka emyezweni we-Eden, ukuba awusebenze, awugcine. ¹⁶ UYehova uThixo wamwisela umthetho umuntu, esithi, Yonke imithi yomyezo ungayidla uyidle; ¹⁷ ke wona umthi wokwazi okulungileyo nokubi uze ungawudli; kuba mhlana uthe wawudla, uya kufa.

¹⁸ Wathi uYehova uThixo, Akulungile ukuba umntu abe yedwa; ndiya kumenzela umncedi onguwabo.

¹⁹ UYehova uThixo wabumba ngomhlaba zonke izinto eziphilileyo zasendle, nazo zonke iintaka zezulu, wazisa kuye uAdam* ukubona ukuba wothini na ukuzibiza, ukuze oko azibize ngako uAdam zonke izinto eziphilileyo, ibe ligama lazo elo. ²⁰ Wazithiya amagama uAdam zonke izinto ezizitho zine, neentaka zasezulwini, nazo zonke izinto eziphilileyo zasendle; ke uAdam akafunyanelwang mncedi unguwabo.

²¹ UYehova uThixo wawisa ubuthongo obukhulu phezu koAdam, walala. Wathabatha lwalunye ezimbanjeni zakhe, wavingca ngenyama esikhundleni salo. ²² UYehova uThixo walwakha ubambo abeluthabathe kuAdam, lwaba ngumfazi; wamzisa kuAdam. ²³ Wathi uAdam, Eli ke ngoku lithambo lasemathanjeni am, yinyama yasenyameni yam; lo yena ukubizwa kothiwa ngumfazi, ngokuba ethatyathwe endodeni. Ngenxa yoko indoda yomshiya uyise nonina, inamathele kumkayo, babe nyama-nyeke. ²⁵ Baye bobabini behamba ze, umntu lowo nomkakhe, bengenazintloni.

Ukuhendwa nokuwa komntu

3

¹ Ke kaloku inyoka yaye inobuqhophololo ngaphezu kwazo zonke izinto eziphilileyo zasendle, abezenzile uYehova uThixo. Yathi kumfazi, Utshilo na okunene uThixo ukuthi, Zeningadli kuyo yonke imithi yomyezo? ² Wathi umfazi kwinyoka, Eziqhameni zemithi yomyezo singadla; ³ ke eziziqhameni zomthi osemyezweni phakathi, uthi uThixo, Ze ningadli kuzo; ze ni ngazihukumisi, hleze nife. ⁴ Yathi inyoka kumfazi, Anisayi kufa: ⁵ kuba esazi uThixo ukuba, mhlana nithe nadla kuzo, oqabuka amehlo enu, nibe njengoThixo, nazi okulungileyo nokubi.

⁶ Wabona umfazi ukuba umthi ulungele ukudliwa, nokuba uyakhanukeka emehlweni, ingumthi onqwenelekela ukuqeqisa, wathabatha eziziqhameni zawo, wadla; wanika nendoda yakhe inaye, yadla. ⁷ Aqabuka amehlo abo bobabini, bazi ukuba bahamba ze; bathunga amagqabi omkhiwane, bazenzela imibhinqo.

⁸ Basiva isandi sika Yehova uThixo, ehamba emyezweni empepheni yasemini; basuka bazimela

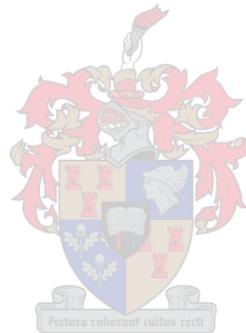
uAdam nomkakhe ebusweni bukaYehova uThixo, phakathi kwemithi yomyezo. ⁹ UYehova uThixo wambiza uAdam, wathi kuye, Uphi na? ¹⁰ Wathi yena, Ndive isandi sakho emyezweni, ndasuka ndoyika, ngokuba ndihamba ze; ndazimela. ¹¹ Wathi, Uxelelwe ngubani na, ukuba uhamba ze? Udlile na kuwo umthi, endakuwisela umthetho ngawo, ndathi, Uze ungadli kuwo? ¹² Wathi uAdam, Umfazi owandinikayo ukuba abe nam, nguye ondinikileyo kuwo umthi, ndadla ke. ¹³ Wathi uYehova uThixo kumfazi, Yintoni na le nto uyenzileyo? Wathi umfazi, Inyoka indilukuhlile, ndadla ke.

¹⁴ Wathi uYehova uThixo kwinyoka, Ngokuba uyenzile le nto, uqalekisiwe wena ngaphezu kwezinto zonke ezizitho zine, neento zonke eziphilileyo zasendle; uya kuhamba ngesisu, udle uthuli, yonke imihla yobomi bakho. ¹⁵ Ndiya kumisa ubutshaba phakathi kwakho nomfazi, naphakathi kwembewu yakho nembewu yakhe; yona iya kukutyumza intloko, wena uya kuyityumza isithende. ¹⁶ Wathi kumfazi, Ndiya kukwandisa kakhulu ukubulaleka kwakho ekumitheni, uzale abantwana unembulaleko; inkanuko yakho ibe sendodeni yakho, ikulawule yona. ¹⁷ KuAdam wathi, Ngokuba uphulaphule izwi lomkakho, wadla kuwo umthi endakuwisela umthetho ngawo, ndathi, Uze ungadli kuwo, uqalekisiwe umhlaba ngenxa yakho; uya kudla kuwo ubulaleka, yonke imihla yobomi bakho. ¹⁸ Uya kukuntshulela imithana enameva neenkunzane, udle umfuno wasendle. ¹⁹ Uya kudla ukudla kokubila kobuso bakho, ude ubuyele emhlabeni, kuba uthatyathwe kuwo; ngokuba uluthuli, uya kubuyela kwaseluthulini.

²⁰ UAdam walibiza igama lomkakhe ngokuthi nguEva,* ngokuba yena engunina wabaphilileyo bonke. ²¹ UYehova uThixo wabenzela iingubo zezintu uAdam nomkakhe, wabambathisa.

²² Wathi uYehova uThixo, Yabonani, umntu usuke waba njengomnye wethu, ukwazi okulungileyo nokubi; hleze ke olule isandla sakhe, athabathe nakuwo umthi wobomi, adle, aphile ngonaphakade: uYehova uThixo wamndulula emyezweni we-Eden, ukuba asebenze umhlaba abethatyathwe kuwo.

²⁴ Wamgxotha ke umntu; wamisa ngasempumalanga kuwo umyezo we-Eden iikerubhi,* nelangatye lekrole elijikajikayo lokugcina indlela eya emthini wobomi.



APPENDIX 4

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UGENESISE

UGenesise

Ukudalwa

1

¹ Ekuqaleni uNkulunkulu wadala izulu nomhlaba. ² Umhlaba wawuyihlane elingenalutho; kwakungubumnyama phezu kotwa, kepha uMoya kaNkulunkulu wehla wenyuka phezu kwamanzi.

³ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Makube khona ukukhanya,>> kwaba khona ukukhanya.

⁴ UNkulunkulu wabona ukukhanya ukuthi kuhle; uNkulunkulu wahlukanisa ukukhanya nobumnyama. ⁵ UNkulunkulu wabiza ukukhanya ngokuthi imini; ubumnyama wabubiza ngokuthi ubusuku. Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lokuqala.

⁶ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Makube khona umkhathi phakathi kwamanzi, kwahlukaniswe amanzi namanzi.>> ⁷ UNkulunkulu wenza umkhathi, wahlukanisa amanzi aphantsi komkhathi namanzi aphezu komkhathi; kwaba njalo. ⁸ UNkulunkulu wabiza umkhathi ngokuthi izulu. Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lwesibili.

⁹ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Amanzi aphantsi kwezulu mawaqoqekele ndawonye, kubonakale umhlabathi owomileyo,>> kwaba njalo. ¹⁰ Okomileyo uNkulunkulu wakubiza ngokuthi umhlaba, nokuqoqeke kwamanzi wakubiza ngokuthi ulwandle; uNkulunkulu wabona ukuthi kuhle. ¹¹ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Umhlaba mawuveze utshani, nemifino ethela imbewu, nemithi yezithelo ethela izithelo ngezinhlobo zayo, ekuyo imbewu yayo, emhlabeni,>> kwaba njalo. ¹² Umhlaba wawusuveza utshani nemifino ethela imbewu ngezinhlobo zayo, nemithi ethela izithelo ngezinhlobo zayo, ekuyo imbewu yayo; uNkulunkulu wabona ukuthi kuhle. ¹³ Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lwesithathu.

¹⁴ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Makubekhona emkhathini wezulu izinkanyiso ezahlukanisa imini nobusuku, zibe yizibonakaliso zezinkathi, nezezinsuku, nezeminyaka, ¹⁵ zibe yizinkanyiso emkhathini wezulu zokukhanyisa emhlabeni,>> kwaba njalo. ¹⁶ UNkulunkulu wazenza izinkanyiso ezimbili ezinkulu, inkanyiso enkulu ukuba ibuse imini, nenkanyiso encane ukuba ibuse ubusuku, kanye nezinkanyezi. ¹⁷ UNkulunkulu wazifaka emkhathini wezulu ukuba zikhanyise emhlabeni, ¹⁸ zibuse imini nobusuku, zahlukanise ukukhanya nobumnyama. UNkulunkulu wabona ukuthi kuhle. ¹⁹ Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lwesine.

²⁰ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Amanzi mawagcwale uswebezane lwezilwane eziphilayo, kundize izinyoni phezu komhlaba emkhathini wezulu.>> ²¹ UNkulunkulu wadala imikhomo emikhulu nezilwane zonke eziphilayo ezihambayo, amanzi agcwala zona ngezinhlobo zazo, nezinyoni zonke ezinamaphiko ngezinhlobo zazo. UNkulunkulu wabona ukuthi kuhle. ²² UNkulunkulu wazibusisa, wathi: <<Zalani, nande, nigcwalise amanzi aselwandle, nezinyoni zande emhlabeni.>> ²³ Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lwesihlanu.

²⁴ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Umhlaba mawuveze izilwane eziphilayo ngezinhlobo zazo, izinkomo, nezilwanyana ezinwabuzelayo, nezilo zomhlaba ngezinhlobo zazo,>> kwaba njalo. ²⁵ UNkulunkulu wazenza izilo zomhlaba ngezinhlobo zazo, nezinkomo ngezinhlobo zazo, nezilwanyana zonke ezinwabuzelayo emhlabeni ngezinhlobo zazo. UNkulunkulu wabona ukuthi kuhle. ²⁶ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Masenze abantu ngomfanekiso wethu, basifuze, babuse phezu kwezinhlanzi zolwandle, nezinyoni zezulu, nezinkomo, nomhlaba wonke, nezilwanyana zonke ezinwabuzelayo emhlabeni.>>

²⁷ UNkulunkulu wamdala umuntu ngomfanekiso wakhe; wamdala ngomfanekiso kaNkulunkulu; wabadala owesilisa nowesifazane.

²⁸ UNkulunkulu wababusisa; uNkulunkulu wathi kubo: <<Zalani, nande, nigcwalise umhlaba, niwunqobe, nibuse phezu kwezinhlanzi zolwandle, nezinyoni zezulu, nezilwanyana ezinwabuzelayo emhlabeni.>> ²⁹ UNkulunkulu wathi: <<Bhekani, ngiyaninika yonke imifino ethela imbewu, esemhlabeni wonke, nemithi yonke okukuyo izithelo zomuthi oveza imbewu, kube ngukudla kwenu. ³⁰ Kepha zonke izilwane zomhlaba, nezinyoni zonke zezulu, nezilwanyana ezinwabuzelayo emhlabeni, eziphefumulayo, zona nginike yonke imifino eluhlaza ibe ngukudla,>> kwaba njalo. ³¹ UNkulunkulu wabona konke akwenzileyo; bheka, kwakukuhle kakhulu. Kwaba ngukuhlwa, kwaba ngukusa, usuku lwesithupha.

Usuku lwesikhombisa

2

¹ Kwase kupheleliswa izulu nomhlaba kanye nombuthano wakho wonke.

² UNkulunkulu waqeda ngosuku lwesikhombisa imisebenzi yakhe abeyenzile; waphumula ngosuku lwesikhombisa emisebenzini yakhe yonke abeyenzile.

³ UNkulunkulu wabusisa usuku lwesikhombisa, walungcwelisa, ngokuba ngalolo suku waphumula emisebenzini yonke abeyidalile uNkulunkulu, wayenza.

⁴ Lokhu kungumlando wokudalwa kwezulu nomhlaba ekudalweni kwakho mhla uJehova uNkulunkulu ewenza umhlaba nezulu. ⁵ Kwakungakabikho sihlahla endle, namifino yayingakamili emhlabathini, ngokuba uJehova uNkulunkulu wayengakanisi invula emhlabeni, kungakabikho muntu wokulima umhlabathi. ⁶ Kepha kwenyuka inkungu ivela emhlabathini, yanisela ubuso bonke bomhlaba. ⁷ UJehova uNkulunkulu wambumba umuntu ngomhlabathi, waphefumulela emakhaleni akhe umoya wokuphila; kanjalo umuntu waba umphefumulo ophilayo.

Insimu yase-Edene

⁸ UJehova uNkulunkulu watshala insimu e-Edene ngasempumalanga; wambeka khona umuntu amenzileyo. ⁹ UJehova uNkulunkulu wahlumisa emhlabathini imithi yonke ebukekayo, emihle, edliwayo, nomuthi wokuphila phakathi nensimu, nomuthi wokwazi okuhle nokubi.

¹⁰ E-Edene kwavela umfula owamanzisa insimu; wahlukana khona, waba yizimbaxa ezine. ¹¹ Eyokuqala inegama lokuthi iPishoni; yiyo ezungeza izwe lonke laseHavila, lapho kukhona igolide. ¹² Lihle igolide lalelo zwe. Kukhona nenhlaka yebedola* netshe leshohamu* lapho. ¹³ Igama leyesibili linguGihoni; yiyo ezungeza lonke izwe laseKushe. ¹⁴ Igama leyesithathu linguHidekeli; yiyo egobhoza ngasempumalanga kwase-Asiriya. Eyesine ingu-Ewufathe.

¹⁵ UJehova uNkulunkulu wayesemthatha umuntu, wambeka ensimini yase-Edene ukuba ayilime, ayigcine. ¹⁶ UJehova uNkulunkulu wamyala umuntu, wathi:

<<Ungadla kuyo yonke imithi yensimu ngokuthanda kwakho, ¹⁷ kepha ungadli kuwo umuthi wokwazi okuhle nokubi, ngokuba mhla udla kuwo uyakufa nokufa.>>

Ukudalwa kowesifazane

¹⁸ UJehova uNkulunkulu wathi: <<Akukuhle ukuba umuntu ahlale yedwa. Ngizakumenzela umsizi onjengaye.>>

¹⁹ UJehova uNkulunkulu wabumba ngomhlabathi zonke izilwane zasendle nezinyoni zonke zezulu, waziyisa kumuntu ukuba abone ukuthi umuntu angaziqamba ngokuthini, ukuze kuthi, njengalokhu umuntu eziqamba zonke izilwane eziphilayo, lokhu kube ngamagama azo. ²⁰ Umuntu waziqamba amagama zonke izinkomo, nezinyoni zezulu, nezilwane zasendle. Kepha umuntu akatholelwanga umsizi onjengaye. ²¹ UJehova uNkulunkulu wamehlisela umuntu ubuthongo obunzima, walala; wayesethatha olunye lwezimbambo zakhe, wavala indawo ngenyama. ²² UJehova uNkulunkulu wakha owesifazane ngobambo abeluthathile kumuntu, wamyisa kumuntu.

²³ Wayesethi umuntu: <<Lo useyithambo lamathambo ami nenyama yenyama yami; uyakubizwa ngokuthi indodakazi, ngokuba uthathwe endodeni.>> ²⁴ Ngalokho indoda iyakushiya uyise nonina, inamathele kumkayo; bayakuba nyamanye.

²⁵ Babehamba ze bobabili, u-Adamu* nomkakhe, bengenamahloni.

Ukuwela esonweni

3

¹ Inyoka yayinobuqili kunazo zonke izilwane zasendle abezenzile uJehova uNkulunkulu. Yathi kowesifazane: <<Ngempela uNkulunkulu ushilo yini ukuthi: <Ningadli emithini yasensimini,> na?>>

² Owesifazane wathi enyokeni: <<Singadla izithelo zemithi yasensimini, ³ kepha ngezithelo zomuthi ophakathi nensimu uNkulunkulu ushilo ukuthi: <Ningazidli, ningazithinti ukuba ningafi.> >>

⁴ Inyoka yathi kowesifazane: <<Aniyikufa nokufa; ⁵ kepha uNkulunkulu uyazi ukuthi mhla nizidla, kuyakuvuleka amehlo enu, nibe njengoNkulunkulu, nikwazi okuhle nokubi.>>

⁶ Owesifazane ebona ukuthi umuthi ulungele ukudliwa, nokuthi uyabukeka emehlweni, nokuthi umuthi unxanelekile ekuhlakaniphiseni, wathatha izithelo zawo, wadla, wanika nendoda yakhe kanye naye, nayo yadla. ⁷ Ayesevuleka amehlo abo bobabili, babona ukuthi bahamba ze; bathunga amaqabunga omkhiwane, bazenzela izibhinco.

⁸ Base bezwa izwi likaJehova uNkulunkulu ehamba ensimini kusihlwa ngokuphola kwelanga; u-Adamu nomkakhe bacasha ebusweni bukaJehova uNkulunkulu phakathi kwemithi yensimu. ⁹ Kepha uJehova uNkulunkulu wambiza u-Adamu, wathi kuye: <<Uphi na?>>

¹⁰ Wathi: <<Ngizwe izwi lakho ensimini, ngesaba ngokuba ngihamba ze; ngalokho ngacasha.>>

¹¹ Khona wathi: <<Ngubani owakutshela ukuthi uhamba ze na? Udlile kulowo muthi engakuyala ngawo ukuthi ungadli kuwo na?>>

¹² U-Adamu wathi: <<Owesifazane, owangipha yena ukuba abe nami, unginikile kuwo umuthi, ngadla.>>

¹³ UJehova uNkulunkulu wathi kowesifazane: <<Yini lokhu okwenzileyo na?>> Owesifazane wathi: <<Inyoka ingikhohlisile, ngadla.>>

¹⁴ UJehova uNkulunkulu wathi enyokeni: <<Njengokuba usukwenzile lokho, uqalekisiwe phakathi kwezilwane zonke naphakathi kwazo zonke izilwane zasendle; uzakuhamba ngesisu sakho, udle uthuli izinsuku zonke zokuhamba kwakho.

¹⁵ Ngizakubeka ubutha phakathi kwakho nowesifazane, naphakathi kwenzalo yakho nenzalo yakhe. Yona iyakuchoboza ikhanda lakho, wena uyakulimaza isithende sayo.>>

¹⁶ Wathi kowesifazane: <<Ngizakubangela ubuhlungu obukhulu ekukhulelweni kwakho; uyakubeletha abantwana ngobuhlungu. Ukunxanela kwakho kuyakuba sendodeni yakho; yona iyakukubusa.>>

¹⁷ Wayesethi ku-Adamu: <<Njengokuba ulalele izwi lomkakho, wadla kulowo muthi engakuyala ngawo ukuthi ungadli kuwo, ngalokho umhlabathi uqalekisiwe ngenxa yakho. Uyakudla kuwo ngokukhathazeka zonke izinsuku zokuhamba kwakho.

¹⁸ Uyakukuvezela ameva namakhakhasi, wena udle imifino yasendle.

¹⁹ Ngesithukuthuku sobuso bakho uyakudla isinkwa sakho, uze ubuyele emhlabathini, lokhu wathathwa kuwo; ngokuba ungumhlabathi, uyakuphenduka umhlabathi.>>

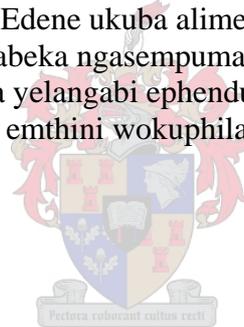
²⁰ U-Adamu wamqamba umkakhe igama lokuthi u-Eva,* ngokuba waba ngunina wabo bonke abaphilayo.

²¹ UJehova uNkulunkulu wabenzela u-Adamu nomkakhe iziphuku, wabembathisa.

²² UJehova uNkulunkulu wathi: <<Bheka, u-Adamu usenjengomunye wethu, uyakwazi okuhle nokubi; kepha manje makangeluli isandla sakhe, athathe nakuwo umuthi wokuphila, adle, aphile kuze kube phakade.>>

²³ UJehova uNkulunkulu wammukisa ensimini yase-Edene ukuba alime umhlabathi athathwe kuwo.

²⁴ Wamxosha u-Adamu, wabeka ngasempumalanga kwensimu yase-Edene amakherubi* kanye nenkemba yelangabi ephenduphendukayo, ilinde indlela eya emthini wokuphila.



APPENDIX 5

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GENESISI

Genesisi

Incwadzi yekucala eBhayibhelini nguGenesisi lokusho <<Kudalwa kwetintfo>>, ngobe phela ikhuluma ngekudalwa kwato tonkhe tintfo, nangebantfu bekucala kanye nekusunguleka kwesive sema-Israyeli.

Esigabeni sekucala salencwadzi (tehluko 1-11), tihloko letimcoka nguleti: Kudalwa kwelizulu nemhlaba; kwehlukana emkhatsini webantfu neMdali wabo, lokudvonsela umuntfu esonweni, ekuhluphekeni nasekufeni; Nowa nazamcolo; umbhoshongo waseBhabheli kanye nekusakateka kwebantfu nemhlaba wonkhe.

Sigaba sesibili salencwadzi (tehluko 12-50) sichaza umlandvo wabokhokho besive sema-Israyeli: Abrahama, lowakhetfwa nguNkulunkulu wametsembisa live netitukulwane; Isaka, indvodzana yakhe; Jakobe, umtukulu wa-Abrahama; nemadvodzana aJakobe lalishumi nambili, basunguli betive tema-Israyeli. Josefa abengulomunye wemadvodzana aJakobe, Genesisi wephetsa ngekulandzisa ngemphilo yakhe, alandzisa ngekutfotjiswa kwakhe nangemphumelelo yakhe, nangekutsi wambita kanjani uyise nabomnakabo, waze wabanika indzawo yekuhlala eGibhithe.

Emakholwa alamuhla atayikhandza lencwadzi yaGenesisi kutsi ingufakazi lobeka ngalokukhanyako emasu netento taNkulunkulu lophilako, umdali nemsimamisi wato tonkhe tintfo, umehluleli nemsindzisi wabo bonkhe bantfu.

Tihloko letimcoka.....Tehluko

Ticalo tato tonkhe tintfo 1-11

<i>Nkulunkulu udala lizulu nemhlaba.....</i>	<i>1-2</i>
<i>Umuntfu wehlukana naNkulunkulu, futsi utakufa...3-4</i>	
<i>Titukulwane ta-Adamu kuya kuNowa.....</i>	<i>4-5</i>
<i>Nowa nazamcolo.....</i>	<i>6-9</i>
<i>Bantfu basakateka nemhlaba wonkhe, umbhoshongo weBhabheli.....</i>	<i>10-11</i>

Bokhokho bema-Israyeli 12-36

<i>Nkulunkulu ubita abusise Abrahama, aphindze amvivinye.....</i>	<i>12-18;20</i>
<i>ISodoma neGomora.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Kutalwa kwa-Isaka; kufa kwaSara.....</i>	<i>21-23</i>
<i>Isaka naRebheka; kufa kwa-Abrahama.....</i>	<i>24-26</i>
<i>Kugewuka nekubuya kwaJakobe.....</i>	<i>27-35</i>
<i>Titukulwane taka-Esawu.....</i>	<i>36</i>

Josefa nabomnakabo 37-50

<i>Kutfotjiswa nekuphumelela kwaJosefa.....</i>	<i>37-41</i>
<i>BomnakaboJosefa bayavivinywa.....</i>	<i>42-45</i>

Indzaba yendalo

1 ¹ Ekucaleni Nkulunkulu wadala lizulu nemhlaba. ² Umhlaba wawulihlane lelingenalutfo, bumnyama babumbonye emanti nekujula kwawo; Moya waNkulunkulu abehla enyuka ahambahamba etikwemanti.

³ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Akube khona kukhanya,>> kwaba khona kukhanya.

⁴ Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi kukhanya kuhle. Nkulunkulu wehlukanisa kukhanya nebumnyama. ⁵ Nkulunkulu wakwetsa kukhanya watsi: <<Yimini,>> bumnyama wabetsa watsi: <<Busuku.>> Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lekucala.

⁶ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Akube khona umkhatsi emkhatsini wemanti, wehlukanise emanti nemanti.>> ⁷ Nkulunkulu wenta umkhatsi, wehlukanisa emanti labengephansi kwemkhatsi nemanti labengetulu kwemkhatsi. Kwase kuba njalo. ⁸ Nkulunkulu wawetsa lomkhatsi watsi: <<Lizulu.>> Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lesibili.

⁹ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Emanti langephansi kwelizulu akabutsane ndzawonye, kubonakale umhlaba lowomile.>> Kwase kuba njalo. ¹⁰ Lokomile Nkulunkulu wakwetsa libito watsi: <<Ngumhlaba;>> nemanti labutsene ndzawonye wawetsa libito watsi: <<Lwandle.>> Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi loko kuhle. ¹¹ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Umhlaba awuvete konkhe lokumilako: lokutsela tindhavu, netihlahla tetitselo letitsela tindhavu letiyinhlanganyelo ngetinhlobo tato.>> Kwase kuba njalo. ¹² Umhlaba waveta konkhe lokumilako lokutsela tindhavu, netihlahla tetitselo letitsela tindhavu letiyinhlanganyelo ngetinhlobo tato. Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi loko kuhle. ¹³ Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lesitsatfu.

¹⁴ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Akube khona tibane emkhatsini wesibhakabhaka tehlukanise imini nebusuku; atibe tibonakaliso tetikhatsi, netemalanga, neteminyaka.

¹⁵ Atibe tibane temkhatsi wesibhakabhaka tikhanyisele umhlaba.>> Kwase kuba njalo. ¹⁶ Nkulunkulu wenta tibane letikhulu taba tibili: lesikhulu kutsi sibuse imini, lesincane kutsi sibuse busuku. Wenta netinkhanyeti futsi. ¹⁷ Nkulunkulu watibeka emkhatsini wesibhakabhaka kutsi tikhanyisele umhlaba, ¹⁸ tibuse imini nebusuku, tehlukanise kukhanya nebumnyama. Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi loko kuhle.

¹⁹ Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lesine.

²⁰ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Emanti akagcwale yonkhe inhlobo yetilwane letiphilako, kundize tinyoni etikwemhlaba emkhatsini wesibhakabhaka.>> ²¹ Ngako-ke Nkulunkulu wadala tilwane letikhulu tasselwandle nato tonkhe tindhlobo tetilwane letiphilako letigcwele emantini ngetinhlobo tato, nato tonkhe tindhlobo tetinyoni letinetimphiko. Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi loko kuhle. ²² Nkulunkulu watibusisa watsi: <<Talanani, nandze nigcwalise tilwandle, netinyoni tandze nemhlaba wonkhe.>>

²³ Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lesihlanu.

²⁴ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Umhlaba awuvete tonkhe tindhlobo tetilwane letiphilako: tonkhe tindhlobo tetifuyo, netetilwane letihamba ngesisu, netilo tesiganga.>> Kwase kuba njalo. ²⁵ Nkulunkulu wenta tonkhe tindhlobo: tetilo tesiganga, netetilwane, netetilwane letihamba ngesisu. Nkulunkulu wabona kutsi loko kuhle.

²⁶ Nkulunkulu wase utsi: <<Asente bantfu, babe ngumfanekiso wetfu, basifute; babuse etikwetinhlanganyelo tasselwandle, nasetikwetinyoni tasemoyeni, nasetikwetifuyo, nasetikwemhlaba wonkhe, nasetikwato tonkhe tilwane letihamba ngesisu

netilwanyakatana.>>

²⁷ Ngako Nkulunkulu wadala umuntfu
waba ngumfanekiso wakhe;
wamdala waba ngumfanekiso waNkulunkulu:
wabadala, lomdvuna nalomsikati.

²⁸ Nkulunkulu wababusisa watsi: <<Talanani, nandze, nigcwalise umhlaba,
niwuncobe. Nibuse etikwetinhlangi taselwandle, nasetikwetinyoni tasemoyeni,
nasetikwato tonkhe tilwane letihamba emhlabeni.>> ²⁹ Nkulunkulu watsi: <<Ase
nibuke la, ngininike tonkhe tibhidvo letisemhlabeni wonkhe letimilisa inhlanyelo,
nato tonkhe tihlala letinhlanyelo etitselweni tato, kutsi kube kudla kwenu.

³⁰ Kepha konkhe lokuphilako: tilwane temhlaba, nato tonkhe tinyoni tasemoyeni,
netilwane letihamba ngesisu, ngikunika konkhe lokuluhlata kutsi kube kudla
kwako.>> Kwase kuba njalo. ³¹ Nkulunkulu wakubona konkhe labesakwentile, kutsi
kuhle kakhulu. Kwahlwa, kwasa: Kwaba lilanga lesitfupha.

Lilanga lesikhombisa

2 Ngako-ke kwase kupheleliswe lizulu nemhlaba, nendalo yako konkhe. ² Ngelilanga
lesikhombisa Nkulunkulu abesawucedzile wonkhe umsebenzi wakhe labewenta; wase
uyaphumula. ³ Ngako-ke Nkulunkulu walibusisa lilanga lesikhombisa, walingcwelisa;
ngobe ngalo waphumula emsebenzini wakhe wonkhe wekudala.

⁴ Ladalwa kanjalo-ke lizulu nemhlaba.

Insimi yase-Edeni

Ngesikhatsi Nkulunkulu Simakadze enta umhlaba nelizulu, ⁵ kusete nakunye
lokumilako emhlabeni, netibhidvo tisengakabikho, ngobe Nkulunkulu Simakadze
abesengakayinisi imvula emhlabeni, kwakute umuntfu wekuwulima lomhlaba. ⁶ Noko
kwenyuka inkhangu, iphuma emhlabatsini, yanisela wonkhe umhlaba.

⁷ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wase ubumba umuntfu ngelutfuli lwemhlabatsi,
waphefumulela umoya wekuphila emakhaleni akhe; umuntfu wase uba ngumuntfu
lophilako.

⁸ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wahlanyela insimi yase-Edeni ngasemphumalanga;
wambeka khona-ke lomuntfu labesamentile. ⁹ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wamilisa
emhlabatsini tonkhe tihlala letibukekako letimnandzi; ekhatsi nensimi wamilisa
sihlala sekuphila kanye nesihlala sekwati lokuhle nalokubi.

¹⁰ Kwavela umfula lowageleta wanisela insimi yase-Edeni, udzabula ekhatsi nayo,
bese wehlukana uba ngimifula lemine. ¹¹ Libito lemfula wekucala yiPhishoni;
ngulona logeleta utungelete lonkhe live laseHavila, lapho kunegolide khona. ¹² Igolide
yalelo live yinhle kakhulu; kunehlaka yebhedola kanye nelitje isholamu kulelo live.

¹³ Umfula wesibili yiGihoni; ngiwo logeleta utungelete lonkhe live laseKushe.

¹⁴ Libito lemfula wesitsatfu yiThigrisi, logeletela ngasemphumalanga ye-Asiriya.
Umfula wesine yiYufra.

¹⁵ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wamtsatsa umuntfu wambeka ensimini yase-Edeni kutsi
ayilime, ayilindze. ¹⁶ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wamyala umuntfu watsi kuye:
<<Ungadla ngekutsandza kwakho tonkhe titselo letilapha ensimini; ¹⁷ kodvwa
ungasidli titselo sesihlala sekwati lokulungile nalokungakalungi, ngobe mhlazana

usidla uyakufa nekufa.>>

Kudalwa kwalomsikati

¹⁸ Nkulunkulu Simakadze watsi: <<Akukuhle kutsi umuntfu ahlale yedvwana. Ngitamentela umsiti lolungele yena.>> ¹⁹ Ngako-ke Nkulunkulu Simakadze wabumba ngemhlabatsi tonkhe tilwane tesiganga, netinyoni letindiza emoyeni, watiletsa kumuntfu kutsi abone kutsi utetsa njani. Lawo magama latetsa wona tabitwa ngawo. ²⁰ Ngako-ke umuntfu watetsa emagama tonkhe tifuyo, netinyoni letindiza emoyeni, nato tonkhe tilwane tesiganga. Kepha Adamu*fb* akamtfolanga umsiti labelungele yena. ²¹ Ngako-ke Nkulunkulu Simakadze wamehlisela umuntfu butfongo lobukhulu; walala. Nkulunkulu wase ukhipha lolunye lwetimbambo takhe wagcwalisa sikhala ngenyama. ²² Nkulunkulu Simakadze wabumba lomsikati ngelubhambo labelukhiphe kulomdvuna, wase umyisa endvodzeni.

²³ Indvodza yatsi:

<<Lona-ke sewulitsambo lematsambo ami,
nenyama yenyama yami.
Uyawubitwa ngekutsi: <yindvodzakati>,
ngobe utsetfwe endvodzeni.>>

²⁴ Ngako-ke indvodza iyawushiya uyise nenina inamatsele kumfati wayo, bese baba nyamanye.

²⁵ Babehamba ngcunu, bobabili, lendvodza nemkayo, bate emahloni.

Kuwela kwemuntfu esonweni

3 Inyoka yayinebucili kwendlula tonkhe tilwane tesiganga labetentile Nkulunkulu Simakadze. Yatsi kumfati: <<Kodvwa ngempela Nkulunkulu ushito yini kutsi: <Ningadli nome ngusinye nje sitselo setihlahla letisensimini?>>

² Umfati waphendvula inyoka watsi: <<Singatidla titselo tetihlahla letisensimini, ³ ngaphandle kwesitselo sesihlahla lesisekhatsi nensimi; Nkulunkulu utsite: <Ningasidli sitselo sesihlahla lesisekhatsi nensimi, ningasitsintsi nekusitsintsa, kuze ningafi.> >>

⁴ Inyoka yatsi kumfati: <<Ningeke nife. ⁵ Kepha Nkulunkulu uyati kutsi mhlazana nisidla, emehlo enu ayawuvuleka, bese nifanana naNkulunkulu nikwati lokuhle nalokubi.>>

⁶ Ngako-ke watsi umfati kube abone kutsi lesihlahla sasifanelwe kudliwa, nekutsi sasibukeka sisihle, nekutsi lesihlahla sasifanele kumhlakaniphisa umuntfu, wakha kulesihlahla wadla. Wanika nendvodza yakhe, nayo yadla. ⁷ Emehlo abo bobabili ase ayavuleka, batibona kutsi bangcunu; base batfunga emacembe emkhiwa, batentela kwekuvunula.

⁸ Ekupholeni kwelilanga beva Nkulunkulu Simakadze ahambahamba ensimini; bo-Adamu nemkakhe bambhacela Nkulunkulu Simakadze emkhatsini wetihlahla tensimi.

⁹ Kodvwa Nkulunkulu Simakadze wabita Adamu watsi: <<Ukuphi?>>

¹⁰ Waphendvula watsi: <<Ngive livi lakho ensimini, ngase ngiyesaba, ngobe ngihamba ngcunu; ngabhaca.>>

¹¹ Nkulunkulu wambuta watsi: <<Ngubani losakutjele kutsi uhamba ngcunu? Sewusidlile yini lesitselo salesihlahla lengakuyala ngaso kutsi ungabosidla?>>

¹² Adamu waphendvula watsi: <<Ngumfati lowanginika yena kutsi ahlale nami, nguye lona longinike lesitselo, ngase ngiyasidla.>>

¹³ Nkulunkulu Simakadze watsi kumfati: <<Yini-ke lena lose uyentile?>>
Umfati watsi: <<Ngikhohliswe yinyoka, ngase ngiyadla.>>

Nkulunkulu ukhipha sigwebo

¹⁴ Nkulunkulu Simakadze watsi enyokeni:
<<Njengobe sewente loku,
sewucalekiswa ngetulu kwato tonkhe tilwane:
tonkhe tifuyo, nato tonkhe tilwane tesiganga.
Sewuyakuhamba ngesisu sakho,
ngesikhatsi sonkhe sekuphila kwakho
udle lutfuli lwemhlabatsi.

¹⁵ Ngitawubeka butsa
emkhatsini wakho nemfati,
nasemkhatsini wentalo yakho nentalo yemfati.
Yona iyakufihlita inhloko yakho,
wena uyakuluma sitsendze sayo.>>

¹⁶ Watsi kumfati:
<<Ngitakwandzisa buhlungu ekukhulelweni kwakho,
bube bukhulu kakhulu;
uyakutala bantfwana kabuhlungu.
Kufisa kwakho kuyakubasendvodzeni yakho,
yona iyakukubusa.>>

¹⁷ Ku-Adamu watsi:
<<Njengobe ulalele livi lemfati wakho,
wasidla lesitselo salesihlahla
lengakuyala ngaso ngatsi: <Ungasidli,>
umhlaba sewucalekisiwe ngenca yakho.
Sewuyakudla kuwo kamatima
onkhe emalanga ekuphila kwakho.

¹⁸ Uyakukuvetela emanyeva nelukhula,
wena uyakudla lokumila esigangeni.

¹⁹ Uyakusebenta kamatima,
ukujulukele kudla kwakho,
udzimate ubuye emhlabatsini,
ngobe vele watsatfwa kuwo;
njengobe ulutfuli, uyawubuyela elutfulini.>>

²⁰ Adamu wametsa umkakhe watsi ngu-Eva, *fc* ngobe waba ngunina wabo bonkhe labaphilako. ²¹ Nkulunkulu Simakadze wentela bo-Adamu nemkakhe kwekwembatsa kwetikhumba, wabembatsisa.

Bo-Adamu na-Eva bayacoshwa

²² Nkulunkulu Simakadze watsi: <<Ase nibuke, Adamu sewunjengatsi,
sewuyakwati lokuhle nalokubi. Angahle akhe kulesihlahla sekuphila adle, bese uphila
kuze kube phakadze naphakadze.>> ²³ Ngako-ke Nkulunkulu Simakadze wamcosha
ensimini yase-Edeni, kutsi alime umhlabatsi labetsatfwe kuwo. ²⁴ Wamkhipha lo-
Adamu; kwase kutsi ngasemphumalanga nensimi yase-Edeni wabeka emakherubhi
kanye nenkamba lenelilangabi lephendvuphendvukako ilindze indlela leya esihlahleni
sekuphila.

NGUNI INTERVIEWEES

(The interviewees wish to remain anonymous, therefore no names will be supplied). For male interviewees there is M next to the group member or F if it's a female.

NGUNI GROUP	Number	ACADEMIC	RELIGIOUS	POLITICAL	NON-RELIGIOUS
XHOSA	1				
Church Member -F	A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lecturer – F	B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Lecturer –F	C	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Politician -M	D			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pastor – M	E		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Student - M	F	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
ZULU	2				
Pastor – M	A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Professional – M	B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Politician – F	C			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Professional – F	D				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student - M	E				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SWAZI	3				
Pastor –M	A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Professor – F	B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Traditionalist – M	C			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cabinet Minister - M	D		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Politician – F	E			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Student – M	F	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Focused group:	G	Ordinary person - M	Ordinary person - F	Ordinary person - M	Ordinary person - F
NDEBELE	4				
King – M	A			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Professional – M	B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Labourer – F	C			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Professional – F	D	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Student - F	E		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Focused group:	F	Ordinary person - M	Ordinary person - F	Ordinary person - F	Ordinary person - F

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1A

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this?

Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Xhosa speaking people believe that Qamatha created, but the details of Qamatha's creation are not clear.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Qamatha created the universe but unfortunately there are no details of His creation.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Among Xhosa creation stories, there is no record as to how long it took Qamatha to create the universe. Xhosa speaking people do not even concern themselves with that question.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

It is difficult to link this word with nature. There is no thorough understanding of nature in Nguni communities.



Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Man has been created by Qamatha and Qamatha is also Mvelingqangi – the first to appear.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

It appears that creation was something spontaneous and as such it did not follow any set format.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni Speakers?

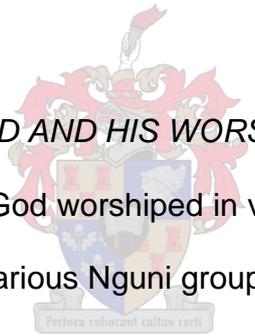
Xhosa speaking people believe that man bears the image of God through the ancestors that is why ancestors are between them and God.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

There is no such a concept among Xhosa speaking people.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Xhosa speaking communities have the same concept as that of the Hebrew Bible, sunset marks the beginning of the new day.



GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

He was respected in the community. As a means of enforcing this respect, no one was allowed to look up or point upwards because this was seen as a sign of disrespect. Animals were slaughtered for sacrifices. He was also worshipped through ancestors.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Nguni speaking communities know and understand God as powerful, He created the universe.

God is unapproachable and God is distant. The only way to approach Him is through the

ancestors who mediate between us and God.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestors are not God. They mediate between God and man. An ancestor is a dead person who was useful in the community or in the clan while he was still alive and this status used to be limited to men only. You just do not become an ancestor because you are now dead, some generations had to pass by before you are called an ancestor. God communicates to us through the ancestors.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

There is only one God and there is no concept of a local God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Nguni speaking communities have recently been exposed to this concept especially in the academic circles, however, this concept would be new to an ordinary Nguni speaking person.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The names of God among Xhosa speaking communities are as follows:- Qamatha, Mvelingqangi, Mdali.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Xhosa speaking people used to worship their God called Qamatha. However, there was no prescribed way of worship, it was something spontaneous. God was respected and known as the Creator of the universe.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

The change was very difficult. Not everybody accepted the messages from the missionaries.

The ancestors are very important in the Nguni speaking communities. Life, good fortune and disaster are always associated with the ancestors.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Missionaries tried their best to communicate their message to the best of their ability

however, there is feeling that they failed to convey some important concepts about God in the Nguni context.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Partly, because they targeted important people in the community. It appears that a great percentage was not reached.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The messages of the missionaries had both positive and negative impact:-

Positive – Nguni speakers gained knowledge through schools, and history written down.

One particular day for worship.

Negative – the missionaries challenged how Nguni speaking people did their things (the way of doing things).



CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

The fall or missing the mark is known among Nguni speaking communities (Ukuwa kuyaziwa) –

The fall is related to the law (umntu uwa emthethweni) - Xhosa speaking people would understand the concept of sin as doing wrong.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

There is no such a concept in the Nguni speaking communities.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

She fell and caused everybody else to fall. She is physically a weak vessel, she is a support system and she is a source of strength. Nguni speaking people always associate polygamy with wealth.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

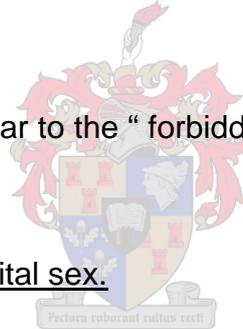
Snakes are not truthful. A fox would be appropriate.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

Nguni speaking communities understand punishment as something redemptive.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

There are forbidden things like premarital sex.



NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations,

would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The language in Nguni Bible translations is always a problem and words that are used are descriptive, e.g. death – the translation is *ukufa*, this word does not refer to a human being

instead it refers to an animal. A human being is *ubhublile* or *uswelekile*. There are some terms that are not transparent e.g. *inqambi* is not clear in Xhosa, it is “slang” – the correct word there is *into engahlambulukanga* (unclean).

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No, they do not, hence a call to review the Nguni Bible translations so that the needs of the community may be met.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Translations are always a challenge and unfortunately ordinary people may not be reached.

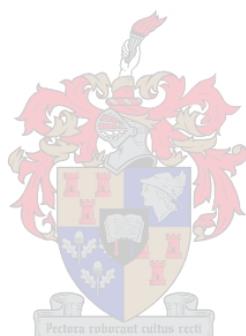
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

The new translation does not help the situation instead it makes things worse. The language used is “slang”.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Problems were identified at the beginning of this section.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1B

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this?

Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Many things were said, however, I really do not remember now how it was said the universe came about.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

It is my understanding that Qamatha created the universe.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I really do not know.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

I do not know if there is any link between creation and this idea .

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

I am not sure, however, my understanding is that God created human beings.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

There is no certain pattern, it looks like creation was something spontaneous.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

I am definitely not sure. **Question 1G:**

The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/ Bible translations?

forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

There is no such a concept in Xhosa speaking communities, as far as I understand.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

I have no idea on this issue.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Qamatha was respected in the community. As a means of enforcing this respect, no one was allowed to look up or point upwards because this was seen as a sign of disrespect. Animals were slaughtered for sacrifices.



Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

God is powerful, and therefore created the universe. God is unapproachable and God is distant. The only way to approach Him is through the ancestors who mediate between us and

God. Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestors are not God. They mediate between God and man. An ancestor is a dead person in The community or in the clan and this status used to be limited to men only. You just do not become an ancestor because you are now dead, some generations had to pass by before you Are called an ancestor.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

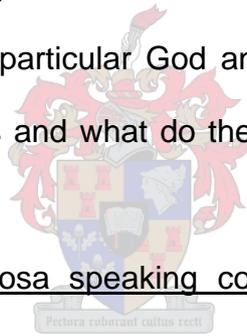
There is only one God and there is no concept of a local God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

There is no such concept among Nguni speaking communities except in the institutions of higher learning where they are taught so.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The names for God among the Xhosa speaking communities are as follows:- Qamatha, Mvelingqangi, Mdali.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Xhosa speaking people worshipped Qamatha. However, there was no prescribed way of worship, it seems it was something spontaneous.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

The change was very difficult among the Nguni speaking people. Not everybody accepted the messages from the missionaries.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Nguni speaking communities believe that missionaries presented a wrong concept about God.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

It appears that they partly achieved their goal, because they targeted important people in the community. As a result it appears that a great percentage was not reached.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The messages of the missionaries had both positive and negative impact: -

Positive – Nguni speakers gained knowledge through schools, and history written down.

Negative – the missionaries challenged how Nguni speaking did their things.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

The fall was understood by Nguni speaking people in terms of keeping or breaking the community law.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

There is no such concept in the Nguni speaking communities.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? The reason why a woman fell was that in the community women are seen as managers. They decide when to work in the field, they even decide when the man must stop working in the field. The kraal is the man's

dominion but there is nothing that can happen in the kraal without the permission of a woman. Nguni speaking people are communal people in their approach, therefore what goes with one person, they take responsibility.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snakes are dangerous. A fox would be appropriate in a Nguni context as a reference.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I am not very clear even though I think judgment should be looked at redemptively.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

In case of an unnatural death, women are forbidden to go to the cemetery. Some names cannot just be mentioned and finally some traditional ceremonies may not be attended by everyone.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The Nguni Bible translations are not relevant to the ordinary people among the Nguni speaking communities.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

There should be a call to review the Nguni Bible translations so that the needs of the community may be met.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

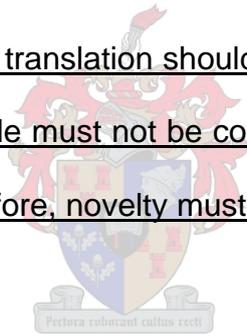
There are challenges with translations, ordinary people may not be reached by these translations.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

The new translation is making things worse instead of helping the situation.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

In any translation project, principles of translation should be followed. When the translators are doing their work, the dignity of the Bible must not be compromised. It must be understood that the Bible is in a specific register, therefore, novelty must be considered.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1C

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

U – Mvelingqangi lives in heaven. Ancestors are also linked to creation. The Nguni speaking people were orderly and law abiding citizens even before the missionaries came onto the scene.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

I think Qamatha created the universe, and there are no other ways.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I really do not have an idea.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

I cannot describe it in Xhosa.



Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Nguni speaking communities understand creation of humankind as God’s creation.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I have no idea, however, it appears that creation was spontaneous.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

The concept of “the image of God” is localized to individual clans, i.e. you are like your forefather (ancestor).

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I don't know.

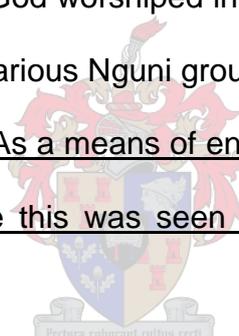
Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

I have no idea on this issue.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

He was respected in the community. As a means of enforcing this respect, no one was allowed to look up or point upwards because this was seen as a sign of disrespect. Worship was through the ancestors.



Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

God is powerful. God is unapproachable and a God is distant. The only way to approach Him is through the ancestors who mediate between us and God.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to Creation?

Ancestors are not God. They mediate between God and man They are both overseers. They are both supernatural beings.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

There is only one God and the local deities are ancestors.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

This is a foreign concept among the ordinary Nguni speaking communities.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The following are the names of God among the Xhosa speaking people in the Nguni communities:- Qamatha, Mvelingqangi, Mdali, Thixo, Sonini Nanini, Somandla, Duma Barhwaqele.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni People knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if

not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

The missionaries indeed brought a new gospel with their hidden agenda. One of the distinguished African writers Mqhayi was expelled from school because he went to a circumcision school.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

The change was very difficult. Not everybody accepted the messages from the missionaries because leaving the ancestral worship was a big issue.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

I have no idea.



Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

It appears that they partly achieved their goal, because they targeted important people in the community.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The messages of the missionaries had both positive and negative impact:-

Positive – Publishing houses, infrastructure.

Negative – Confusion, leaving ancestor worship and traditional Nguni attire.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

There was a law and therefore sin is breaking that law.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

I have no idea.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? A woman is seen as someone who is limited to the kitchen.

She is blamed for bringing the disaster to humanity (fall in the beginning). This is highlighted by Mthingane in his book, *Inene nasi isibhozo [I swear]*.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

A snake is very dangerous. The same snake can be a symbol for an ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

A kraal is forbidden to an outsider. A young woman does not come close to where the father-in-law is.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

It does not meet the mind of an ordinary man on the street.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

I have no idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

I have no idea

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

I have no idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Xhosa speakers must translate.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1D

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

God lives in heaven. Ancestors are also linked to creation. The Nguni speaking people were peace loving even before the missionaries.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Qamatha, and He was respected, and no one was allowed to point upwards because that was deemed disrespect.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I really do not have an idea.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

There is no fitting description.



Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

There is no detailed information about the creation of human beings even though I believe Qamatha created.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Spontaneously.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Because of the protocol = Qamatha → Inkosi → indoda yekhaya → Family, human beings are like their ancestors. The family listens to the last words from the head of the family where he is alive or dead.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I have no idea.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Xhosa speakers knew the times and days. Inkuku zokuqala [time for crowing of the cock], ukuphuma kwekhwezi [dawn], ekuseni [morning], entlazane [late morning], emini enkulu [midday], ngorhatya [evening] and ebusuku [night]. The day starts at the sun rise. Months have their names and important dates are marked by events.

Pectus roburant cultus recti

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

There was a *isivivane* [heap of stones] for protection where the people would worship [*ukubika bacele indlela*] and they contribute stone. Worship was done on two levels i.e. collective – on top of a mountain or on the banks of the river under the direction of the king and secondly individually – family ancestors by families.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

He is actively involved in the affairs of the people.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

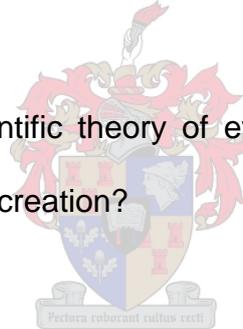
Ancestors are a medium which Qamatha uses to communicate with his people.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Ancestors are local deities and Qamatha is a national deity.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

I have absolutely no idea.



Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The only name for God is Qamatha

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Xhosa speakers had laws and kings. They were worshipping events e.g. ulibo [greenery]. Virgins were there even before missionaries came and breaking a woman's virginity was a punishable offence.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

I have no idea.



Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Missionaries misrepresented the Bible.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

No, they have failed to achieve their goal.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The missionaries looked down upon the culture. They looked down upon the traditional health system and discouraged the clothing of Xhosa speaking people.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Ihlazo is the sin concept in the Nguni speaking communities because there was no sin concept.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No, they did not.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? Disaster [ishwangusha] (i) looking and laughing at a disabled person, (ii) your lifestyle. Suffering and sickness is the result of something wrong that has been done, or failure to listen to someone senior.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

It does not make sense this figure of speech is irrelevant.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Certain herbs, women were forbidden to eat eggs, certain meat portions, calling certain names.

If a woman is in her menstrual cycle, she was not allowed to drink or use milk.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

It is a bit difficult to read and understand the Bible, it will remain a challenge.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

I have no idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

I have no idea

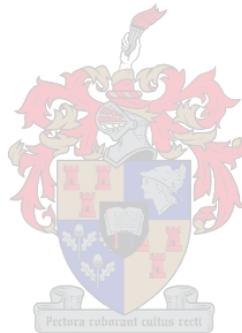
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

I have no idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

The Bible must be inclusive.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1E

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

According to Nguni belief, the universe is the most widely acknowledged work of God. This concept is expressed through saying that God created all things out of nothing. He is given the name of Creator, Moulder or Maker.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

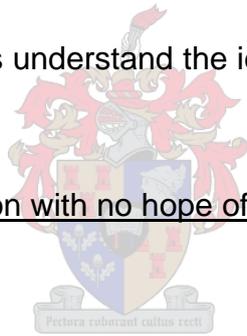
The Nguni people believe that only God created the world. God has been a name befitting His title as Creator such as “Excavator”, “Carver”, “Originator”, “Inventor” and “Architect”. The universe is said to have its architectural origin and form from God, the chief artist.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

According to Nguni beliefs, it took several days to create the universe.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

To some it is a place of utter destruction with no hope of future life.



Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

According to Nguni speakers, Qamatha created the humankind.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Spontaneously.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

The idea of “created in the image of God”, is associated with the ancestors and unfortunately God is not the central focus, rather, the ancestors are.

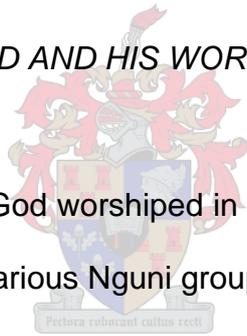
Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I have no understanding on this, but I think in the Nguni language group there is no reference to the resting God.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

It gives the impression that God was physically involved in creation, hence the question in 1G above.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP



Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

In many ways Nguni speaking people respond to their God through worship.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

In this capacity God is regarded as King, Ruler, Lord, Master and Judge. This emanates from the societies which traditionally have or have had kings, chiefs or other central rulers.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

God is considered as King of kings and supreme in all respects and ancestors are mediators between God and people.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Ancestors act as local deities and Qamatha is the national deity.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Evolution has no scientific influence upon the conservative or traditional Nguni language groups.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Qamatha is the only divine name I know.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?
worship styles.

Missionaries uprooted Nguni language groups from their basic beliefs. Nguni speaking people formed independent or traditional churches along with their worship styles.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Nguni speaking people thought that independent churches would be the answer to the question above.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Missionaries were confronted with cultural issues which made it difficult for them to preach the gospel to the ordinary man on the street.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

I feel they partly achieved their goal.



Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The messages of the missionaries had negative overtones in the Nguni language groups. They looked down upon the culture. They looked down upon the traditional health system.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

There was no concept equivalent to that of sin in the Nguni communities.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No, unfortunately I have no idea.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

Suffering and sickness are not necessarily associated with a woman, instead these are associated with evil spirits.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

A snake is a dangerous animal but there are times where it can be a symbol for an ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

There indeed are a few things that were considered as a no go area, especially to women.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

It is a bit difficult to read and understand the Bible, it will remain a challenge.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

I have no idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

I have no idea

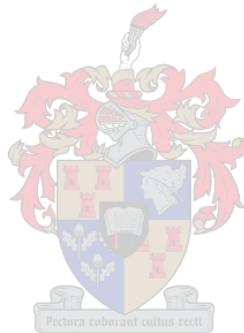
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

I have no idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

I have no idea for now.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1F

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

It was created by Qamatha who is the Creator of all things

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Qamatha and there are no other ways.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I believe it took seven days even in the Nguni understanding.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

It was a dark place where there was nothing.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Mankind was created by Qamatha

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

It followed a certain pattern. We believe that the creator has order and so he created everything with order.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Yes, when I went to the college, I thought that God is exactly like us. In other words I imagined a God who is in my own image contrary to the fact that we are like God and God is not like us.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/ Bible translations?

Yes

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

It is understood exactly the same way as it is in the Hebrew Bible.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

He was worshipped through the ancestors. The sacrifices were made to appease Him because of His anger.



Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

The Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent God

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

The ancestors are intercessors between God and man. God is the creator of everything.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

They have a universal God but they differ only in naming Him. Some call Him Mvelingqangi, Zimu, and others call Him Qamatha.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No, because they only believed in creation.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Mvelingqangi – the one who created everything.

Qamatha – the one who was there before everything.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni People knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if Not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Different missionaries came with different approaches. Some were totally contrary to the Nguni beliefs and yet others were including everything. For instance the Catholics didn't have a problem with the worship of the Ancestors while worshipping God.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Some rejected it because they felt that it was imposed on them. Some changed their belief system totally.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Not so accurate.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Some did and some did not.



Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

It depends. Some Nguni speaking people learnt the style of imposing this gospel to the people and they did exactly that. Consequently they were hated by others. To others it had a positive impact.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

It depends on the different schools of thought. Some take it as it is revealed in the Bible while others have their own theories.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

They know that it was where the first couple was put by God.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

Just as it is in the Hebrew Bible. But some sicknesses are a result of the fury of the ancestors.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Yes i.e. dangerous and cunning.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

Just as it is in the Hebrew Bible.



Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

There are laws and regulations in the Nguni Culture.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Yes, to some extent.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

Yes, but sometimes they lose the meaning.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Sometimes they reach them but sometimes you have to use other translations to understand.

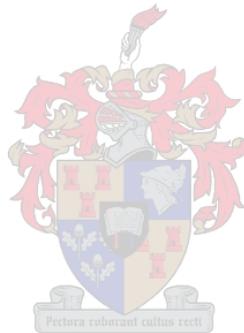
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

It depends on the verse but the current Xhosa Bible is good in some areas.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

If the writers can please remove the name “Ndikhoyo” and use the Ordinary Xhosa name because this name is not known in our communities and some reject the whole Bible because of it.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 1G

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

No idea

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Qamatha created and He was very respected. Pointing up using your index finger is viewed as disrespectful

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I honestly have no idea in this regard.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

I have no idea.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

I do not have any detailed information on this issue.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I believe creation was spontaneous.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Because of the protocol – Qamatha [God] – Inkosi [Lord] – Indoda yekhaya [head of the family] – family. The family listens to the last words of the head of the family whether dead or alive [Ikhaya liphula phula imiyolelo kulentloko ye khaya nokuba iyaphila okanye ibhubhile].

Amagqhirha [diviners] 1. imboni [seer] – abacebisi (amatola) [advisor] – Xhosa prophets

2. Iqqirha lamanzi [water diviner] – izinyanya [ancestors]

3. Iqqirha lentaba [mountain diviner] – aphilisayo [for healing]

Amaxhwele [traditional healers] – ayaphilisa (ayaphupha/ abone imibono) through dreams and visions are healing.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I have no idea on this issue.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Xhosa speaking people knew the time and the day – inkuku zokuqala [dawn], ukuphuma kwekhwezi [very early in the morning], ekuseni [morning], entlazane [mid-morning], emini enkulu [mid-day], emalanga [afternoon] ngorhathyha [evening] imini iqala ukuphuma kwelanga [the day begins at the rising of the sun].

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Pectus roburant cultus recti

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

There was an “isivivane” (for protection) where people would worship! (Ubika uhambo acele indlela) throw a stone. There are 3 steps describing collective worship – on top of a mountain or on the banks of the river under the direction of the king. (ancestors’ family)

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

He is actively involved in the affairs of the people.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestors are a medium which Qamatha uses as He communicates with His people.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Ancestors are local deities and Qamatha is the national God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

I have absolutely no idea.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Qamatha is the only one I know.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni people] reaction, if

not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Xhosa had kings and law they were worshipping events – ulibo (utshangatshangiso) the missionary brought some new things. Virgins were there/ agreed with missionaries inkomo yesihewulo - breaking of virginity. Morals were taught even before missionaries came.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

They had mixed feelings.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Missionaries misrepresented the Bible.



Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

No, they failed to achieve their goal.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The missionaries worked down upon the culture. Upon the health system. Discouraged the clothing of Xhosa speaking people.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Ihlazo (understood as sin) is the concept because there was no sin concept.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No, they did not understand it all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

In Nguni culture the concepts of suffering and sickness are understood in the following manner (this may not necessarily refer to a woman only): *Ishwanwisha* – (i) looking at a disabled; (ii) how you live; (iii) suffering is the result of something; (iv) failure to listening, results in suffering and sickness.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

It does not make sense, the figure of speech is not relative, however, it is a dangerous and cunning animal.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No, I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Certain herbs, women were forbidden to eat eggs, certain meat, calling certain names. If a woman menstruates – no milk.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

It is a bit difficult to read and understand it. How it has been translated is a challenge

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No, I have no idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No, it does not reach them.

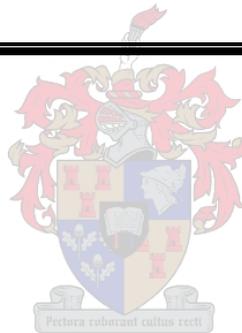
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No, I have no idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

The Bible must meet the needs of the community.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 2A

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

This universe came into existence through u-Mvelinqangi [self-existent one].

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I do not exactly know how long it took God to create in a Nguni context.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

I think Mvelinqangi created.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I think it was spontaneous.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

They see God as being different to them, rather, they are close to ancestors.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in the Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translation?

Yes.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How this concept is understood in Nguni communities?

No, I have no idea.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

There were feasts and at those feasts cattle or goats would be slaughtered in order to appease Him.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

They have a good God in mind.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

God is the creator and the ancestors intercede between God and us.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Nguni speaking communities have a universal God as opposed to the local deities that other national groups might have.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Mvelinqangi – self-existent one, Simakade – eternal one and Nkulunkulu – the great one.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

I have no idea.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

I have no idea.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

The messages were fairly accurate.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

To a fairly large extent.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

At first positively. Later there was a reassessment which was politically influenced [apartheid, colour bar, etc]. Missionaries were now seen as colonizers.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Sin – doing wrong to God and the norms of the society.



Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

I do not know.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

I do not know.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

It could mean an ancestor visiting the living, according to the type. It could also mean a double crosser.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

It is understood as a curse to work hard.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Sexuality.



Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Yes.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

Mostly sometimes.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

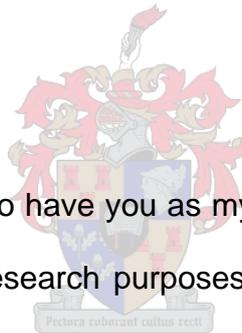
Translations do speak to the level of the people but symbols are doubtful.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

I have no idea

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea at all.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 2B

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

No, I have no Idea.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

I have no idea at all.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Mankind was created by God.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Not exactly, they had an idea of a supreme being, who created everything, but not necessarily created mankind in the image of God. The Bible light was not yet known.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in the Hebrew; does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

No idea at all.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Ngunis have beliefs, rituals and practices. Ngunis believed that there was a superior being and their ancestors served as a link between them and their God.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

He is Almighty and everywhere. He cares for us all.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

No idea at all.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Yes, Nguni's are strictly monotheistic. They accept only one God. Even though different clans use different names for the same God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No, Nguni folklore provides no evidence of evolution

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Mvelinqangi – vela – “appear” ngangi – first, hence He is the creator of everything that appeared thereafter.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Ngunis found it difficult to accept that Adam and Eve were the first people and could not accept that God created white people only. That it was not easy for them to accept a foreign God.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

The first group accepted the teachings of the missionaries wholeheartedly. The second group rejected the teachings of the missionaries. The third group found itself holding to part of their

traditional beliefs and part of the teachings of the missionaries.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

No idea at all.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

I am not very sure.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

This resulted in conflict within families as converts were regarded as outcasts. Religious denominations had different interpretations of the Bible. This resulted in animosity and intolerance. Not all members of a church accept every item of belief and doctrine. Some Ngunis believe that Biblical accounts are myths designed to teach basic truths.

CREATION AND THE FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

They do believe in the concepts of sin and the fall.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an

important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

They believe that creation occurred in different continents as there are similarities between people who originated in particular continents.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? Ngunis are strongly patriarchal, therefore Eve had to be responsible.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Unpleasantly cunning, secretive and mischievous. A snake can also be a symbol for a family ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

They view it as a curse which is still troubling people today working hard, drought, misfortunes re associated with Adam's curse of sin he committed.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the "forbidden tree" of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Disobedience.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

I have no idea at all.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea at all



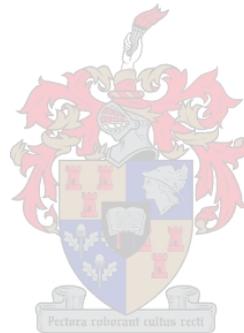
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

It appears that the new translations are not the best, however, they are at least better than the old.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible, which is one of the major sources that deal with creation, and God. Where would you suggest changes?

I have no idea at all.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 2C

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

No idea.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

No idea at all.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

No, I have no idea on this issue.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

I am not sure how, but I know God created.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No, I have no idea at all.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

I have no idea.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No idea at all.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How this concept is understood in Nguni communities?

I do not have a clear understanding on this issue.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

In times of crisis, people would go and pray on top of a mountain and plead with him. This was summoned by the royalty.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Mvelinqangi – seems to be an unapproachable one hence the introduction of ancestors.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

A person – ancestors – king – Mvelinqangi. Ancestors are mediators between God and people.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

No idea at all.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No idea at all.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Mvelinqangi is the only divine name I know.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

It was perceived differently.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

It was accommodated because blacks are basically syncretistic in nature.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

I do not know, however, I think the message brought a different perspective to their worship of God.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Partly they did, and their problem was enculturation.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Partly positive and partly negative

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

No idea at all.



Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No idea at all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

Something is going wrong just here or someone is casting a spell. The concept is that of angry ancestors also causing sickness and suffering.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

A snake is dangerous and poisonous. However, it can also be seen as a symbol of a family ancestor.

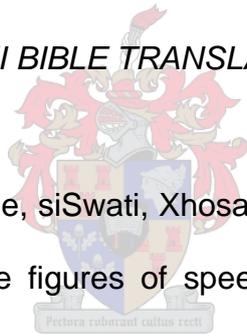
Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

There are forbidden things, especially in the area of rituals.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

No idea at all.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No, I have no idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

I do not think so. A dynamic interpretation found in English translation is needed.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Dynamic translations and literal translations for the reason that people live in different areas.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 2D

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this?

Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

I have no idea at all.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Mvelinqangi created.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

No idea at all.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

No idea at all.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

No idea at all.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No, I have no idea at all.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

In Zulu the likeness is associated with ancestors not God.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No idea at all.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How this concept is understood in Nguni communities?

No idea at all.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Through the ancestral worship, sacrifice a cow and burn papers. They speak at *emsamo* [at the back of the house], *ikhamba* [traditional beer], *inyama* [meat].

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

He is not visible hence they use the ancestors.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestor is a link between us and God. There is a clash when it comes to Christianity.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Mvelingqangi is a national God. The ancestral worship vary from community to community among the Zulu speaking people.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No, I have no idea.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Mvelinqangi is the divine name I know.

Nomkhubulwane – agriculture God (the queen of heaven – inkosazana ye-Zulu). They would plough a field designated for her and they will first eat its crops before harvesting theirs.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Their messages were viewed negatively, they were viewed as misleading people.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

They dealt with it negatively.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

It looks like they did and the kings accepted it.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Yes.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Education – infrastructure

Culture change

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Nguni speaking people were not allowed to do something wrong because they would be provoking ancestors.



Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

The conceptual imagination shared with the Nguni people needs some correction – it was not clear.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

A woman is a second class citizen. Sickness and suffering is brought by the angry ancestors.

Sickness and suffering is a way of reporting to us as human beings.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

It is a symbol of ancestors and at the same time some snakes are dangerous.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Respect was always there.



Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The old translation was difficult but the second edition translation is better understood.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

This is still a challenge and the bible society should look into this.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

I think so.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

Newer translations are better than the old one.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

The Bible must use the language of the people.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 2E

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Well I don't exactly know but I do know one thing though that we knew that there was or is a God behind everything.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

That what we called “u-Mvelinqangi”, there is no other explanation.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Well I’ve never spent time researching about creation but we know he’s the head God in charge.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

We believed that once you die you will be righteous and you will be with your ancestors looking after your family.



Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

It is believed that u-Mvelinqangi created one person and we then came out of that person.

“Well that’s what I am told.”

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

No idea.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Yes it is crystal clear.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How this concept is understood in Nguni communities?

Well, it is not seriously stressed to people and some people do understand the concept.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

No idea.



Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

No idea.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

No idea.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

No idea.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No idea.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Zulu – Mvelinqangi, Xhosa – Mvelingqangi



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

They brought the messages like - ancestors don't exist and the reaction wasn't very good.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Some accepted it, some didn't.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

No idea

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

No idea.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Not until late because it was forced and it came to a stage where people thought that the Bible came with White people (which is true) and it gave the power to make people slaves. Then slowly they started to understand.



Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

No idea.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

Most people believe that it happened in Northern Africa and the first person was not actually white, therefore between, Africa and the Middle East.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

Women in the Zulu communities were known as baby makers and taking care of the home, not even giving them the respect they deserve from the beginning.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

No it represents the ancestors and they are also dangerous.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

Well its similar to a girl whose vagina has never been penetrated by a penis and as such she is a virgin.



NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Yes, only a minority does not comprehend.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they

make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

In a way they do cause challenges, in the olden days we were used to proverbs when communicating, so in some cases it's well understood.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Yes because some people in a society are not biblically inclined.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

Not really, actually it makes it more clear.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3A

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Creation – supreme being – Mvelincanti existed before anyone. The first to be.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Mvelincanti created but there is no detailed information

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

There is no time period.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

There was no concept like ‘bottomless pit’ in the Swazi context.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Common ancestor – Adam and Eve in the past. The Reed Theory is foreign in the Swazi speaking community.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea at all.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

No idea at all.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I do not know.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How this concept is understood in the Nguni communities?

No, I have no idea.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

There was no direct communication with God. Worship revolves around the ancestral worship and the monarchy.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Nguni communities picture God as Sacred, Sovereign, respected. That is why they have *inxusa* [mediator] because no one can talk directly to Him.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestors are nearer to God. They are able to communicate with God. Ancestors are mediators between God and man. Jesus – is not clearly understood, it was a new Theology.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Swazi speaking people have one universal God and His names are as follows:- Umdali, Mvelincanti, Mlentengamunye.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Swazi do not subscribe to this concept, this is a philosophical concept that does not make sense to the ordinary person on the street.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Families are different and as such have different approaches to worship



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

It is true that missionaries brought something completely different from the Nguni speaking communities.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

It was very hard for Nguni speaking people to adapt since this needed a paradigm shift .

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

No idea at all.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

They did not achieve their goal due to a number of factors.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Positive – people were impressed and changed their life in some degree. Family ministries. Education, infrastructure. Negative – opposite cultural issues. Monogamy also as opposite to polygamy.



Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

There was no concept among Nguni speaking communities. However, sin is breaking a public law which is recognized and Kings/ Chiefs are the custodians of this law.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No idea at all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and

sickness as a result of the *fall*?

A woman is an important figure in the family. Everything revolves around a woman. A woman is subservient to the man.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snake – represents an ancestor – diviners are called to guide and direct; snake are also dangerous.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I have no idea at all on this issue.



Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea at all.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

I think so, except the flow of language. Semantic/ formation of words are very important.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

Certain issues miss the target.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea at all.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

Older translations are better.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Metaphors, similes, oxymoron, and imagery.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3B

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

No idea.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

The idea was already there – Mvelincanti (compound noun – Mveli [appear] – ncanti [prior to someone else]).

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

There is no detailed information as to how He created the universe. Beliefs affirm the created universe.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

No idea at all.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

No idea at all.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Spontaneity would be more possible in this regard. Yes/No No: no effort of getting into details of unfolding creation. Yes – Swazi use *Zidalwa* [creatures] as an awareness of a product of creative power.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

No concept of the image of God in man. Creation – Reed plant swollen and bursts into 2 people – male/female. No direct connection with the super power.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Swazi Supreme being distanced himself from the creation, and therefore for that reason there is no connection between God and the created universe.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Not related to the Swazi – instead sun or event is important e.g. [impeka bafati] – time to cook.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

No connection between Swazi super being and the ancestors, even though worship among the siSwati speaking people revolves around ancestors and monarchy.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

He does not concern himself with the ordinary. No function at all.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

No relationship at all.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

There is only one national God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

The community is not aware of this scientific theory except those who are exposed to the institutions of higher learning.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

No idea at all.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Swazis accept the concept of God who is involved in every day activities.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Indigenous church i.e. Zionists have no problem with this.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

I am not sure how accurate their messages were, but in Swaziland three religious bodies were born as a result: -

Ecumenical bodies league – Indigenous; Conference – evangelical and Pentecostal and Council – Roman Catholics. The last two are missionary churches.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

No idea at all.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?



Positively – pioneer – aspects of Swazi life e.g. education health, general community development. Negatively – highly intolerant of the Swazi Culture, not everything is wrong in a culture. Criticism was based on ignorance and assumption and very dismissive.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

The Swazi text is heavily coloured by the patriarchal context. The Swazi culture is a reflection of patriarchal relationships. Hebrew society parallels the Swazi society. Biological family aunts are important.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No idea at all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

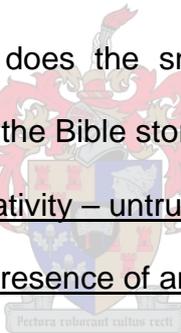
There is no concept of time when people were innocent, there is no concept of original sin.

Buntu – is the epitome of recognizing the upright living. Sin is connected with social responsibility. Polygamy does not feature in Gen 1-3.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snake – is an enemy. It represents negativity – untruthfulness, undependable – snake.

The snake can also be a symbol of the presence of an ancestor.



Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea at all

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The Bible translation brings both. However, some concepts are heavily coloured by Swazi context.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No idea at all.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea at all.

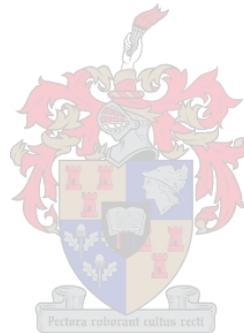
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea at all.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3C

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

The universe was created by God. Mvelincanti – from eternity to eternity.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

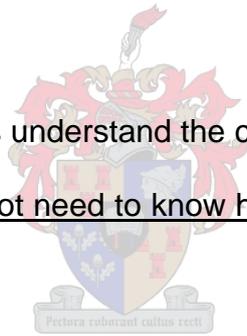
It is not important in the Swazi culture.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

No idea at all.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Man was created by God and we do not need to know how man was created [*akusimcoka kutsi sadalwa njani*].



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea at all.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Swazis believe that we are created in the image of God – belief is to be sure of things we do not know. If we come from the reed, then the reed would be given a special recognition in the Swazi culture. Once again, it is not important in the Swazi culture.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

We are familiar with the concept of resting in the Swazi culture.

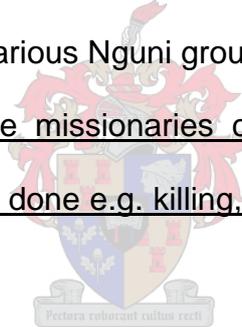
Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

We believe the morning and evening concept.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

We worshipped God even before the missionaries came – wrong things (which were not accepted by the community) were not done e.g. killing, adultery etc. Worship revolves around ancestors and kings.



Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

No, I have no idea.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their statuses in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Ancestors are dead people. Each person has a blood of all other people e.g. husband and wife's blood. Connection man – ancestor. Mediation is God's mystery. Both God and ancestor are invisible.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

No idea at all.

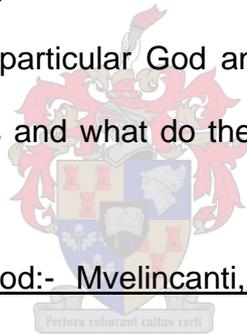
Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Evolution is just a theory which might be there or not there.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The following are the names of God:- Mvelincanti, Nkulunkulu, Somandla – Sinanatelo

(Sithakazelo)



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Missionaries were white. They spoke English and we spoke Swazi. The problem was whites thought their approach was better and sidelined our culture.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

A nation has been given wisdom.

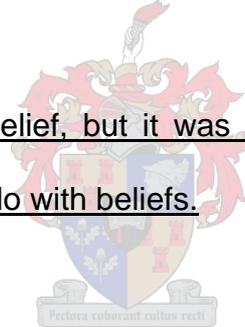
Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

The belief system in Swaziland came through the Royal family, that is why we are still encouraging faith.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Polygamy and Monogamy is not a belief, but it was the missionaries practice and tradition.

Look at the attire, that has nothing to do with beliefs.



Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Positive aspects - Education, infrastructure.

Negative aspects– undermine our culture of doing things. Many have died believing false things. False teachings on location of Bible lands etc. Missionaries did not find us dying, we had our own traditional healers who were accepted in various communities.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Wrong things, as the society would indicate, those would be considered as sin, since man became psychologically aware.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

We were falsely taught about this location.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

This is far away from us. It does not fit the Swazi setting. Man can be cheated by another human being not necessarily a snake.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

It does not fit the profile. The snake is used in Swazi ancestry. Some snakes are dangerous.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

Man must walk in front and a woman at the back. The man must kill the snake. It is a thought of birth pains. When things are tough, its just part of life. A woman is subservient, because of creation. Man was created and lived alone first.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

We also have the same concept, however, we do not know why.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The original thought has been taken away. The Bible was interpreted not translated.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

The old translation speaks about Jesus changing water into wine. The word *Umtsimba* fits the Swazi context well instead of “wedding” e.g. a wedding at Cana.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea at all.

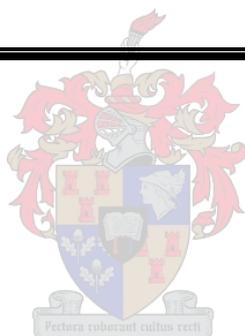
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

The monarchy is still playing an important role in ensuring Swaziland remains a religious country.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3D

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

I have no idea at all.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

I am not sure but I think God created the universe.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

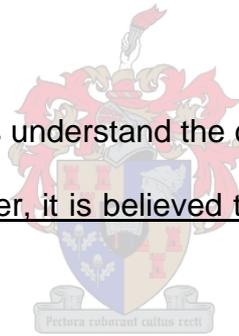
I have absolutely no idea on this issue.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlane*]?

I do not know.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

I have no clear understanding, however, it is believed that God created and how He created is not important to us as Swazi people.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I am not sure.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

I do not know.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come

I have no idea at all.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

I am not sure.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

The Supreme being concept is always cherished by Nguni speaking communities. Ancestral worship is a medium through which God is approached – morning or evening. Circumstances dictate. The kings were also involved in the worship.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Ancestors can also be accused. The ancestors communicate with Mvelincanti. There would be a cow set aside for ancestors and that is treated with care.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

I have no idea.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

I do not know.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

I do not know but I think not.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

No, I have no idea at all.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Missionaries came with colonialism. King Somhlolo had a vision – advised to choose between kinobho (money) and umculu (Bible). He then advised his subjects accordingly to choose the Bible for knowledge and learning, and to ignore money.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Benefits – the increase in wisdom.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

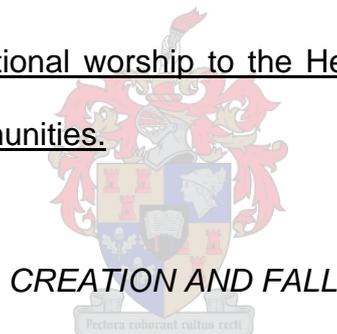
No, I have no idea.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

I am not sure.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The transition is difficult from traditional worship to the Hebrew Bible. Infrastructure was a benefit to the Nguni speaking communities.



Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Sin is understood in terms of wrong.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

The Nguni understanding is close to that of the Hebrew Bible. A woman is loved and supported, there is interdependence and she also plays an important role in the society. However, if anything goes wrong she is the first to be blamed.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

I am not sure but the community I think understands snakes in the following manner:-

1. Snakes are considered to be dangerous and
2. Sometimes they are a symbol for ancestors.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea at all.



Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea at all.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphor are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

I do not know.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

SiSwati speaking people need a translation in their mother tongue not something close to SiSwati.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea at all.



Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea at all.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3E

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Mvelincanti created.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

I believe our Swazi God Mvelincanti created the universe.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Since I am not a religious person, this question is difficult for me.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

No, I do not know.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

We have no idea, I think *Mvelincanti* is responsible and *akusimcoka kutsi sadalwa njani* (it is not important how we were created).



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I think it happened spontaneously.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

I think we look like Mvelincanti through our ancestors.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible; does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

I have no idea.

Question 1H: The evening and the morning concepts interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

I have no idea.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Worship revolves around kings and ancestors.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Mvelincanti is the source of everything.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Since they are dead now they can easily be contacted and are accessible to us, however Christ is the new theology.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

For the whole nation.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking

communities in their understanding of creation?

I do not believe Swazis believe in evolution.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

The following are the names of God in the Swazi context: -

1. Mvelincanti – appeared before everything
2. Mlentengamunye – unique not like us.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

I am not very sure.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

I do not know.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

I am not sure.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Positively – brought with them education.

Negatively – crushing the traditional issues.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

You would do something wrong and be punished accordingly.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

I do not know.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

A woman has a very important place in the Swazi context. Even when a king is appointed the mother of the king plays an important role. However, they are also considered weaker vessels and mistakes are expected.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

A snake is something bad and sometimes represents an ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No, I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No, I have no idea.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

I do not know.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No, I have no idea at all.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3F

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Mvelincanti (GOD) created all things.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

It is God, Mvelincanti who created everything, but have no specifics.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Unknown.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

No Life – a place where there is no life.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Created by Mvelincanti (He who appeared first) without the specifics as to how!

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Not known, because it is not considered to be important by the Swazis.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Very much so by Swazis, through the intervention of the ancestors.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Yes it does.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

More like the Hebrew one. Once it is dark is the start of another day.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

He was worshipped through the ancestors, since they are believed to be close to God.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Swazis have a powerful God in mind when they think of him.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

The ancestors are close to God. Whatever they don't like God doesn't like either because they get permission from him to do anything they want to, they only have an influence on matters of the living.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

For Swazis it is a universal God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No not for the Swazis.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

Umdali – Creator.

Somandla – All powerful.

Mvelincanti – the first one to be there.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

It was similar – between God and an individual is the ancestor, who pleads on one's behalf with God – One mediator the man Christ for the missionary.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Still battling with the thought of taking out their ancestors from the equation. Others worship both God and ancestors in the same town.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Not so accurate with Swazis.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Yes they did.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

It was both negative and positive. Missionaries are thought of as those who brought civilization, while telling communities that whatever they did was barbaric.



Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Swazis have no concept of sin and the fall as in the Hebrew Bible. It is just wrong to do injustice to your neighbour.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No account of the garden of Eden.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

A woman is subordinate to the man, and taken as a child but not with regard to the fall of suffering.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

In Swazi it is both a relative and enemy, certain snakes are relatives, ancestors and are not to be touched while others are seen to be killed.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I've no idea about that from the Swazi perspective.



Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

If anything forbidden, it could be in clans different one from the other, not as a Swazi community.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

At times the translators have failed to use the Swazi figure of speech that has the same message.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Mostly they reach the people.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

I don't know if we have in (Swazi) the old and new translation.



Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes? For a wedding – the Swazi translation has umshado which is not Swazi. There should be umtsimba, that is Swazi.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 3G

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Mvelincanti created all things.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Mvelincanti created it and there are no other ways known to us.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Have no idea (we don't' think about it – probably because of Christianity)

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

We haveno idea (all we know is that Mvelincanti created him).

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

It just happened spontaneously.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Yes it is and we are made in the image of Mvelincanti.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Its personal rest from weariness, not God's rest.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Light is day (not necessarily evening).

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Worshipped but in times of difficulties through sacrifices and brewing in storms and drought but not in times of plenty.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

Nguni speaking communities see God as an Originator of all things.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Since they are dead now they can easily have contact either with God or us and are easily accessible.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

It appears that Nguni communities have a universal deity.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Swazi as far as we understand do not believe in evolution.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

There are three names of God that we can look at: -

1. Mvelincanti – appeared before everything.
2. Mlentengamunye – unique not like us.
3. Simakadze – has always been there.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

It was so similar we changed words and names.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how

accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

We believe their messages were accurate.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

We believe they did achieve their purpose.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Positively – the missionaries brought with them education.

Negatively – the missionaries had a challenge in following up their work.



CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

You would do something wrong and be punished accordingly but have no idea of man being upright.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

Our understanding of the “Garden of Eden” is that it is in heaven not on earth.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

Women are stigmatized particularly when there is something wrong happening because of them not doing something.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Something bad, but it can also represent an ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No, we have no idea at all.



NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Probably not, we are not sure here.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No, we have no idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No, we have no idea at all.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 4A

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Blacks believe the same way. They knew u-Zimu. That belief was there.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Abantu abanzima (blacks) believe you go through Abezimu to u-Zimu.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

The black traditional religious believe differently.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Details are not known. Ndebeles came from emhlangeni [reed] through u-Zimu.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

People were not inquisitive then.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

People looked like or were fashioned after u-Zimu.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No, I have no idea.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

No, I have no idea.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

There was no church. Sacrifices to Abezimu would suffice. Children and senior people would clean the area, and ask for rain, but now we go to the mountain. Abafazi ababona inyanga abafuneki [menstrual cycle]. Worship revolves around the ancestors.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

No, I have no idea at all.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

The belief is they are mediators. It depends on what you believe. Churches are clashing.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

Protocol - Abezimu – u-Zimu. Royalty plays an important role.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Not known.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

u-Zimu is understood as the Creator God among the Ndebele speaking communities .

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Berlin missionary in Vaalman is where missionaries first came in Kwa-Ndebele. They used Sotho Speaking reverends to reach the Ndebele community. The Vaalman was a training ground for general Piet. In spite of all this it had no impact.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Only few people changed but it was noticeable.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

The message was not accurate e.g. clothing, language, etc.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

They did not achieve their purpose.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

The impact was very minimal. As a result most people attend the indigenous churches where they can practice their traditional religion freely under the umbrella of the church.

CREATION AND FALL



Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

The concept is understood.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? Clashes with the Bible, umuntu wasesibuyeni (kitchen). It confused people. Polygamy is better. Sickness and suffering is caused by: -

1. Witchdoctors who bewitch people.
2. Ancestors showing their unhappiness towards the affected individual.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Yinyoka – dangerous, and a representative of an ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

The following are the forbidden things among Ndebele speaking communities:- respect water, hail, death.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS



Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The translation is problematic to a Ndebele speaking person.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

Ndebele has many dialects and as such it makes it difficult to be understood.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

Ndebele was developed later and as such the language is still in its infancy stage in terms of written materials.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No, I have no idea at all.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

People should read and study the Bible. The Bible must be made practical. Kings/chiefs are known to be custodians of the truth among Ndebele communities. Pastors are part of the structures/attend functions/ prayer rallies.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 4B

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this?

Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

Human beings were just there as descendants of abezimu/ amadlozi (ancestors) from generation to generation. Abezimu are from traditional leaders.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

Zimu is the creator who created the first person – and concept is translated as God. U-Zimu is a supreme being associated with the sun.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

U-Zimu was powerful and he indicates masculinity.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

Umnkayi – bottomless space.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

Created by u-Zimu.



Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

Not clear.

Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Ndebeles believe that human beings are created in the image of God. Family ties are very important in the Ndebele speaking community.

Question 1G: The concept of God resting” is clearly portrayed in the Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

Not clear.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Yes, e.g. ekuseni [morning], ntambama [afternoon], ebusuku [night], ebusuku obukhulu [mid-night].

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

He created a communication line, through rituals and communication with the forefathers. White chicken, white goat, traditional beer. *Worship revolves around ancestors.*

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

God is there. Ndebeles are very afraid of God. His name should be revered.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

No, ancestors and God are not at par with each other. *The following protocol identifies the difference: human – ancestor – Jesus – God.*

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

U-Zimu is the only God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

Not believed.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation.

Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

No idea.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Missionaries did not come with a new Gospel, rather they confirmed the beliefs in a structured manner.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

Education influenced many things – clothing, games.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

It is the Nguni speaking people's considered opinion that the law of God was kept even before the missionaries came, and therefore, the concept of ubuntu is interspersed in the bible.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Yes.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Advantages – education, health, infrastructure, economic development. They brought a general worldview. Disadvantages – sacrifice values/ norms, hunting, chopping of wood. Cattle sacrificed, land. The Ndebeles were nomadic. The language.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Ukutshapha – wrong doing.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

Do not know about it.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? She is an executor/implementer of decisions. She was informed. A woman was not given much as she did. She is considered a junior manager. Children are always likened to the mother. She is viewed as betrayer sometimes. Ndebele speaking communities are polygamous societies. UTsobe – upheka ngomlilo omunye. (Tsobe is cooking with one fire – meaning a monogamous relationship. Ndebeles use the Bible to justify their polygamous acts.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snake – unenhliziyoyenyoka – cruel and secondly snake sometimes represents the family ancestors.



Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

I have no idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

There is such a concept among Ndebele speaking communities. It is a description of certain names or rituals.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Relevant concepts are addressed.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea.



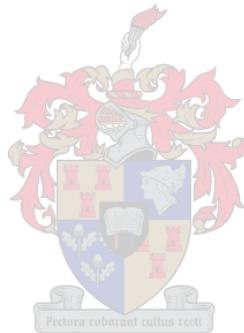
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

Language is developing. Concepts must be polished.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 4C

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

U-Zimu created as the Almighty God.

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

No idea.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

Not understanding.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

Not understanding.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

No clear idea, however, it is a common belief that u-Zimu created.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

No clear idea, but it is also a common understanding that man is fashioned after u-Zimu.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No resting.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

Morning evening concept.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Abezimu – God is worshipped, circumcision/ bayathomba intonjane – iqhude [female circumcision], Ukuphahla – speaking to ancestors. Worship is reactionary, involving animal sacrifices. No set pattern. Worship in a nutshell revolves around the ancestors.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

No considerations whatsoever.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

U-Zimu Almighty, Abezimu mediators. Life issues and success – Abezimu. Christ is the church concept.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

One national and local Abezimu.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

No such concept.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

U-Zimu u-Nkulunkulu, u-Somandla.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

Positive - Indigenous churches –ZCC.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

A greater percentage has adopted the Indigenous Churches and that therefore influences their belief system.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

Not sure then.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

Not really.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Positive – changes for the better. Education. Moral or value standards.

Negative – confused people, forced solid steps to follow in life, a priority problem.



CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

No idea.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the "Garden of Eden" as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No idea.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? A woman gains identity through a man. Obedient, respect,

value associated with marriage. A woman does not own much. Ndebele women are very strong.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snake – dangerous, cunning, inyoka yasemlanjeni, inyoka ethuthayo. A snake is sometimes viewed as a symbol for a family ancestor.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea.



NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

It has some challenges.

Question 5A: When the metaphors, similes, oxymoron, etc are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

There is no need for a Ndebele Bible.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea.



Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**

APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 4D

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

U-Zimu ukhona (God exists) – kudale u-Zimu (God created everything).

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

U-Zimu.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

We only know what the Bible has taught us in this regard.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

No idea.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

No clear idea, however, it is believed that u-Zimu created.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

No idea.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

Umuntu ufana no Zimu [man resembles God].

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

No idea.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter

of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

We follow the same [Siyakusebenzisa].

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

Abantu babekhonzisa amadlozi [people worshipped ancestors]. Amadlozi kukhulunywa nawo esibayeni[they communicated with ancestors in the kraal]. Kuyahlatyhwa, kukhulunywe kuselwe [an animal would be killed while beer or sour milk is prepared for drinking].

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

No idea.



Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

Amadlozi bayahlangana no-Zimu [there is a link between God and ancestors].

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

No idea.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking

communities in their understanding of creation?

Not believed.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

U-Zimu yedwa [God is the only one].

THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

They taught a lot of things including Sunday worship.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

No idea.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

No idea.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

No idea.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?

Disadvantages – misinterpretation of scripture. Advantages – education, infrastructure.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?

Sisibi – ukwenza okungasile [sin is defined as doing something wrong].

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

No idea.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*? Woman is subservient. There was a problem with polygamy in the eyes of the missionaries while to Ndebeles this was never considered a problem.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

Snakes are always dangerous and sometimes they are a symbol of the family ancestors.

Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

No idea.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

The words are clear.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

No idea.

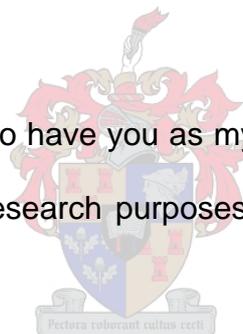
Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

No idea.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



APPENDIX 7

INTERVIEW 4E

Core Questions

Good day/evening Sir/ Madam, it is good of you to agree to talk to me. As I mentioned in my letter, I am researching on how Nguni speaking people read and understand Gen 1-3 in the Bible. I am also interested in how they understood these texts before missionaries came and the *impact of missionaries* on their belief system in particular on issues such as *creation* (i.e. the origin of the world) and the so-called *fall* (expulsion from paradise). My focus will be directed to four different phases, i.e. (1) the understanding of *creation* and the *fall* before the arrival of missionaries among Nguni communities. (2) What impact did the missionaries have on Nguni speaking people and their traditional belief systems? (3) In Nguni communities today, what views do people have on *creation* and the *fall*? (4) What do you think is the effect of current Nguni Bible translations on people's understanding of the texts under discussion? (5) When people do not understand a concept or phrase, how do you think they clarify this? Please keep in mind that I am interested in your view and not whether it is "right" or "wrong".

GOD AND CREATION

Question 1: Tell me, as you were growing up, you might have heard people talking about how good/ bad it was to worship the old indigenous traditional God before missionaries and the churches came onto the scene. With this background in mind, how did the universe come into existence according to the traditional Nguni belief system?

u-Mdali, u-Qamatha, u-Nkulunkulu or u-Thixo created the universe

Question 1A: According to Nguni beliefs: who created the universe, and are there any other ways to explain the origin of the world?

The Ngunis believe that the world was created by u-Qamatha or u-Mdali.

Question 1B: How long did it take the creator to create this universe according to Nguni beliefs?

It is not clear, but we are not told of the days in our culture.

Question 1C: How do Nguni speakers understand the idea of a “bottomless pit” [*indzondzobila/ehlani*]?

The world was dark, without anything before God created.

Question 1D: How do Nguni speakers understand the creation of humankind?

They believe that humankind came from the ground.

Question 1E: Did creation follow a certain pattern/trend or just happened spontaneously?

I am not very sure on this point.



Question 1F: The idea of humankind “created in the image of God,” is it cherished by Nguni speakers?

They believe that u-Mdali is our God and human beings were created in His image.

Question 1G: The concept of “God resting” is clearly portrayed in Hebrew Bible, does it come forth clearly in this way in the Nguni culture/Bible translations?

The Ngunis had a day of rest though it was not the original Sabbath, but they had a concept of rest. You will realize that they had a day in Ndebele called ‘izilo’ [fasting day] where people were not allowed to work, plough or go into the fields. This was a day once a week they rested.

Question 1H: The “Evening and Morning” concept is interspersed throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible. How is this concept understood in Nguni communities?

No idea.

GOD AND HIS WORSHIP

Question 2: How was this traditional God worshiped in view of the fact that He was *understood* /not understood as Creator amongst various Nguni groups?

God was not directly worshipped, He was a more important figure so that the living could not talk to Him direct but through the dead, our ancestors.

Question 2A: What kind of a God does Nguni speakers have in mind when they consider the work that God has done?

God who is the creator of all things and without Him there was nothing. God who is so powerful that when one wronged Him, disasters would strike the earth until the spirits are appeased to make Him happy.

Question 2B: If one compares the ancestors and God, how is the relationship between these two and what are their status in Nguni communities with regard to creation?

God is above ancestors, He is the creator while the ancestors are mediators on behalf of the living. As Christ is the mediator between us and God.

Question 2C: Do all the Nguni communities have a universal God or does each community have its own God?

One God.

Question 2D: Do you think the scientific theory of evolution influenced the Nguni speaking communities in their understanding of creation?

You cannot sell the evolution concept to the Nguni communities, they won't believe it.

Question 2E: It appears that traditionally each Nguni community had its own name/s that it was using to describe the God whom they believed created the universe. Some names indicate how each community related to that particular God and understood the concept of creation. Will you please mention a few names and what do these mean with regard to the concept of creation?

U-Qamatha, u-Thixo, u-Nkulunkulu, u-Mdali – Him who created is above all, superior, and the creator.



THE ROLE PLAYED BY MISSIONARIES

Question 3: When missionaries came, did they bring messages contrary to what the Nguni people knew about creation and the Creator? If so, what was their [Nguni People] reaction, if not, how similar was their gospel to that of the belief system of the Nguni speaking people?

The missionaries came with the concept of Christ centred messages which were not known in the Nguni culture and condemned the ancestral worship as evil and Satanic. This they thought was an insult to their dead.

Question 3A: How did Nguni speaking communities deal with the change in their belief system with regard to creation as a result of the presence of missionaries?

It brought a lot of resistance to the Ngunis, especially the trinity issue while they only believed in one God who created not three Gods. They believed the missionaries imposed to them other Gods.

Question 3B: The message of the missionaries with regard to the origin of the world, how accurate was the message conveyed to the Nguni listeners through preaching?

They needed more teaching and understanding than to be preached at.

Question 3C: As far as you are concerned, do you think the missionaries achieved their purpose?

I believe they achieved their purpose because today our culture as Ngunis has been lost, our beliefs forgotten and we have adopted foreign beliefs.

Question 3D: Did the messages of the missionaries' impact positively or negatively on Nguni speaking communities?



It brought a negative impact because the way we viewed our God was seen as barbaric and this made the Ngunis view themselves and their culture as inferior.

CREATION AND FALL

Question 4: How do Nguni speaking communities understand the concepts of sin and the fall?
Sin was going against the will of the ancestors and they would strike you with death or diseases. One's sins were only forgiven by appeasing the angry spirits that will talk to God on one's behalf. This will be done by sacrifices of animals which is the concept of the sanctuary and priesthood.

Question 4A: What do Nguni communities understand about the “Garden of Eden” as an important location/place when it comes to creation and the fall?

This world was our Garden of Eden given to us by God.

Question 4B: What is the role of the *woman* in the *fall* and how can one explain suffering and sickness as a result of the *fall*?

There was a myth of a woman who went to fetch firewood on the day of rest and went to the moon and never came back. Because of failing to obey God and listen to our ancestors who were seen as our mediators we were getting all these misfortunes in the world.

Question 4C: In Nguni culture what does the snake represent, does it have the same characteristics that the Hebrew snake in the Bible story has?

No idea.



Question 4D: The pronouncement of judgment on humankind, how is this understood in Nguni thought?

Judgment was now, if you do wrong God will punish you, either your children will get sick, you will become unfortunate, have bad luck or become insane. There was no concept of resurrection of Jesus coming again but if you die you got to the world of the gods.

Question 4E: Is there something similar to the “ forbidden tree” of Gen 2 in the Garden of Eden in Nguni thought and culture?

No idea.

NGUNI BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Question 5: When you look at Ndebele, siSwati, Xhosa, and Zulu Bible translations, would you be able to say the language and the figures of speech used in the first three chapters of Genesis are clearly understood by the majority of Nguni speakers?

Because they talk of u-Mdali that created, with the same belief and understanding most Nguni speakers understand the chapters.

Question 5A: When matters such as metaphors are translated into Nguni languages, do they make any sense? Alternatively, do the Nguni translators use the relevant figure of speech that carries the same message but with different imagery?

No idea.

Question 5B: Do Nguni translations reach Nguni speaking people at their level or do they still need to be interpreted for the ordinary person to understand?

They lack the depth of our languages and many times the translators put thing in the English perspective of things – especially most Nguni Bibles are a translation of KJV.

Question 5C: If you look at the old and the new Nguni translations, are there any differences, if there are, are they for the betterment of understanding or are they making the situation worse?

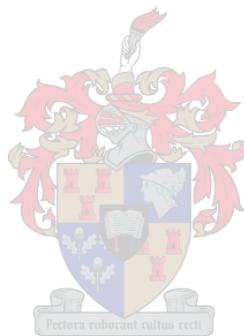
Not yet read the new translation but I feel the more we try to simplify the language, things will be worse because we will lose the original meaning of the message.

Question 5D: Could you identify some problems in the current Nguni translations that you

have experienced so that at the end of the day all interested Nguni readers may benefit from reading the Bible which is one of the major sources that deal with creation and God. Where would you suggest changes?

No idea.

Conclusion: It has been my pleasure to have you as my interviewee. I must also mention that this interview is conducted only for research purposes and your identity will not at any given point be disclosed. **Thank you**



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